

Bagley Downs housing ready for student families

■ **APARTMENTS:** The 30 renovated units were spared from the demolition of Amazon housing

By Kristin Bailey
Associate Editor

In a show of community spirit, the City of Eugene, St. Vincent de Paul and the University unveiled the 30 newly-renovated apartments at Bagley Downs Tuesday afternoon.

The buildings' history is extensive. World War Two shipbuilders in Vancouver, Washington have lived in the buildings, as have University student families. But low-income families will now call some of the former Amazon Family Housing structures home.

"In World War Two when these buildings were constructed, we had a sign that we would put up, 'V for victory,'" Mayor Ruth Bascom said. "We have quality housing for students and low-income families. It's a day to say 'V for victory' a second time."

With the help of St. Vincent de Paul and the Save Amazon Coalition, the 30 newly-renovated apartments survived the University's demolition of the Amazon student housing complex.

"This is a very happy and satisfying day for the University," University President Dave Frohnmayr said. "And it's a real tribute to our community that we celebrate today."

The University originally wanted to demolish all of the Amazon buildings. Opponents fought to save the buildings because of their half-century history.

"One of the first decisions I made upon becoming president of



The newly renovated Bagley Downs apartments are some of the 30 Amazon buildings that were spared.

ANDREW BRACKENSICK/Emerald

the University of Oregon is, regrettably, we could not afford as a University to restore Amazon Housing," Frohnmayr said. "[Now we're able] to provide additional housing in this area for low-income families who desperately need it at this time of rental shortages in the entire region."

Rent for a two-bedroom apartment at Bagley Downs will run \$270 a month. To qualify, renters must earn less than \$16,400 for a family of three or \$18,200 for a

four-person family. St. Vincent de Paul already has a waiting list for families hoping to move in.

"You know, a home is something more than four walls, a ceiling and a floor," Frohnmayr said. "It is — or ought to be, at least — a safe haven and a nurturing environment. And we have seen a community effort here that retains the sense of community and will provide [those things] to those families who are now able to live here."

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—Dave Frohnmayr
UO President

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