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obligation to give back to the community," says Baker.
The Bakers' original dilemma to stay in Portland or move back to rural Oregon is part of a national predicament that CLTs are addressing, believes Lewis. "The high cost of living in urban cores pushes out lower-income populations, including teachers, firefighters and the backbone of employment ... putting the burden on transportation and affecting the quality of life," says Lewis. By buying land in and around urban cores, Lewis believes that CLTs like Proud Ground are ensuring a diversity of homeowners in cities.

The benefits that come with owning a Proud Ground home abound. Homeownership workshops, mini home repair grants, discounted Zip Car membership and free heating system replacements are just a few perks. Nationwide, CLT homes have been earning acclaim for their modern, weatherized, LEED-certified designs, including several Home Depot Awards of Excellence. "We do not want people to buy fixer-upper's," says Beason.

Many sources of funding fuel Proud Ground's mission. Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), the Oregon General Fund and Tax Increment Financing (TIF) dollars make it possible to bring homes into the land trust. Government contracts and grants from the Portland Housing Bureau keep the nonprofit's doors open and the staff employed. About 20 percent of Proud Ground homes sit on previously tax-foreclosed land that the County donates, says Beason.

However, as the City of Portland faces an enormous projected loss of revenue related to the tax-increment finance system, Beason is wary of uncertainty. "With a decline in (TIF) dollars, and with the Housing Bureau reformulating its processes for allocating funds, it means we do not know whether to prepare to serve fewer families each year, or to maintain capacity to serve the number of families we serve today," he says. But Beason is optimistic, adding that Proud Ground has "promised to be around forever."

To be fair, Proud Ground isn't for everyone. "There's no panacea out there," says Lewis. "Community land trusts don't want to fit a square peg in a round hole, and if you can buy at market rate, we say go ahead. But CLTs do have a really valuable approach to community and they are sustainable for generations."

"You're not at the whim of rent increases, your kids can attend the same school and, over time, it's a type of savings plan, putting money away over the years through a mortgage," says Beason.

"Not to have that fear of renting, that's huge for me," says Avery. "You can't wait around to own a home because your life goes by so fast."



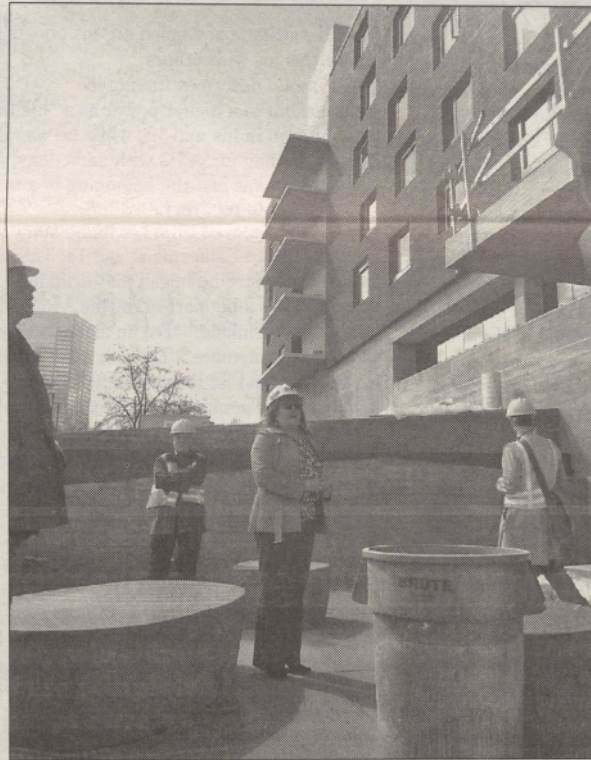
PHOTOS BY JOANNE ZUHL

Bud Clark Commons opens doors for a preview of services to come

The Bud Clark Commons opened for a special tour on April 7 for representatives from the City of Portland, Multnomah County, the Housing Authority of Portland, and Transition Projects Inc., which will be moving its offices into the \$47 million multi-use center in June. Above, Doreen Binder, (left foreground) executive director of Transition Projects Inc., looks out from the gathering and dining hall area for the shelter space.

The center fills half a block on the corner of NW Hoyt Street and Broadway, near the Greyhound Bus Station and TriMet services. And it achieves the highest government standards of environmentally conscious engineering, including solar hot water, green roofs, stormwater planters, lighting sensors and greywater collection. The building has also been designed with materials and furniture considered bedbug proof, and has a bedbug "sauna" to kill any bugs on material before entering the building.

In addition to the day center and 90-bed shelter, all managed by TPI, the Commons has 130 studio housing units, full subsidized through public housing and Section 8 vouchers for individuals with no or very little income. A selection process is being finalized to prioritize the most vulnerable among the homeless, including people who are disabled, ill and injured. The housing portion of the building will be managed by the Housing Authority of Portland.



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