

# Combating Displacement

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economic development projects brought about profound neighborhood transformations, leaving many long-time residents with fewer and fewer affordable housing options.

Within the past decade, the percentage of African Americans in Portland's historically black neighborhoods had fallen by more than half.

In March, Mayor Charlie Hales, with the support of housing commissioner Dan Saltzman, dedicated an additional \$20 million in Tax Increment Financing dollars from the Interstate Corridor Urban Renewal Area to affordable housing in an effort to begin to address the on-going threat of displacement and gentrification.

The pledge followed a controversial proposal to subsidize development of a Trader Joe's grocery store for the corner of Northeast Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Alberta Street.

The Portland Housing Bureau determined that any plan to increase the affordable housing budget would need to be guided by the community itself.

The result is a five-year plan that proposes a set of new practices and policies to address the specific barriers to housing access, security, and economic opportunity.

The \$20 million budget has been cut up strategically. Accordingly, \$3.2 million dollars has been allocated to providing single-family home repair loans. These zero-interest loans of up to \$40,000 per home are expected to provide critical repairs for low-income homeowners. Approximately 80 households are expected to reap benefit and be prevented from displacement through these loans.

An additional \$800,000 has been budgeted as grant money, of up to \$5,000 per home, also for critical repairs with an emphasis on seniors, people with disabilities, and those that make less than 50 percent of the median family income. This support is expected to help an additional 160 homes. Both of these grants and loans are set to start immediately if approved by the council and to be annually allocated over the course of the next five years.

In terms of creating new homeowners, \$2.4 million has been set aside to create a Down

Payment Assistance Loan Program, assisting first time homebuyers with incomes up to 80 percent of the median family income. This also is set to start immediately and to be fully deployed in three years. The program is expected to help approximately 40 households. In addition, another \$2.6 million is being invested into creating new affordable homes. The Housing Bureau estimates this will help create an additional 32 households.

The city plans to invest \$4.5 million, plus land, into creating permanently affordable rental homes, especially for land already owned by the Portland Housing Bureau, including a plot on Northeast Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, between Northeast Cook and Ivy Street.

The emphasis will be on creating family-sized rental units that feature family-friendly features. The city will be trying to identify ground-floor commercial opportunities for local businesses to be a part of these communities. This budget is set to create 40 to 80 new housing units.

Another \$3.5 million is set to be invested in redeveloping one or more additional properties either owned by the Portland Housing Bureau or other partners. This would begin in 2017 and create an additional 30-60 units.

Lastly the city is set to spend \$3 million on acquiring additional land to be used for permanent affordable housing in the future. The city plans to work with the community and other institutions to leverage additional funds for this purpose.

For the entire budget and overall plan, a community-based Oversight Committee is being formed to make the city and Housing Bureau accountable to the community.

While any government assistance cannot be based on race, people from the neighborhoods impacted by displacement will have priority access to the housing developed through this initiative, officials said. Although the city is still working on the logistics of how this will work, the emphasis of the project is on helping communities of color.

For more information on the housing plan and to see if you qualify for some of the help, visit [portlandoregon.gov/phb](http://portlandoregon.gov/phb).



An arson fire in August 2013 engulfs a new apartment complex that was under construction at Northeast Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Monroe Street. The FBI is now offering a \$5,000 reward for tips that lead to an arrest in the case.

## Monroe Street Arson Reward

Tips that lead to the identification, arrest and conviction of the person or people responsible for a five-alarm fire that consumed a northeast Portland apartment complex could result in a reward of up to \$5,000.

The FBI announced last week that it is offering the reward in conjunction with the Aug. 8, 2013, arson at the "Monroe Apartments" – a 46-unit

building that was under construction at 318 N.E. Monroe St. Callers to 9-1-1 reported the fire at 4:14 a.m. Several nearby homes and vehicles also suffered significant damage. Investigators put the total damage estimate at over \$6 million.

Anyone who wants to report tips about the arson should call the FBI at 503-224-4181 or Detective Joseph Luiz at 503 823-3408.

### SEI Community + Family Programs



King Facility  
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SEI's Community + Family Programs are designed to provide African-American families and other families in need with the resources, support, and wrap-around services needed to help ensure they are safe, stable, and have their social, emotional, and economic needs met.



- SEI's established programs:  
- The Community Shelter Program (2009)
- Community Support Program:  
- Economic Stability and Apprenticeship Program (2011)  
- Entrepreneurial Program  
- Community Clean  
- Community Training Center  
- Housing Development Program
- Community Support:  
- Housing Program

For more information please call: 503.285.0453 or visit: [www.seienhancement.org](http://www.seienhancement.org)