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Affordability for Now

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thousands of affordable housing units across the state, according to Tim Collier of Home Forward and Denis Theriault of the Multnomah County Office of Homeless Services.

Multnomah County alone could lose close to \$200 million in funding that would affect close to 1,800 housing units in the county, officials said.

"The GOP tax bill is cruel and backwards," said U.S. Rep. Earl Blumenauer, D-Ore. "As Portland and cities across Oregon face housing crises, this bill would bankrupt critical programs that support affordable housing and families who need it most, all while giving massive tax breaks to the rich."

The Block 45 project will provide 220 housing units to folks at 60 percent or below the area median income—that's \$44,820 a year—and 20 "deeply affordable" housing units to folks at or below 30 percent of the area median income. The building will also set aside housing units specifically for survivors of domestic violence. It will also provide resident services, community space, and the ground floor will contain a retail store, Calhoon said.

The estimated construction cost of \$284,600 per unit did raise some eyebrows when it was approved last week, but the price will be worth it for a building that lasts 100 years and is sustainable, according to City Commissioner Nick Fish who disputed claims from outside contractors who said

they can build Block 45 for half the proposed price.

Fish was critical, however, of plans that did not offer permanent supportive housing with social services for homeless folks and added an amendment that orders housing officials to meet once again with a proposal to include supportive housing—the funding for which is yet to be determined.

Located on the western half of a block bound by Northeast Grand Avenue, Hassalo, Sixth Avenue and Holladay, Block 45 has stood vacant since the city bought it back in 1989.

The property is ideal for public transport, within easy reach of the downtown corridor by streetcar and Max line.

"It's going to do a lot of great things," Calhoon said.

Networking for Jobs

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

downtown.

An open house was held earlier this month in a networking event for members of the public to learn about the county's capital construction projects.

It began with introductions from project managers, contractors, subcontractors, pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship experts each describing a substantial need for many kinds of workers and skill sets: pipefitters, truckers, caulkers, carpenters, masons, laborers, sheet rockers, sheet metal workers, project engineers and 3-D modeling experts, among other vital roles.

"We're looking for people who have experience and those who don't have experience. We're willing to train and teach," one apprenticeship manager said.

The event was co-hosted by Hoffman Construction, JE Dunn Construction and Construction Apprenticeship and Workforce Solutions.

Both the Multnomah County Central Courthouse Project and the Gladys McCoy Health Department Headquarters in Old Town/Chinatown have broken ground and set ambitious goals to provide opportunities for apprentices and for minority, women, service-disabled veterans and emerging small businesses.

"We've put some things in place so we can achieve those goals," said Faye Burch of FM Burch and Associates, an equity and inclusion consultant. "We're taking responsibility for developing these job opportunities and people."

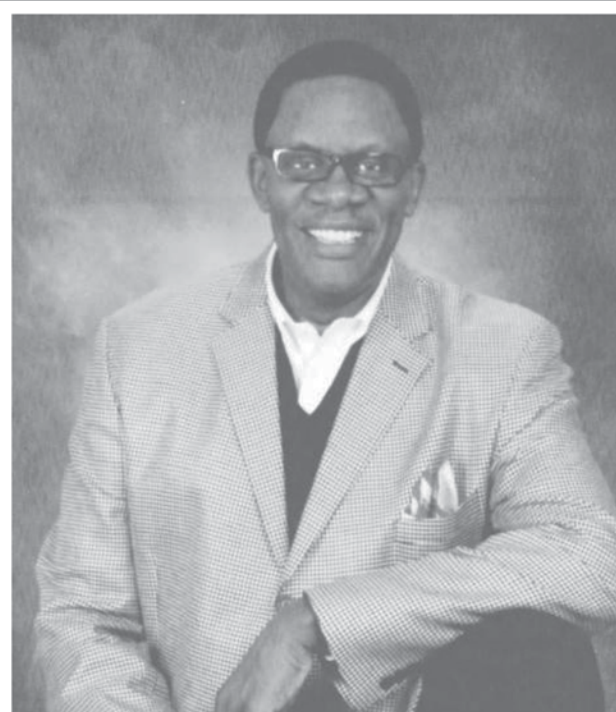
Opportunities exist for people as young as 18 years old, Burch stressed. Prospective candidates

can have a high school diploma or a GED and can enter the field through pre-apprenticeship programs like Constructing Hope, Oregon Tradeswomen Inc., Portland Youthbuilders Program or Portland Opportunities Industrialization Center.

Trainings range from six- to 12-week classes. After basic training classes, students work on actual construction projects to discover areas of interest. Some programs have direct entry to union and non-union work.

"Apprenticeship is a pathway for many out of poverty, and an opportunity to be self-sustaining for minorities and women," Burch said. "These are jobs that pay a competitive wage with opportunity for growth."

For more information on Constructing Hope call 503- 281-1234, Oregon TradesWomen call 503-33-8200, Portland Youthbuilders call 503-286-9350.



Dr. Billy R. Flowers

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- Develop good body mechanics through exercises to improve your posture.

- Eat a diet rich in calcium and vitamin D. Your doctor might prescribe a medication to help prevent further bone loss.

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- Consult a chiropractor if the curvature of your upper back causes pain or discomfort.

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