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Month



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Committed to Cultural Diversity

## The Williams & Russell Restorative Project!

### Building Four Important Community Pillars

The Williams & Russell CDC (W&R CDC) today disclosed a series of building initiatives demonstrating significant progress and plans for the Williams & Russell Project, a collaborative, community-driven initiative to revitalize a historic Black neighborhood in North Portland.

The Williams & Russell Project centers on a 1.7-acre vacant block at North Russell Street and North Williams Avenue which is currently owned by Legacy Health and was once the thriving Albina community that housed the majority of African Americans in Oregon before being acquired through eminent domain for urban renewal in the early 1970s.

“The vision of the Williams & Russell Project honors Portland’s displaced African American community, and Legacy is proud to be part of this historic effort by returning the land to the community,” said Legacy Health board chair Charles Wilhoite.

The approximately \$115M project aims to honor and enrich Portland’s Black



Project Working Group, City, Legacy, and Elected 2018

community, create wealth, and promote a healthier economy by providing affordable rental apartments and homeownership as well as business opportunities for the community, especially those whose families were impacted by the displacement.

“I am honored to have had a hand in this project since its inception and I am grateful to see the project reach this key milestone – especially because it address-

es many of the community priorities including equity, housing affordability, access, displacement, and climate change. I look forward to our continued collaboration and to work commencing on the site,” said Mayor Ted Wheeler.

A community-led effort from 2018 to 2021 set the project mission. “Our mission is to build four important community pillars: support for Black entrepreneurs, af-

fordable homeownership and rental housing, education and workforce training, and community space where we can all gather. It is an ambitious project involving complex processes and partnerships and my hope is that our project can be a template for how governments, organizations and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

## Honored with a Building for Black Veterans in Portland



From Right to Left: Robin Carter, Paul Knauls and Lille Knauls

### New low-income housing complex in the Northeast

The Paul & Geneva Knauls Building is located in Portland’s King neighborhood it is collaboration between Community Development Partners and Self Enhancement Inc. (SEI). The building is one of first to open within the shared Alberta Alive vision. Paul and Geneva opened and operated numerous businesses that served Portland’s Black community. The Knauls ran Geneva’s Restaurant and Lounge, The Cotton Club, Paul’s Cocktails and Geneva’s Shear Perfection.

The Knauls Building provides 31 units for Veterans, including 25 VASH housing voucher units and services provided by Do Good Multnomah. The building is two blocks from each other on NE Alberta Street, the historic heart of Portland’s African American community.

Units will provide affordable rental housing to low-income persons with a median income of no greater than 60%

of the area median income. Twenty-five of the units come with Veteran Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) vouchers attached. The projects create a place that supports the African American community and Veterans in a permanently affordable community, incorporating housing and robust service offerings.

SEI will oversee on-site resident services at both buildings with a culturally responsive services plan tailored to the resident population. This includes on-site events as well as SEI’s many school-based and after school programs, located at their Center for Self Enhancement, less than a mile from the project sites. Additionally, SEI offers adult programming in parenting, financial management/budgeting, matched savings, credit repair, and home ownership. In addition to SEI’s programming, residents of The Knauls Building will also receive wraparound supportive services from Do Good Multnomah—a nonprofit organization that partners with the community to providing housing, emergency shelter, and services to houseless Veterans. Their emphasis includes relationship building, one-on-one engagement, supportive services, and direct community participation.