

# The Williams & Russell Restorative Project!

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

communities can come together to right past wrongs.”, said Bryson E. Davis, Board Chair, Williams & Russell CDC.

Since 2021, the W&R CDC has been working with real estate development partners to advance key aspects of the project including campus planning, fundraising, and the land transfer process. Funded by Prosper Portland, the campus planning initiative, which began in 2021, is being led by commercial development partner Adre and includes due diligence, environmental site assessment, right-of-way design, public works, building placement, and land division, all of which is required for the eventual property transfer by Legacy.

Detailed design and community outreach for the three building projects began in January 2024 led by developers Adre and Portland Community Reinvestment Initiatives Inc (PCRI) and includes the core team of Housing Development Center (HDC), LEVER Architecture, Hood Design Studio, and Colas Construction. There will be 85 affordable one- to three-bedroom units at the 30%-60% Area Median Income (AMI) affordable level. The project will include a community room, outdoor space, on-site parking, resident services, and a cultural-specific daycare. Twenty of the homes will be two- to three-bedrooms, five of which will include an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) and another five which will be



Left-Right/Top-Bottom: Steven Holt, Try Excellence LLC, W&R Project Working Group, Facilitator; Kimberly Branham, Executive Director of Prosper Portland; Mayor Ted Wheeler; Shannon Callahan, Former Director of the Portland Housing Bureau; Kathryn Correia, CEO Legacy Health Systems; Charles Wilhoite, Legacy Health Board Chair; Lakeitha Elliott, Former Co-Chair of the W&R Project Working Group; Bryson Davis, Board Chair of the Williams & Russell CDC photo credit Lisa Norwood, Prosper Portland

fully ADA accessible. This “missing middle housing” will offer homeownership to low- and moderate-income families and individuals at the 60%-120% AMI affordable level. The black business hub will be a landmark center for the creation and support of local Black businesses. The 30,000 SF, Cross Laminated Timber (CLT) development will offer affordable office and retail space for Black-owned businesses and community partner organizations.

The projects have collectively secured \$10.3M in pre-development funding. “This initiative shows what happens when the community leads and the government is a supportive partner. We are committed to meaningful change through our ongoing collaboration with the Williams & Russell Project team — their diligence and determination to increase housing opportunities and economic opportunity for the Black community is clearly evident,” said Carmen Rubio, Portland City Commissioner.

The project is keenly focused on creating equitable economic opportunities and is targeting over 30% of the project budget towards women-and/or BIPOC-owned businesses. The campus planning phase also involved 50% participation from Minority, Women and Emerging Small Businesses (MWESB) certified firms. In addition, a plaza and central garden to be designed by MacArthur Genius Fellow and landscape architect, Walter J. Hood, will incorporate environmental graphics and public art encapsulating the story and spirit of the Black community.

Underlining the core sustainability and energy efficiency goals of the project, each building is pursuing Path to Net Zero, LEED or Earth Advantage certification, and solar energy generation. Adre was awarded a grant for the Williams & Russell Project from Energy Trust of Oregon, as part of the organization’s Net Zero Fellowship, to explore the feasibility of creating a district-scale micro-district across the three development projects.

To promote educational advancement, the Williams & Russell Project served as the site for the annual Barbara G. Laurie Student Design Competition, hosted by the National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA). In all, 38 student teams from around the U.S. submitted proposals for the project including designs for a mix of community uses.

The Williams & Russell Project is on track to break ground on the first phase of construction in May 2025 and the entire project is expected to be complete in 2027.

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