

North Baldwin



COMMUNITY UPDATE

Early concept design by SERA

Finding Roots in North Portland

North Portland has become one of Portland's most vibrant areas, attracting new homebuyers and some of the region's hottest restaurants and bars. **Gentrification has revitalized many neighborhoods but taken a toll on housing costs.** Countless long-time—and mostly African American—residents have been pushed out of what was once the hub of the Black community. Coupled with discriminatory practices and the aftermath of urban renewal, **many of these individuals have struggled with housing instability and homelessness.**

“The Urban League is pleased to embark on a development that shares the values of our seventy-five years of service. The Baldwin project will create place, meaning and vibrant community for Black Portlanders.”

— NKENGE HARMON JOHNSON
Executive Director, Urban League of Portland

Home Forward and the Urban League of Portland, the state's oldest civil rights and social service organization, have come together to provide hope and stability for people of color experiencing chronic homelessness. The new North Baldwin redevelopment project will provide **safe shelter for 60 formerly homeless individuals in need of culturally specific support and services.**

Over the past two years, **North Portland has seen a 122.5%**

overall increase in those experiencing homelessness in this area of the city. “There's a real need for affordable housing here,” said Michael Buonocore, executive director, Home Forward, “and a huge demand for housing that serves people of color who comprise a small percentage of the general population **but disproportionately experience higher rates of homelessness.**”

The proposed four-story, 34,000-square-foot building will feature an array of services to help folks regain purpose and dignity living in an area they may once have called home. An on-site team will include a resident services coordinator, case managers and peer support specialists.

“The Urban League is pleased to embark on a development that shares the values of our seventy-five years of service. **The Baldwin project will create place, meaning and vibrant community for Black Portlanders.**” said Nkenge Harmon Johnson, Executive Director, Urban League of Portland.

Home Forward will develop and manage the property and collaborate with Urban League on developing culturally specific supportive services. **Home Forward has two decades of experience renovating older, obsolete properties into new, brighter developments** that bridge housing and services. Urban League, an organization that serves and advocates for the African American community in Portland, will rely on its success with their Project HAVEN permanent supportive housing program and will integrate **trauma-informed, culturally specific, and client-centered input into the building design, financing and programming.**

Construction is expected to begin in summer 2021 with housing ready for new residents in summer 2022. ■

Finding a Future at Project HAVEN

The vision for North Baldwin is inspired in part by Urban League’s successful Project HAVEN, founded in 2016. Urban League’s model provides focused and intensive services to address homelessness in the Black community, **a population over-represented in the homeless community yet underserved.**

“For many Black and African American people, their story of homelessness is rooted in a history of discrimination, displacement and racial trauma,” explained Linda King, housing programs manager, Urban League. “Our services are unique in that staff are able to relate to that lived experience. We empower our clients to see themselves as more than just their experience and know that they have a voice and that the community cares about them.”

HAVEN offers 50 deeply affordable apartments to individuals and couples, largely representing communities of color. A team of housing specialists and case managers **help each resident maintain their housing stability by supporting their individual needs**, whether it is teaching life skills,

“We empower our clients to see themselves as more than just their experience and know that they have a voice and that the community cares about them.”

– LINDA KING
Housing Programs Manager, Urban League

balancing a budget, or attending a medical appointment.

According to Max Smith, HAVEN’s project supervisor, there’s no one-size-fits all solution for their residents. **“We personalize our services to every individual,”** he said. “People come to our program with their own ideas and goals, and that may not be how things work out. We’re here to help them adapt to whatever is going on and give them the support they need in that moment.” ■

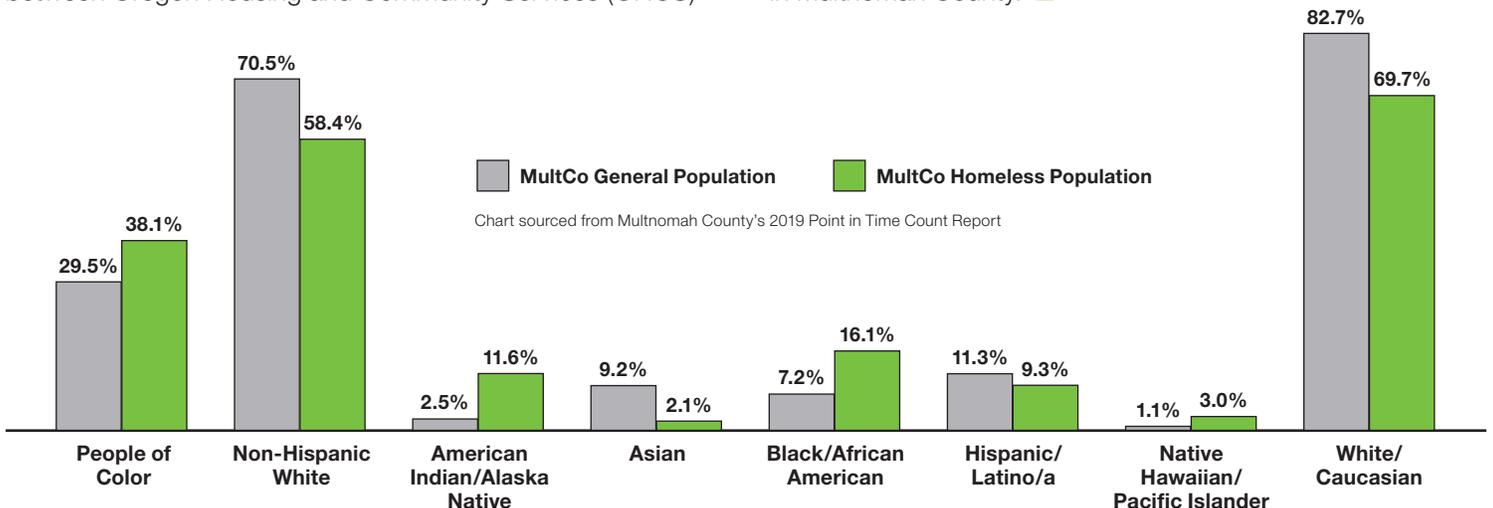
Governor’s Plan Funds Solutions

In 2018, Governor Kate Brown announced a four-part strategy to address homelessness and to make housing more affordable in Oregon. Funding for the North Baldwin redevelopment comes in part from the Governor’s plan to invest in permanent supportive housing for the chronically homeless.

The Permanent Supportive Housing Initiative is a joint effort between Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS)

and the Oregon Health Authority, to combine funding for projects that blend affordable housing with supportive services **to help individuals experiencing homelessness maintain housing and lead more stable lives.**

The chart below illustrates the extreme disparities facing people of color who experience homelessness in Multnomah County. ■



RESIDENT PROFILE

Warren Stubblefield is a thankful man, happy to have a warm and safe home, and to be surrounded by a caring and compassionate community.

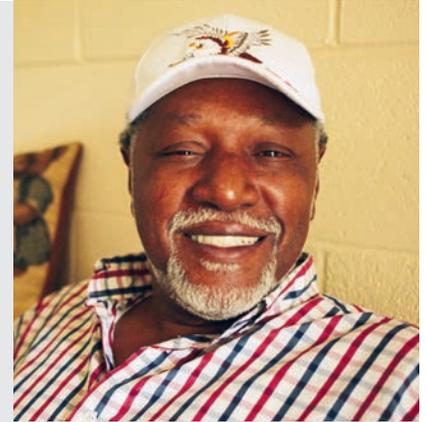
His story of homelessness has had a positive outcome, and he knows he is one of the lucky ones. Now 59, he spent 17 years living on the streets and struggling with drug addiction. With the help of Central City Concern's Imani Center, Warren kicked addiction and bad influences out of his life more than five years ago. Despite his hard work, he remained homeless. He made the rounds of agencies looking for housing and was turned away. Finally, he connected with Urban League and found a home with Project HAVEN. For the past 18 months, he has lived in a one-bedroom apartment in southeast Portland.

"When you're homeless, you feel worthless," said Stubblefield. "Once I was able to get into housing, HAVEN motivated me to believe my life could change. **To have people who care about you and want to see you feel successful makes a big difference.**"

"This is really a unique program because they support me in whatever way I need them to," he continued. **"They're not pushy, they just support, support, support."**

"They also understand what it means to be a black man and how difficult it has been for me. Even when I was trying to get an apartment, I kept getting denied over and over again and nearly gave up. They understand me and my identity. But, the big picture at HAVEN is really about **treating us as human beings, not about our color or ethnic group, but about caring and compassion.** That concern makes you want to be a better person. They made me feel like somebody."

"I hope other people can get this kind of help because it really saves lives," he said. "It saved my life." ■



Finding Hope through Design

Design of the new North Baldwin community will be integral to resident success.

"Meeting resident needs is our overarching priority," said Leslie Crehan, senior project manager, Home Forward. "People who transition from homelessness need to feel safe and secure, and to have access to amenities that make their life easier. **Their new housing must offer them the privacy they can't get on the street and encourage the hope they have for their future.**"

SERA Architects have been hired as the project architect and Bremik Construction as general contractor. Both have extensive experience with low-income housing and understand how design can inspire vibrant communities.

Sixty generously sized studio units will accommodate individuals and couples. **"Our goal is to make these studios feel nice and roomy,"** Crehan said. "Generous windows will bring natural daylight and views to the units. **Community-**

building is also important, so we'll have common rooms, a community kitchen facility, outdoor areas and other amenities that bring residents together," she continued.

Mindful of its focus on serving people of color who have experienced homelessness, the design team will interview residents currently living in Urban League properties and peer support specialists currently working at Urban League. Knowledge and insight gathered through these sessions will ensure **the design is culturally specific to the needs of future residents.** Focus groups may also include both Urban League and Home Forward staff, service providers, local stakeholders and neighbors.

Ideally located on busy North Interstate Boulevard and steps from North Lombard Street, the North Baldwin site is also adjacent to an established, quiet neighborhood. With limited parking required, a small parking lot will separate the property from the nearest neighbors. Landscaping will soften outdoor spaces and serve as a buffer to provide additional privacy. ■

The North Baldwin Community Update is published by Home Forward. Home Forward (formerly the Housing Authority of Portland) is dedicated to providing safe, decent and affordable housing for individuals and families who are challenged by income, disability or special need.

For more information about North Baldwin, contact Home Forward community relations at 503-802-8508 or visit www.homeforward.org.



Resident Relocation

The half-acre North Baldwin property is currently home to a small cluster of eight market-rate apartments. Households living at the property will have to relocate to make way for redevelopment. **The good news is that residents of these units will receive relocation guidance and resources from Home Forward to find a new place to live.**

Home Forward's relocation team will help household members gather a wish list of desired amenities, and curate a selection of prospective new apartment properties. Residents will also receive financial assistance to search, secure and move to their new housing. ■

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Due to the COVID-19 restrictions on group gatherings, a virtual neighborhood meeting, hosted by the Kenton Neighborhood Association, will be held on June 10. The section of the Kenton meeting advertised below will focus on our proposed Baldwin Project for interested friends and neighbors:

**Wednesday, June 10, 2020
from 7-8 p.m.**

- **Join the meeting** from your computer, tablet or smartphone. <https://www.gotomeet.me/SusanRonning/kna-board-meeting>
- **You can also dial in using your phone.**
United States: +1 (224) 501-3412
Access Code: 823-775-693
One-touch-dial: 1-224-501-3412,,,823-775-693
- **New to GoToMeeting?** Get the app now and be ready when your first meeting starts: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/install/823775693>

If you have questions or if you are unable to participate in this meeting, please send contact information to Leslie Crehan (leslie.crehan@homeforward.org). We'll be glad to provide you with meeting notes and answer your questions individually. Per Portland Zoning Code Section 33.705, we will be also posting an informational sign on the property with details about the meeting. ■