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## GREEN 4.0 BUILDING ANNUAL

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A FRONT AND CENTER  
REQUIREMENT THAT THEIR  
DESIGN BE SUSTAINABLE



## Housing for **Working Families**

Utilizing its skill set and building on its impressive real estate portfolio

Since its founding in 1984, Innovative Housing Inc. (IHI) has developed eleven multifamily housing sites and three mixed-income condominium projects in the Portland, Oregon area.

Through its work, IHI's team of professionals continues to work toward its mission of efficiently and economically developing, preserving and operating high-quality, affordable housing for low- and moderate-income households. It is also known for offering a variety of services to help residents maintain housing stability, improve their quality of life and access opportunities to break the cycle of poverty.

"We were founded to identify gaps in the housing continuum and then fill those needs," says Sarah Stevenson, Executive Director of IHI.

IHI has a diverse portfolio of more than 1,400 affordable apartments for individuals and families in Oregon and Washington, which consist of workforce housing in downtown Portland, large family apartments, studios for people with physical and mental disabilities and housing for individuals and families transitioning out of homelessness. The organization conscientiously manages its real estate to make sure that each rental property is well-maintained, financially sustainable and makes a positive contribution to its overall neighborhood.

The organization, which began developing multifamily apartments in 1991, develops projects and meets the housing needs of the community in a number of ways, including building new housing, acquiring and renovating older apartment buildings and preserving existing housing at risk

**Innovative  
Housing Inc.**

**Executive Director**  
Sarah Stevenson

**Location**  
Portland, Oregon



of becoming unaffordable. From 1998 to 2000, IHI developed three condominium projects that provided low- and moderate-income residents with the opportunity for first-time homeownership, and every project IHI has developed since 2006 includes permanent supportive housing for people moving out of homelessness.

"We approach each property individually," Stevenson says. "We create a program that helps residents maintain their housing and access opportunities to improve their lives."

#### **MORE THAN AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

Innovative Housing's services go beyond providing a safe and affordable place to live. Realizing residents may face challenges and struggles in their daily lives in addition to finding a place to live; IHI offers resident services to help people maintain their housing and lifestyles.

The IHI staff also tailors programs to meet the needs of each property. Buildings that house low-income adults focus on securing Social Security benefits and obtaining employment, while family-concentrated properties offer a variety of adult and youth services.

"One of our biggest goals, especially with the family program, is to do everything we can to help students

achieve academically," Stevenson says. "We want to help kids break the cycle of poverty through better education and increased opportunities."

Innovative Housing also understands that finances and loans cause trouble for many residents, which is why in 2009 it created the "Innovative Changes" program in order to offer an alternative to predatory lenders. It is now a standalone nonprofit that was recently certified by the U. S. Treasury as a Community Development Financial Institution.

Innovative Changes offers financial education and one-on-one financial consultation to help people achieve financial stability, which is a major issue for many of our residents," Stevenson says.

Innovative Changes makes small-dollar consumer loans, provides financial coaching and workshops and offers credit building opportunities. In addition, as a confirmation of its alternative lending efforts, it was selected as the Credit Builder Alliance's "2010 Innovator of the Year."

#### **HISTORIC RENOVATIONS**

Utilizing its skill set and building on its impressive real estate portfolio, IHI completed its historic renovation of the Clifford Apartments in southeast Portland in December 2010. The renovations include a mix of single-room occupancy

units, studio apartments and four ground floor commercial spaces.

According to Stevenson, challenges and setbacks are expected when dealing with any aging property, but IHI uses an experienced professional team to overcome any problems.

"When you have an old building, you never know what you're going to find in the walls," she says. "We had a project team that had experience dealing with those challenges quickly and efficiently."

IHI also made improvements to the residential units, implemented new energy efficiency measures and created new community space and offices for supportive services. Additional improvements included new windows, a reconstructed and seismically reinforced roof, tuck-pointed exterior brick and a new entrance canopy and lighting. The renovations returned the building to its original configuration of 88 units, and the property reopened just before its 100<sup>th</sup> birthday in January 2011.

IHI is also working on a new development that will bring 49 affordable rental units to the Eliot Neighborhood in northeast Portland. The mixed-use property will include commercial space on the ground level with four stories of apartments above. "It is really exciting for us because we don't do a lot of new construction, and this is an opportunity to take our green building commitment to the next level," Stevenson says.

With the project, IHI will seek a LEED certification and integrate a number of green elements into the design and construction to minimize the building's impact on the environment, reduce utility costs for residents and make it a healthier place to live. Stevenson also says the building will feature a roof deck, on-site community garden and compost collection. IHI hopes the apartments will attract tenants who are not only interested in sustainability, but also those who can also share and pass along their interest and knowledge in the environment. **DDC**

**NOVA**

Nova congratulates Innovative Housing on their recent successes in the development of the Clifford and The Eliot-Mlk Projects downtown. We are very proud to have been of service to IHI in these efforts. Developments such as these not only serve the area's low-income and special needs populations, but provide housing that beautifully blends into their respective neighborhoods, proving both a sense of pride and enhanced community awareness to residents and neighbors alike.

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We are proud to partner with **Innovative Housing, Inc.** to provide Oregonians with quality, affordable housing.

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