



## 2011-13 STRATEGIC PLAN PORTLAND HOUSING BUREAU

# imagine a Portland that everyone can call home



**NICK FISH**  
Housing Commissioner  
City of Portland

The Portland Housing Bureau is charged with making sure all residents have safe, stable homes. We are guided in our work by three core goals: ending homelessness, increasing the availability of rental housing, and promoting stable homeownership. We're focused on eliminating racial and cultural barriers to housing.

This is a roadmap of our goals, strategies and investment priorities for the next three years. It highlights where we're headed and how we'll get there. It was developed with thoughtful input from a variety of people with a stake in the outcome, including community members, housing providers and city leaders.



**MARGARET VAN VLIET**  
Director  
Portland Housing Bureau

Portland is considered one of the 10 most sustainable cities in the world. But can any city truly be sustainable if residents cannot meet their needs for one of the most basic necessities of life?

We can do better.

Let's imagine a place where all Portlanders can find a safe, decent and affordable home to rent or own in a livable neighborhood. Portland should be a place where everyone has equal access to the things that define a great city, like family-wage jobs, schools, health care, libraries, parks, recreation, nature, public transportation – even a grocery store.

This is more than our vision. It's our obligation. It requires us to improve and broaden our efforts in an era of tightening budgets. We certainly face hard choices about how we should invest money, time and energy. But through strong leadership and open relationships, we believe we can get to that place we imagine. This Strategic Plan guides us there.

In the end, this is only one piece of our larger effort to build a genuinely sustainable, equitable Portland. But it's an important part of creating a city where everyone wins – families, workers, business owners, people of all income levels, ages, races, and neighborhoods, and no one loses the opportunity to live in the community they choose. We are striving for a city that is prosperous, healthy and rich in opportunity for all; a place everyone can call home.

That's a vision we can all share.

# mission

Solve the unmet housing needs of the people of Portland.

## vision

All Portlanders can find affordable homes in healthy neighborhoods with strong schools, good parks and recreation, healthy natural areas, safe streets and quality food stores.

All Portlanders have equitable access to housing and to the opportunities that safe, stable housing can deliver, free from discrimination.

### ***We do this by:***

- Building and preserving affordable housing.
- Supporting programs that help low-income Portlanders find, rent, buy, retain and repair their homes.
- Bringing together our partners and leading them as we assess the city's housing needs, choose the best solutions to efficiently meet them and identify how to pay for them.
- Reaching out to racially and culturally diverse groups to ensure their participation in the economic opportunities our housing investments create.

## values

**Equity:** We are committed to social justice in the delivery of housing to all residents of Portland's diverse communities. We embrace diversity in our workforce and culture.

**Stewardship:** We invest, leverage and prioritize spending in ways that provide the highest public value and have the greatest influence on critical housing needs.

**Transparency:** We build long-term trust by operating with integrity, inviting broad public involvement, and following processes that are clear, open and without bias.

**Innovation:** We believe new thinking, partners and ideas will help us build an effective organization and resolve long-standing challenges.

## investment priorities

- {1} Provide more rental housing for the most vulnerable people.
- {2} Move people quickly from homelessness to permanent housing while preventing families from losing their homes.
- {3} Help Portlanders from communities of color buy a home or keep the home they already own.
- {4} Provide a safety net that includes shelters and other short-term help for low-income Portlanders who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.



# housing

*Goal: Meet Portland's need for quality, affordable homes for its residents.*

Too many Portlanders cannot find an affordable home for their family. They cannot afford to rent or buy a home near their work, school or transit. Others live in substandard housing and pay more than they can afford for housing, putting them at risk of eviction or foreclosure while depriving them of the basic necessities. Thousands of Portlanders sleep on the streets or in crowded shelters.

*Produce and preserve housing to meet the needs today's market cannot.*

- Figure out how much housing Portland will need, who needs it and where it can be built.
- Invest in deeply affordable rental housing designed to reduce Portland's needs over time.
- Preserve and renovate existing affordable housing.



*Bud Clark Commons*

*Move people quickly from homelessness into housing in a way that lasts.*

- Update our Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness.
- Shift resources to programs proven to quickly, effectively and permanently end homelessness.
- Support effective, long-term solutions such as permanent housing placement.
- Integrate housing programs with jobs, mental health, addiction and corrections services.
- Work with Multnomah County to maintain a safety net for emergency needs while prioritizing lasting solutions to end homelessness.



*The Admiral*

***Increase the ability of low-income, minority households to access homeownership opportunities.***

- Support programs that move people of color into homeownership.
- Set clear strategies and targets for minority homeownership.
- Increase awareness and coordination of available homeownership assistance programs in the community with a focus on households of color.
- Utilize and strengthen the existing capacity of nonprofit partners to provide effective homeownership assistance to households of color.
- Support financially sustainable programs that balance the level of subsidy provided with the number of households served.

***Keep families in their homes by preventing avoidable, involuntary evictions and foreclosures.***

- Continue to provide short-term rent assistance where proven effective.
- Continue to work with the State to bring foreclosure prevention funding to Portland.
- Use neighborhood revitalization and redevelopment planning to help minority and low-income people stay in their neighborhoods.
- Raise community awareness of existing programs to prevent eviction and foreclosure.

***Maintain the health, safety and viability of the existing housing stock.***

- Renew and pursue grants that promote healthy homes.
- Champion improved housing code enforcement .
- Support programs that improve the quality, health and energy efficiency of existing housing and that relocate low-income people out of unsafe or unhealthy housing.
- Focus limited funding for healthy housing in ways that that reduce health disparities.

## *Goal: Ensure equitable access to housing*

Communities of color are underrepresented in employment, education, homeownership and housing stability. Oregon's legacy of housing discrimination casts a long shadow, and too many Portlanders are still denied housing, mortgages and other basic opportunities because of discrimination.

Portland is still a city in which success at securing a construction contract, buying a home or living in a safe neighborhood depends too much on one's race and background. We are striving for a more equitable city, free from discriminatory barriers, where families can choose to live in safe neighborhoods, with good schools, parks, grocery stores and transit access regardless of their race or income.

### *Remove discriminatory barriers confronting Portlanders trying to access housing.*

- Challenge discriminatory practices that serve as barriers to fair housing.
- Strengthen existing and new programs that will expand our efforts to overcome housing discrimination and bring violators to justice.
- Work with local partners to educate renters on programs that can help reduce discrimination.

### *Ensure equity for underrepresented populations in city-supported housing programs.*

- Set clear, measurable equity goals for all city-supported programs.
- Incorporate Portland Housing Bureau equity goals into all funding applications and contracts.
- Monitor and report on whether we are hitting our goals.
- Use proven strategies to increase the use of city-supported housing services by communities of color.



*Ruth Benson, Contract Specialist, Business Operations  
Letimya Clayton, Executive Assistant, Director's Office*



Photo credit: Proud Ground

***Increase participation by minority-owned and economically disadvantaged firms in Housing Bureau's programs and construction projects.***

- Consistently engage construction industry professionals to understand barriers and work to remove them.
- Work with communities of color to set clear goals and implement strategies to increase participation in construction and professional service contracting.
- Report results annually.
- Make the proposal process fair and available to competitive minority-owned and economically disadvantaged firms.
- Look beyond state certification to better assess actual participation by minority-owned firms, whenever possible.
- Support other local efforts intended to build capacity of minority, women and emerging small business firms

***Use the Housing Bureau's influence, investments and partnerships to create fair housing close to quality jobs, schools, transportation and other elements of sustainable communities.***

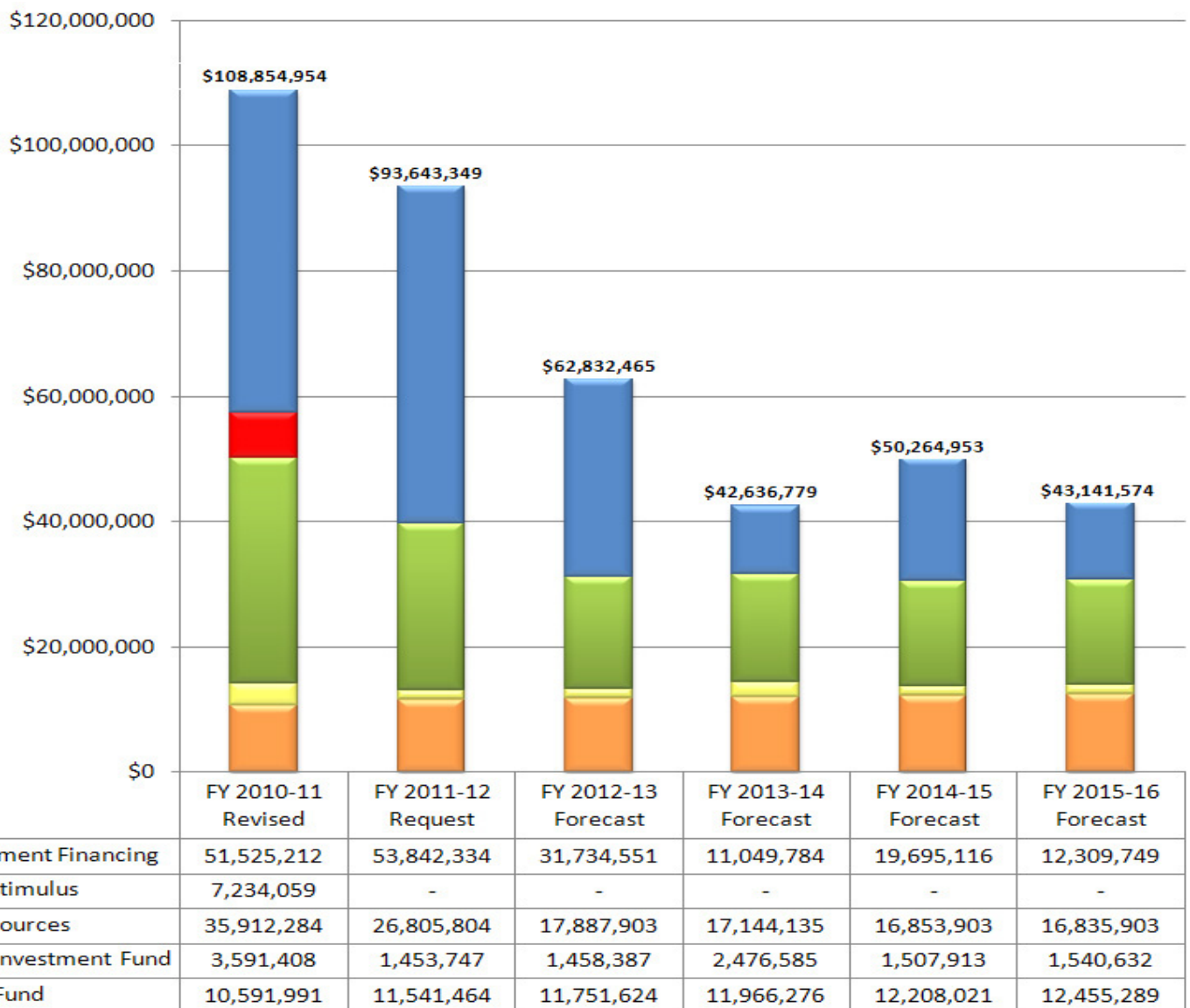
- Strengthen our connections to education, economic development, transportation, health, recreation, and jobs.
- Explore collaboration on a demonstration project mirroring federal Sustainable Communities and Choice Neighborhoods grant.
- Continue participation at regional long-term planning efforts aimed at improving equity and livability.



# resource development

*Goal: Develop, leverage and allocate housing funds to meet needs, sustain our assets and strengthen the housing industry*

The Portland Housing Bureau faces potential revenue reductions that could affect funding and staffing levels. Tax Increment Financing (TIF), the largest source of direct funding, is projected to decline by more than half over the next few years. That means money for services and operations is threatened. This reality highlights the need to shift our reliance on discretionary general funds, to stable, ongoing income sources.





*Develop new financial resources to meet the most critical unmet housing needs.*

- Build and leverage relationships with local and regional investors, foundations, coalitions, financial institutions and partners to develop new ways to pay for housing.
- Adopt a long-range plan to create sustainable funding to meet local housing needs.
- Increase public understanding of the city's housing needs and the benefits new revenue will bring.
- Track and pursue grant opportunities to advance the Housing Bureau's mission and goals.
- Consider a fee structure for certain Housing Bureau services.

*Wisely spend our money in a way that produces the best long-term results while ensuring equitable access to housing services.*

- Base decisions about cost-effectiveness on long-term research.
- Give top priority to programs that have the most lasting effect on the most critical housing needs.
- Prioritize and pay for programs that have proven to better people's station in life, moving them from homelessness through renting to homeownership.
- Increase leveraging of limited public funds and aligning of efforts.

*Manage existing housing stock and landlord partnerships to maintain long-term value for the community.*

- Develop a long-range management plan in collaboration with the housing industry to assess our current stock of affordable rental housing.
- Invest to sustain cost effective properties and phase out those that underperform.
- Work with our partners to improve long-range performance of our investments.



# organization

*Goal: Build a strong, dynamic Housing Bureau that provides the highest level of leadership and service to our customers, stakeholders, employees and the community*

As a new bureau, we are refining our ability to effectively deliver on our mission, vision and values. Integrating the operations, staff, cultures and strategies of two agencies is a challenge. But it's also a rare opportunity to streamline our business practices, enhance customer service, collect and maintain data to measure our progress, improve external and internal communications, and promote a strong organizational culture that builds community respect and rewards employees.

*Develop an organizational culture that values employees, promotes innovation and respects diversity.*

*Set and meet the highest standards for customer service and regulatory compliance.*

*Provide the community with clear, consistent, reliable data on Portland's housing needs and trends, and on the performance of our programs and projects.*

*Clearly communicate to the public the value of the Portland Housing Bureau, our programs and partners, and the community needs we address.*

*Ensure that a wide range of perspectives inform decision-making and policy-setting.*



Antoinette Pietka, Manager, Business Analysis, Research and IT  
Thao-Oanh Doan, Contract Specialist, Business Operations



Javier Mena, Program Manager, Asset Management & Loan Servicing  
Dory Van Bockel, Specialist, Neighborhood Access & Retention

# our partners

211info  
African American Alliance for Homeownership  
Albina Community Bank  
American Red Cross  
Asian Pacific Islander Community Improvement Association  
Bank of America  
Bank of the West  
Bridge Meadows  
Blanchet House  
Cascade AIDS Project  
Cascadia Behavioral Healthcare  
Catholic Charities  
Central City Concern  
City of Portland  
Clackamas County Bank  
Clark County Public Health  
Community Alliance of Tenants  
Community Energy Project  
Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon  
Enterprise Social Investment Corp.  
Fair Housing Council of Oregon  
First Presbyterian Church  
Guardian Management  
City of Gresham  
Habitat for Humanity Portland Metro East  
Hacienda CDC  
Home Forward  
Housing Development Center  
Human Solutions  
Impact NW  
Immigrant and Refugee Community of Oregon  
Innovative Housing Inc.  
Josiah Hill, III Clinic  
JOIN  
JPMorgan Chase  
Key Bank  
Legal Aid Services of Oregon  
MacDonald Center  
Metro  
Metro Multifamily Housing  
Multnomah County  
National Equity Fund  
NAYA Family Center  
Network for Oregon Affordable Housing  
New Avenues for Youth  
Northwest Housing Alternatives  
Northwest Pilot Project  
Orange Splot  
Oregon Community Warehouse  
Oregon Housing and Community Services  
Oregon Opportunity Network  
Outside In  
PNC Bank  
Portland Community Reinvestment Initiatives  
Piedmont Community Developers  
Portland Business Alliance  
Portland Development Commission  
Portland Housing Center  
Proud Ground  
REACH CDC  
Rebuilding Together  
Rental Housing Association of Greater Portland  
ROSE CDC  
Sabin CDC  
Salvation Army  
Street Roots  
Transitions Projects Inc.  
Turtle Island Development  
U.S. Dept of Housing and Urban Development  
Upshur Renewal  
US Bank  
Unlimited Choices  
Wells Fargo

*On the cover: A sampling of projects funded by the Portland Housing Bureau.*

*Clockwise: Bud Clark Commons, managed by Home Forward; an affordable rental home rebuilt and managed by Portland Community Reinvestment Initiatives; and artist rendering of REACH CDC's South Waterfront veterans housing project, slated for completion in fall 2012.*

# thank you

Creation of the first Strategic Plan for the Portland Housing Bureau wouldn't be possible without the hard work of community volunteers, stakeholders, staff and partners. We appreciate your continued investment of time and talent.

## Strategic Planning Focus Groups

Todd Adkins	Jean DeMaster	Martha McLennan
Elisa Aguilera	Eileen Devine	Ed McNamara
Susan Anderson	Susan Emmons	Steve Messinetti
EV Armitage	Rey España	John Mohlis
Kathy Armstrong	Topaz Faulkner	Ibrahim Mubarek
Israel Bayer	Maxine Fitzpatrick	Earline Penson
Jesse Beason	Moloy Good	Michelle Puggarana
Monica Beemer	Heather Gramp	Steve Rudman
Emily Berndt	Michelle Haynes	Amanda Saul
Liora Berry	Sheila Holden	Nick Sauvie
Ed Blackburn	Sara Hussein	Shannon Singleton
Sheila Black-Craig	Roy Jay	Ian Slingerland
Robin Boyce	Eric Johansen	Barbara Smith
Cathey Briggs	Marc Jolin	Eli Spevak
Heather Brown	Tony Jones	Meganne Steele
Sherry Burbach	Brenda Jose	Sarah Stevenson
Carlos Calderon	Lynn Knox	Brian Stewart
Bonnie Calnek	H.Q. La	Damin Tarlow
Claudio Campuzano	Beckie Lee	Trish Tillman
Julie Cody	Mary Li	Maureen Welsh
Jennifer Cooperman	Ben Loftis	Sara Westbrook
Rick Crager	Leslie Lum	Daryl Winand
Deona DeLong	Jen Matheson	

## Portland Housing Advisory Commission

Jesse Beason	Carter MacNichol
Andrew Colas	Traci Manning
Rey Espana	Carmen Rubio
Deborah Imse	Tobias Washington
Marc Jolin	Mark White
Christine Lau	Brian Wilson

## Portland Housing Bureau Leadership

Nick Fish	Commissioner
Margaret Van Vliet	Director
Jacob Fox	Assistant Housing Director
Alissa Mahar	Chief Financial Officer



Portland  
Housing  
Bureau

