



**ANNUAL MEETING  
OF THE  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**May 16, 2016 at 8:30 a.m.**

King County Housing Authority  
Snoqualmie Conference Room  
700 Andover Park W  
Tukwila, WA 98188

**A G E N D A**

- I. Call to Order**
- II. Roll Call**
- III. Public Comment**
- IV. Approval of Minutes**
  - Board Meeting Minutes – April 18, 2016 **1**
- V. Approval of Agenda**
- VI. Consent Agenda**
  - A. Voucher Certification Reports for March 2016 **2**
- VII. Resolutions for Discussion & Possible Action**
  - None.
- VIII. Briefings & Reports**
  - None.
- IX. Executive Director's Report**
- X. KCHA in the News** **3**
- XI. Commissioner Comments**

**XII. Adjournment**

Members of the public who are disabled and require special accommodations or assistance at the meeting are requested to notify the Board Coordinator, Jessica Olives, in writing at 600 Andover Park West, Seattle, WA 98188 or by calling 206-574-1194 prior to the meeting date.

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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE  
KING COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY**

**Monday, April 18, 2016**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the King County Housing Authority was held on Monday, April 18, 2016, at the King County Housing Authority Offices, 700 Andover Park West, Tukwila, WA. There being a quorum, the meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Michael Brown at 8:36 a.m.

**II. ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Commissioner Michael Brown (Vice-Chair), Commissioner TerryLynn Stewart, and Commissioner Susan Palmer

**Excused:** Commissioner Doug Barnes (Chair), and Commissioner John Welch

**Staff:** Stephen Norman (Secretary), Bill Cook, Connie Davis, Teri Ekenman, John Eliason, Tonya Harlan, Sean Heron, Megan Hyla, Gary Leaf, Jessica Olives, Nikki Parrott, Jennifer Ramirez-Robson, Rhonda Rosenberg, Craig Violante, Tim Walter, and Dan Watson

**III. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Maria Hudson, Resident, provided public comment via telephone. Ms. Hudson addressed concerns and issues she experienced in the coordination with KCHA to replace flooring in her unit. Ms. Hudson also mentioned that she had submitted a request for reasonable accommodation to purchase a home using her Housing Choice Voucher.

**IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

On motion by Commissioner Palmer, seconded by Commissioner Stewart; the Board approved the minutes from the Board of Commissioners' meeting of March 21, 2016.

**V. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Vice-Chair Michael Brown announced that item IX. Study Session on Seola Gardens & Greenbridge Market Rate Land Development will be deferred to the June 2016 Commissioners' meeting.

On motion by Commissioner Palmer, seconded by Commissioner Stewart, the Board unanimously approved the April 18, 2016 Board of Commissioners' meeting agenda.

## VI. CONSENT AGENDA

### A. Voucher Certification Report for February 2016 (General and Bond Properties)

#### **February 2016**

##### **GENERAL PROPERTIES**

Bank Wires / ACH Withdrawals	4,238,823.83
<i>Subtotal</i>	<b><i>4,238,823.83</i></b>
Accounts Payable Vouchers	
Key Bank Checks #301202-#301720	3,816,802.93
Tenant Accounting Checks #100043- #10067	7,309.66
Commerce Bank Direct Payment	42,739.21
<i>Subtotal</i>	<b><i>3,866,851.80</i></b>
Payroll Vouchers	
Checks - #90014 – #90057	37,889.74
Direct Deposit	1,243,242.14
<i>Subtotal</i>	<b><i>1,281,141.88</i></b>
Section 8 Program Vouchers	
Checks - #612902-#613217	251,315.97
ACH - #339088-#342113	10,113,676.69
<i>Subtotal</i>	<b><i>10,364,992.66</i></b>
Purchase Card / ACH Withdrawal	169,564.05
<i>Subtotal</i>	<b><i>169,564.05</i></b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b><i>19,921,374.22</i></b>

##### **BOND PROPERTIES**

Bond Properties Total (30 different properties)	<b><i>2,258,792.11</i></b>
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### B. Administrative Correction to Resolution No. 5533 – Approval to renumber Resolution No. 5533, authorizing the transfer of the Harrison House project from Harrison House Apartments, LLC (the Company) to the Housing Authority, including, but not limited to, the acquisition of the investor member interest in the Company's obligations, subsequent dissolution of the Company and all related matters; previously adopted by the Board, as Resolution No. 5534

### C. Resolution No. 5535: Intergovernmental Cooperative Purchasing Agreement with the Renton Housing Authority

On motion by Commissioner Palmer seconded by Commissioner Stewart, the Board approved the consent agenda.

## **VII. RESOLUTIONS FOR DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION**

- D. Resolution No. 5536: Authorizing the disposition and sale to HomeSight of five lots adjacent to the Greenbridge Community, as well as the provision of up to \$1.3 million in construction financing, a \$350,000 note from HomeSight and deferred homebuyer loans in a cumulative amount not to exceed \$20,000, to support low-income homeownership as part of the Greenbridge development

John Eliason, HOPE VI Development Director, presented Resolution No. 5536 and mentioned that approval would authorize KCHA to sell 5 lots to HomeSight for \$70,000 per lot and will defer up to \$10,000 per lot for up to two homes as deferred loans. Mr. Eliason discussed risks associated with the sale, performance and construction, and explained plans for three remaining lots.

On motion by Commissioner Stewart seconded by Commissioner Palmer, the Board unanimously approved Resolution No. 5536.

## **VIII. BRIEFINGS & REPORT**

- A. Fourth Quarter CY 2015 Financial Report  
Craig Violante, Director of Finance, briefed the Board on the Financial Statements for the Fourth Quarter in Calendar Year 2015.
- B. First Quarter CY 2016 Procurement Report  
Connie Davis, Deputy Executive Director, reported on the procurement activities for the First Quarter in Calendar Year 2016 and discussed the most notable activity. Ms. Davis reminded the Board that the report represents the activity involved in the award of contracts over the amount of \$100,000 and change orders that cumulatively exceed 10% of the original contract amount.
- C. Resubmission of Renton's Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant Application  
Dan Watson, Deputy Director, reminded the Board that KCHA partnered with the City of Renton and the Renton Housing Authority last year on a Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant Application. Mr. Watson mentioned that although the joint application was a finalist, it did not score high enough to be funded.

Mr. Watson announced that in March, HUD issued another notice of funding availability for additional grants to be awarded nationally. Mr. Watson stated that Renton would like to resubmit the application and that KCHA has tentatively agreed to partner with the City of Renton and the Renton Housing Authority in the submission of a second joint application. Mr. Watson stated

that a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will be developed with the City of Renton and the Housing Authority to clearly define roles of each agency to insure that costs are reimbursed in full to KCHA. The MOU and second joint application will be presented to KCHA's Board of Commissioners' for consideration at the June 2016 meeting.

**D. Legislative Briefing**

Stephen Norman, mentioned that Commissioners' Stewart and Barnes will be joining staff on a trip to the Washington DC to meet with legislators. Mr. Norman stated that the intent is to inform State representatives on the status of the Region's housing needs, the housing market, and impacts on low-income and disabled households. Mr. Norman introduced Teri Ekenman, Senior Housing Program Manager, who will join the group in Washington to assist in providing valuable information and serve as voice for front line staff.

Mr. Norman also mentioned that more background information will be provided to the Commissioners.

Mr. Norman provided an update and background information on Congress and current Budget negotiations. Mr. Norman explained the financial impact on KCHA of the proposed Appropriations Bill. Mr. Norman presented a video clip from the Transportation-HUD Senate hearing subcommittee (THUD) with Senator Murray, where she addresses increased homelessness in Washington State and requested more information on HUD's action plan to continue to assist Housing Authorities.

**IX. STUDY SESSIONS**

- A. Seola Gardens & Greenbridge Market Rate Land Development (continued)  
*This item was not discussed and deferred to June 2016.*

**XI. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Stephen Norman, Executive Director, recognized John Eliason and his team (HOPE VI and Development) for their efforts in the significant land sale of 2.4 acres at Greenbridge. Mr. Eliason stated that Property 7 at Greenbridge has sold for the full price.

Mr. Norman mentioned that the Village at Overlake Station property reverted back to the KCHA portfolio. Tim Walter explained the history of that Transit Oriented Development property.

Mr. Norman gave an update on the MTW contract negotiations.

Upon request, Sean Heron, Chief of Staff provided an update on the software conversion project and implementation progress of the program, known as Tenmast.

Kristin Winkel, Director of Leased Housing Programs, provided an update on the implementation of the new Payment Standards and mentioned that it has been well received and well understood by staff and residents.

Connie Davis, Deputy Director, gave a brief update on the Energy Performance Contract and the partnership with Johnson Controls.

## **XII. KCHA IN THE NEWS**

None.

## **XIII. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

Commissioner Stewart asked staff to look into the possibility of holding the Board Meeting scheduled for June 2016 in Renton.

Commissioner Stewart mentioned that KCHA received an award from ARCH and commended staff for their efforts.

## **XIV. ADJOURNMENT**

On motion by Commissioner Stewart, seconded by Commissioner Palmer, the Board adjourned the meeting at 10:38 a.m.

**THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE  
COUNTY OF KING, WASHINGTON**

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**DOUGLAS J. BARNES**, Chair  
Board of Commissioners

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**STEPHEN J. NORMAN**  
Secretary



# T A B N U M B E R



**To:** Board of Commissioners


**From:** Linda Riley, Controller

**Date:** April 26, 2016

**Re:** **VOUCHER CERTIFICATION FOR MARCH 2016**

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I, Linda Riley, do hereby certify under penalty of perjury that the materials have been furnished, the services rendered or the labor performed as described herein, and that the claims represented by the vouchers listed below were just obligations of the Housing Authority of the County of King, and that I am authorized to authenticate and certify said claims.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Linda Riley  
Controller  
April 26, 2016


Bank Wires / ACH Withdrawals	2,210,325.78
<i>Subtotal</i>	<u>2,210,325.78</u>
Accounts Payable Vouchers	
Key Bank Checks - #301721-#302150	3,363,732.31
Tenant Accounting Checks - #10068-#10087	4,478.87
Commerce Bank Direct Payment	43,395.89
<i>Subtotal</i>	<u>3,411,607.07</u>
Payroll Vouchers	
Checks - #90058-#90084	35,227.42
Direct Deposit	1,273,593.65
<i>Subtotal</i>	<u>1,308,821.07</u>
Section 8 Program Vouchers	
Checks - #613218-#613537	221,067.97
ACH - #342114-#345210	10,057,660.55
<i>Subtotal</i>	<u>10,278,728.52</u>
Purchase Card / ACH Withdrawal	144,176.93
<i>Subtotal</i>	<u>144,176.93</u>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<u><b>17,353,659.37</b></u>

TO: THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, HOUSING AUTHORITY OF  
THE COUNTY OF KING, WASHINGTON

FROM: Tim Walter

SUBJECT: VOUCHER CERTIFICATION FOR MARCH 2016

I, Tim Walter, do hereby certify under penalty of perjury that the claims represented by the transactions below were just, due, and unpaid obligations against the Housing Authority, and that I, and my designees, are authorized to authenticate and certify said claims.

  
Tim Walter  
Senior Director of Acquisitions and Asset Management  
May 11, 2016

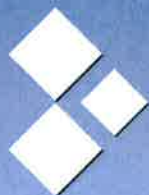
Property	Wired to Operating Account(s) for Obligations of Property			Notes:
Mar-16	Date	\$	Claim	
<b>Bellepark East</b>	3/3/2016	\$ 12,007.17	A/P & Payroll	
	3/10/2016	\$ 1,362.93	A/P	
	3/17/2016	\$ 14,434.28	A/P & Payroll	
	3/23/2016	\$ 27,930.80	Payroll	
	3/31/2016	\$ 12,603.81	A/P & Payroll	
<b>Colonial Gardens</b>	3/3/2016	\$ 19,639.21	A/P & Payroll	
	3/10/2016	\$ 15,813.42	A/P	
	3/17/2016	\$ 8,975.27	A/P & Payroll	
	3/23/2016	\$ 5,541.45	Payroll	
	3/31/2016	\$ 7,746.91	A/P & Payroll	
<b>Cottonwood</b>	3/3/2016	\$ 15,290.54	A/P & Payroll	
	3/10/2016	\$ 9,105.89	A/P	
	3/17/2016	\$ 9,781.48	A/P & Payroll	
	3/23/2016	\$ 12,813.21	Payroll	
	3/31/2016	\$ 11,968.99	A/P & Payroll	
<b>Cove East</b>	3/3/2016	\$ 22,723.52	A/P & Payroll	
	3/10/2016	\$ 4,246.75	A/P	
	3/17/2016	\$ 36,130.38	A/P & Payroll	
	3/23/2016	\$ 5,797.39	Payroll	
	3/31/2016	\$ 31,761.21	A/P & Payroll	
<b>Landmark</b>	3/3/2016	\$ 28,078.76	A/P & Payroll	
	3/10/2016	\$ 3,432.60	A/P	
	3/17/2016	\$ 15,941.85	A/P & Payroll	
	3/23/2016	\$ 46,508.59	Payroll	
	3/31/2016	\$ 14,204.55	A/P & Payroll	
<b>Timberwood</b>	3/3/2016	\$ 27,196.62	A/P & Payroll	
	3/10/2016	\$ 4,515.17	A/P	
	3/17/2016	\$ 25,614.19	A/P & Payroll	
	3/23/2016	\$ 8,108.49	Payroll	
	3/31/2016	\$ 93,263.64	A/P & Payroll	
<b>Woodland North</b>	3/3/2016	\$ 8,761.25	A/P & Payroll	
	3/10/2016	\$ 4,850.44	A/P	
	3/15/2016	\$ 101.67	Petty Cash	
	3/17/2016	\$ 13,260.54	A/P & Payroll	
	3/23/2016	\$ 5,294.78	Payroll	
<b>Woodside East</b>	3/3/2016	\$ 10,418.58	A/P & Payroll	
	3/3/2016	\$ 35,089.81	A/P & Payroll	
	3/10/2016	\$ 2,713.74	A/P	
	3/17/2016	\$ 20,570.42	A/P & Payroll	
	3/23/2016	\$ 15,066.39	Payroll	
<b>Alpine Ridge, Aspen Ridge, Auburn Square, Carriage House, Cascadian, Corinthian, Fairwood, Heritage Park, Laurewood, Meadows, Newporter, Parkwood, Somerset East, Somerset West, Walnut Park, Windsor Heights, Woodridge Park</b>	3/3/2016	\$ 50,234.76	Bank Fees	
	3/4/2016	\$ 20,383.82	Corinthian Relocation	
	3/10/2016	\$ 484,999.32	A/P & Payroll	
	3/10/2016	\$ 17,142.00	Corinthian TOD HAP	
	3/10/2016	\$ 23,155.00	Somerset W Debt Svc	
	3/10/2016	\$ 16,588.25	Somerset E Debt Svc	
	3/17/2016	\$ 517.16	A/P Correction	
	3/24/2016	\$ 510,325.48	A/P, Payroll, M/F, OCR, Debt Svc	
	3/24/2016	\$ 27,627.76	A/P	
	3/24/2016	\$ 22,402.42	LW & MEA A/P	
	3/24/2016	\$ 5,069.13	Meadows A/P	
<b>Laurewood Meadows</b>	3/31/2016	\$ 677.54	A/P	
	3/17/2016	\$ 3,289.53	A/P	
	3/31/2016	\$ 10,798.74	A/P	
<b>Gilman Square</b>	3/3/2016	\$ 2,402.50	Bank Fees	
	3/9/2016	\$ 43,345.44	A/P & Payroll	
	3/23/2016	\$ 13,339.35	A/P & Payroll	
<b>Meadowbrook</b>	3/3/2016	\$ 228.17	Bank Fees	
	3/9/2016	\$ 8,254.82	Payroll	
	3/10/2016	\$ 7,654.76	A/P	
	3/23/2016	\$ 38,488.74	A/P & Payroll	
<b>Villages at South Station</b>	3/3/2016	\$ 461.88	Bank Fees	
	3/9/2016	\$ 29,162.60	A/P & Payroll	
	3/23/2016	\$ 38,448.74	A/P & Payroll	
<b>Bellevue Manor</b>	3/3/2016	\$ 10,000.66	A/P	
	3/17/2016	\$ 14,058.00	To KCHA	
<b>Charter House</b>	3/3/2016	\$ 1,193.62	A/P	
	3/23/2016	\$ 20,541.00	To KCHA	
<b>Northwood Square</b>	3/3/2016	\$ 4,373.36	A/P	
	3/17/2016	\$ 6,304.00	To KCHA	
<b>Patricia Harris</b>	3/3/2016	\$ 12,009.87	A/P	
	3/17/2016	\$ 8,800.00	To KCHA	
<b>Vashon Terrace</b>	3/3/2016	\$ 5,526.78	A/P	
	3/17/2016	\$ 3,899.21	A/P	
<b>Rainier View I</b>	3/3/2016	\$ 12,076.91	A/P	
	3/23/2016	\$ 17,915.85	A/P	
	3/31/2016	\$ 1,113.53	A/P	
<b>Rainier View II</b>	3/3/2016	\$ 8,640.72	A/P	
	3/23/2016	\$ 11,823.41	A/P	
	3/31/2016	\$ 1,021.44	A/P	
<b>Si View</b>	3/3/2016	\$ 4,116.18	A/P	
	3/23/2016	\$ 8,976.03	A/P	
	3/31/2016	\$ 16,657.34	A/P	
<b>Portfolio Total:</b>		<b>\$ 2,268,099.55</b>		

# T A B N U M B E R

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# **KCHA IN THE NEWS**





# Novogradac Journal of Tax Credits

News, Analysis and Commentary On Affordable Housing, Community Development and Renewable Energy Tax Credits

May 2016 • Volume VII • Issue V

Published by Novogradac & Company LLP

*What's Inside:*  
Cantwell LIHTC  
Legislation  
Echoes 2000 Changes

## LOW-INCOME HOUSING TAX CREDITS

### New Development Fills Need for Senior Housing In Renton, Wash.

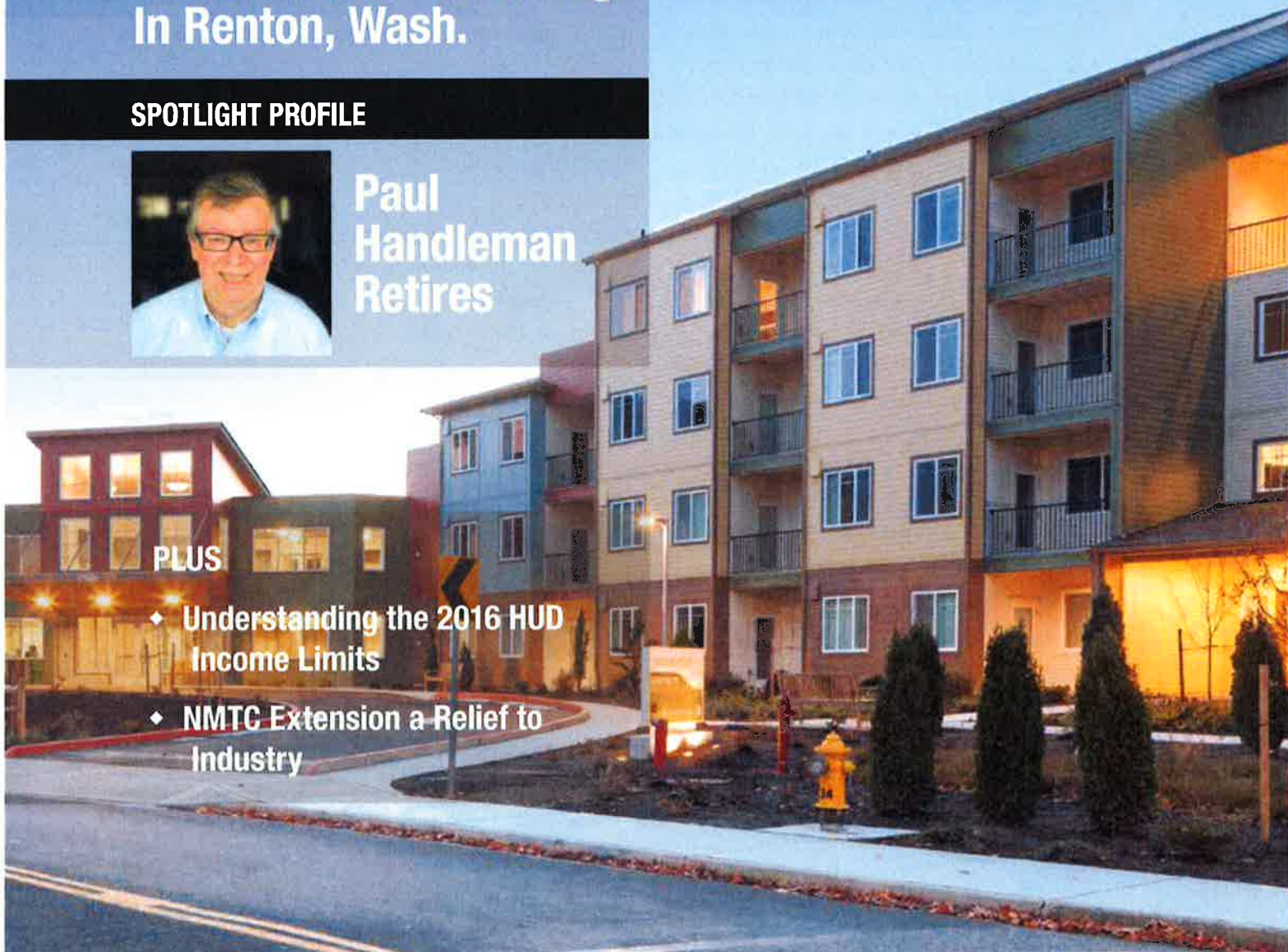
## SPOTLIGHT PROFILE



**Paul  
Handleman  
Retires**

## PLUS

- ◆ Understanding the 2016 HUD Income Limits
- ◆ NMTC Extension a Relief to Industry



## Vantage Point Fills Demand for Affordable Senior Housing in King County, Wash.

**MARK O'MEARA, STAFF WRITER, NOVOGRADAC & COMPANY LLP**

**A**s the baby boomer generation ages, demand for senior housing across the country grows. That is certainly the case in King County, Wash. By 2025, one in four King County residents will be 65 or older and 54,000 of these seniors will live in poverty, according to a study commissioned by the King County Housing Authority (KCHA), King County Aging and Disability Services and other local public agencies.

To address this ever-increasing need, KCHA developed Vantage Point, a 77-unit housing development reserved for very-low-income seniors and people with disabilities in the Benson Hill neighborhood of Renton, Wash. The development features 72 one-bedroom apartments and five two-bedroom apartments. Half of the apartments are reserved for tenants earning less than 50 percent of the area median income (AMI) and half are reserved for those earning less than 30 percent of the AMI. However, Daniel Landes, senior development manager at KCHA, said that tenant rents are much lower than that. The average tenant income is \$12,354, which is substantially less than 30 percent AMI in the area (\$18,850), according to KCHA. Many seniors will retire with little more than a monthly

Social Security check. With longer life spans, it is estimated that up to 90 percent of all seniors will outlive their savings, according to KCHA. There are 6,673 seniors on KCHA's waiting list for public housing and the average waiting time is five to six years for housing, according to KCHA. Many wait much longer.

"The project was designed based on what is healthy for seniors, allowing them to live independently as long as possible, decreasing the public burden at supportive living facilities," said Landes. "There is a lot of common room space for crafts, exercise and socialization." Common amenities include a library, a fitness room, an arts-and-crafts room, a game room and landings with communal "living rooms" with a view. There is also a community room with a kitchen, laundry rooms, a walking path around the building, parking and raised garden beds. Fully accessible units are also available.

The site is adjacent to a 35-acre, 164-home senior community run by KCHA on a land trust model. When these homeowners need to transition to apartment living, Vantage Point will be available, enabling them to stay in the community, according to KCHA.

*continued on page 2*



continued from page 1

The development is compliant with Washington's Evergreen Sustainable Design Standards. As such, it has Energy Star-rated appliances, LED lighting throughout the property, native drought-tolerant plants, drip irrigation to reduce water use, as well as low-volume flush toilets and water-saving faucets and showerheads to minimize water use by residents. Furthermore, there are electric car charging stations provided on-site. Vantage Point is ideally situated for senior housing, with the North Benson shopping center, which has a Fred Meyer grocery store, a bank and other small retailers directly across the street. It is also 1 mile from the Valley

Medical Center, which Landes said was a huge factor when picking the location.

Construction of Vantage Point began in August 2014 and was completed in October 2015. The development has been fully leased since November 2015.

### LIHTCs Fund Vantage Point

RBC Capital Markets (RBCCM) was the syndicator for the 9 percent low-income housing tax credits (LIHTCs) providing \$15.5 million in LIHTC equity, with Nationwide as the investor. RBCCM has worked with KCHA on five previous developments. John Galfione,

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Image: Courtesy of William Wright Photography

Vantage Point features 72 one-bedroom apartments and five two-bedroom apartments.





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vice president at RBCCM, liked the fundamentals of this development because of the demand for housing in the area. He said a recent market study found that rental units in King County have a 1.6 percent vacancy rate. Combine that with the fact that there are no vacancies in LIHTC properties in the primary market surrounding the property, and Galfione said the demand is huge for affordable senior housing.

This development did present an unusual challenge: it received LIHTC allocations from the 2013 and 2014 rounds from the Washington State Housing Finance Commission. “It was a little more complicated by nature because it had two different LIHTC awards,” said Galfione. “Placed-in-service deadlines were different and the income restrictions were slightly varied for each allocation.”

Other development funding included a \$5 million working capital loan from KCHA’s Moving to Work block grant, a \$3 million bridge loan from Bank of America, a \$2 million soft loan from King County Housing Finance, public housing subsidy from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to subsidize tenant rents as well as \$2 million from the Washington Legislature. The Moving to Work contribution was critical in closing the equity gap created by the use of public housing subsidies, according to KCHA.

“I was involved in this project for two reasons—it serves seniors in need of affordable housing in my district and I was serving as the ranking minority member of the Senate Capital budget when this project was considered

for funding by the state,” said State Sen. Karen Keiser, 33<sup>rd</sup> District of Washington “I was able to advocate for the project in budget negotiations because I understood the need in my district for so many seniors in need of housing. I was also pleased that the project was so well-situated for seniors who may not have transportation options to shop in nearby stores and to access mass transit.”

Thomas Stagg, a partner in the metro Seattle office of Novogradac & Company LLP, helped KCHA navigate some of the difficult issues surrounding the development of the project, including issues that arose from having two allocations of tax credits. “Being able to increase the supply of affordable senior housing is always a tremendous use of the LIHTC program,” Stagg said. “But to do so in an area like King County was especially impactful, because of the county’s dire need for such units. Although this project took a little more work than a standard LIHTC project, the results show the extra [work] was worth it.” ♦

### Vantage Point

#### FINANCING

- ◆ \$15.5 million in 9 percent LIHTC equity syndicated by RBC Capital Markets to Nationwide
- ◆ \$5 million working capital loan from KCHA’s Moving to Work block grant
- ◆ \$3 million bridge loan from Bank of America
- ◆ \$2 million from the Washington State Capital Budget
- ◆ \$2 million soft loan from the King County Housing Finance Program

*This article first appeared in the May 2016 issue of the Novogradac Journal of Tax Credits.*

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continued on page 4

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*tax issues addressed in it. Additional issues June exist outside the limited scope of any advice provided – any such advice does not consider or provide a conclusion with respect to any additional issues. Taxpayers contemplating undertaking a transaction should seek advice based on their particular circumstances.*

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### PRODUCTION

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## CONTACT

### CORRESPONDENCE AND EDITORIAL SUBMISSIONS

**Alex Ruiz**

**alex.ruiz@novoco.com**

**415.356.8088**

### ADVERTISING INQUIRIES

**Carol Hough**

**carol.hough@novoco.com**

**415.356.8040**

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ISSN 2152-646X

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# EDUCATING A GLOBAL COMMUNITY

## Vickiy Van Beek

Director of Diversity Initiatives and Services, AWSP

## Adina Brito

Principal, Evergreen Elementary (Shelton Schools)

## Roed Freeland

Assistant Principal, Salk Middle (Spokane PS)

**H**ighline's White Center Heights Elementary (WCH), a PK-6 grade school of approximately 670 students, is located in one of the most ethnically and culturally diverse communities of South Seattle. Its student body reflects this global community, drawing a diverse cross-section of students and families. Nearly 85 percent of students at White Center Heights qualify for free-and-reduced meals.

Anne Reece, now in her fourth year as principal at the school, recently sat down with Washington Principal magazine and members of AWSP's Diversity and Equity Committee, to talk about how she engages students, families and the community where they live and learn.

**ANNE REECE (AR):** Our school campus is organized to meet the needs of the kids who live in our neighborhood. We work consistently to understand our neighborhood with its many cultures and we respond in the classroom to systemically meet their needs. We advocate for all our kids, being responsive to meeting their needs and building meaningful relationships with their parents, families, and the community to enhance their school and life success.

### WASHINGTON PRINCIPAL (WP): WHAT HAS BEEN THE KEY TO YOUR SUCCESS IN ENGAGING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS?

**AR:** A number of community groups, nonprofits, and other social agencies are geographically located in this "urban planning" site, which has assisted us in creating partnerships with public institutions and nonprofits.

When I was hired into the principal position, I saw that

partners were meeting regularly but were struggling to get real traction around goals. There were good intentions from the partners but no actionable goals. I realized that nonprofits need schools more and more and the schools need them. They are in position to go after grants but need to work in collaboration with schools to bring their expertise to the table while supporting students and their families. The community partners have the expertise

to write the grants, they need schools to compliment community programs — so it's a win-win situation!

Another key for success is that the Highline School District is very supportive, from a district perspective, and has leadership for prioritizing family engagement through community partnerships. They employ full time staff at the district level to help schools make connections.

In addition, White Center Heights has a Family Success Partner (FSP) — a staff member from White Center Community Development Association (WCCDA) — who works full time in the school. The FSP organizes and helps families access resources when a family is in need. They also organize a monthly family meeting with the principal to discuss and answer questions related to all aspects of schooling and parenting. At a recent monthly meeting, I was able to discuss and clarify the roles and expectations for parents related to the upcoming student report card conferences.

The key to our success has been finding mutual goals where the school and the community organization's missions align. For example, the KCHA has the goal that children in their housing will have good attendance at school as it leads to success. So does the WCCDA, and so does the school. Recently we have been piloting a program to

“The voice of our underrepresented students and families sometimes gets lost in diverse, low socio-economic schools. We want all voices to be heard.”

Anne Reece, Principal, White Center Heights Elementary



# One school's effort to engage students, families and community partners



*EDITOR'S NOTE: Editor's Note: Last year, the AWSP Diversity and Equity Committee outlined themes it wanted to explore in upcoming issues of Washington Principal. This column explores one of those themes, community and family engagement, based on an interview with White Center Heights Elementary Principal Anne Reece.*

## PRINCIPAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

Creating a Culture, Ensuring School Safety, Planning With Data, Aligning Curriculum, Improving Instruction, Managing Resources, Engaging Communities, Closing the Gap

improve attendance through positive supports for families. We meet as a community team and with other community partners (such as NAVOS Mental Health Services and Southwest Youth and Family Services) and we invite parents to a workshop and address their family needs in the moment. It has been powerful to link families to community organizations that can support them.

### WP: WHAT STRUCTURES OR FORMATS HAVE YOU USED MOST SUCCESSFULLY TO CONNECT WITH PARENTS, GATHER FEEDBACK AND ENCOURAGE PARENT LEADERSHIP?

**AR:** As many schools do, we hold Monthly Family Nights in literacy and math as part of the Title 1 requirements.

As a starting point, an early survey was administered to determine what parents were most interested in. The number one response was discipline. Traditional Family Night Events are divided into thirds with one-third of the topic focus on literacy/math/health and fitness, one-third on the School Improvement Plan, and the remaining are based on families' interests.

Some of the topics for Family Nights have been:

- Understanding Mathematics
- Town Hall Meetings
- Bullying (led to a survey)
- Discipline
- Multicultural Celebrations

We have a Community Room that is open for an hour every morning. It is in a classroom where parents can drop in, talk and have coffee with staff. I staff the community room with my bilingual para-educators who are my Family Engagement paras. My parents like this because it removes the language barrier they feel at school. I split up the Family Engagement para time so I have both Somali and Spanish-speaking paras in the Community Room, but I still need a Vietnamese-speaking para to be there. I just found out WCCDA is providing an FSP on Monday mornings so

that should help. In addition to answering basic questions, we discuss how their children are doing and what their children are learning. The para-educators help me build relationships with the families. They let me know if there is

### EDUCATING SCHOLARS FOR A GLOBAL COMMUNITY

Hispanic: 31.9%

Asian: 25.2%

Black: 23.1%

White: 11.1%

Multi-racial: 4.7%

Pacific Islander: 3.3%

American Indian/Alaskan Native: .7%

a problem if the parent does not speak English.

The voice of our underrepresented students and families sometimes gets lost in diverse, low socio-economic schools. At WCH, we want all voices to be heard. We strive to get better at serving high needs and low socio-economic students in part by relying on school-based initiatives such as improving and personalizing instruction, but we must also empower the parents to be able to be actively involved. You can't get families in to advocate for themselves on their own: You need community support. The Community Room where I have my bilingual paras, the WCCDA Family Success Partners, and my GLEA advocate, provide a consistent forum for listening to families. I stay ahead of concerns and needs through this forum.

We implemented **Town Hall Meetings and Surveys**, as additional avenues to gather and respond to parent requests. Bilingual staff are a priority at the town hall meetings and any survey development work to ensure language isn't a barrier. From one survey, we learned

*Continued on page 26*

that parents wanted more homework assigned because it helped to keep kids at home and off the street. Homework for academic gains was the secondary reason for them. Homework feedback was always been a negative coming from parents. Families struggled to help their children with homework and children had negative consequences in the classroom when they didn't do it. So in response to the parents' desire, we met as a staff and got clear about what the children need to do for homework that would not pull teacher time and school resources so much. I presented the concept of a Homework Journal at the Open House in the fall to get parent approval.

We implemented the **Homework Journal** strategy, which we also have prioritized as one of our academic goals. Daily, all students attending WCH are expected to: 1) read, 2) write about their reading, 3) do a math problem, and 4) do some type of physical activity. Each student is expected to record their responses to each of the four in their journal each day. The WCH staff developed a matrix for grades 1-6 that defines what is expected in each of the four areas for each grade level and the matrix is in the front of the journal. The time spent doing homework each night is more for a sixth-grader than a kindergarten student. All students, families, and staff know that this is the strategy we have and it is a daily expectation. We have communicated this expectation to all of our families through multiple means. Our afterschool programs are also aware of the journal strategy. This keeps students accountable to do some type of homework even if they don't bring their journal home or to the afterschool program. Our community providers appreciate knowing what needs to be done even if a student "forgets" his/her homework. This initiative resulted in students gaining better study skills while we met parents' needs. There are no excuses now — it's on the student and families to get the homework done. They know the expectations and the expectations are always the same. Parents are no longer judging teachers on homework. Students at WCH have breakfast in their classrooms; teachers check the Homework Journals but don't grade them. Some collect the journals now and then and determine teaching points.

I also hold a **Monthly Chat with the Principal** for families through a parent coffee hour that WCCDA organizes. This month the learning goal for our parents was to gain understanding and the skills needed to navigate the upcoming student led conferences. Topics for the monthly chats are influenced by parent requests in addition to topics staff may have noticed need attention.

Second- and third-graders are tutored by high school students in reading after school at the **Club Read Program**. This program is held at the local Boys & Girls Club. The program is modeled after Team Read, but tailored to meet the needs of White Center Heights students. KCHA helps to fund the partnership in doing this program.

## **WP: WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS WHEN DEVELOPING PARTNERSHIPS THAT ENGAGE FAMILIES? HOW DO YOU COMMUNICATE THIS PRIORITY WITH STAFF?**

**AR:** All staff at WCH prioritize what our students can do. They really know and understand our families' strengths and challenges. They use this knowledge as a resource. When partnership opportunities related to family engagement present themselves or staff have a request, the idea is collectively researched. We will only partner on grant opportunities when the opportunity meets an identified need of our students, families, and/or staff.

The following are the focus of my partnerships and collaborative grant writing and I believe they are essential to success:

- Partners must have a team approach to the work.
- The work must be research-based.
- Community partners school staff work together to develop a model to fit the WCH community.
- Whenever possible, we visit a successful model with community partners and adapt it to make it ours.
- We monitor the implementation of programs with our community partners.
- We assess and revise when needed.

As we proceed along this successful journey of engaging families and partnering with community organizations, we have found that it's essential to employ a certified teacher to drive and lead community partner programs in the school and community. Certified teachers can bridge the gap between classrooms teachers and the community partners in ways that non-certified staff or community partner staff cannot. It reduces the need for teacher meetings and ensures the academic and social needs of students as understood by teachers is driving our programs.

## **WP: WHAT ARE SOME CHALLENGES, STRATEGIES, OR SUCCESS STORIES YOU HAVE TO SHARE WITH US? WHAT DO YOU WANT US TO KNOW ABOUT THE CHALLENGES YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED?**

**AR:** We have had lots of success related to engaging our families and community partners but that also comes with a few challenges along the way. One issue we've had to tackle is chronic attendance problems. Working together with school staff, KCHA, and WCCDA Family Success Partners, we've developed a positive intervention based on a workshop and family support model. To see if it would work, we initially identified 12 children who were demonstrating attendance challenges. We invited the parents of these students in and KCHA offered them a \$20 gift certificate as an incentive to get them to the

meeting. We presented the parents with positive reasons/information related to why we wanted and needed their children in school every day. We were intentional about keeping the meeting positive.

In another room, we assembled community partners that could provide support services. We had NAVOS, a mental health agency, SWYFS, a community support organization and others. We did this so partners could help address issues the student or the family may have been going through. After a short presentation, we met with each family individually and talked about the reason for the chronic absenteeism. As support was needed we called on the different community partners who joined in on the conversation and signed up families for services right in the moment. This was a powerful way to help solve some of the challenges the families were experiencing which was contributing to the student's absenteeism. We have done one more workshop and we are seeing improvement in attendance for these students. Based on prior experience I knew that absenteeism is complex and I have so many students, but with the community partner support, I feel we can get access to these families better and provide support faster using this model.

It is a constant challenge to have parents participate in school events regularly. Parents have multiple jobs and many feel that they don't have the confidence in typical ways perhaps found in a "middle class" school. Some don't speak English and may have other barriers. I would love to start a classroom volunteer network, and have looked at the Chicago model, which is community-based and prioritizes building confidence in parents by developing parents as tutors. Parents at White Center Heights volunteer to chaperone on field trips. They don't feel confident to volunteer in classrooms, but it would be a great place to focus some community partnership work.

#### **WP: HOW DO YOU MEASURE SUCCESS RELATED TO COMMUNITY AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT?**

Attendance at family/parent events is one of the metrics we use to determine if we are being effective with our family partnership initiatives. Attendance rates of our students are an easy and appropriate measure for the attendance family-community-school partnership initiative.

Another family-school partnership initiative is around reading. We have a community reading goal of 80 percent of our students meeting standard by third grade. Our community partners have committed to 60 minutes of reading with their students, especially over the summer, and this reduces reading loss. We consistently monitor reading progress of all of our students and work out how our different school and community programs can better support their growth.

White Center Heights relies on a variety of community partnerships to serve students and their families. This includes:

- King County Housing Authority
- White Center Community Development Association
- Southwest Youth and Family Services
- WIC
- Southwest Boys & Girls Club
- Educare
- Arts Corps
- University of Washington
- Head Start
- NAVOS Counseling

#### **WP: WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO YOUR COLLEAGUES WHO ARE ALSO TRYING TO BETTER ENGAGE FAMILIES AND THEIR COMMUNITY?**

**AR:** I think many principals are trying innovative strategies to get families into their school and to build relationships with them. We need to share more of these strategies. Addressing the language barrier is a good place to start to build those relationships. We need to invest in bilingual paras who can be available to connect with families on a social level first and then build on those relationships to address school and family needs.

I also think the work I have done with my community partners has been extremely beneficial for us all — families, students, school staff, and our community partners. I would advise other principals to seek out other organizations in your neighborhood. They are everywhere and they need you as much as you need them. It has taken me hours of meetings to get where we are but it has strengthened my school in ways I could not do without them. So while it takes time and energy it is well worth sitting down with them and finding out what their mission is and seeing where you align. Even if you start with one organization, it will help you to get an idea of the possibilities. Work with the partner to figure out what you can do with existing funding and what you could do with additional funding. Then work with them to work out plans. Community organizations have the expertise to seek out grants in ways we in schools cannot. We need to capitalize on their strengths. My community partners expand the potential of my school to meet the needs of my students and families. With them, I have deepened my understanding of the potential of family engagement and the power of a community approach to schooling. ■

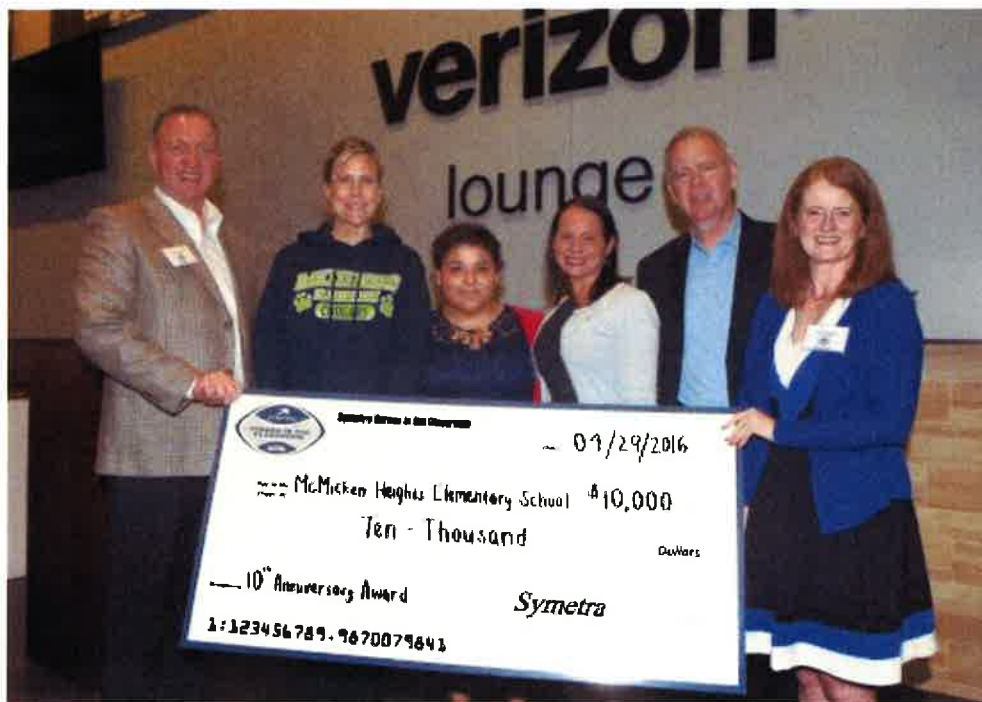


- SeaTac Blog | Local News, Events, Arts & More for SeaTac, WA - <http://seatacblog.com> -

## McMicken Elementary School wins \$10K grant from Symetra and the Seahawks

Posted By *Scott Schaefer* On May 3, 2016 @ 1:00 pm In Business, Education, Featured Stories, Fundraiser, Headlines, Life | [No Comments](#)

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[1]

Alexandria Haas, Erica Castellon Hernandez and Superintendent Susan Enfield being presented with the Symetra Heroes 10th Anniversary Award check for \$10,000. Pictured are (l to r): John Pleas, Seattle Seahawks Corporate Partnerships; Alexandria Haas, principal, McMicken Heights Elementary School; Erica Castellon Hernandez, bilingual paraeducator, McMicken Heights Elementary School; Susan Enfield, superintendent, Highline Public Schools; Mike Flood, Seattle Seahawks vice president, Community Relations and Special Projects; and Tracy Wort, assistant director, Symetra Community Relations.





[2]

Highline Public Schools staff that attended the luncheon. They are pictured in the Verizon Lounge at CenturyLink Field, overlooking the field itself (l to r): Terri McMahan; Vicki Fisher; Erica Castellon Hernandez, Lori Box, Susan Enfield, Crystal Fresco, Alexandria Haas and Karin Jones.

**What does a principal dream of doing with \$10,000? Principal Alexandria Haas of McMicken Heights Elementary wants to fund math training and toolkits for families in a nearby apartment complex for whom English is a second language.**

And now, she'll get her wish thanks to a \$10,000 grant from Symetra and the Seattle Seahawks.

The Symetra Heroes in the Classroom teacher-recognition program—a partnership between Symetra and the Seattle Seahawks—gave the award to celebrate its 10th anniversary. Haas was awarded the funding at a luncheon on Friday, April 29, at CenturyLink Field.

"I'm so excited to receive funding to ramp up our efforts to reach out to neighboring families with math tools and training," said Haas. "Most importantly, we hope to form valuable partnerships with families, in order to help them support their students' math achievement in powerful ways."

Bridges to Student Success is a monthly program aimed at making academics and family support accessible to all students and families. It will allow families to meet with the principal, assistant principal, family engagement coordinator and teaching staff in the convenient location of the New Futures community room at Windsor Heights Apartments in SeaTac. This apartment complex is home to a significant number of students who are English Language Learners at McMicken.

Staff and interpreters will work with students and families to understand the math strategies being taught. Families will be given a Family Math Success toolkit to support learning at home. This program will begin in August to allow for a jumpstart prior to the beginning of the school year.

Symetra and the Seattle Seahawks also honored the 16 Puget Sound-area teachers who were recognized as Symetra Heroes in the Classroom during the 2015 NFL season, including two Highline Public Schools teachers:

Crystal Fresco—Chinook Middle School

Lori Box—Highline High School

Following lunch, the teachers and their district administrators received an exclusive behind-the-scenes tour of the stadium. The festivities wrapped up in the Seahawks locker room, where each teacher was surprised with a “customized” locker complete with nameplate. Each teacher’s locker’s contents included a plaque commemorating his or her “Heroes” award and a copy of the April 29 edition of the Seattle Times, which featured a ¼-page ad saluting all 16 Symetra Heroes in the Classroom recipients.

Seahawks DB DeShawn Shead was a surprise guest, joining the teachers, principals and guests in the players’ locker room and sharing some personal stories on the important role teachers played in his life.

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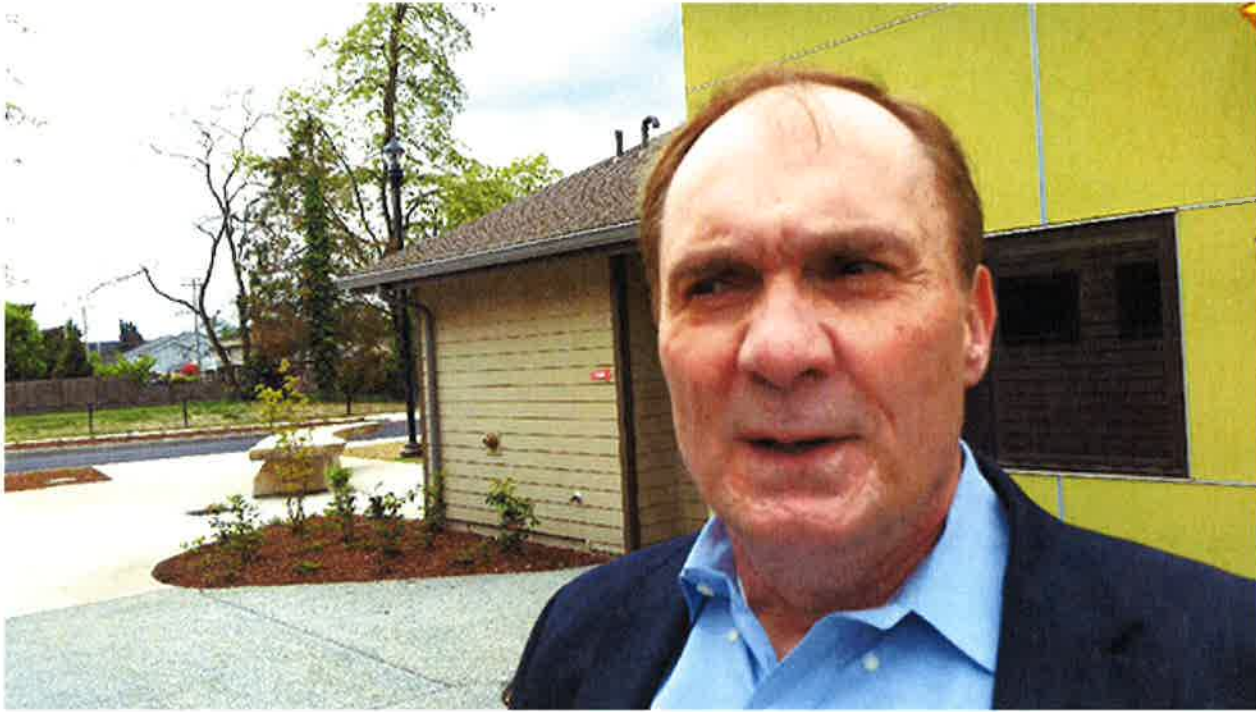
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# Valley Cities Counseling opens Phoenix Rising project



Ken Taylor, chief executive officer of Valley Cities Counseling, says Auburn's Phoenix Rising housing project 'was a labor of love.' The new facility will help young adults transition from homelessness to independent living. — *Image Credit: Robert Whale, Auburn Reporter*

by [ROBERT WHALE](#), Auburn Reporter News Reporter  
May 5, 2016 at 4:00PM

For four years she lived behind an Auburn store, doing her best to keep out of sight and avoid being roused awake in the dark and told to move on.

Or robbed, beaten – or worse.

With Valley Cities Counseling opening last week of its 24-unit, Phoenix Rising housing project next door at 915 26th St. NE, one can only imagine how thrilled this young woman is to be one of the 18-25-year-olds in those units.

But Phoenix Rising offers people like her much more than a place to sleep, with laundries, computer labs and a reception area.

Not only do the two detached, 4,394 square-foot, one-story residential buildings and their rooms provide housing, the project melds housing with services to help young adults make the critical move from homelessness to independent living.

That is, with Valley Cities mere yards away, support, treatment, behavioral health services and case management are mere seconds away.

Left to complete by this fall, Recovery Cafe, where tenants will meet, get job training and substance recovery support.

There is room on the property for development of two additional, 12-unit, single-story residential buildings.

"It took a long, long time to build," said Ken Taylor, chief executive officer of Valley Cities Counseling. "It was a labor of love because ultimately, we're going to take people off the streets and not only give them a warm, safe place, but when the cafe is complete, they'll have a place to meet and to organize and work. Because, fundamentally, what a lot of these folks are missing is the sort of basic skills you and I got from our parents."

A centralized program in King County called 211 screens prospective tenants, and staff at Valley Cities work with the agency to determine if Phoenix is the appropriate place for that person.

"It's permanent housing, so they're not going to be kicked out after 90 days or a couple of days or anything like that," said Scott Sciuchetti, a director at Valley Cities. "And we're taking people that have other issues, like alcohol and substance abuse."

For tenants who decide to live at Phoenix House long term, King County Housing offers Section 8 vouchers that would allow them to live there rent free until they get an income, at which time rents are proportionately scaled up.

The King County Housing Authority (KCHA) has provided 24 vouchers for tenants for the first five years, though that may be extended, Taylor said.

"It's really not generosity on our part," said Dan Watson, deputy director of the KCHA. "It's part of our mission to ensure that every young person has a place to call home, and an opportunity for success in learning and in life."

"Once a young adult enters into homelessness, they face serious obstacles getting back out. At Phoenix Rising, we will help them rise above some of these challenges," said Suzanne Smith, chair of Valley Cities board of directors.

Rep. Mark Hargrove, R-Covington, 47th Legislative District, said he was "very impressed" by what he was seeing.

"I imagine that a homeless youth off the street would grow in self worth, and things here would get him or her on the right track. I like how it's individual rooms, but it's also a community," Hargrove said.

Valley Cities still needs funds to complete the Recovery Cafe and to buy equipment to run the food service. To help, contact Scott Sciuchetti at 206-408-5817 or [ssciuchetti@valleycities.org](mailto:ssciuchetti@valleycities.org).

Additional partners were United Way, the Auburn Valley YMCA, Donovan Bros. Construction and the architectural firm of Keimig Associates.

Valley Cities operates neighborhood clinics in Auburn, Enumclaw, Federal Way, Northgate, Midway, Kent, Rainier Beach and Renton. New offices are on the way on Beacon Hill and in Kent.

ROBERT WHALE, Auburn Reporter News Reporter  
[rwhale@auburn-reporter.com](mailto:rwhale@auburn-reporter.com) or 253-833-0218, ext. 5052

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- The Waterland Blog for Des Moines, WA - <http://waterlandblog.com> -

## Man shot and killed in Des Moines Friday night

Posted By *Scott Schaefer* On May 7, 2016 @ 3:21 pm In Crime,Featured Stories,Headlines,Life | [6 Comments](#)

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**The Des Moines Police Department is reporting that a man was shot and killed in the 22800 block of 30th Ave South (map below) around 6:30 p.m. Friday night, May 6.**

Police say they got 911 calls from witnesses who said they heard two or three gunshots near the Shoreham Apartments. When deputies arrived on scene, they found the male victim bleeding in the apartment's parking lot.

Medics took him to Harborview Medical Center in Seattle, where he was pronounced dead.

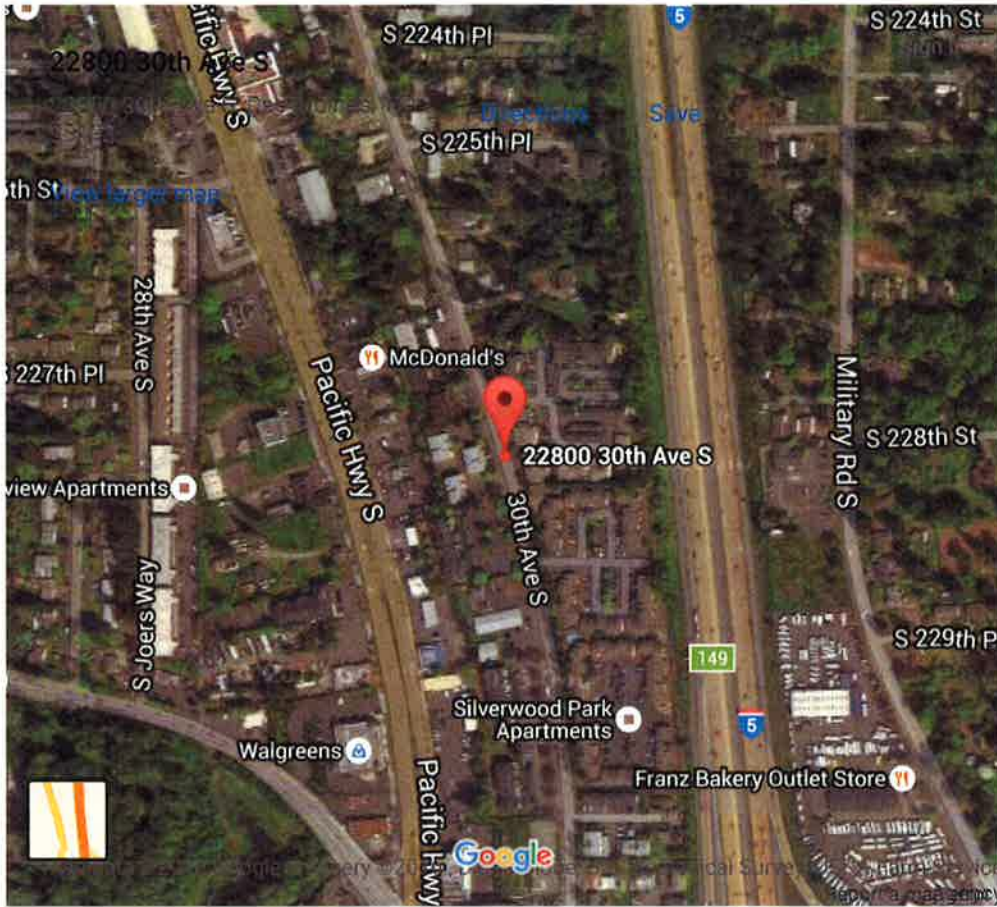
The victim is an Hispanic man, and his identity was still unknown as of Saturday afternoon, according to Sgt. Doug Jenkins. Police say he wasn't carrying any identification.

Jenkins added that a suspect vehicle was found abandoned on Pacific Highway South around 3 a.m. Saturday morning. Police impounded it and are awaiting on a warrant to search the car.

There is still no suspect in the shooting, nor is a motive known.

Police add that it is unknown now whether the shooting is related to the apartment complex where the victim was found.

No arrests have been made in the case, and police are still investigating.



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## NEWS

# Steady job doesn't guarantee housing security



LARRY STEAGALL /KITSAP SUN Matthew Daignault holds son Aden, 1, whom he calls the "clinger," outside his rental home in West Bremerton. Daignault's rental is being sold, and he is struggling to find an affordable living space for him and his four children. (LARRY STEAGALL /KITSAP SUN)

By *Tad Sooter* of the Kitsap Sun

April 02, 2016

In a white house perched on a hillside overlooking Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, Matthew Daignault was running out of options.

Late last year, the owners of the rental house decided to put the residence up for sale. They gave Daignault a generous four



months to find a new home for himself and the four young children in his care. It seemed like plenty of time.

The single father spent the winter scouring rental ads for homes in his price range with little success. He looked at listings as far away as Belfair and found even single-wide trailers were renting for \$1,300 a month.

Daignault thought his search would get easier after he landed an entry-level job at SAFE Boats International that paid \$16 an hour plus benefits. But he said income requirements adhered to by landlords stymied his search. It's not uncommon for landlords to require tenants to show income that's three times more than the rent they'll be paying. By that formula, Daignault calculated he could afford rent of \$853 a month. Fair-market rent for a three-bedroom home — the minimum he'd need for his family of five — is about \$1,500 per month in Kitsap.

When Daignault did find homes in his price range, owners balked at his bad credit history or the number of children living with him.

He started offering landlords extra cash just to rent to him.

None accepted.

With one week left before his move-out date at the end of March, Daignault still had not found a place to move. He would rent a storage unit for their belongings. Beyond that, he had no plan.

"I don't know what we're going to do," Daignault said.

A paycheck, as Daignault found, doesn't guarantee a place to live. Kirsten Jewell, who heads the county's Housing and

Homelessness program, said affordability is increasingly an issue for working-class families, who've watched housing-cost increases outpace wage growth.

An analysis by the National Low Income Housing Coalition found Kitsap renters earn an average of \$11.26 an hour. At that wage, they'd have to work 53 hours a week to make the typical one-bedroom rental affordable, and 70 hours to afford a two-bedroom, according to the report.

That means people working in restaurants, retail stores and child care centers might have to put in extra hours or find roommates to afford homes in the county.

"It's really hard, even for people doing jobs that support the community," Jewell said.

## WORK HOURS TO MAKE RENT

According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition, renters in Kitsap County earn an estimated average wage of \$11.26 per hour. This chart shows the number of hours renters have to work per week to make market-rate rentals affordable (meaning rent equals 30 percent or less of their income). The coalition calculated a renter earning minimum wage (\$9.47) would have to work 73 hours per week to afford a market-rate one-bedroom apartment in Kitsap.

### Work hours per week at average renter wage to make rentals affordable

	Washington	Kitsap County
Studio	36 hrs	41 hrs
One-bedroom	42 hrs	53 hrs
Two-bedroom	53 hrs	70 hrs
Three-bedroom	77 hrs	100 hrs

Source: National Low Income Housing Coalition

JOURNAL MEDIA GROUP

As a result, some families spend a larger portion of their incomes on housing than the federally recommended standard of 30 percent, leaving less money for other necessities. A 2015 Housing Needs Assessment produced by the state Department of

Commerce estimated nearly 14,000 Kitsap renter households were "cost-burdened," spending more than 30 percent of their incomes on housing.

"I look at this number with a lot of alarm," Jewell said. "It means we have a lot of households living on the edge."

Ted Kelleher with the state Department of Commerce said communities across Washington are grappling with similar affordability issues. Kelleher worked on the state's 2015 Housing Needs Assessment. He said he wasn't aware of how widespread Washington's housing challenges were when the study began.

"We were surprised how much of a problem it is not just in the Puget Sound corridor, but all over the state," he said.

The assessment found that for every 100 "very low-income" and "extremely low-income" households in the state, there were about 51 housing units that were affordable and available. The gap in Kitsap was more striking, with 32 units available per 100 households, in line with the rate for King County.

Census data used in the study were three years old, Kelleher said. He suspects the state's affordable housing gaps have gotten wider.



#### About Tad Sooter

Tad Sooter covers business and health care for the Kitsap Sun, and writes the Minding Your Business blog. He is a 2007 graduate of the University of Montana School of Journalism.

 @tsooter  thaddeus.sooter@kitsa...  360-475-3783

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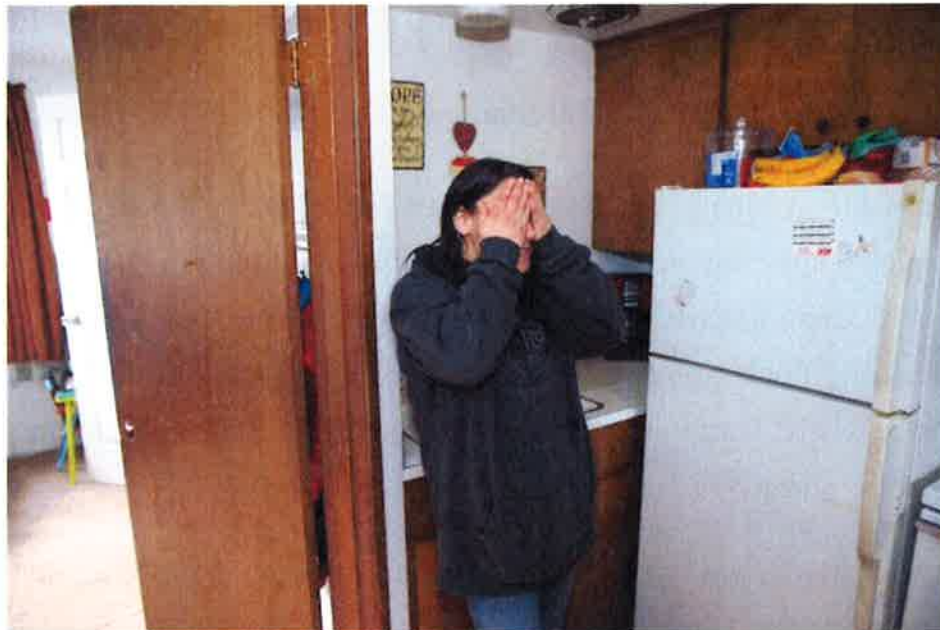


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NEWS

# As housing market soars, poorest renters are priced out



Photos by LARRY STEAGALL/KITSAP SUN Securing an apartment at Admiral Manor in West Bremerton allowed Crystal Turner to move her family out of her car. But the complex is changing ownership and tenants have been given eviction notices as the new company prepares to renovate it. Turner fears she will have to return to living in her car. (LARRY STEAGALL/KITSAP SUN)

By *Tad Sooter* of the Kitsap Sun

April 02, 2016

BREMERTON — Crystal Turner stood in the kitchen of her cramped apartment and stared at the cracks in the fake wood flooring beneath her feet.

Surrounding her was the home she'd made for herself and her two sons in the past year, since they moved out of her Toyota Camry and into Admiral Manor, a low-rent apartment complex in West Bremerton. There was the single bedroom with two kids' beds on the floor. The living room she'd decorated with signs that said "Hope" and "Love." A dingy bathroom with a leaking toilet that had never been fixed.

Admiral Manor wasn't the place Turner, a recovering addict, wanted to raise her boys. It was the place she could afford.

"It was better than nothing," she said.

Turner can't afford Admiral Manor much longer.

A Seattle company bought the 118-unit complex in January and began displacing tenants in waves as it prepared to renovate rooms and increase rent. During a visit last month, residents in Turner's block of apartments were awaiting 20-day termination notices. For Turner, eviction likely meant a return to her Toyota and the street.

"I'm going to lose all this" she said. "It isn't much, but it's mine."

The same upheaval taking place in apartments at Admiral Manor this spring is quietly playing out across Kitsap County as the economy gains strength and a long-slumbering real estate market roars back to life.

Rents have surged. Vacancies are scarce. Once-cheap houses and apartment buildings like Admiral Manor are being renovated and rented at higher rates. Some federally subsidized developments have been converted to market-rate rentals, eating away at the county's stockpile of affordable units. With a large pool of

tenants to choose from, landlords are less likely to lease to low-income families, even when they have money for rent.

Frustration is simmering among those residents finding themselves priced out of homes.

"If you don't work at the shipyard, or you don't work for the Navy, you're screwed," said Laura McLovin, a pizza delivery driver who lost her Admiral Manor apartment at the end of February.

McLovin was considering a move to Belfair. Bremerton, she said, had become too expensive.

Affordable housing advocates say the sudden constriction of Kitsap's real estate market widened an existing gap in affordability, a gap that will continue to grow unless new housing solutions are created. Reports from service agencies suggest rising costs already have added to the county's homeless population.

"A recovering economy is a great thing, except when it impacts people who are most vulnerable," Bremerton Housing Authority Executive Director Kurt Wiest said.

Communities across the region are confronting similar pressures. Seattle recently declared a state of emergency on homelessness.

Community leaders here warn Kitsap is facing a housing emergency of its own.

"Sometimes I wonder if we don't have an undeclared crisis," said Joe Roszak, CEO of Kitsap Mental Health Services, which reported a growing number of vulnerable clients priced out of rentals. "I think it's happening already."

## **DEMAND 'LET LOOSE'**

Kitsap's housing squeeze was years in the making, according to real estate professionals.

Home construction slowed to a virtual halt during the recession as sales fell off, contractors went out of business and platted developments slipped into foreclosure. Home construction ground back into gear across the county over the past few years, but demand rebounded faster, said Mike Eliason, CEO of the Kitsap County Association of Realtors. More people hunted for new homes and rentals as the economy improved and consumer confidence grew.

Emerging trends heaped additional housing demand on the peninsula. New jobs came online, including hundreds of shipyard positions. The Navy stationed a second aircraft carrier, USS Nimitz, in Bremerton through 2019, ensuring nearly 3,000 military households will stay in the area. King County residents trickled across Puget Sound, seeking refuge from Seattle's skyrocketing costs.

A host of economic factors seemed to converge in 2015.

"The pent up demand finally let loose," Eliason said. "The problem with housing is the inventory hasn't been there."



## RENTS AND VACANCY RATES

### Kitsap apartment vacancy rate by quarter

Apartment vacancy rates in Kitsap remain among the lowest in the region. These numbers are drawn from surveys of apartment complexes with 50 or more units.



Rents in Kitsap were higher than in South Sound counties, but lower than in King and Snohomish counties in the fourth quarter of 2015. Market-rate rents in the more expensive areas of Seattle and the east side of Lake Washington hovered at about \$2,000 per unit.

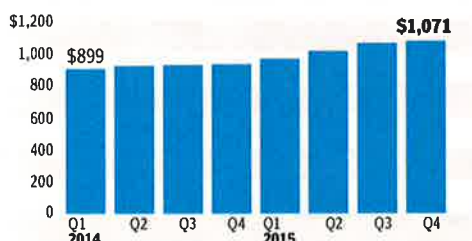
### Fourth quarter apartment rent and vacancies

	Rents	Vacancies
King/Snohomish	\$1,451	4.32%
Kitsap	\$1,058	3.44%
Pierce	\$978	4.22%
Thurston	\$931	3.64%

### APARTMENT RENTS UP IN KITSAP

Market-rate rents increased 15.4 percent in 2015 at Kitsap County apartment complexes with 50 or more units.

### Kitsap apartment rent by quarter (per unit)



Source: Tom Cain, Apartment Insights Washington

JOURNAL MEDIA GROUP

The average number of homes for sale in the county plunged 30 percent last year. The vacancy rate at large apartment complexes, which had been as high as 10 percent in 2013, dove to about 3 percent. Property managers said the vacancy rate for single-family homes was as low, if not lower.

"I've never seen the market as tight as it is now," Wiest said.

High demand and low supply helped drive up prices. Buyers paid a median of \$258,500 for Kitsap homes in 2015, an 8 percent increase from the year before. Average apartment rent jumped 15 percent — about \$143 — climbing to more than \$1,000 for the first time.

The strong rental market was a refreshing change for landlords. To tenants [already scraping to pay rent](#), it signaled trouble.

## PRESSURE ON LANDLORDS





"Welcome back to the '70s," Ben Nelson said, pushing open the door to a one-bedroom apartment in Madrona Estates, a low-rent complex on the outskirts of Bremerton.

The apartment inside was small, clean and simple. A bathroom, tiny kitchen and living room were wedged into the ground floor. A spiral staircase led to a sleeping loft above, a funky layout devised 40 years ago, when the complex opened as a motel.

It's not the retro vibe but cheap rents that draw tenants to Madrona Estates. Studios start at about \$575 a month. With

Admiral Manor converting to market rate, Madrona Estates might soon become the least expensive private apartment building in the county. The waiting list for units is 90 applicants long and growing.

"We're kind of the last bastion of affordable rentals in Kitsap," said Scott Nelson, who owns Madrona Estates with Ben, his son.

The Nelsons want to keep rents low, but they say pressure is mounting to charge more. Their tax and utility bills have risen to the point they'll have to eventually bump up rent to cover expenses.

"Essentially forcing us to go market rate," Ben Nelson said.

Some jurisdictions, including Bremerton, offer tax breaks for new multifamily developments that rent a percentage of units to low- and middle-income families. Ben Nelson wonders why there aren't similar incentives for existing building owners to keep affordable units affordable.

"Where are the incentives for landlords that have been here 10, 20, 30 years, who are providing low rents to the people of Kitsap County?" he asked.

Many of the Nelsons' counterparts have increased rents, with the housing market improving. Others are selling.

Already this year, two large Bremerton apartment complexes have been scooped up by firms outside the county. A Los Angeles company paid \$13 million for the 70-year-old Bremerton Garden apartments in Manette in March and announced plans to invest \$3.5 million in upgrades.

In January, a corporation affiliated with Seattle-based Stratford Co. bought Admiral Manor for \$5.83 million. In February the company began issuing 20-day notices alerting residents their tenancy would be terminated.

"We are planning to make significant and necessary improvements to the property," Stratford CEO George Webb said in an email. "We believe this will be a benefit to the community and are excited to help revitalize this part of the city."

Tenants being displaced from Admiral Manor agreed the apartments desperately needed renovation. In interviews, they complained about unsanitary conditions, ignored maintenance requests and bedbug infestations. But most believed they wouldn't be able to afford rent at Admiral Manor after the work was finished.

"We're not the right monetary demographic, or any other demographic," said resident Laurleen Smith, who commutes to a call-center job in Tacoma.

Pete Gamez, 70, shares a one-bedroom Admiral Manor apartment with his sister Rosie. Gamez said he didn't know where he and Rosie would move after the new apartment owners give them notice. Neither did his neighbors.

"They don't care where we go," Gamez said. "That's the ugly part."

## **PRESERVING SUBSIDIES**

Residents leaving Admiral Manor will be joined in their housing search by a group of renters uprooted from Poulsbo.

Like Admiral Manor, Woodcreek Apartments on Hostmark Street recently changed hands and new owners began moving out tenants to make way for renovation and rent increases. Unlike Admiral Manor, Woodcreek was a government-subsidized development.

The 40-unit complex was built in 1984 with a low-interest loan offered through a U.S. Department of Agriculture rural development program. Under the program, Woodcreek made apartments affordable to low- and moderate-income households. A portion of the units were supported by a federal rental assistance subsidy, making rents even cheaper.

Mary Traxler, multifamily housing director for the USDA in Washington, said the loan for Woodcreek was set to mature in 2034, but owners successfully applied to pay off the debt early in 2014, releasing the complex from the terms of the program. Woodcreek Apartments sold in September for \$3 million. Some tenants received 20-day termination notices shortly after.

Jeff Miller, CEO of Pacific Living Properties, which oversees Woodcreek, said the property was purchased with a market-rate loan, and the new owners need to increase rents for the investment to pencil out.

"There was no way we could still support those low rents," Miller said, noting that many tenants in low-rent units were allowed to remain in place for months.

Traxler said qualifying residents were offered vouchers to help them pay for housing elsewhere.

Allison Shaw, a single mother of two, received notice to move out of Woodcreek in February and relocated across Hood Canal

to Brinnon. Shaw felt lucky to have stable housing but worried other Woodcreek tenants would be left homeless.

"I don't want Poulsbo to become the kind of place where a single mom can't live, and I think that's what's happening," she said.

Federal programs subsidize about 40 multifamily properties across Kitsap. According to housing agency officials, owners of properties with subsidies set to expire in the near future have indicated they'll continue to participate in affordable housing programs. Local advocates are keeping a close eye on the properties, hoping to head off another situation like Woodcreek.

Earlier this year, Bremerton Housing Authority swooped in to buy Charter House, a 30-unit affordable apartment complex for seniors in Manette that was on the verge of letting its Housing and Urban Development subsidy lapse. Funding for the \$1.37 million purchase came from land sales at the former Westpark public housing neighborhood in West Bremerton, now being redeveloped as Bay Vista. The housing authority planned to keep rents affordable and make minor renovations.

Tenant Donna LaVerne was among the seniors at Charter House feeling relieved.

"When you're on a very limited income, with no potential for increasing that income, you're very grateful for anywhere you can live," LaVerne said.

## **HARDER TO HELP**

If Kitsap is experiencing a housing crisis, Housing Solutions Center is its ground zero.



The Kitsap Community Resource's program is billed as the county's "one-stop" source of help for families struggling to find homes. The center can place people in temporary shelters, refer them to landlords with affordable rentals, provide money to help with deposits and other upfront housing costs, and link them to other services.

The Housing Solutions Center recorded its busiest year in 2015. Staff met with 3,258 households facing housing crises, up 17 percent from the previous year. Monica Bernhard, who oversees the program, said more than 940 households reported living in homes not fit for habitation. Instead, they were sleeping in cars, abandoned buildings or tents. Nearly 550 households were seeking services because they'd been evicted — also a spike from the previous year.

At the same time more Kitsap residents are seeking help, Housing Solution Center is finding it harder to place clients in housing. Bernhard said the lack of vacancies is a big part of the problem. With demand for housing high, some landlords also are tightening income requirements and shying from renting to low-income tenants. It's taking three to four months for tenants assisted by the center to find homes, even when they have cash in hand.

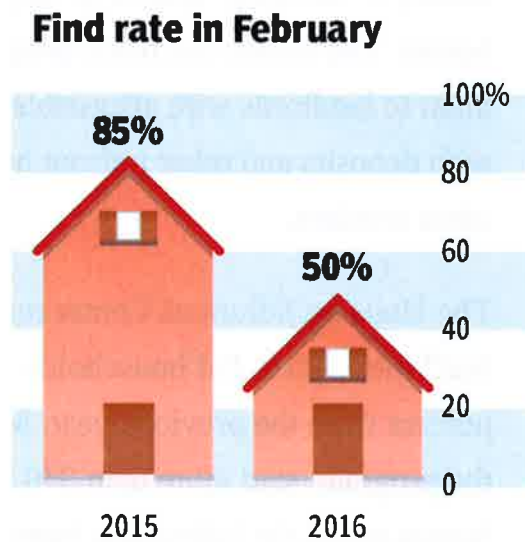
"The number of landlords who will work with us has shrunk," Bernhard said.

The story is similar for renters receiving coveted Section 8 rental assistance vouchers. Nearly 2,000 very low-income Kitsap residents have their rent subsidized by vouchers, which are funded by Housing and Urban Development. Residents who receive vouchers pay between 30 and 40 percent of their income on rent. The government covers the remaining cost.

## RENTAL ASSISTANCE

Section 8 rental assistance voucher holders have 120 days to find a landlord who will rent to them and a home that meets the program's requirements. A year ago, 85 percent of recipients working with Bremerton Housing Authority found homes within 120 days. This year, only half have been successful.

Source: Bremerton Housing Authority



JOURNAL MEDIA GROUP

For many recipients, "it's the difference between going over the edge and being able to survive," said Wiest with Bremerton Housing Authority, which administers its own Section 8 voucher program, and the voucher program for Housing Kitsap.

When Housing Kitsap opened a lottery for 150 vouchers in February, 2,500 people applied. Bremerton Housing Authority opened a lottery for 300 voucher slots in March and expected to receive another 4,000 applications.

Those lucky enough to be awarded assistance will have 120 days to find landlords who will accept their vouchers and homes that meet the program's requirements. If they can't find qualifying housing in time, and don't receive an extension, their vouchers will be revoked.

A year ago about 85 percent of voucher holders in Kitsap found housing within 120 days. This year the "find rate" is down to about 50 percent. Wiest attributed the change to a depleted supply of rentals.

"As the vacancy rate tightens, voucher holders are the first to suffer," Wiest said. "... I'm really hopeful this is as bad as it's going to be."

## **NO EASY FIXES**

Solutions to the affordable housing shortage won't come easy, cheap or fast.

Local housing authorities are chipping away at the issue. Bremerton Housing Authority, for example, is working with the city and Kitsap Mental Health Services to create homes for mental health clients at the site of the former Frances Haddon Morgan Center. Housing Kitsap has self-help housing projects underway that help income-qualified households obtain low-interest mortgages. On Bainbridge, the City Council approved a plan for a 14-acre parcel called Suzuki Property that will include an affordable-housing element.

Housing Kitsap Executive Director Stuart Grogan said it will take incremental bites to close the affordable housing gap.

"The more aggressive we can be in our bites, the more successful we'll be as a community," Grogan said.

Housing advocates say their work is slowed by a lack of funding. Federal and state revenue streams for affordable housing have generally held steady or declined, falling behind demand. With finite public dollars available, they believe creating more affordable units will require partnerships among governments, private developers and nonprofit groups.

"Housing authorities can't go it alone anymore," Grogan said.

Kirsten Jewell, who heads the county's Housing and Homelessness, said planners are considering policies to encourage the creation of lower-rent housing. Promoting accessory dwelling units and tiny houses, for example, could result in more backyard homes for renters, she said. Jewell noted all local jurisdictions are updating their comprehensive land-use plans this year, making it an ideal time to consider affordable housing goals.

Kitsap cities already have some density or tax incentives for building less expensive housing into new developments. In Bremerton, developers of four recently approved apartment buildings are taking advantage of a tax break awarded to multifamily projects that rent 20 percent of their units to low- and moderate-income tenants.

Landlords like the Nelsons would like to see more incentives to keep existing affordable units affordable. Builders say streamlining land-use and construction permitting would speed the creation of new homes, easing pressure on the housing market.

"It's a very long and difficult process to get land permitted in Kitsap County," said Teresa Osinski with the Kitsap Building Association.

On a broader level, housing challenges won't be addressed with new buildings alone, Wiest with Bremerton Housing Authority said. Residents need access to education, decent paying jobs, transportation and support for myriad issues like mental illness and substance abuse that contribute to underemployment and homelessness.

"I think society likes to make it simple," Wiest said. "But there are a lot of factors."

The good news, Jewell said, is that headlines created by Seattle's housing crisis have raised an alarm in surrounding communities.

"We have to pay attention to this," she said. "Because it's not going to go away on its own."

**About Tad Sooter**

Tad Sooter covers business and health care for the Kitsap Sun, and writes the Minding Your Business blog. He is a 2007 graduate of the University of Montana School of Journalism.

 @tsooter    thaddeus.sooter@kitsa...    360-475-3783

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# SLOG

ECONOMY

## Microsoft, Boeing Among Corporations With Billions Stashed in Offshore Tax Havens

by [Ansel Herz](#) • Apr 19, 2016 at 10:21 am

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**Bermuda: Where Microsoft parks its money.** ANDRES VIRVIESCAS / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

### ***The Guardian:***

US corporate giants such as Apple, Walmart and General Electric have stashed **\$1.4tn (£980bn) in tax havens**, despite receiving trillions of dollars in taxpayer support, according to a report by anti-poverty charity Oxfam.

The sum, larger than the economic output of Russia, South Korea and Spain, is held in an “opaque and secretive network” of 1,608 subsidiaries based offshore, said Oxfam.

The Oxfam **analysis** shows that local corporate heavyweight **Microsoft** has stashed a monumental **\$108 billion in offshore tax havens**, while **Boeing** has put away a comparatively paltry **\$800 million**. Of the country's biggest fifty companies, Microsoft is the third-worst offender. (**Amazon** does it too, according to Reuters.)

There is a direct relationship between this kind of tax avoidance, including the lobbying that goes into enabling it, and **our own city's homelessness crisis**. When Seattle Mayor Ed Murray declared an official homelessness "emergency" last fall, he **blamed** the federal government for defunding affordable housing locally and nationally. Here's how Oxfam traces the connection:

As tax returns from multinational companies fall short of their potential, governments often turn to two options: either cut back on the essential investments needed to reduce inequality and deprivation or make up the shortfall by levying higher taxes on working families and small businesses in the domestic economy. Both options see the poorest people lose out and the inequality gap grow...

In fiscal year 2014, the US federal government collected \$320.7 billion from corporate income taxes **or 10.6% of its total revenue**, down from 32% in 1952...

Since 2010, federal policymakers have cut 85% of US federal programs supporting low income families. Chronically underfunded anti-poverty efforts took ever deeper cuts, leaving them with less funding today than six years ago. Consider low-income housing assistance, where already trim budgets mean only about **one in every four eligible poor families receive rental assistance**. Because of budget cuts, local housing agencies have had to further reduce the number of available housing vouchers...

Last year, the *Seattle Times* **reported**: "22,600 households applied for just 2,500 spots on the King County Housing Authority's waiting list for Section 8 rental assistance." And in 2013, the Seattle Housing Authority "received about 24,000 applications for 2,000 spots."

If the mayor wanted to get his social justice activist thing on and, say, lead a sit-in against tax dodging on the steps of Microsoft's corporate headquarters in Redmond, I'd totally join him. Would you?

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