

# d design annual 2018

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The American Institute of Architects . Southwestern Oregon

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## HOUSING OURSELVES THOUGHTFULLY

By Frank Visconti, AIA  
AIA-SWO Chapter President

Over the last few years architects have been more intensely focused on the national housing crisis. Future forecasting is showing us that our city populations will double as well as the amount of needed building area. Local AIA architects have been busy designing with updated approaches to creating more user friendly, inclusive, safer and more ecologically neutral buildings than ever before. The increasing need for housing within and around cities is widely studied by community groups, professional organizations, planners, real estate developers, politicians, and in university academic studios. The consensus is that more affordable housing is sorely needed to keep our cities vibrant and friendly, and can also reduce our energy consumption.

This year's issue of the Design Annual presents articles from local AIA Architects on current projects that have been designed to be built in our community.

Local architect Kaarin Knudson, founder of Better Housing Together, checks in on how the organization she founded is progressing here in Eugene. She has rallied many key individuals and organizations to guide local housing development.

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## HOW WE LIVE IN EUGENE



Next, we have an article on the newest Tiny Home neighborhood just completed in Eugene made up of 22 new private homes on 1.5 acre lot. A lot of that size will commonly fit only 6 homes! Designed by a collective of local architects, architect Randy Nishimura walks us through the nearly complete project that included a tour inside one of the resident's homes.

A first-of-its-kind for Eugene, Amanda D'Onofrio of Bergsund Delaney Architects and architectural doctoral graduate Christina Bollo, explain their design for a "Housing First" project to be located off of MLK Boulevard which will provide studio apartments for 50 homeless people. Nationally, "Housing First" has been the most successful building approach for housing the homeless and providing supportive services.

Prolific local architect, Willard Dixon explains a novel project for 28 homes on 2.3 acres off of River Road. The property is being developed as a Cohousing community which is benefits residents by cooperative ownership and a community vision.

It is exciting to see so many approaches being applied to our built environment!

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# Q&A: WHAT CAN HOUSING ADVOCACY GROUPS ACCOMPLISH?

The local AIA is one of 45 community partners in the Better Housing Together initiative working to increase housing affordability, diversity, and supply in Lane County. We asked Project Lead Kaarin Knudson, AIA, about the Lane County housing crisis and Better Housing Together's recent work.

**Q: Better Housing Together is working on housing "affordability, diversity and supply." Why those three together?**

Kaarin Knudson: They're interconnected—we need to work on all three to meet people's needs and generate great housing. Affordability won't dramatically improve unless we have more quality, diverse supply in the market. Creative partnerships are needed to increase supply, fill in gaps, and more effectively use land. There's a huge opportunity to steer supply to meet the demand of older and younger residents—they aren't all looking for single-family homes. We work on those three aspects together because it's fiscally smart, socially equitable and environmentally progressive—and all are important to quality of life.

**Q: In addition to AIA, who are the partners in Better Housing Together?**

Kaarin Knudson: There are about 45 partners now—organizations and businesses like the United Way, ShelterCare, Food for Lane County, local Realtors, Chambers of Commerce in Eugene and Springfield, AARP Oregon, NAACP Lane County, the League of Women Voters, Home Builders, businesses, construction firms, and land conservation, sustainability and transportation advocates. We are working with the "Collective

Impact" model and draw from a Steering Committee and work groups to capture a wide range of perspectives and technical expertise. All organizations that want to work collaboratively on housing can join—just visit the website or send an email.

**Q: What does "Collective Impact" have to do with housing?**

"Collective Impact" is model for cross-sector collaboration to address specific social challenges at scale. Some structural problems—like the housing crisis—are too complex for one sector or organization to address alone. Lasting progress requires partnership. Better Housing Together came to the model organically, but we've learned a lot by studying it.

**Q: What's the status of Lane County's housing crisis?**

Unfortunately, the Eugene Area still claims some of the worst housing metrics in the state and the nation—44% of Lane County is struggling to meet basic needs and month-to-month expenses. That's over 65,000 households. The National Association of Realtors reports this is the

(Continued on pg. 5)

Right: Lane County statistics on current housing and affordability.

## A HOUSING CRISIS in Lane County



**42% OF HOUSEHOLDS FOCUSED ON SURVIVAL**

**18% in poverty**  
**24% ALICE** (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed)  
**42% struggling to meet basic needs**

United Way's 2014 ALICE Report (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) refers to households that earn more than the Federal Poverty Level, but less than the basic cost of living. They struggle to afford basic needs. In Eugene-Springfield alone, rates are 20% poverty and 24% ALICE, a 44% total. Note: ALICE calculations presume \$0 debt.

**COST BURDEN OF HOUSING IS REAL**

**6 in 10 renters** pay more than 30% of income for rent, and of these half pay more than 50% of income for housing

**3 in 10 homeowners** pay more than 30% of income for housing, making them cost-burdened.

Oregon Housing Alliance, Lane County, 2017

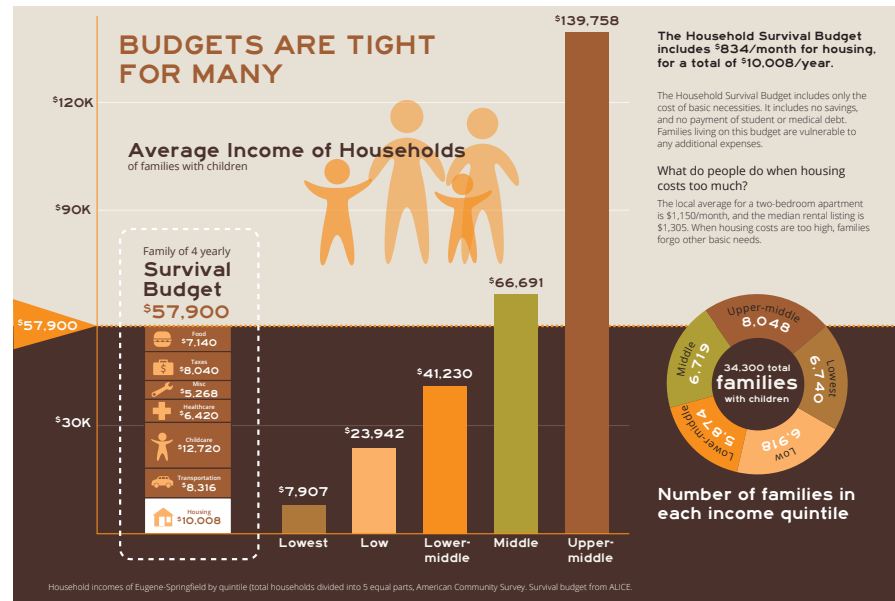
**2017 = All-time High for Average and Median Home Sale Prices**

**\$265,000**  
Purchase price that median income can afford

**\$305,000**  
Median home sale listing price in January 2018

**Housing options** for low-income and working-class families are further compressed and even more expensive when middle-income families are cost-burdened.

Regional Multiple Listing Service (RMLS), 2018



**MISSING MIDDLE HOUSING OPTIONS**

**Expand and diversify our housing options to create more local affordability**

**Four Key Characteristics of Missing Middle Housing**

- 1 Walkable
- 2 Smaller homes
- 3 Transitional scale
- 4 Simple construction

**Did you know?**

A 67-hour work week is needed to afford a 2-bedroom apartment at minimum wage.

Eugene has the 2nd most-constrained housing market in the nation. Only Seattle, WA is worse.

The average local family spends more than 60% of its income on housing and transportation costs.

Our households are changing. 83% of US households will have no children at home in 12 years (2030)



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# HOMELESS HOUSING SOLUTION: "HOUSING FIRST"

**Eugene's first "Housing First" project will be a home for 50 formerly homeless individuals in our community.**

*Amanda Donofrio, AIA and Christina Bollo, PhD*

Lane County social service providers identify the lack of affordable housing as the most significant barrier to their work preventing and ending homelessness.

Our area has a lack of available affordable housing stock, making it hard for many people to afford housing in our rental market. To maintain housing, and avoid homelessness, one needs financial stability and a strong support network for hard times.

In 2018, when Lane County Human Services Division conducted a "point in time" count to better understand the number of people who are experiencing homelessness in our community, they counted 1,642 people who were unhoused. Of these individuals, 412 people admitted to having issues with substance abuse, 547 people reported having a mental illness and 713 people identified as being chronically homeless. Mental health systems were the first to recognize and respond to the homelessness epidemic and a disproportionately high number of homeless people are living with mental illness.

Most affordable housing options have preconditions to entry that require long-term sobriety in order to access housing. This linear approach to ending homelessness is seen as "**Treatment First**", as it requires participation in treatment and a demonstrated period of sobriety before being placed in housing. People who are evicted from "Treatment First" housing because of relapses return to homelessness; they have an increase in reported mental illness; and they need more emergency services than those that are able to remain in housing.

In contrast, the "Housing First" approach recognizes that in order to truly tackle the issue of homelessness, we must eliminate restrictions and get individuals into affordable housing while offering emotional, mental and physical health resources on-site. This model functions

under the belief that housing is a basic human right and not something that a person has to earn through treatment. The elimination of sobriety prerequisites to obtaining housing eliminates what is seen as an insurmountable barrier for a certain percentage of chronically homeless individuals. Housing is fundamental to survival, providing a solution for the basic human need to feel safe and secure. The element of choice in the pursuit of treatment results in residents staying in housing programs longer. In the "Housing First" model, loss of housing occurs only for violations of a lease and not for relapses, which prevents the return to homelessness and ensures that support is available through times of crisis.

The "Housing First" model relies on on-site services in tandem with housing. This pairing of **housing and supportive services in the same building** allows residents to have services tailored to their needs. Also, the presence of service staff builds trust and the resident can seek assistance when they are ready. Staff in the building will check in with residents frequently, even if they are not in treatment. A cornerstone of the Housing First model is that the resident has the right to a choice in the services they receive with their housing and will receive support in their recovery at their own pace.

Peer-reviewed, academic studies show broad positive outcomes of "Housing First", such as improved mental, physical and behavioral health; lower drug and alcohol use; reduced emergency room usage; and fewer crimes of homelessness such as trespassing and public urination that result in arrest and jail. A key factor in the success of Housing First is the simple fact that a **safe and stable home** enables people to remove themselves from survival mode and work through past trauma in a supportive environment with reliable service providers. Research shows that the Housing First model is effective in achieving residential stability for people who have



*Site plan with arrow showing location of proposed 50 bedroom Housing First building.*



*Rendering of proposed Housing First facility in Eugene, OR.*

been homeless for years. One study found that 88 percent of "Housing First" residents remained housed compared to 47 percent in a control group who had entered housing through the traditional, "Treatment First" model.

**Poverty and homelessness are persistent throughout America and an unavoidable part of our community conversation here in Eugene.** A partnership between Lane County Human Services and Homes for Good Housing Agency has worked to realize our area's first

"Housing First" affordable housing project. Funding support from Oregon Housing and Community Services and a generous land transfer on the Lane County Behavioral Health Campus have made the project possible. Bergsund DeLaney Architecture and Planning, P.C. began conceptual design work in the Fall of 2016 to assist with the project's feasibility and will see the project through to completion.

The architect is also a facilitator of community conversations about





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**WHO IS BETTER HOUSING TOGETHER?**

MORE THAN  
**40**  
COMMUNITY PARTNERS

**50**  
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

**36**  
PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS & MEETINGS

**1,200**  
SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENTS PER MO.

**500,000+**  
DIGITAL TOUCHES



**Q: Didn't housing in Lane County just hit another all-time high?**

Yes—Lane County set a new median home price record of \$299,000 in September. Still a “good deal” for those moving from the Bay Area or Seattle, but unattainable for most local residents.

**Q: What can people actually afford?**

Most people need options that cost less. Most simply, housing affordability is a function of price and local income. Locally, it now takes 5-6 years of income to equal the price of a home—“normal” used to be about a 3-year price-to-income ratio. About half the community has \$840/month for housing, but the median apartment rents at around \$1,300. More new housing that is “affordable by design”—more efficiently designed, with lower energy costs, and good transportation options—is part of what’s needed to bridge the gap. Simultaneously we need to increase wages and expand other opportunities that provide stability.

**Q: How are housing and homelessness connected?**

The connection between homelessness and high costs of housing has been documented repeatedly—in 2017, 8 of the 10 states with the highest median home prices had the highest rates of homelessness.

second-most constrained market in the country. Data from Oregon Housing and Community Services shows 60% of local renters and 30% of homeowners are cost-burdened by housing. Lane County’s median income is lower than the state average, and the poverty rate is higher. This simply reinforces the need to work upstream and identify new solutions.

**Q: What progress are we making?**

More people understand the challenge, and shared understanding supports action. We collaborated with Oregon Law Center this summer to study how legal appeals impact housing supply, and we have a task team looking at social impact investing and finance models. We’ve also been working with EWEB to review their development policies. As a result of that work, EWEB is looking to reduce water “Systems Development Charges” for small houses, reinstate a grant program for affordable housing, and effectively eliminate some performance bond requirements for residential work. In Springfield, our partners have been providing technical assistance to analyze the code and cost structure. In Eugene, we’ve completed a series of technical work groups to identify barriers to housing affordability and vetted a revised proposal for the affordable housing fund that City Council has discussed.

(Continued on pg. 14)



# LIVING IN EUGENE'S NEW TINY HOME VILLAGE

Randy Nishimura, AIA, CSI, CCS, Principal at Robertson Sherwood Architects PC

SquareOne Villages believes everyone deserves a safe and stable place to call home. The organization, founded in 2012 by pastor Dan Bryant and others, seeks to bridge the gap between the street and conventional housing with a variety of simple, cost-effective housing options. Following its Opportunity Village pilot project (which consists of transitional micro-housing for otherwise homeless individuals and couples) SquareOne embarked on Emerald Village, a tiny house community located in Eugene's Whiteaker neighborhood providing permanent, accessible, and sustainable homes for people with very low incomes. By developing Opportunity Village and now Emerald Village, SquareOne is delivering real solutions through innovative means.

A big part of that innovation is enlisting the help of local architects, designers, and builders to make Emerald Village a reality. The AIA-Southwestern Oregon members and other design professionals who volunteered their efforts each designed one or two of the twenty-two homes or shared communal facilities. All the homes meet code definitions for a "permanent dwelling," including sleeping and living areas, a kitchenette, and bathroom—all within 160 to 288 square feet per unit.

Each resident of Emerald Village pays between \$250 and \$350 to cover their share of the cooperative costs (which pays for rent and includes utilities, maintenance, and operating expenses). They can build equity as \$50 of their coop share each month applies to a savings account, which can be cashed out if they choose to move elsewhere. Each resident had a voice in shaping how Emerald Village is operated and managed, creating the foundational sense of ownership on which the village thrives.

I recently toured the project. My host was Andrew Heben, SquareOne's project director and himself a resident of Emerald Village. Andrew's background is in urban planning and design, and includes a stint working with The Urban Collaborative. He's traveled extensively to study over a dozen tent cities organized by the homeless, and spent time living at one in Ann Arbor, Michigan known as Camp Take Notice.



This experience informed his 2011 award-winning thesis in urban planning at the University of Cincinnati. He is the author of *Tent City Urbanism: From Self-Organized Camps to Tiny House Villages*, based on his extensive field work, personal research, and hands-on experience with SquareOne.

I found Emerald Village remarkably picturesque, albeit pint-sized. The cluster of varied structures is truly village-like, shaping an assortment of pleasant outdoor spaces shared by the residents.

I asked Andrew whether he considers the tiny home village concept to be a superior means to address the problem of housing affordability when compared to multi-unit apartment buildings, cooperative housing, or SROs (Single Room Occupancy). "Emerald Village is simply an alternative, it isn't necessarily better," he said. "What's important is rethinking the problem of affordability and scale, and involving residents in the final design and construction of their homes."

Tiny homes are not truly inexpensive (economy of scale is lacking, and the SquareOne model relies heavily upon donated labor & materials, and an absence of debt), they are small (they are, after all, tiny houses), and not for everyone (Emerald Village's residents include individuals and couples, but no families with children). No matter: for the inhabitants of Emerald Village, what's most important is that

(Continued on pg. 12)

Above: Eugene's Emerald Village Tiny Homes. Front porches are oriented to a central open lawn. Each building is uniquely designed by a local architect in collaboration with several top construction companies.





# 2018 AIASWO DESIGN EXCELLENCE AWARD WINNERS

Among 11 projects awarded, the AIASWO recognized two U of O architecture student projects for design excellence. The 2018 AIASWO Design Excellence Awards were selected by an invited group of regional and international architects who reviewed over 30 submissions. The judges included Ruth Baleiko AIA (Miller Hull Partnership, Seattle WA), Robert Hastings FAIA (Agency Architect, Trimet, Portland OR), Jerry Aqualina AIA (CAS Architects, San Francisco, CA), Carrie Stickland FAIA (Works Progress Architecture, Portland OR / Los Angeles CA), and Cassandra Keller AIA (Clark Keller Architects, Australia). The Awards were celebrated at an AIASWO banquet at the UO Ford Alumni Center in June 2018.



**STUDENT PROJECT DESIGN AWARD:** Grandstand at Hayward Field by UO Architecture students Nicole Giustino, August Lehnert and Max Moore (Computer Rendering)



**STUDENT PROJECT DESIGN AWARD:** Net Zero visitor center and research station on the Oregon Coast by UO Architecture student Benjamin Fuglevand (Computer Rendering).



# 2018 AIASWO DESIGN EXCELLENCE AWARD WINNERS

The AIASWO recognized 9 projects for Design Excellence Awards selected by an invited group of regional and international architects who reviewed over 30 submissions. The judges included Ruth Baleiko AIA (Miller Hull Partnership, Seattle WA), Robert Hastings FAIA (Agency Architect, Trimet, Portland OR), Jerry Aqualina AIA (CAS Architects, San Francisco, CA), Carrie Stickland FAIA (Works Progress Architecture, Portland OR / Los Angeles CA), and Cassandra Keller AIA (Clark Keller Architects, Australia).



**HONOR AWARD:** UO Student Recreation Center by Robertson Sherwood Architects/Otto Potichia Architect



**HONOR AWARD:** UO Student Recreation Center by Robertson Sherwood Architects/Otto Potichia Architect



**HONOR AWARD:** Arts and Technology Academy Middle School by Rowell Brokaw Architects.



**HONOR AWARD:** Arts and Technology Academy Middle School by Rowell Brokaw Architects.



**HONOR AWARD:** "Push Pull" House by Speranza Architecture.



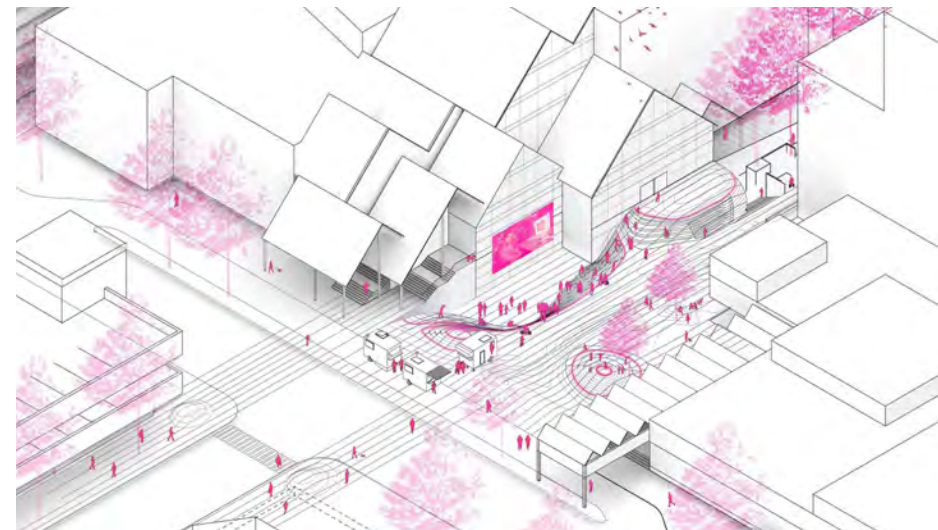
**HONOR AWARD:** "Push Pull" House by Speranza Architecture.



The Awards were celebrated at an AIA of Southwestern Oregon banquet at the UO Ford Alumni Center in June 2018. Projects included College and Middle School facilities, a corporate facility, a downtown rehabilitation project, a built residence and unbuilt design projects for a residence, food market and public space.



**MERIT AWARD:** Roosevelt Middle School by Robertson Sherwood Architects.



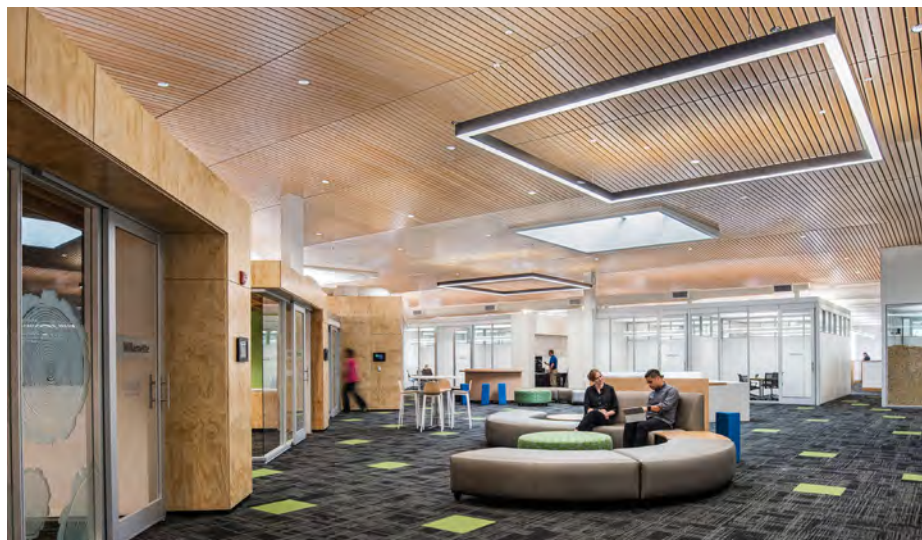
**CITATION AWARD** Hult Center Plaza Renovation Study by Speranza Architecture (Unbuilt)



**MERIT AWARD:** 1203 Willamette Street by Rowell Brokaw Architects.



**CITATION AWARD:** Birche Fircrest House by Speranza Architecture (Unbuilt)



**CITATION AWARD:** Roseburg Forest Projects Headquarters by Rowell Brokaw Architects.



**CITATION AWARD:** Eugene Public Food Market by Speranza Architecture (Unbuilt)



# COHOUSING IN EUGENE!

Willard Dixon, AIA



Above: Oakleigh Meadow Co-Housing with planting gardens and a central Common House.

**Will Dixon here! I'm the Project Manager for the Oakleigh Meadow Cohousing (OMC) project situated in the River Road area along the Willamette River and bike path.** I'm also a River Road resident and OMC household member along with my wife and two boys – we currently live just a block away from the beautiful cohousing site where we've gathered many times with friends and family. We welcome cohousing into our neighborhood and plan on living at OMC as soon as it's built in 2020.

OMC cleared yet another major legal hurdle when the Court of Appeals recently affirmed our development, giving us an unconditional two-thumbs-up to proceed unhindered. In addition, OMC has once again secured approval of our project from the City of Eugene. As such, we have all of the necessary land use approvals at this time and are aiming to break ground spring/summer 2019, right around the corner!

In case you're wondering, cohousing is an intentional community of private homes clustered and strategically positioned around shared common space to facilitate maximum possibility of social interaction between neighbors (*see site plan on opposite page*). Each attached or single family home has traditional amenities,

including a private kitchen. Shared spaces typically feature a common house, which may include a large kitchen and dining area, laundry, and recreational spaces. Cohousing communities are intentional, collaborative neighborhoods created with a little ingenuity. They bring together the value of private homes with the benefits of more sustainable living. That means residents actively participate in the design and operation of their neighborhoods, and share common facilities and good connections with neighbors. All in all, they stand as innovative and sustainable answers to today's environmental and social problems.

One key characteristic of cohousing communities is breaking bread together regularly in the Common House. Cohousing communities are created and managed by its residents, who value a healthy mixture of privacy and community. Sustainability and innovation are two words often associated with these communities – natural products of people working with one another for community sake.

Pertaining to our development, there's no big, bad developer from out-of-state trying to make a profit here. OMC members are the developers and the budget is as tight as it can be to make it viable. We

care very much for the River Road area and want to strengthen and contribute to our neighborhood and its ties to the larger community and City. We are teachers, musicians, gardeners, architects, artists, retirees, builders, consultants, and more who support local merchants, schools and organizations. We believe that the UGB (Urban Growth Boundary) is a good thing, promoting infill, curtailing sprawl and preserving open land for farm use. Essentially, Oakleigh Meadow Cohousing is what smart-growth looks like. It is our goal to build a housing development with a lively and positive social environment. And we desire to be part of the larger vision of shifting back to a sustainable, ecological village life where we can raise families within a community that provides support, security, and aging in place.

Emerging demographic changes are all around us – moms working outside of the home; fewer children per household; more single-individual households; the increasing desire for a convenient, practical, responsible, economical, interesting, and fun lifestyle; and an easier way to live a little lighter on the planet. Many of us are already involved in local matters and greater area activities, and encourage this type of development that will bring in fresh

families to the neighborhood, folks who are neighborly and committed to keeping it local.

The current zoning of the OMC site is R-1, low-density residential and has been this way for a long time – we haven't changed it or asked for any special exceptions. We're proposing 28 units (homes) on 2.3 acres, less density and less square footage than is allowed by code (14 units per acre max). It's fair to say that if an outside developer were to get ahold of this property, they would max it out by building a spaghetti system of streets lined with 32 of the same houses dropped into place. Oakleigh Meadow Cohousing is also proposing more on-site parking than is required, in order to keep cars off the road and to help maintain the "country lane" feel of the neighborhood. We are also not going to create any shade on our neighbors or build on the City Parkway – first of all, the City wouldn't allow it, plus cohousers care about their neighbors and the environment. Ours is a sensitive design that has come from a long and tedious internal design process, a process that has required us to seek consensus, explore and understand a slightly different lifestyle. It is specifically designed for the realities of an industrially and technologically advanced society in which the residents – for the sake of their children and future generations – generally wish to see society advance in a positive direction.

Seven years ago when we embarked on this project, we were initially thinking of fewer households. We soon realized that a larger community makes it affordable through economies of scale, and allows for a greater diversity of ages and family types. Common facilities can also be more extensive when we pool our resources. Plus, there is a "sweet spot" when it comes to right-sizing cohousing developments – if the group is too small, it'll tend to function similarly to households in which a number of unrelated people share a house or an apartment. If too big, it'll have an institutional feel and will lack the intimacy required to make its residents feel as if they have a stake in its success. OMC members now have a deeper understanding of how cohousing works, and how it addresses our needs both for community and private life while offering a feeling of belonging. It is important to note that cohousing is not the

(Continued on pg. 12)





## Looking for a Safe and Supportive Community for People of All Ages? Welcome Home!

- Light filled homes along the beautiful Willamette River and bike path; shared resources, gardens, open space, and common facilities support a more socially and environmentally sustainable lifestyle; designed to cultivate a culture of connection and support among residents; pedestrian and family friendly; accessible units available now.
- All necessary land use approvals in place for beginning construction spring/summer 2019.
- 2, 3, and 4 bedroom units available. Reserve yours now before they are all spoken for!



Join us for a Site Tour! [oakleighmeadow.org](http://oakleighmeadow.org) • 541-357-8303

Above: Oakleigh Meadow Co-Housing site plan illustrating how houses, community open space and shared facilities may be clustered to encourage social interaction between neighbors. The common house at center functions as the gathering point for neighborhood activities, an important facet of cohousing communities.

**“The team at GLAS Architects really listened to our ideas for what we would like to see in our new school. We couldn’t be happier with the results we are already seeing from them!”**

*Jerrie Matuszak — Principal, Oak Grove Elementary School*

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**Oak Grove Elementary School - Greater Albany Public Schools - Albany, Oregon**



communes we know of in the United States, which are sometimes organized around ideological beliefs and may depend on a charismatic leader to establish the direction of the community and hold the group together. Cohousing instead offers a “new” approach to housing that speaks directly to the desire for a more practical and social home environment. They’re unique in their extensive common facilities and, more importantly, in that they are organized, planned, and managed by the residents themselves.

OMC is actively seeking more members so if OMC interests you, please call about our next meeting (541-357-8303). I also strongly encourage anyone interested in learning more about cohousing to read the book, *Creating Cohousing / Building Sustainable Communities* by Kathryn McCamant and Charles Durrett. If you don’t want to buy your own, OMC has donated a few copies of the book to the Eugene Public Library that are available for check-out. Also, I have a copy to share – if you’d like to borrow it, or would like to meet over a cup of coffee, just let me know.

Come on board in creating Eugene’s first cohousing community, an intergenerational village on a beautiful piece of land that is close to downtown with clustered townhouses and flats to maximize efficiency, interaction, and green space. Are you looking for an open, safe, and eco-friendly neighborhood with private homes balanced with generous common spaces, a place for kids of all ages to play together, and an opportunity to age in place surrounded by people who care about you? Welcome home! Join us at an upcoming event to learn more about our project. We look forward to hearing from you!

Will Dixon is a local architect with a small practice in the Whiteaker neighborhood. He is also a past president of the AIA SWO Chapter and a past board member of RRCO, the River Road Community Organization.

[www.oakleighmeadow.org](http://www.oakleighmeadow.org)  
[www.willardcdixon.com](http://www.willardcdixon.com)

each is a place they can afford and proudly declare as theirs.

During my visit, Andrew and I chatted with one of Emerald Village’s pioneering residents, Bruce Sedgwick. His home—Unit C—features a hallmark common to all of the village’s tiny houses: individuality. Bruce’s home is truly his. He enjoyed providing input during the design phase (Bergsund Delaney Architecture & Planning PC designed Unit C), and he’s equally enjoying the process of “home improvement” now that he’s moved in. His current project is an expansion of his front porch using a type of patio paver that can be filled with grass, crushed rock, or sand to provide a permeable, durable, and usable surface.

I peeked inside Unit C. “Tall, isn’t it?” Bruce asked rhetorically. Indeed, it is. The loftiness of the main living space relieves its otherwise petite dimensions. Above the bathroom and kitchenette is Bruce’s sleeping loft, accessible via a ship’s ladder. Like the other Emerald Village houses, Unit C is definitely cozy, but it is practical and full of charm. Bruce did lament the absence of indoor places in which to stow away his belongings, but also noted the generous storage room he can access from outside.

Andrew mentioned how one of the obstacles to creating a tiny home village has been Oregon’s residential building code, which mandates minimum room sizes and specifies acceptable stair configurations. The State recently adopted the 2018 International Residential Code (IRC), which includes Appendix Q for Tiny Houses. The new code provides relief from some of the provisions that were applicable to conventional housing but impractical for tiny homes. The new code will certainly ease the acquisition of building permits for future tiny home developments in Oregon like Emerald Village.

Those fortunate enough to be housing-secure can easily misjudge how the lack of affordable housing impacts our entire community. Rather than fearing the housing affordability challenge and the change it portends, we need to confront it to help low-income individuals find permanent housing and preserve the qualities we find most attractive about life in Eugene.

Andrew stressed the importance of communication with neighborhood

associations and involving them in the planning for projects like Emerald Village. Significantly, a long-time neighbor of the development site served as a member of the Emerald Village resident selection committee. Inclusive communication from the beginning helped to allay concerns. Notably, the plans for Emerald Village didn’t trigger a public input process because the development was allowed outright under the current R-2 zoning for the site. Only 6% of the land zoned for residential use in the City of Eugene is zoned as R-2, compared to 91% zoned for R-1.

Now nearing completion, Emerald Village stands as its own best ambassador. It has cachet in spades. Downsizing and simple living may be fashionable trends but the environmental and social merits of tiny houses and living with less give them real staying power. In a sense, SquareOne has captured lightning in a bottle by capitalizing on the popularity of tiny homes, paving the way for broader acceptance of developments like Emerald Village within other established neighborhoods and communities.

I asked Andrew if he might change anything for SquareOne’s future projects. “No, not really,” he answered. “We can always do things more efficiently. We do like the organic process we employ.” Regarding future projects, SquareOne has Cottage Village in the works. Located in Cottage Grove, Cottage Village follows the permanent, affordable tiny house community model pioneered by Emerald Village. The new project will consist of 13 tiny houses and the conversion of an existing shop building to include a community gathering area, kitchen, and laundry.

Too many people with low incomes lack the security, the predictability, and the comfort that comes with one’s own house, which is why the efforts of non-profit organizations like SquareOne Villages are so important and appreciated. Emerald Village is proof our community is prepared to welcome a safe, livable, and affordable tiny-housing development. The project is a brilliant and inventive example for others to

### **Housing First** (Continued from page 4)

the project. Local service providers and community members who have experienced homelessness have contributed

to design goals and key concepts. This project is benefiting from much applied research, including the review of national examples of “Housing First” projects and incorporation of “Trauma Informed Design” concepts into the project. The design and development team has been involved in a series of site visits and discussions with regional “Housing First” development teams with buildings in service. The expertise given to the project from all community voices is invaluable.

When looking to other successful examples in service, Lincoln Place in Vancouver, WA has served as an example of a similar sized Pacific Northwest community that has seen the benefits of this housing program. Sanderson Apartments in Denver, CO is a recently completed project and is one of the rare national examples featuring “Trauma Informed Design” concepts. Denver has found such value that there are multiple Permanent Supportive Housing projects utilizing the Housing First model.

Affordable, permanent housing provides a safe place to shift focus from the uncertainty that comes with questioning where you’ll sleep each night, if at all. Residential stability can lead to a sense of psychological stability and allows a person to focus on their home and relationships with others. Most of us take for granted how intertwined our home is with our life, providing security and privacy to nurture ourselves and others.

**Eugene’s first “Housing First” project will be a home for 50 formerly homeless individuals in our community**, within a strongly supported community setting. The building will be a manifestation of our shared value that safe and stable housing is not a privilege, but a right.



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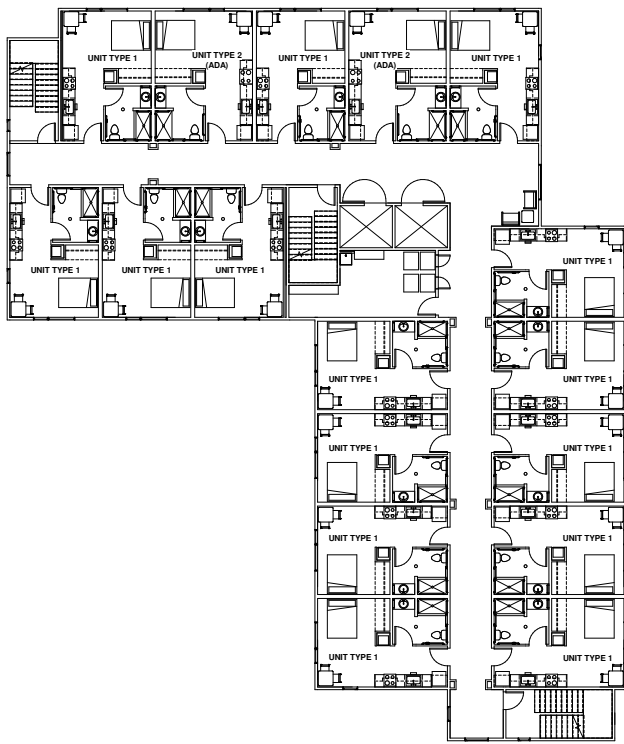
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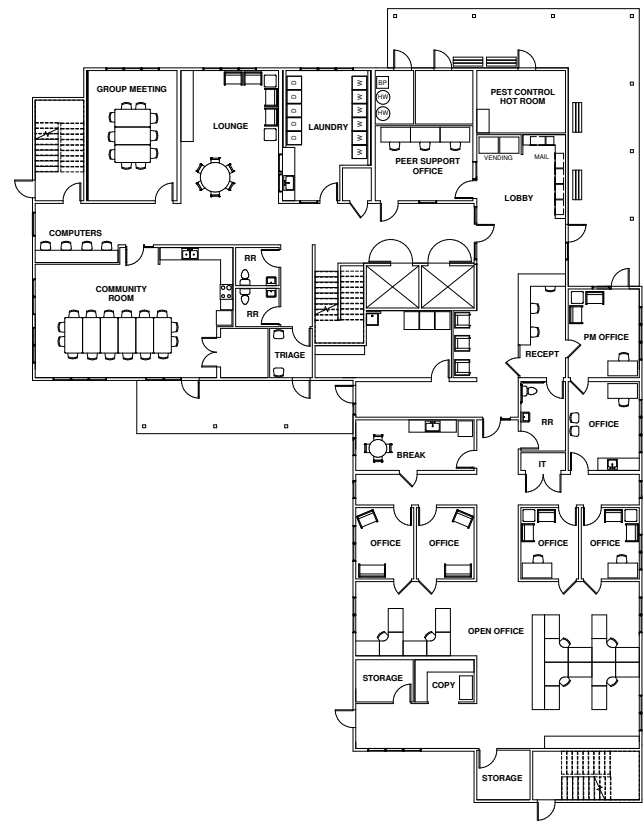
Contact Jessica Wu at [jwu21@uoregon.edu](mailto:jwu21@uoregon.edu) to learn more.

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Above: Architect's conceptual layout of the studio apartments which include full baths and kitchens.



Above: Architect's conceptual layout of the ground floor where there are many support and community services available.

# Striving to create exceptional housing in our community.



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Cities with the highest rents also experience the highest rates of homelessness—you need to work a 67-hour week at minimum wage to afford a local two-bedroom apartment. People experiencing homelessness are typically experiencing crisis in several ways, but a lack of supportive housing and housing affordability undermine their stability.

**Q: How does more housing diversity help with affordability?**

Housing diversity just means more choice, and that's good regardless of income. When you have more choices, you likely have different price points. Smaller housing, housing with different amenities, locations that are more affordable, with good access to transportation, schools and places to walk nearby. Portland Metro is seeing most ADUs rent below the cost of a one-bedroom apartment—that's a good example of how small housing can fill in a missing rung on the housing ladder. Demographically, we also know there are people in great family homes right now who would downsize if they had a good option. We just don't have the housing. In terms of overall inventory, we still only have about 1/3 of what's needed to be considered "healthy."

**Q: How does the housing crisis figure into community health?**

Housing is a social determinant of health, measurable at the individual and community scale. Adequate housing conditions, affordability, and housing stability affects people in distinct and overlapping ways—some of those direct and indirect impacts can last a lifetime.

**Q: Direct and indirect impacts like what?**

Direct health impacts like asthma, lead exposure and allergies acquired from living in substandard housing. That happens in this community. Many indirect impacts are also related to health, but go far beyond it to things like school-readiness and climate change. We know that children experiencing housing insecurity have a harder time finishing school. We know that people will spend more, be less healthy, and create more pollution if the only transportation option they have is to drive. All of these im-

acts have the most influence on vulnerable and typically underrepresented populations.

**Q: Have you learned anything surprising from other places facing this challenge?**

One surprise was how often "will" is cited as the key to progress. We tend to think it's more complicated than that.


**Q: Do you have a sense of what people are willing to do?**

Earlier this year, we asked 275 people, "What do you think is stopping this community from addressing the housing crisis?" and "What will you do in response to the housing crisis?" They gave us about 2,200 data points—personal commitments and ideas—about how the community is willing to act. This spring and summer, we held another series of technical work groups to understand how we can impact cost structure and funding. We're still crunching through this information, but it's a strong foundation.

Learn More:  
[www.betterhousingtogether.org](http://www.betterhousingtogether.org)

A special thank you to all our AIA SWO Chapter members and past leaders for creating and developing a truly exemplary Chapter since 1952.

2019 will be our first year as Oregon AIA's Eugene Section which will further connect us to colleagues statewide.

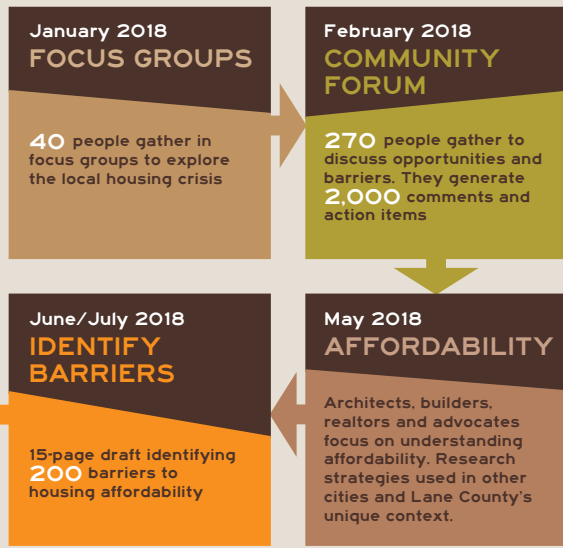


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A lot has happened in the past year. Thanks to people and organizations who share a common goal of creating an innovative, inclusive, livable community that includes well-designed infill redevelopment and provides more affordable housing choices.



Above: Better Housing Together along with local professionals and community members have taken steps that continue the conversation around the housing difficulties facing our communities in hopes of developing long term, sensible solutions. Information courtesy of Better Housing Together.

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**Housing our Community**



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