

Hawk's Eye Housing Project

Clatsop County Context and Early-Stage Reflections



Photo: Tree Swing Photography

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Clatsop County Context

Housing

- Limited supply of affordable rentals
- High housing costs and limited availability
- High rates of homelessness

Healthcare and Social Service Workforce

- Third largest employment sector
- Predominantly female, white, and aging
- High vacancies and recruitment challenges

Medically Underserved Areas in Northwest Oregon, 2023



Source: Oregon Office of Rural Health. Green shading denotes medically underserved areas, brown denotes medically underserved populations, and yellow signifies a Governor's Health Care Shortage Area Designation.

Hawk's Eye Housing Project

Project goal: Help address the housing crisis in Clatsop County and support workforce recruitment and retention

Project details

- Located in Seaside, the Hawk's Eye project was launched by CareOregon and Columbia Pacific CCO (CPCCO) in 2023
- The building has 17 units for people with disabilities, and 38 units for healthcare and social safety net workforce housing
- The apartment building was formerly a Red Lion Inn & Suites



Employer-Assisted Housing

- Employer-assisted housing (EAH) programs support housing affordability for employees
- Some evidence suggests positive impacts on employee retention and satisfaction
- Limited information on EAH impact in the healthcare sector

Examples of healthcare-led mixed use housing development projects		
Organization	Location	Number of Units
Family Health Centers of San Diego	San Diego, CA	146 units
Martha's Vineyard Hospital	Martha's Vineyard, MA	118 units
Albertina Kerr	Gresham, OR	150 units
Cascadia Health	Portland, OR	52-units
Sinai Health System	Chicago, IL	350-units

Evaluation Overview

Aims

- Explore the perspectives of key stakeholders engaged in the development of the Hawk's Eye project related to the workforce housing component to identify early lessons learned and inform future evaluation efforts

Methods

- CORE conducted in-depth interviews with ten key stakeholders in December 2023 and January 2024
 - Stakeholders represented a range of organizations including CareOregon, Columbia-Pacific CCO, regional healthcare employers, and community/regional partners.
- Interviews took place by phone and video conference; interviews were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed thematically

Stakeholder Perspectives

Project Facilitators

- Recognized need for affordable housing.
- Existing partnerships, strong stakeholder buy-in and independent funding from CO/CPCCO.
- Positive public perception and staff with deep housing expertise.
- Conversion of an existing building – faster turnaround to get it online.

Project Challenges

- Learning curve for healthcare organizations.
- Timing and unforeseen setbacks.
- Partnership and communication issues.

Stakeholder Perspectives

“One thing is CPCCO, is one of the rare organizations that is bringing its own financial resources to housing development when they're building affordable housing. Usually, the typical approach is to cobble together state funding, federal funding, tax credits, local funding. Because the rents will never support the construction, there's always a need to subsidize affordable housing. For CPCCO to bring its own resources to the table, I think, sends a message to everybody in the community that the way to solve the problem is to put skin in the game, essentially.” – Community Stakeholder

“The disadvantage is that we don't have any expertise in running an apartment building. {...} thinking about the implications of security and safety, and bike racks, and EV charging stations, and pet policies, right? We're in the healthcare business. We're not in the tenancy business. It is forcing us to be thinking about it.” – Healthcare Stakeholder

Ongoing Questions

Considerations for Implementation

- Co-housing model potential pros and cons
- Rental arrangements and referral networks
- Financial sustainability
- Partnerships and communication
- Compliance with Oregon Pay Equity law, Fair Housing Act, and CCO administrative cost caps
- Financial liability and reputational risk concerns

Stakeholder Perspectives

“[T]he different population groups, and how that's going to be managed. Supportive housing versus workforce housing, very different population there at times, and whether that really belongs within the same housing unit. I know there's ideas around how they're going to separate those two populations, how that's going to be carried through and managed. That's the main concern.”

– Healthcare Stakeholder

Markers of Success

Financial sustainability

- Close to full occupancy
- Income to cover costs of project administration, property management, and upkeep

Positive tenant & community perception

- Development of healthy community relationships among all residents
- Smooth transition between tenants
- “No news is good news.”

Improved recruitment & retention

- Improved ability to recruit and retain healthcare workforce in the region
- Increased access to care because of improved workforce capacity

Employee satisfaction

- Additional resource for housing barriers, ability to save on rents.
- Satisfaction with housing

Next steps on evaluation

Phase 2 of evaluation

- Stakeholder interviews with healthcare workforce renters at the Hawk's Eye and with regional employers to explore experiences and potential project outcomes.
- Explore the availability of additional data from employers or CPCCO (e.g., information about occupancy / vacancy rates, turnover rates, rental tenure, size of waitlist, time on waitlist, costs in different categories, the occupations or work locations of Hawk's Eye renters)

Stakeholder Perspectives

"...Having people be able to live just a normal life, be able to have a good job. Our healthcare industry is a great place to work. Then having a place whether it's permanent or transitional housing for people to be able to work through whatever issues they have, mental, physical, whatever and either be able to come out of that and function on their own or if it's something that's longer term, then they are functional members of society as well." – Community Partner Stakeholder

Recommendations for Health Partners Interested in Housing Projects



Bringing in housing sector expertise



Cultivating community buy-in



Planning for long-term sustainability



Maintaining clear, timely communication

Time for Reflection

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