



February 14, 2025

Re: Support for Mixed Used Housing in Portland Metro Area (SB 949)

Dear Chair Pham, Vice-Chair Anderson, and Members of the Senate Committee on Housing and Development:

On behalf of Edlen & Co, I am pleased to submit testimony in support of SB 949, which directs the Housing and Community Services Department to establish a project to develop affordable housing that integrates residential units with community spaces and services in the Portland metropolitan area.

I am a Co-Founder and Partner at Edlen & Co, a mission-driven real estate development and investment firm. We focus on affordable housing, mixed-income housing, public-private partnerships, and projects that further push the boundaries of sustainability. Edlen & Co's portfolio includes over 1,100 units of affordable housing completed, under construction, or in predevelopment. Many of these projects are partnerships with culturally specific nonprofits and serve historically underserved communities. We are honored to have been selected to support Self Enhancement, Inc. (SEI) in their Garfield project. The proposed project includes a daycare, culturally specific retail spaces, and a café, along with affordable homes and extensive services for residents.

Self Enhancement, Inc. (SEI) was founded in 1981 and has been providing excellent services to marginalized youth and families in the Portland Metropolitan Area for 44 years. In 2021 SEI partnered with Community Development Partners on the Alberta Alive Affordable Housing Project. At completion, Alberta Alive will provide 190 units of affordable housing to children and families in the N/NE Portland community. Existing funding sources are not sufficient to achieve the vision of a 'complete community' that SEI developed in partnership with the community. Creating affordable housing units in the heart of N/NE Portland that also include community services and commercial spaces will enhance livability, increase residential retention, and create a sense of community and belonging.

I urge you to support this request for funding to develop mixed use housing in partnership with Self Enhancement, Inc. by passing SB 949. Your support is needed so that organizations like SEI that are working to provide support and opportunity to marginalized populations can deliver. Thank you for your consideration and for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Jill Sherman
Partner