

LIFT Homeownership: \$100.9 million in General Obligation Bonds

Scaling up permanently affordable homeownership supply

The Local Innovation and Fast Track (LIFT) Homeownership Program, established alongside the LIFT Rental Program in 2016, creates affordable homeownership opportunities for Oregon households who earn up to 80 percent of the area median income.

The LIFT Homeownership Program directly supports three key priorities of the Statewide Housing Plan: Rural Communities, Homeownership and Housing Justice. With a focus on increasing housing supply, LIFT funds facilitate new construction or the conversion of existing non-housing structures with housing units. This program stimulates the rapid development of multi-home sites, with units ready for sale within 36 months of receiving a funding reservation.

Utilizing Article XI-Q bond funding as a source for housing development, the LIFT Homeownership Program requires the state to maintain ownership or operational interest in any real property developed. For homeownership opportunities, this currently means using a shared-equity model, such as a community land trust, condominium, or leasehold property.

To date, Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS) has leveraged LIFT Homeownership funding to stimulate the construction of 963 permanently affordable, entry-level homes across the state. LIFT has helped many affordable homeownership developers to triple their production of new homes. The majority of LIFT Homeownership-funded developments include homes designed to accommodate larger households, with up to five bedrooms per home. All homes built under this program meet strict energy efficiency standards and often accommodate aging in place.

A new \$100.9 million investment will further expand the pipeline of permanently affordable homeownership opportunities under development in Oregon communities. In 2024, the OHCS Homeownership Division convened a LIFT Homeownership Work Group composed of agency staff, community stakeholders, and Department of Justice (DOJ) attorneys. The work group leaned in together to substantively improve LIFT Homeownership program implementation.

LIFT Homeownership Program improvements include:

- Ensure that LIFT supports density in areas of high opportunity and development in rural areas.
- Align LIFT Homeownership with investments from construction lenders.
- Increase access to mortgage products for LIFT homebuyers.
- Ensure that foreclosure of one home doesn't jeopardize the entire LIFT project.
- Standardize LIFT documents.

