



## HOUSE MAJORITY OFFICE

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# 87 New Affordable Housing Units Open In Southern Oregon

*Legislature approved more than \$5M in funding for New Spirit Village, a community of affordable houses in Medford.*

**MEDFORD, Ore.** – Today, 87 families will now have a home in Medford following investments from the Oregon legislature in a project envisioned by a local nonprofit.

During a ribbon cutting ceremony today, **Rep. Pam Marsh (D - Southern Jackson County)**, Chair of the House Committee on Housing and Homelessness joined Governor Tina Kotek and local leaders to celebrate the opening of New Spirit Village, a project started during recovery efforts after the Almeda Wildfire.

“This is a neighborhood built on love, a place that will provide forever homes where children thrive, adults grow old together and families create a shared history.” said Marsh. “I am grateful to the Thaldens for the vision, tenacity and compassion that fueled this project and that will change the course of lives for the residents who will call this home. The Thaldens were unwilling to settle for anything less than a whole new community after the Almeda fire created such tremendous loss.”

In 2020, after the Almeda Wildfire in Southern Oregon, Kathryn and Barry Thalden dedicated their funds and efforts to develop a housing project for fire-victim families. They did so after seeing families still housed in hotels and FEMA trailers, or even campgrounds, and realizing there was little affordable replacement housing being built.

They began work on New Spirit Village, one project of 87 homes to serve as a prototype for building affordable communities where Oregonians can live. The legislature recognized the promise in this work and approved funding on multiple occasions since the project began. Just this year, the legislature approved \$945,000 for a regional stormwater facility that was needed to finish the New Spirit Village project.

“Investments made by this legislature directly addresses current issues Oregonians face and positions us well for responding to future challenges,” said **Rep. Tawna Sanchez (D-Portland)** and co-chair of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means.

The project was also granted \$4.8M in 2020 from Oregon Housing and Community Services’ Local Innovation and Fast Track (LIFT) Homeownership Program, a grant program created by the legislature to develop new affordable housing in Oregon.

Long-term affordability of the homes will be assured through management by Proud Ground, a community land trust that has partnered on the project.

On its website, [New Spirit Village](#) explains its vision as a whole new approach that creates the opportunity for a way out of multi-generational poverty.

Since 2020, the legislature has invested millions to build more affordable housing and address the root causes of homelessness in Oregon. Investments by the legislature over the last two sessions have prevented over 9,000 people from becoming homeless, created over 1,000 new shelter beds, and re-housed over 1,400 households.

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