



**White Center
Community
Development
Association**



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Updated May 17, 2024

Media contact:

Jessica Sherwin

Senior Communications Manager

Community Roots Housing

jsherwin@communityrootshousing.org

Community celebration marks start of construction on new affordable housing, unique community center in White Center

SEATTLE, WA – This Saturday, an ambitious community-driven project will break ground to address an urgent need for housing and human services in the White Center neighborhood. The White Center Community HUB, named to reflect the project goals of “hope,” “unity,” and “belonging,” is an exercise in deep collaboration between resident-led nonprofit White Center Community Development Association (WCCDA), Community Roots Housing, Southwest Youth and Family Services (SWYFS), and King County.

Located at 10821 8th Ave. SW near schools and transit, the White Center Community HUB will comprise a large, shared campus featuring a residential building, a public plaza, and a three-story, 25,000-square-foot community and human services center. The residential building will create 76 new homes ranging in size from one- to four-bedroom apartments, set to be affordable to households earning between 30% and 60% of the area median income. The campus, adjacent to King County Dick Thurnau Park, will include native plant gardens, a children’s play area, and an outdoor plaza to promote community connection and outdoor activities.

Several nonprofit organizations will program the community center to create an inclusive space that promotes health, well-being, and social equity in White Center. The YES! Foundation of White Center will lead after-school programming for local youth, including a music studio and maker space. HealthPoint will operate an on-site clinic, offering comprehensive medical and dental services to address community healthcare needs. SWYFS will operate educational programming for youth as well as a licensed behavioral health clinic. FEEST Seattle will focus on youth leadership development and community engagement, addressing critical issues related to food access and mental health awareness. By prioritizing access for marginalized groups and offering culturally relevant services, the HUB aims to advance racial equity and foster a sense of belonging among residents.

“Reaching groundbreaking is a testament to the resilience and determination that define what it means to come up in White Center,” said Aaron Garcia, executive director of the White Center Community

Development Association. “This project exemplifies what we can achieve when we lead with purpose and prioritize the voices of residents most deprived of justice and equity. By working together, we are building a stronger future and preserving the unique spirit of our neighborhood. The HUB will empower us to uplift community priorities, address displacement, and protect the cultural richness of White Center as we continue to lead the charge in this critical work.”

Extensive community engagement initiatives informed the design and programming of the HUB project. White Center is one of the most ethnically and income-diverse neighborhoods in Washington state, with a large immigrant and refugee population. Over 40% of households are bilingual, and the poverty rate is almost double the county average. The WCCDA holds annual community-wide summits, which typically attract over 500 residents. The concept for the White Center Community HUB originated from one of these summits, elevating the long-held aspirations of the White Center community to create a safe, welcoming, and inspiring space for gathering and accessing vital services.

“Partnership is a cornerstone of this project,” said Christopher Persons, CEO of Community Roots Housing. “The White Center Community HUB illustrates a model for development that leverages collaboration to meet critical neighborhood needs. In the midst of a protracted housing crisis that has disproportionately impacted marginalized populations, it is absolutely crucial that organizations like the WCCDA are empowered to realize their community's vision, making tangible strides towards a more inclusive and equitable future.”

The White Center Community HUB project utilizes a diverse portfolio of funding sources, including a mix of public grants, tax credit equity, and philanthropic contributions from the Rise Together capital campaign. The project is made possible by generous support and collaboration between the following organizations, stakeholders, and funding sources: King County, Washington State Housing Finance Commission, Washington State’s Department of Commerce, congressional funding championed by Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal and Senator Patty Murray, Enterprise, Capital One, Citibank, JPMorgan Chase, Hudson Housing Capital, Corporation for Supportive Housing, Local Initiatives Support Corporation, Craft3, and Ecotrust. Private support includes major gifts from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Microsoft, and the Norcliffe Foundation.

Marpac Construction will serve as the general contractor on the project; SKL Architects designed both the residential and commercial components of the shared campus. Construction is expected to last approximately 16 months with completion slated for September 2025.

“The White Center Community HUB is a testament to the power of partnerships,” said King County Executive Dow Constantine. “King County is honored to be part of the development of this space, investing more than 16 million dollars to create 76 units of affordable housing, community and education spaces, and integrated health services in the neighborhood. This hub signifies a place of “Hope, Unity, and Belonging,” for which the building will be named, and proves that community-driven development works. King County looks forward to seeing the full vision for the White Center Community HUB become a reality.”

###

About White Center Community Development Association

The White Center Community Development Association ([WCCDA](#)) is a nonprofit organization in unincorporated King County. White Center is one of only two heavily urbanized areas in King County that is not incorporated as part of a city (the other being Bryn Mawr-Skyway). Seattle has been working towards incorporating the area since the mid-2000s. The White Center CDA is a vibrant, evolving community organization guided by the White Center Neighborhood Action Plan and engages in various core programs and partnership initiatives to benefit the White Center community. The mission of the WCCDA is to envision a community of diverse, empowered, and connected residents coming together as stewards of the land, the people, and the natural assets of White Center. The WCCDA is working to eradicate poverty and build a vibrant economically diverse community.

About Community Roots Housing

Everyone has the right to a quality, affordable home. At Community Roots Housing, this truth drives our work. By embracing community-led development and engaging in deep-rooted partnerships, we're fostering vibrant, equitable communities where everyone has access to safe, affordable, and welcoming homes. Today, with nearly 50 apartment buildings and over 2,000 residents, we continue our commitment to build community with and for people. Learn more at communityrootshousing.org.

About Southwest Youth and Family Services

Southwest Youth & Family Services ([SWYFS](#)) is a leading resource for low-income families and youth in southwest King County. Since 1979, SWYFS has continually adapted to the changing landscape of the region while remaining dedicated to offering education, counseling, youth, and family development services within a welcoming environment. For nearly 40 years Southwest Youth and Family Services has been providing critical services in significantly under-resourced communities of southwest King County, including southwest Seattle, White Center, South Park, Burien, and SeaTac.



Rendering of the White Center Community HUB project courtesy of SKL Architects.