



Commissioner Nick Fish
City of Portland

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CITY INVESTS IN HOMEOWNERSHIP AND FORECLOSURE PREVENTION

Today, the City of Portland announced thirteen grants totaling \$970,000 to promote first-time homeownership for families of color and reduce foreclosures.

“The poor economy, flat wages, a tight credit market and high housing prices have kept homeownership out of reach for too many Portland families, particularly families of color,” said Commissioner Nick Fish. “These grants will equip more Portland families of all races and incomes to build equity through homeownership. Homeownership not only increases a family’s housing stability, but the equity in a home can be used to pay for higher education, provide start-up capital for a business, or help folks ride out hard times. That’s an economic boost we could use right now.”

Commissioner Fish noted that, in response to the lending crisis, the City would require all grantees to educate homebuyers about predatory lending and the risk of foreclosure. “Our main strategy to address foreclosures is prevention. Graduates of homebuyer education have a lower rate of foreclosures than other homebuyers of similar incomes. By expanding homebuyer education and counseling, we expect to prevent future foreclosures.”

The City will also be providing funding to two agencies to offer counseling to homeowners who are already in foreclosure proceedings, or who are at high risk of foreclosure because of their inability to make scheduled mortgage payments.

The agencies receiving the awards will assist low- and moderate-income households with incomes as high as \$54,000 for a family of 4 towards first-time homeownership by providing marketing and outreach services (including a series of homeownership fairs); education and counseling, including foreclosure prevention; and direct financial assistance.

The grantees included: Habitat for Humanity (\$75,000), the Minority Homeownership Assistance Collaborative (\$225,000), the Portland Housing Center (\$180,000), the Portland Community Land Trust (\$277,000), the Native American Youth and Family Center (\$73,000), HOST Development (\$75,000), Sabin Community Development Corporation (\$15,000), and Gameplan Financial, Inc. (\$10,000). \$40,000 will be divided among 5 homeownership fairs.

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