



ImagineHousing
building eastside communities

10604 NE 38th Pl, Ste 215 📍 Kirkland, WA 98033 📞 (425) 576-5190 🌐 www.imaginehousing.org

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Media Contact: Cheryl Isen

Phone: 425.233.9032

Email: cheryl@isenandco.com

Imagine Housing “30Bellevue Project” Tackles the Hidden Side of the Growing Affordable Housing Crisis

Bellevue, WA—Imagine Housing is celebrating the opening of 30Bellevue, a new affordable housing community in Bellevue featuring 63 apartments designed for low-income individuals and families. Heralded as an innovative template for communities working together to address homelessness and affordable housing, the project is a collaboration with St. Luke’s Lutheran Church and the generous support of donors and volunteers committed to ensuring that Bellevue remains a community whose workforce—including teachers, service workers, veterans, first responders and others—can afford to live and work in. The grand opening ribbon cutting ceremony will be Tuesday, June 4, 2019, from 10:00 am – 12:00 am at 30Bellevue, located at 3040 Bellevue Way, Bellevue, WA.

Affordable housing is one of the greatest unmet needs in Western Washington. In September 2018, The Seattle Times named Bellevue and Kirkland the two most expensive cities in the State in which to live. The rapid rise of housing costs not only creates an increase in homelessness, but it is also creating a hidden crisis that impacts low- and moderate-income earners. Rising rents put a severe strain on individuals and families, often forcing them to forgo other basic needs to avoid losing their housing. Housing is considered affordable at no more than 30% of family income, yet on the Eastside, 36% of renters and 29% of homeowners are “housing cost burdened,” spending more than 30% of their income on housing expenses. An additional 17% of Eastside renters and 12% of homeowners are “severely cost burdened”, which means they spend more than 50% of their income on housing. Individuals who earn moderate wages such as teachers, first responders, retail and service workers, and many of our veterans are forced to move to areas outside of the cities they work in to find lower housing costs, increasing commute times and adding to traffic congestion across the county.

“As housing costs continue to rise throughout the Eastside, we recognize the crisis this is creating for our cities,” said Bellevue Mayor, John Chelminiak. “We applaud the effort Imagine Housing is making to address this crisis and look forward to working with them to add additional affordable homes in Bellevue.” The 30Bellevue property supports primarily low-income individuals and families, including seniors and veterans, with half of the units designated for those exiting homelessness.

30Bellevue is an innovative collaboration with Bellevue’s St. Luke’s Lutheran Church. In 2014, St. Luke’s, in partnership with Imagine Housing began talks to utilize a portion of their property to build an affordable apartment community.



Pastor Mark Griffith of St. Luke’s Lutheran Church stated, “We’re proud that St. Luke’s was able to do its part to provide 63 affordable apartment units and hope that other organizations with available real estate will see our partnership with Imagine Housing as a template and roadmap for how to join forces to make a significant impact in the community. We know the need is so much more.” King County’s Regional Affordable Housing Task Force estimates that 157,000 new homes are needed now to solve the current housing crisis.

Beyond being an innovative template for organizations working together, 30Bellevue inspired heart-warming community outreach from others wanting to ensure Bellevue remains a community for all. Members of the St. Luke’s congregation helped residents’ transition into their new, affordable homes with personalized welcome baskets and handmade quilts. The congregation remains highly involved and invites others interested in helping to visit the Imagine Housing website at www.imaginehousing/get-involved .

Villette Nolon, President and CEO of Imagine Housing, said, “The grand opening of 30Bellevue is truly a celebration of a community coming together to address a need. We are grateful for our partnership with St. Luke’s Lutheran Church and the City of Bellevue and for their vision and understanding of how affordable housing strengthens our communities.”

The grand opening program will feature distinguished guest speakers, including: Senator Patty Kuderer; Councilmember Claudia Balducci, King County; Mayor John Chelminiak, City of Bellevue; Kim Herman, Executive Director of the Washington State Housing Finance Commission; Lindsey Masters, Executive Director of ARCH; Dan Watson, Deputy Director of King County Housing Authority; and Pastor Mark Griffith, St. Luke’s Lutheran Church.

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About 30Bellevue Funding

Funding for the development of 30Bellevue was provided by: Chase’s Community Development Banking group, Raymond James Tax Credit Funds, Inc., Washington State Housing Finance Commission, Washington State Department of Commerce, King County Housing and Community Development, King County Housing Authority, Washington Community Reinvestment Association, and Impact Capital. Funding was also provided by the Eastside Housing Trust Fund, administered by A Regional Coalition for Housing (ARCH) with funding from a Community Development Block Grant and the cities of Bellevue, Clyde Hill, Hunts Point, Issaquah, Kenmore, Kirkland, Medina, Mercer Island, Newcastle, Redmond, Sammamish, Woodinville, and Yarrow Point. We would also like to thank our construction and design partners Walsh Construction Co./Washington, SMR Architects, and JC Gowdy Interiors.

About Imagine Housing

Rooted in the Eastside community for over 30 years, Imagine Housing is a leading, award-winning affordable housing developer with 15 residential buildings in Kirkland, Bellevue, Issaquah, Redmond, Sammamish, and Mercer Island. As the only local, community-based nonprofit actively building new affordable housing on the Eastside, Imagine Housing provides more than 1,400 low-income families, youth, veterans, and seniors a safe, permanent



home with an emphasis on long-term housing stability. In addition to permanent affordable housing, Imagine Housing provides on-site supportive services to help residents remain stable in their housing, as well as have the resources and support they need to achieve their goals. Services include case management; community-building activities such as meals and events; emergency basic needs supplies; and partnership development. For more information about Imagine Housing, visit www.imaginehousing.org or call 425-576-5190.