



People's Park Supportive Housing Frequently Asked Questions

What do you mean by "affordable housing"?

A home is considered affordable if the household pays 30% or less of their income towards rent. The term usually refers to homes affordable to people with low, very low and extremely low income, including low-wage working families, seniors on fixed incomes, veterans, people with disabilities and the homeless. In the Bay Area, many affordable homes are developed by nonprofit organizations such as Resources for Community Development (RCD) that finance the developments with a variety of public subsidies to ensure that the rent levels are low and the units are affordable to low income tenants.

For how long will these units be affordable?

A 55-year affordability restriction will be put in place as a requirement of the financing. However RCD is a non-profit with a mission to provide affordable housing to people with the fewest options. We plan and expect this affordable housing development to remain affordable in perpetuity and beyond the required 55-year period.

Who is going to live in the supportive housing project and what is supportive housing?

Supportive housing provides on-site services to people who may need support to live independently. RCD leases permanent supportive apartments to very low-income residents with a variety of special needs, determined in part by funding requirements and governmental policy goals. RCD's housing model integrates diverse special needs populations, including people who have been homeless, seniors, people facing health challenges or disabilities, veterans, people living with HIV/AIDS and transition-aged youth. RCD's resident services program assists residents in maintaining and enhancing self-sufficiency within a caring community.

How much will it cost to live in these units?

A home is considered affordable if the household pays 30% or less of their income towards rent. RCD's mission is to create and preserve affordable housing for people with the fewest options. RCD mainly serves households with incomes between 20%-60% of the Area Median Income. In Berkeley, this translates to rents in the range of \$400-1400 for studio and one-bedroom apartments (note that these rents are updated annually, and will likely be somewhat higher by the time a new development is built). All tenants will need income sufficient to pay these rents. Income typically comes from employment and disability or social security benefits. If residents have a portable rent subsidy (Section 8) voucher, the amount of rent they need to pay is further reduced. (If project-based rental subsidies become available, RCD will pursue those to make a portion of the apartments available to residents with even lower incomes over the long term.) We intend to pursue State No Place Like Home funds, which come with an operating subsidy that makes up the difference between what the tenants can pay and the cost to operate the apartment for previously homeless households while maintaining the physical and financial health of the building for the long-term.



Creating & Preserving Affordable Housing

Who is going to pay for development and operating costs?

Affordable housing is developed by private developers, mostly non-profit affordable housing developers like Resources for Community Development, of which many are local community or faith-based organizations. As part of the development process, RCD assembles ***a combination of private funding and government subsidies***, which, with future rental income, ensures full funding for each project from design and construction through operations. The University of California will pay for the master planning, environmental clearance process, and related costs for the overall development plan of which this supportive housing is a part. RCD will pay for all other development and operating costs related to the supportive housing.

Who decides who is eligible to live here?

The eligibility requirements of government funding sources determines who is eligible to live in an affordable community – these requirements include income level and, depending on the final combination of funding sources, may also include homeless status, mental health diagnosis, or other disability. RCD follows a housing model that integrates special needs populations, including people who have been homeless, seniors, people facing health challenges or disabilities, veterans, people living with HIV/AIDS and transition-aged youth.

How do you find eligible tenants?

RCD will work with its property management partner, The John Stewart Company (JSCO), to lead marketing and lease-up efforts. Outreach will be carried out according to RCD's marketing policy, which includes both local outreach as well as outreach to region-specific ethnic, language, and cultural minorities in order to meet local housing needs while complying with fair housing laws. RCD will also identify service providers and special needs groups for the targeted population, media outlets, schools and churches in the project area to further marketing outreach. JSCO will make applications available for a designated period of time, and will sort the applications by lottery at the conclusion of the application period.

Will homeless students be able to live in this project?

Full time students are not eligible to live in apartments subsidized by Low Income Housing Tax Credits, which are main funding source for affordable housing. Part-time students may be eligible.

How long can people stay in these projects?

Each year, prior to renewal of the lease, tenants must provide updated information regarding household income and assets. A household may continue to live in the apartment as long as they are in good standing.



Creating & Preserving Affordable Housing

What kind of services will be available for residents?

RCD's Resident Services department oversees the provision of resident services at all RCD properties. RCD's resident service coordinators have experience working closely with residents. They are focused on providing a community-driven, service enriched model that is voluntary, free, and promotes resident empowerment and self-sufficiency. The basic resident services program focus on short-term assessment and case-management with residents to provide information and referrals to outside agencies, as required. The programming focuses on five areas that lead to success: housing retention; economic stability and employment/education; health and wellness; social engagement and community development; and youth enrichment. Beyond the basic services, RCD will engage with services partners to provide more intensive, specialized support to residents who have been homeless or live with major mental health challenges.

Are the services provided for free?

A key to the success of residents is the resident services program, included at most of RCD's developments, without cost to the residents.

Are these services available to the community?

Due to limited funding available for services, these services are generally only available to tenants living in the development. That said, the ground floor uses of the People's Park supportive housing community have not yet been defined. Depending on the programming for these spaces, some additional services may be available to the broader community.

What will these units look like?

The University of California has selected a design team led by LMS Architects to create the master plan for People's Park, including the massing and location of the supportive housing. Once that is completed, RCD will select an architectural and construction team, with specialized sub-consultants, to work closely with the community to design the best possible supportive housing development. Each RCD building is uniquely designed to meet the needs of the target population. The apartments each have a designed kitchen equipped with stovetop/oven and refrigerator, living room space and bathroom.

Will this development impact nearby property values?

This question has been the subject of repeated academic study by a wide range of research teams under a wide range of conditions, and the consensus is overwhelmingly that well-designed, well-maintained affordable housing does not lower property values—and in some cases might raise them.

Is there a screening process for people visiting residents?

All visitors need to be escorted in by a resident. Residents will be held responsible for the conduct and actions of their guests or visitors while guests or visitors are on the property. The current plan also anticipates a front desk clerk.