

CITY OF RENTON FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Willowcrest Townhomes project wins Governor's Smart Communities Award

Project is the first multifamily, net-zero energy and permanently affordable homeownership project in King County

RENTON, WA – [Willowcrest Townhomes](#) in Renton has won a 2020-2021 [Governor's Smart Communities Award](#) (GSCA) by the Washington State Department of Commerce.

Willowcrest is the first multifamily, net-zero energy and permanently affordable homeownership project in King County. The homes provide permanent affordable housing for families making between 60 and 80% of the area median income.

The GSCA recognizes achievements by local leaders who promote smart growth planning and projects that contribute to thriving communities, a prosperous economy and sustainable infrastructure in Washington state. Willowcrest is the [eighth project in Renton to win a GSCA award](#) since the award was instituted in 2006.

Eleven communities won 2020-2021 awards. However, the Willowcrest project was the only one honored with a GSCA Smart Partnership Award, which goes to a "joint public project that implements a comprehensive plan." In their review, judges wrote that the project was a model for others looking to begin climate-focused projects and environmental justice work.

Willowcrest was conceived six years ago as part of the [Sunset Area Transformation Plan](#). The innovative 12-unit project is a partnership between [Homestead Community Land Trust](#) (sponsor and developer), [Renton Housing Authority](#) (land donation), [JP Morgan Chase](#)



Willowcrest Townhomes exterior and interior.

(initial grant contribution), and the City of Renton (grant contribution). The project's architect was [Third Place Design Co-operative](#), and [Edge Developers](#) was the general contractor.

The Renton City Council authorized \$322,000 for the project to help support the highly energy-efficient design and features.

Willowcrest consists of nine three-bedroom and three four-bedroom townhomes, designed to be highly energy efficient. The homes include solar panels and Energy Star appliances. Heating and cooling systems will provide a 25% energy savings beyond Washington State Energy Code. A high-efficiency heat pump water heater also reduces energy costs, and WaterSense low-flow fixtures provide water conservation.

It's a short walk from Willowcrest to the new Sunset Neighborhood Park, Renton Highlands Library, and shopping. The Sunset Neighborhood is served by Metro Transit Route 240, which will connect with the East Link Extension when completed in 2023. The neighborhood is also served by Metro Route 105, which connects to the downtown Renton Transit Center. King County Metro also plans to expand Rapid Ride service to the neighborhood in the future.

Quotes from our leaders

Armando Pavone, Mayor, City of Renton

"This award recognizes the vision, creativity, and hard work that transformed the Willowcrest Townhomes project from a dream to much-needed housing for our community. It's a tribute to the Sunset Area Transformation Plan, which is a blueprint for a true 'walkable neighborhood.'"

"These projects are vital in providing deserving families a path to affordable homeownership. It's also a testament to the unique relationship the city has with Renton Housing Authority and Homestead Community Land Trust."

Mark Gropper, Executive Director, Renton Housing Authority

"The Willowcrest Townhomes project represents Renton Housing Authority's first homeownership program. It comes when the opportunity for hardworking, low-income families to invest in housing stability could not be more important.

"I believe that the land trust model demonstrated by Homestead CLT will persuade other agencies to make land likewise available and enhance their neighborhoods through life-affirming affordable homeownership.

"A step-up for deserving families, a solid choice for thriving communities."

Kathleen Hosfeld, Executive Director, Homestead Community Land Trust

"Willowcrest is an example of the extraordinary outcomes we create when visionary partners work together. It shows we can build affordable and environmentally responsible homeownership developments that create opportunity for current and future generations. We look forward to continued work with partners to assemble the resources so that this model can be replicated at scale throughout our region."

(continued)

Cat Martin, Global Philanthropy, JPMorgan Chase

“We are thrilled that our partners are receiving this well-deserved recognition. Homestead Community Land Trust, the City of Renton, and Renton Housing Authority demonstrated a strong commitment, vision, and collaborative spirit throughout the entirety of this process. We are so proud to have played a role in making the Willowcrest Townhomes community a reality.”

About the City of Renton

The City of Renton, Washington, with a population of 106,500 (2021), is located on the southeast shore of Lake Washington, just south of Seattle. Renton's strong economic base, diverse marketplace and favorable business climate have attracted nationally recognized companies that wish to provide employees and their families an outstanding quality of life. Renton is the home of Boeing, PACCAR, IKEA, the Seattle Seahawks, and the eternal resting place of Jimi Hendrix. More information is on our [website](#), in [news releases](#), or on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Nextdoor](#).

About Renton Housing Authority

We at RHA are part of a diverse and wonderful community. We strive every day to render excellent and caring service to all those who share the community with us. Our goal is to provide quality, affordable housing to people who choose to make Renton their home. Through continuing partnerships with our clients, service providers and other groups, our vision is to constantly work to enhance our housing programs and provide opportunities for those in the community we serve.

About Homestead Community Land Trust

Homestead Community Land Trust is a 501(c)(3) non-profit membership organization that preserves and advances access to permanently affordable homeownership to create thriving, equitable and inclusive communities. Our work empowers individuals, stabilizes families, and strengthens neighborhoods in the Greater Seattle/King County area. Partnering with modest income households (who earned less than 80% area median income), we have created the largest portfolio of permanently affordable homes in Washington state.

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