

October 25, 2013

Longtime Spokane advocate honored as Friend of Housing

SEATTLE—In recognition of her long career of successfully developing affordable housing in the Spokane area, Helen Stevenson has been honored as a Friend of Housing by the Washington State Housing Finance Commission.

“Through her dedication and advocacy, Helen Stevenson has helped to create affordable homes for thousands of people in Spokane and beyond,” said Karen Miller, chair of the Housing Finance Commission. “This recognition is richly deserved.”

Stevenson was presented with one of five Friend of Housing awards earlier this month in a ceremony at the 20th annual Housing Washington conference in Spokane.

Friend of Housing awards are presented each year to individuals or organizations who have made exceptional contributions to creating or supporting affordable housing. Examples include helping to solve housing problems, creating innovative financing mechanisms, or drafting legislation or policy that addresses the state’s housing needs.

For more than 30 years, Helen Stevenson has not only been actively involved in the development and preservation of affordable housing in Spokane and eastern Washington, but has also been an outspoken advocate for changes in zoning and public-funding policies to address housing needs. Her skills include extensive expertise in land acquisition and development, debt financing, writing grant applications, construction management and more.

Between 1980 and 1994, Stevenson oversaw many housing programs for Northwest Regional Facilitators (now known as Community Frameworks) and helped to incorporate Spokane Housing Ventures (SHV). There she established the policies, training programs and safeguards that allowed SHV to participate in the highly regulated Low-Income Housing Tax Credit program. Today, of the 750 units that Spokane Housing Ventures owns and manages throughout Spokane and Lincoln counties, roughly 570 are financed through the tax-credit program in combination with other resources.

Stevenson has also volunteered her time to local planning in Spokane’s West Central neighborhood and helped the city set affordable-housing-friendly zoning regulations. She currently serves on the boards of Salem Arms Community Housing, a Spokane nonprofit providing housing for the chronically mentally ill and for large families, and the Commonwealth Agency, an Idaho nonprofit promoting affordable housing in a multiple states.

Stevenson retired from Spokane Housing Ventures in November 2012 and currently resides in Pullman, Wash.

For more information on Housing Washington and the Friend of Housing Awards, see www.wshfc.org/conf.

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Celebrating its 30th year in 2013, the [Washington State Housing Finance Commission](http://www.wshfc.org) is a publicly accountable, self-supporting team that works with lenders, investors, developers, nonprofit organizations and more to bring private investment dollars to benefit families and achieve public goals throughout Washington. The Commission has created and preserved more than 275,000 affordable homes across the state, while contributing more than \$42.5 billion and 240,000 jobs to the economy.  [@WSHFC](https://twitter.com/WSHFC)  [Facebook.com/WSHFC](https://www.facebook.com/WSHFC)



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