



**TACOMA  
HOUSING  
AUTHORITY**



**For Release After October 11, 2018**

**Media Contacts:**

<p>Michael Mirra Tacoma Housing Authority (253) 207-4429 <a href="mailto:mmirra@tacomahousing.org">mmirra@tacomahousing.org</a></p>	<p>Troy Christensen Korean Women’s Association (253) 538-8377 <a href="mailto:tchristensen@kwacares.com">tchristensen@kwacares.com</a></p>	<p>Nanette Sorich Pioneer Human Services (206) 766-7034 <a href="mailto:Nanette.Sorich@p-h-s.com">Nanette.Sorich@p-h-s.com</a></p>
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## **Tacoma Housing Authority, Korean Women’s Association and Pioneer Human Services Make 61 Housing Units More Affordable in Downtown Tacoma**

**TACOMA, WA – October 11, 2018** – Tacoma Housing Authority (THA), Pioneer Human Services (PHS) and Korean Women’s Association (KWA) are excited to announce the funding of 61 affordable housing units in Downtown Tacoma. Thirteen of these apartments will be in PHS’s property, Rialto Apartments on 311 South 9<sup>th</sup> Street, and 48 of these apartments will be in KWA’s Olympus Hotel on 815 S. Pacific Avenue. This partnership will preserve these affordable units amid the shrinking downtown options for low-income households. This effort not only preserves affordable housing but also protects the Olympus Hotel as a historic building.

THA issued a Request For Proposal (RFP) on August 6, 2018. The RFP offered rental subsidies to market rate and nonprofit owners of housing who would agree to then rent some of their apartments to households with low-incomes. The RFP offered two types of rental subsidies: Project-Based Vouchers and Property-Based Subsidies. KWA and PHS applied for the Project-Based Voucher subsidy.

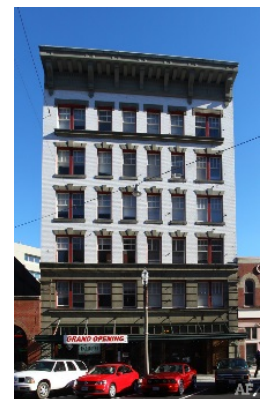
The Project-Based Voucher is a federal housing subsidy program. Under this program, THA and a property owner negotiate a long-term contract. THA would pay housing subsidies for units occupied by qualified tenants. Tenant rents are based on tenant incomes. THA pays a subsidy to cover the remaining balance of the rent each month up to the fair market value. These subsidies are “attached” to the unit and benefit each qualified tenant that moves into that unit. The subsidy gives the property a fair market income stream. This allows the owner to maintain the property, offer services and provide for a net return.

THA’s RFP is a continuing invitation for proposals from market rate and nonprofit owners of housing for use of THA’s rental subsidies. For information about the RFP go to [www.tacomahousing.net/rfp](http://www.tacomahousing.net/rfp)

### **The Partnership**

#### **Korean Women’s Association**

KWA will reserve 48 units at the Olympus Hotel on 815 S. Pacific Avenue for low-income families. Half of these will serve families at 60% of the area median income; another half to lower incomes. The THA rental subsidy will allow KWA to dedicate more case management time to help people with education and employment programs. The vouchers will also invest more money into revitalizing the Olympus Hotel.



*“The Board of Trustees and senior staff at KWA share a strong sense of pride in our role in saving the historic Olympus Hotel, especially given that in doing so, we created affordable housing downtown,”* said Troy Christensen, KWA Executive Director. *“These vouchers will now allow us to invest further in the property, but also in current and future tenants in the building. This is a big win for everyone involved, including our diverse and vibrant community.”*

### **Pioneer Human Services**

Using THA rental subsidies, Pioneer will reserve 13 units at the Rialto Apartments on 311 South 9th Street for tenants with income below 50% Area Median Income. Affordable housing also allows these households to focus on their personal and financial well-being and get the tools they need to be self-sufficient.



Joseph Nagel, Pioneer’s Director of Service Enriched Housing stated, *“Pioneer is so grateful that the Tacoma Housing Authority provided the opportunity to preserve affordable housing in the Tacoma community and reduce the financial burden for our low-income households at the Rialto apartments. Thank you THA!”*

*“THA’s main job is to provide or finance affordable housing for Tacoma residents who need help to afford a home. One way we do this work is to partner with market rate or nonprofit owners of housing”* said Michael Mirra, THA executive director. *“This partnership with KWA and Pioneer is a good example. In these cases, the partnerships with KWA and Pioneer Human Services not only preserve affordability, it also does so in Downtown Tacoma, which needs more affordable places to live. They combine our housing dollars with services. And they help preserve an important historic building. All this makes for a good use of a scarce THA housing dollar.”*

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### **About Korean Women’s Association**

Korean Women’s Association provides multi-cultural, multi-lingual human services, regardless of race or ethnic background, to diverse communities through education, socialization, advocacy and support. Since 1972, KWA has responded to the needs of Western Washington communities with programs for affordable housing, senior wellness, in-home care support, and benefit enrollment. In addition, KWA advocates for individuals seeking immigration and naturalization, escaping domestic violence situations, and needing health screenings. KWA operates offices in eleven Western Washington counties and employs more than 1200 employees.

### **About Pioneer Human Services**

In 1963, Pioneer Human Services opened a single halfway house in Seattle and has since expanded into over 50 programs across Washington state that provide counseling and treatment, housing and employment services to justice-involved individuals and those overcoming substance use disorders. As a social enterprise, Pioneer also operates a diverse line of businesses to provide on-the-job training and work experience, while generating revenue to help fund its social mission. In 2017, 63 percent of Pioneer’s enterprise workforce had a criminal history or was in recovery.

### **About Tacoma Housing Authority**

Established in 1940, Tacoma Housing Authority provides high-quality, stable and sustainable housing and supportive services to people in need. It does this in ways that help them prosper and help our communities develop equitably. THA develops and manages real estate and provides rental housing. In partnership with thousands of private landlords, it helps families pay the rent in the private rental market. It delivers supportive services to help families succeed as “tenants, parents, students, wage earners and builders of assets who can live without assistance.” THA seeks to do its work in ways that help our community be an “attractive place to live, work, attend school, shop and play,” and that help Tacoma be “safe, vibrant, prosperous, attractive and just.” For more information about THA and its work, go to [www.tacomahousing.net](http://www.tacomahousing.net).