



News Release

November 3, 2014

Blaine County Housing Authority to Receive Lift Lower Lodge

KETCHUM, Idaho – The Lift Tower Lodge will be turned into affordable housing, thanks to an anonymous donation to the Blaine County Housing Authority.

The 3,100-square-foot motel with its iconic ski lift tower has long been a landmark at the southern entrance to Ketchum. It ceased operations as a motel last Friday.

The housing authority plans to use the 14 motel rooms at 703 S. Main St. for a demographic that has been difficult to serve in the past. Single people will be eligible if their income is \$16,900 or less, a figure that equates to 30 percent of the median income of \$56,450 for a single-person household in the county.

“This is a major step for us, as we have had difficulty providing suitable housing for very low-income households in the past,” David Patrie, executive director, said. “We also anticipate that we can use the rooms for temporary and emergency housing, which we have not previously been able to offer before.”

“We are committed to retaining the iconic and historic nature of the Lift Tower Lodge and the lift itself,” he added. The working name for the project is “The Lift,” he said, because “the use of this property will allow BCHA to give the lowest-income members of our community the lift they need to find a more permanent and workable housing solution.”

The housing authority plans to seek tenants in conjunction with other nonprofits, including The Hunger Coalition, the Crisis Hotline and The Advocates for Survivors of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. Background and income eligibility checks will be required. “One of our primary goals is to be certain that the property is a safe and desirable place to live,” Patrie said.

The housing authority is seeking additional funds, some of which already have been pledged, for improvements to the property.

The housing authority currently has about 125 applicants in its database. In the past few years, the number of applicants has increased incrementally while the income level has dropped. In 2009, about 22 percent of the applicants had incomes that were less than half of the median income in the county. Today that percentage runs between 45 and 50 percent, Patrie said.

The housing authority currently has 83 owner-occupied homes and 13 long-term rental units in Blaine County.

About the Blaine County Housing Authority

The Blaine County Housing Authority's mission is to advocate, promote, plan and preserve the long-term supply of desirable and affordable housing choices in all areas of Blaine County in order to maintain an economically diverse, vibrant and sustainable community. Additional information is available at www.bcoha.org.

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