



August 11, 2011

To Friends and Partners of Portland Housing Bureau:

This week I submitted my resignation as the Portland Housing Bureau Director, effective September 15, 2011, to Housing Commissioner Nick Fish. I did this with very mixed emotions, because the two years I've spent working for the City and leading the bureau have been among the very best any housing professional could ask for. But I have been invited by Governor Kitzhaber to lead Oregon Housing and Community Services Department, and that is an opportunity I cannot pass up.

While the housing challenges and opportunities in Portland have been exciting to be a part of, I am drawn to the chance to work across the entire state of Oregon. I'm a fourth generation native Oregonian, and a third generation public servant. My love for this state runs deep. I see great communities with rich histories struggling to keep a safety net under our low-income neighbors. And in Governor Kitzhaber, I see the possibility to make transformative changes in the way state government operates for the benefit of its residents. It's an honor for me to be invited to help connect a housing agenda to the other critical issues facing Oregonians: health reform, economic development and job creation, and education reform.

It's been a great two years for me at Portland Housing Bureau, and I have truly valued the opportunity to launch the new bureau and set it on a good course. I have learned so much from Commissioner Fish, from our partners, and from the wonderful employees of PHB, and I feel great about the work we've done together. I'm proud of big projects like Block 49 and Bud Clark Commons. I'm proud of less visible accomplishments, like strengthening internal business systems, and creating transparency in our decision-making. And I'm proud of the stage we set for a game-changing equity agenda.

I told Nick that I cannot thank him enough for the opportunity he gave me when he selected me to be PHB's first director. I've had an amazing experience, and will always be grateful for the trust placed in me for this vital work. And while more work remains to help PHB reach its full potential, I leave the agency in good shape, in capable hands, and poised for a bright future. I will of course continue to be a full partner to PHB when I take the helm of OHCS.

With best regards and high hopes for the future,

Margaret Van Vliet