



265 Strand Street
St. Helens, OR 97051
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St. Helens City Council Public Notice and Notice of Public Hearing

The City of St. Helens is eligible to apply for a 2021 Community Development Block Grant from the Business Oregon. Community Development Block Grant funds come from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The grants can be used for public facilities and housing improvements, primarily for persons with low and moderate incomes.

Approximately \$12 million will be awarded to Oregon non-metropolitan cities and counties in 2021. The maximum grant that a city or county can receive is \$1,500,000. The City of St. Helens is preparing an application for a 2021 Community Development Block Grant from the Business Oregon for the lifempowered Empowerment Center. It is estimated that the proposed project will benefit at least 75 persons, of whom 95% will be low or moderate income.

A public hearing will be held by the St. Helens City Council at 6:15 p.m. on Wednesday, December 1, 2021, in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 265 Strand Street, St. Helens, plaza entrance. The purpose of this hearing is for the City Council to obtain citizen views and to respond to questions and comments about: community development and housing needs, especially the needs of low- and moderate-income persons, as well as other needs in the community that might be assisted with a Community Development Block Grant project; and the proposed project.

Written comments are also welcome and must be received by November 30, 2021 at City of St. Helens, 265 Strand Street, St. Helens, OR 97051. Both oral and written comments will be considered by the St. Helens City Council in deciding whether to apply. The location of the hearing is accessible to persons with disabilities. Please contact Kathy Payne, City Recorder, at 503.366.8217 if you will need any special accommodations to attend or participate in the meeting.

More information about Oregon Community Development Block Grants, the proposed project, and records about the City's past use of Community Development Block Grant funds is available for public review at 265 Strand Street, St. Helens, Oregon, during regular office hours. Advance notice is requested. If special accommodations are needed, please notify Kathy Payne, City Recorder at 503.366.8217, so that appropriate assistance can be provided.

Permanent involuntary displacement of persons or businesses is not anticipated as a result from the proposed project. If displacement becomes necessary, alternatives will be examined to minimize the displacement and provide required/reasonable benefits to those displaced. Any low- and moderate-income housing that is demolished or converted to another use will be replaced.



WHO WE ARE: Formerly known as Riverside Training Centers, **lifempowered** has had a presence in St. Helens since 1974 supporting individuals to live the life they choose. We envision a county where all people with intellectual and developmental disabilities can access all aspects of community life as valued and contributing members.

THE NEED: Residents of Columbia County with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) are one of the country's most vulnerable populations, consistently underserved in social and community engagement opportunities. A 2020 feasibility study indicated that there was a compelling interest in an Empowerment Center to increase and enhance the options for educational, empowerment and community engagement opportunities for the people who choose **lifempowered's** services. In the IDD community, especially in residential situations, the individuals build essential relationships with Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) as they grow in their personal development and independence journey; retention and consistency of DSPs is vital to their success and this center will allow for greater opportunity to retain and develop these critical workers.

THE OPPORTUNITY: In an effort to be the leading resource for intellectual and developmental disability services in Columbia County, **lifempowered** is building a new Empowerment Center that will replace the current facility in St. Helens. The design of the 10,000 square foot building will be fully accessible to individuals the organization serves, DSP's and administrative staff, while also acting as a resource for the broader community. This Empowerment Center will include a multi-use space that could be used for ongoing staff development workshops, educational and empowerment classes, and other broader community events.

lifempowered's current building sits on Port Avenue in St. Helens. This building was built nearly 50 years ago, as a warehouse, formerly for production, and not intended for its current uses. While further investment in the current building is not a sustainable solution, the new Empowerment Center would be best positioned at the current site. **lifempowered** does not currently own the land but is currently in communication with The Port of Columbia County regarding property control. To achieve our vision, it will require committed leadership and flexible, creative, and responsive planning. **lifempowered** will also be prioritizing opportunities to partner strategically throughout the community. A recently completed feasibility study to fund this Empowerment Center successfully tested a \$4 million project goal (over the next several years) that would include:

- Full accessible kitchen and multi-use space for workshops, classes, and community event use
- Security and technology upgrades
- Vehicle maintenance space and equipment
- Administrative & staff offices and common spaces

OUR REQUEST: **lifempowered** is seeking \$1 million from the City of St. Helens in the form of State of Oregon non-entitlement Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding for the 2021 cycle.

For more information contact Taylor Rost, Westby Associates Inc. (360) 750-3825