

The 1980s

A social challenge so big, no one can solve it alone

In response to expanding housing needs, the 1980s saw the growth of mission-based housing developers and the creation of various, but insufficient, resources. The time called for strategic coordination and commitments to working together in ways that would forever change the landscape of development and management of affordable housing throughout our region.

- With support from the City of Seattle, nonprofits **acquire and rehabilitate all 734 units of downtown single room occupancy (SRO) housing** threatened due to new fire codes and the new State Convention Center.
- Through partnerships with social service organizations serving veterans, seniors, people with mental illness, and people with development disabilities, **housing for people with special needs is emphasized.**
- In 1988, 10 nonprofits **form the Seattle Housing Development Consortium.**



On the heels of two multi-fatality fires in downtown Seattle SROs, existing owners couldn't afford the required fire code upgrades, and vacated the buildings.

Throughout the 80's, the Public Provides Critical Financial Support, leveraging private dollars

1982 - Seattle voters, for the first time, tax themselves to provide \$48.1M for 1,000 senior homes through the **Seattle Senior Housing Bond**.

1983 - **WA State Housing Finance Commission (WSHFC)** is established to provide developers access to critical tax-exempt financing.

1986 - **Low Income Housing Tax Credits** are invented by Congress to produce/preserve affordable housing.

1986 - A \$100M **WA State Housing Trust Fund** is established.

1988 - Seattle approves \$50M for housing, through the passage of the first **Seattle Housing Levy**.

Carla Okigwe was the consortium's first Executive Director. During her 21-year tenure, she helped position HDC as a major force, both locally and nationally



Founding Leaders of HDC & the Movement Include

John Berdes
Steve Clagett
Rev. David Colwell
Tom Lattimore
Sharon Lee
Earl Richardson
"Uncle" Bob Santos
Nancy Smith
Josephine Tamayo Murray



By the end of the decade, HDC members created or preserved **2,000 affordable homes**



...and HDC **membership rose to 12** by 1989



HOUSING
DEVELOPMENT
consortium