

The Wellstone Apartments

Minneapolis, Minnesota (opened May 2009)



Developer/Sponsor Hope Community, Inc. and Aeon

Architects UrbanWorks Architecture
Cunningham Group

General Contractor Watson-Forsberg

Units 49

Project Description The Wellstone was completed in November 2008. It features 49 units of mixed-income housing; 37 units are for families with incomes at or below 50 percent area median income and four units are for individuals experiencing long-term homelessness. Rental units include studios, one-, two-, and three-bedroom apartments.

The Wellstone is Phase III of the Franklin Portland Gateway development, located on a revitalizing commercial and transit corridor. The development brings new life to the northeast corner of a long vacant yet highly visible intersection just ten blocks from the Minneapolis downtown district. The four-story, mixed-use project consists of residential and commercial space, including a community center built over one level of underground parking. Construction testing was conducted throughout the project that included verifying framing, insulation, and window installations as well as measuring the degree of air tightness and duct leakage in the apartments. Tests to measure pressure balancing and outside air intake also helped ensure that The Wellstone was built as designed. Post-construction testing and verifications were also performed as part of commissioning the building.

A Green Advantage The Wellstone features an array of green and sustainable features for the benefit of residents and the community, including:

- Re-use of an urban grayfield site—next to public transportation, close to downtown amenities, with secure bike storage.
- Energy Star appliances, including front-loading washing machines and interior and exterior light fixtures.
- Native landscaping and high-efficiency bubbler-type irrigation system.
- 50 percent of the building's hot water needs come from a solar domestic hot water system.
- Whisper Green model continuous bathroom ventilation for moisture control.
- Verified efficient building envelope due to Low-E windows, measured air tightness, and duct leakage.
- Low-flow toilets and showerheads.
- Low-VOC paints, sealants, and adhesives and Green Label certified carpets.
- Rain gardens for storm water retention.
- 80 percent efficient Magic-Pac unit heating system with an 11.5 SEER rating.
- Public heating and cooling HVAC system with a minimum rating of 14.0 SEER.



Project Financing

Minnesota Green Communities and Other Green Funding	\$460,000
LIHTC	\$6,500,000
HUD First Mortgage	\$4,114,000
City of Minneapolis	\$1,200,000
State of Minnesota Funding Partners	\$285,000
Metropolitan Council	\$246,000
Hennepin County	\$196,000
Total	\$13,001,000

A Green Advantage
(Continued)

- High-efficiency gas fired unit heaters controlled by a CO2 monitor in the garage, a highly efficient cold weather system because it limits fresh air entering the garage to the minimum amount needed.
- High efficiency ramp snowmelt system.

Rents Thirty-seven units (or 75 percent of total units) are affordable to families at or below 50 percent of the area median income. Four long-term homeless individuals will receive rental assistance.

Amenities The Wellstone includes 4,000 square feet of commercial space and 3,000 square feet of space for the community to gather. Other features include underground parking, bike storage, and downtown views. The Wellstone is located on a commercial corridor with direct connection to transit and less than a block from Peavey Park.

Social Services All Residents will have full use of community-building activities offered at The Wellstone and at Children’s Village Center located at the southeast corner of the intersection. Four units at The Wellstone are reserved for individuals experiencing long-term homelessness. Individuals will receive support services provided by Cabrini Partnership. The vision for families receiving support services is to gain self-sufficiency and become part of a healthy community.

Developer Hope Community, Inc. and Aeon are Minneapolis-based nonprofit organizations engaged in developing affordable housing and community-building activities. Hope and Aeon began a co-development partnership in 2000 to develop the Franklin Portland Gateway project, located at a strategic and highly visible south Minneapolis intersection long plagued by drugs and violence. Incorporated in 1977, Hope is helping to revitalize the neighborhood by rehabilitating or building affordable housing. In addition, Hope offers community-building activities that include education, leadership, organizing, and year-round children, youth, and family activities that appeal to its diverse residents. Aeon was established in 1986, and has built or renovated 1,705 apartments and town-homes that provide stability to more than 2,800 people each year—including individuals and families with low to moderate incomes and formerly homeless individuals. The organization’s inspiration to create community assets that last for generations stems from its name “Aeon,” which is Greek for “eon” or “forever.” Its vision is that every person has a home and is interconnected within community.



Lessons Learned “The project team made sure that the main green features—solar hot water and stormwater systems—were well-defined and integrated early in the design process. Other features, such as lighting, were done later without a great deal of attention. We could have accomplished more and had better results had we followed a complete integrated design process.”

“Our construction monitoring firm required that the framing and insulation subcontractors attend a preconstruction meeting. Guidelines and expectations were provided and crews were told that their work would be visibly inspected at various times during construction. Post-construction testing indicated excellent building performance and validated the work of the crews.”

—Marcia Cartwright, Real Estate Manager, Hope Community, Inc.



Minnesota Green Communities, a collaboration of the Greater Minnesota Housing Fund, the Family Housing Fund, and Enterprise, is an initiative designed to foster the creation of affordable, healthier, and more energy-efficient housing throughout Minnesota. The initiative will support the production of affordable housing with markedly reduced energy costs, use of materials beneficial to the environment, conservation-minded land use planning, and attention to the creation of healthy environments and lifestyles for individuals, children, families, and communities. For more information, please visit www.mngreencommunities.org.

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