Trenton Terrace, a new affordable rental community for residents at least 62 years of age, is located at the heart of New Columbia, an 80-acre, multi-use HOPEVI redevelopment project in North Portland, Ore. Preference was given to residents who had to be relocated from the previous development, called Columbia Villa, during the redevelopment process. The goal of the project was to create a socially and environmentally friendly community that promotes independent living for seniors as well as green living practices. The site’s open level plot allows safe and easy access for pedestrians and vehicles and easy entry to a plaza used for gathering at McCoy Park across the street. The site is strategically designed around a scenic heritage tree with a surrounding terrace and narrow bridge that make the tree visible from multiple points of view, giving residents a feeling of being in the park even inside the building. Trenton Terrace is designed to be “100 percent visitable” so that residents and guests may take part in even informal events. The building is comprised of approximately 56,400 square feet and includes 65 one-bedroom apartments and a two-bedroom apartment for the resident manager, as well as a community room, shared common areas on each floor, laundry rooms, and outdoor terraces.

The Green Advantage

The project features low-flow plumbing fixtures in all kitchen and bathroom areas. All trees and plants are appropriate to the climate and region, and it has a drip irrigation system to aid in water conservation. Other green features include:

- Energy star appliances and lighting fixtures
- Low-VOC paints, primers, adhesives, sealants, and caulking
- Composite wood and carpet that meet green standards
- An HVAC system designed to be energy efficient, with exhaust fans vented to the exterior, natural ventilation, and common area whole-house fans
- Many procedures in place to limit excess moisture accumulation
- Residents and management to receive education on the green design elements and encouraged in the use of recycling and other measures for sustainable and healthy living

Rents

Trenton Terrace provides affordable housing to residents at least 62 years of age with no more than 50 percent area median income, with many likely to have incomes as low as 15 percent of the area median. Qualified tenants contribute 30 percent of their monthly income and pay electric and hot water bills. Rent includes all other services, from planned social events to high-speed internet access.
Amenities
Trenton Terrace is adjacent to a main street lined with numerous retail and social service outlets. In addition, there is a bus stop in front of the building that links tenants to mass transit into Portland and the wider, mixed-age community. The site was part of a major project by the Housing Authority of Portland that includes commercial, community, and transportation services close by.

Resident Services
There are two aspects to our resident services program. The first provides a safety net via Housing Stabilization and Case Management services for specific residents referred by partnering agencies. The second provides general services to all residents. Both components are carried out in close collaboration with experienced service providers in the Portland area.

For residents specifically referred by partnering agencies, case management includes an on-going assessment of a tenant’s needs, coupled with linkages needed to maintain tenant health and housing. Based on these assessments, a Housing Stabilization / Case Management plan is developed in order to identify goals and the resources available to help achieve them. Support services may be provided by the same agency providing the case management or arranged by the case management agency through third party service providers.

We also provide an array of social, recreational and wellness opportunities that are available to all residents. The resident manager coordinates with Northwest Pilot Project (NWPP) and the YWCA as well as other local service providers such as Metropolitan Family Services, Elders in Action and nearby senior centers to organize a comprehensive listing of services available in the immediate neighborhood. The manager reviews this listing with all new tenants when they move in, making note of which services interest them and following through to create linkages with the proper service providers. Where appropriate, residents are also put in touch with eligibility specialists at state, county, and nonprofit agencies to ensure that they receive public benefits to which they are entitled. Some of the services available include health and wellness programs; meal services; social, recreational and educational opportunities; information and referral; and transportation.

Developer
Northwest Housing Alternatives, Inc., builds and rehabilitates affordable housing for Oregonians with low incomes, serving seniors, families and people with special needs. It also operates a shelter for homeless families with children. Northwest Housing Alternatives was founded in 1982 and today provides homes to more than 2,100 people in 14 Oregon counties.

Architect
Michael Willis Architects (MWA) was the project architect. MWA has a strong track record in affordable housing development in Oregon and California. MWA has been involved in affordable housing projects for the Housing Authority of Portland at New Columbia and Humboldt Gardens.