

2005 EXCELLENCE IN HOUSING AWARDS
Housing Revitalization
Betty Tamm & Umpqua Community Development Corporation for the Grand Hotel in
Roseburg, Oregon



The Grand Hotel was originally constructed in 1909. In the 1950's, an effort was under-



taken to rehab the building. With the explosion of a dynamite truck in 1959, the Grand Hotel was the closest building to the explosion left standing, with all windows blown out. The project changed hands several times during the ensuing decades, however nothing was done for the upper floors except for the installation of aluminum windows.

In 2002, the building was offered to Umpqua CDC at no cost. Initially Betty Tamm was cautious. Having stood empty for 45 years (except for pigeons), the building was a mess. Except for the incentive of an unspent grant in the amount of \$250,000, Umpqua was not confident that the effort would be worth it.

The project presented challenges during construction. First, the contractor found layered asbestos tiles. The 1959 explosion had stressed timbers in the basement and the building required shoring up with steel frames. No small job! With a great deal of popping and snapping, the building shifted to a level beyond the best hopes of the architect. Additional surprises continued to soak up contingency funds, but late in the project, the City of Roseburg and other partners stepped in and contributed additional resources.

Even with so many challenges, the project presented many rewards. Discovering and saving the paintings on a basement wall from a prohibition 'era' card room; replacing the birdcage elevator in the 1914 era concrete shaft; discovering and preserving the glass ceiling in the restaurant, and recreating the two story high sign and entrance marquee. But the biggest reward is that the Grand is fulfilling the original dream. Residents include young mothers, working individuals, seniors and veterans. And, other buildings between The Grand and the train station are now being renovated. The Grand is once again the talk of the town.