

# The Portland Observer

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## Preserving historic African American Heritage



*LEFT: The Colored YWCA shortly after its construction on North Williams and Tillamook streets in 1926.  
RIGHT: Jennifer Dishman in front of the North Tillamook Street Elks Lodge.*

## Billy Webb Elks Lodge to receive a \$1 million face-lift!

The National Association of Minority Contractors of Oregon (NAMCO) announced its plans to remodel the Billy Webb Elks Lodge on Tillamook Street in Northeast Portland. NAMCO will work with Hoffman Construction, CJ Jackson Construction, Portland Development Commission, IBEW local 48, Walsh Construction, Legacy Health System, Stacy Witbeck General Engineering, NW Natural Gas and other local partners on the project.

Built in the early 1900's, the historic Elks Lodge was known then as the YWCA and today is one of the few remaining African American owned buildings. The Elks Lodge, currently owned by the local lodge membership, serves as a place for events, birthday parties and wedding receptions; however, the entire building is in need of immediate repairs and NAMCO has willingly stepped forward to organize a team that can assist with renovations.

Contractors for the project will donate their time and labor. The group has organized a Project Management Team and is asking for help with material contributions, new furnishings, flooring and carpeting, restaurant equipment and cash contributions from organizations and individuals to cover additional expenses. Because the Elks Lodge is a nonprofit organization, plans will include a donor wall at the entrance of the Lodge that will list the names of those who contributed to the project. NAMCO's goal is to have the outside of the building and a portion of the inside finished by a kick-off celebration planned for "The Gathering" in late August.

Once completed, the public can expect a completely new revitalized Elks Lodge and a chance to partake in a variety of business and community activities. To remember the project, the membership plans to create a picture collage that will reflect the history of the organization.

For more information on how to get involved or donate to the Elks Lodge project, contact one of the project partners above, stop by the elks lodge and talk with Jennifer Dishman or call 503 284-4853.