

APANO GRANT AGREEMENTIF YOU WISH TO SPEAK TO CITY COUNCIL, **PRINT** YOUR NAME, ADDRESS, AND EMAIL.

NAME (PRINT)

ADDRESS AND ZIP CODE *(Optional)*Email *(Optional)*

✓ Kara Carmosino	4906 SE 108th Ave, 97266	kara@apano.org
✓ Colin K. Crader II	2810 Rainier Pl 97068	colin@apano.org
✓ Jean Yamamoto		

Good morning, Mayor and Commissioners. My name is Kara Carmosino. I currently work as the Director of Programs at APANO and APANO Communities United Fund. I also live just east of the Jade District in Lents, so I see every day the pressures facing these neighborhoods, as public and private investments set the stage for rapid change.

82nd Avenue, where the Jade District is located, is on the forefront of this change. As we partner with the city on the Division Safety and the Division Transit Projects, some of our neighbors are reporting rent increases of 30-40%. We know that major public projects that reshape our neighborhoods must go hand in hand with community stabilization projects, such as affordable housing investments. This is why we are here today to thank you for your investment in our Roots to Rise Campaign, which will support a 48-unit affordable housing complex on the corner of 82nd and Division, as well as a community cultural center on the first floor. Given the developments and economic pressures that are driving displacement in the area, this project could not come any sooner.

As you know, this development is the result of 4 years of community led planning and multilingual outreach. At the current site is the old Furniture Store, which APANO has been operating as a de facto community space for the past few years. Last year, we had 25,000 visitors to the building, illustrating the need for a community center in this area.

When we talk about neighborhood investments, we should be clear about what they mean. In our work, street improvements are not about the streets but the residents who can cross traffic safely when they take their kids to school or return home from work late at night. Helping businesses mitigate the impacts of development happening around them is not just about a handful of businesses, but the surrounding communities they anchor in place, from the culturally specific goods and services they provide to the informal gathering spaces they create.

So you aren't just investing in a building, but the people who will inhabit it. People like Jessica, a tenant in the neighborhood who spoke at our groundbreaking, who sees this project as one solution to reduce some of her worries about affordable housing and how to stay in this neighborhood and community. She stated that she "hopes the construction of this building goes smoothly and quickly for our families, children, and community to enjoy."

When completed, this will be a safe space for neighbors to gather to organize, plan, and be in community, just as people dreamed about four years ago in our community visioning process. The space will continue to house art exhibits, cooking demonstrations, community gatherings and cultural events. It will also be a hub for crucial community services. This will include tenant protection services in partnership with the Community Alliance of Tenants, and workforce navigation services. Small immigrant owned businesses will have support through the Prosper Portland Inclusive Business network.

So it is not just a building, but what that building makes possible: family stability, community, art, learning, leadership, entrepreneurship, access to resources and connections.

There is no magic bullet for addressing problems that residents face throughout East Portland, but we can begin to address these issues together, guided by community vision. This is a major step forward and will serve as a model for future developments to come. Thank you.