



Wednesday, October 26, 2022

*Sheila Stiley, Board
chair – NW Coastal
Housing*

*Kymberly Horner –
Vice-chair - Portland
Community
Reinvestment Inc.*

*Rachael Duke,
Secretary -
Community Partners
for Affordable
Housing*

*Trell Anderson,
Treasurer –NW
Housing Alternatives*

*David Brandt,
Housing Works*

*Wakan Alferes
Homes for Good*

*Ernesto Fonseca -
Hacienda CDC*

*Maria Elena Guerra -
Farmworker Housing
Development Corp*

*Nkenge Harmon
Johnson – Urban
League of Portland*

*Kristy Rodriguez –
Housing Authority of
Malheur & Harney
Counties*

Mayor Ted Wheeler
Members of City Council
City of Portland
1221 SW 4th Avenue
Portland, OR 97204

Dear Mayor Wheeler and members of the Council:

Housing Oregon applauds Mayor Wheeler and Commissioner Ryan's bold affordable housing goal to produce 20,000 new units of affordable housing by 2033 as proposed in Resolution 899 this past week. We are ready to engage with City officials on the proposed permitting, zoning, land banking and funding advocacy efforts.

At the same time, we join our homeless service member organizations and allies in raising concern with Resolution 901 that returning to criminalizing homelessness and creating mass camps distracts us from the real progress being made as a result of voter approved measures with the production of new affordable units and mental health and substance abuse recovery services.

According to City of Portland and Metro construction bond websites, 5,759 units have already been produced or are under development. Multnomah County, with support from the Metro Supportive Housing Services measure, moved 4,500 homeless individuals into housing in the past year.

We urge you to not abandon the spirit of collaboration with Multnomah County and Metro government, as well as engaging those with lived experience with homelessness and stakeholder organizations to address what is truly a region-wide, even statewide humanitarian crisis.

And do not forget, criminalizing homelessness disparately affects Communities of Color, further moving people into the criminal legal system instead of housing.

Regarding Resolution 899 addressing funding for affordable housing, we invite City elected officials to join Housing Oregon and the

P.O. Box 8427, Portland, OR 97207

Welcome Home Coalition as we begin to explore options for the next generation of local revenue sources to replace the expended City of Portland and Metro construction bonds. We urge future bonds to prioritize nonprofit housing providers as the investment continues to be owned by the community for generations.

Second, Housing Oregon welcomes City advocacy efforts at the Federal level to reform and expand Low Income Housing Tax Credits. We have an opportunity to support Senator Wyden's efforts to reform the 50% test for access to Private Activity Bonds, which could double available LIHTC resources to build affordable housing.

Third, Housing Oregon supports the recommendation to create a central point of contact for permitting to build affordable housing. The Bureau of Development Services used to have someone in this position. This is something we have been advocating for with Commissioner Ryan and agree the position is needed.

Fourth, Housing Oregon supports the recommendation to build a landbank of up to 400 publicly owned sites. We urge you to consider collaborating with other local jurisdictions to create regional strategies to coordinate land banking, which we believe would prove more effective and accessible with affordable housing developers.

Fifth, consider proposals from 3000 Challenge PDX, a consortium of homeless service providers and advocates, including purchasing hotels that can quickly be repurposed into community-run transitional housing and later redeveloped into permanent affordable housing.

Lastly, Housing Oregon reminds you to fold in efforts to address rising eviction rates as COVID-era renter protections have expired. We need to advocate for extending eviction prevention legal services and emergency rental assistance as keeping people in their current housing is the best strategy for avoiding homelessness.

Housing Oregon is the membership-based statewide association of affordable housing nonprofit developers committed to serving and supporting low-income Oregonians across the housing needs spectrum – from homeless to homeowner. We are working towards a day when every Oregonian has a safe and healthy place to call home.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian Hoop". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Brian Hoop
Executive Director
Housing Oregon