

**From:** [Jazzmín Sergia Kahananui](#)  
**To:** [Council Clerk – Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** Written Testimony item 899 City Council 2022-10-26 session  
**Date:** Thursday, October 27, 2022 12:40:00 PM

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Aloha!

‘O wau ‘o Pīkake Jazzmín Sergia Ellis Kahananui and I am writing to provide testimony on item 899 as discussed during City Council 2022-10-26 session.

- We, the people of Portland, do **not** need *more* buildings built for affordable housing.
- These buildings are a way for predatory landlords to gain a *tax incentive* for allocating a 20% portion of the building as "affordable housing" *while not needing to comply with rent increase caps* due to the age of the building.
- This is a recipe for landlords to astronomically increase rent every 12 months, thereby **endangering the security of tenants receiving housing assistance**
- These predatory landlords **dramatically profit from affordable housing services** "footing the bill" of the rent increase, and *do not care* if the affordable housing services are unable to meet the increase demand, because **all the landlord has to do if the increased demand is unmet is EVICT THE TENANT** - in this way, the landlord *only gains*, and **the tenant receiving financial assistance LOSES**.
- Even if tenants rental assistance service providers are able to foot the bill of the increased, **UNLIMITED RENTAL INCREASE**, the stress of the increase sets the tenant up for scarcity, stress and instability and taxes time and financial resources.
- Additionally, **WE DO NOT NEED MORE BUILDINGS BUILT! PLENTY OF BUILDINGS ALREADY EXIST THAT CAN BE CONVERTED TO HOUSING, OR THAT ARE ALREADY HOUSING-READY!**
- Building 20,000 *new units* while so many buildings sit empty is **disasterous economically, disgusting ethically, and murderous environmentally.**
- UNHOUSED PEOPLE NEED HOUSING NOW, and Portland has plenty of **empty houses and units currently available.**
- What is needed is **inclusive wrap-around services** for currently unhoused individuals and families, including: **immigration protections for undocumented peoples:** We as a collective community need to acknowledge **the many barriers undocumented peoples face in TRYING TO APPLY FOR CITIZENSHIP**, nonetheless merely existing as undocumented peoples. Also including **HOUSING FOR PEOPLE, NOT PROFIT!** For far too long housing has been a capital industry allowing the wealthy to gain more wealth while taxing and fining poor and working class peoples and families. What is also needed **right now** is **hygiene and waste management services ON-SITE WHERE UNHOUSED PEOPLE ARE and where they know they can safely gather.** Too much talk is focused on how HOUSED community members feel "unsafe" with unhoused neighbors around, ignoring the fact that **THE HOUSED COMMUNITY MEMBERS HAVE A DOOR THEY CAN LOCK AND WALLS TO FEEL SECURE IN. WE NEED TO TALK WITH UNHOUSED PEOPLES ABOUT HOW THEY CAN FEEL SAFE WHILE LIVING OUTDOORS,** as they are not immune to the dangers of society and systems.  
**UNHOUSED PEOPLES FEEL JUST AS UNSAFE AS HOUSED PEOPLE DO, IF NOT MORE,** because **they are often unsafe in MULTIPLE INTERSECTING WAYS that housed peoples are not:** Systemically, societally, and not having shelter being just three easy examples of these intersecting ways.
- We as a collective community need to **STOP CRIMINALIZING UNDOCUMENTED PEOPLES, UNHOUSED PEOPLES, AND SUBSTANCE USING PEOPLES.** These people are **not criminals**, they are people thwarted terribly by a **SYSTEM that does not**

**support them where they currently are, a SOCIETY EMBOLDED BY THIS SYSTEM that does not see them as human beings oppressed by the system, and SERVICES PROVIDED BY THIS SYSTEM UNDER THE SOCIOLOGICAL PHILOSOPHY OF THESE PEOPLE BEING "LACKING" AND "LESS THAN" DUE TO THEIR BEING OPPRESSED AND RESPONDING TO THEIR OPPRESSION.**

- The REAL CRIMINALS are the housed neighbors and politicians lobbying for the criminalization and removal of unhoused neighbors. When I live in a building of 21 units and 3 of those units are unoccupied and there are 7 unhoused people **SLEEPING ON THE CONCRETE SIDEWALKS** doing their absolute best to SELF-NAVIGATE a system that HAS BETRAYED THEM AS HUMAN BEINGS, it is the **SYSTEM that is unjust, it is the SYSTEM AND THE LAW MAKERS AND THE NEIGHBORS CALLING FOR CRIMINALIZATION WHO ARE THE REAL CRIMINALS.**

- Yes, people yelling on the streets may be "scary" to so many people WHO HAVE NEVER EXPRESSED THEIR TRAUMA and are **PRIVILEGED to be able to AFFORD HOUSING IN THIS SOCIETY THAT USES SHELTER FOR CAPITALISM AND CRIMINALIZATION INSTEAD OF MEETING THE MOST BASIC OF HUMAN NEEDS.**

- Additionally, we, the people of Portland, do not need *more* buildings built because the process displaces so many families and communities, ***IS INHERENTLY GENTRIFYING AND FOR CAPITALIST, PRIVATE PROFIT***, and destroys areas where **LAND BACK and LAND REHABILITATION** can occur. Facing increased climate change and dramatic weather, we need to **cultivate the land we still have access to**, the land that is **not buried under concrete**, though already polluted in air, for food and medicine growth.

**- WE HAVE PLENTY OF HOMES AVAILABLE FOR UNHOUSED PEOPLE.**

**- STOP THE MYTH THAT MORE HOMES BEING BUILT IS THE ANSWER TO TODAY'S HOMELESSNESS.**

**- LET UNHOUSED PEOPLE SELF-DETERMINE THEIR OWN SOLUTION, based on their individual and familial situations,**

**-PARTNER WITH THOSE ALREADY DOING THE WORK, those who have gained the trust of unhoused peoples for mental, emotional, cultural and substance support services :: STRANGER DANGER IS REAL, *especially in unhoused communities who are prone to being attacked by LAW ENFORCEMENT.***

**- HONOR THE SAFETY CONCERNS OF UNHOUSED PEOPLE WHO DO NOT WANT TO & CANNOT ENTER SHELTERS OR ACCESS HOMES due to so many reasons, a couple easily being:**

**-- the AGGRESSIVELY LIMITED ACCESSIBILITY OF HOUSING APPLICATIONS,**

**-- TEMPORARY HOURLY PLACEMENTS IN SHELTERS,**

**-- SHELTERS RESTRICTING WHO IS ELIGIBLE, SEPARATING FAMILIES, NOT ALLOWING PETS, AND BEING UNHYGIENIC DUE TO *LITTLE FINANCIAL GOVERNMENT SUPPORT,***

**-- ABUSERS FREQUENTING SHELTER NEIGHBORHOODS SPECIFICALLY TO PREY ON UNHOUSED PEOPLES, & so many other safety concerns.**

**- LISTEN TO THE UNHOUSED FOLKS WHO SAY ALL THEY WANT IS A PLACE TO PITCH THEIR TENT SAFE FROM CRIMINALIZATION AND LAW ENFORCEMENT TERRORIZATION, WITH ACCESS TO WASTE MANAGEMENT AND HYGIENE, AND THEN PROVIDE THOSE SERVICES!**

**- LIFT THE RESTRICTIONS ON ACCESSING AND MAINTAINING HOUSING BY SHIFTING THE HOUSING "MARKET" TO A MODEL OF HOUSING FOR PEOPLE, NOT PROFIT**

- **PENALIZE PREDATORY LANDLORDS**
- **PROVIDE GOVERNMENT-SANCTIONED FINANCIAL RESOURCES FOR TENANTS IN EVICTION PROCEEDINGS**
- **PROVIDE RELIEF IN STUDENT DEBT & FINANCIAL INCENTIVE INCLUDING PENSIONS FOR FOLKS DIRECTLY ENGAGED WITH & ALREADY DOING THE WORK WITH UNHOUSED PEOPLES AND TENANTS; LAWYERS, CASE MANAGERS, FOOD WORKERS, WASTE MANAGEMENT WORKERS, SECURITY, FARMERS, SHELTER WORKERS, HYGIENE PROVIDERS, etc., REGARDLESS OF GOVERNMENTAL POSITIONING OF THESE WORKERS,** including citizenship status, mental health, substance use, housing status, etc.

In closing, there are *so many ways* to support ALL OUR NEIGHBORS, and **ALL OF THESE WAYS TO SUPPORT ALL OUR NEIGHBORS INVOLVES A HOUSING FOR PEOPLE PARADIGM SHIFT AND DECRIMINALIZING PEOPLE.**

It is simple, **WE HAVE ALL WE NEED ALREADY**; we have the buildings, we have the food cultivators, we have the people already doing the work, we have the money, but do we, the law makers and lobbyists and collective people of Portland, have the *humanity*?

Or do we only have money to spend on building more buildings for landlords to fill their pockets while displacing communities and destroying land?

Do we only have the same old system that has proven itself, decade after decade, ineffective and decidedly **NOT FOR ALL PEOPLE?**

Do we only have the same mouths, the same minds, the same hearts gathered at the table, speaking blank words into their microphones about issues well beyond their lived experiences and capacity to understand, decade after decade after decade?

Uwē, uwē, uwē!

E ola, e ola, e ola!

E 'olu'olu, you may reach out to me at this email address for further testimony.

Pīkake Jazzmín Sergia Ellis Kahananui