



**Interfaith
Alliance on
Poverty**

COMMENTS TO THE PORTLAND STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY GROUP

July 11, 2017

Greetings. My name is John Elizalde. I am a member of First Unitarian Church of Portland and the Interfaith Alliance on Poverty. We appreciate the opportunity to attend and observe the stakeholder group meetings and to have the chance to comment.

I am here to ask the group to include specific points in your framework document.

- 1. The faith community has land that could be used for affordable housing. The faith community is making a concerted effort to identify congregations that have land and interest in having that land converted to such housing.**
- 2. Affordable housing is consistent with the religious function of the faith community; it is part of what a faith community does, stands for, and values. It is very much part of the religious work of the community. This is an important point for your framework to stipulate because it addresses issues of land use planning and zoning.**
- 3. The city should explore and develop ways to help faith communities provide their land for affordable housing. Help means reducing the time, cost, process necessary to get otherwise idle congregation land into affordable housing.**
- 4. The faith community would be willing to make long-term commitments to affordable housing and should be eligible for reduced development fees and SDC waiver agreements.**
- 5. The city should work with faith communities to facilitate the neighborhood relationships necessary to make such development acceptable to all parties who may be impacted by the housing. Local congregations have an intense interest in being strong members of their neighborhoods and seek to accommodate concerns from individual neighbors, neighborhood associations and others.**

We believe your framework from the stakeholder group provides a reliable means to get this important resource presented to the city in a manner that will serve well the city, developers, neighbors and, most importantly, those who might be eligible for affordable housing.

Thank You