



PORTLAND HOUSING ADVISORY COMMISSION

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BAC Members:
Kim McCarty
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Date: January 30, 2017

To: Mayor Ted Wheeler
Commissioner Nick Fish
Commissioner Amanda Fritz
Commissioner Chloe Eudaly
Commissioner Dan Saltzman

Re: PHB FY 2017-18 Request Budget

The Portland Housing Advisory Commission's (PHAC) Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Portland Housing Bureau's (PHB) FY 2017-18 Requested Budget. We are committed to PHB's mission, vision, and values and support the Bureau's Strategic Plan. We endorse the Bureau's budget request and would like to highlight the following considerations.

We continue to appreciate and thank City Council for steps that have been taken in the last year to combat the current affordability crisis – the creation of the Joint Office of Homeless Services, the referral of a housing development general obligation bond, the adoption of a construction excise tax for affordable housing, the adoption of mandatory inclusionary housing, and more.

In reviewing the 2017-18 request budget, we support the adjustments and additions that have been proposed by the Housing Bureau as responsive to community needs and current market conditions.

The request budget is responsive to other city and community planning efforts, including the development of the *Draft 2035 Comprehensive Plan*, the *Central City 2035 Plan*, the continued updating and implementation of the *East Portland Action Plan*, the formation of the Anti-Displacement Coalition and their displacement mitigation recommendations, the North-Northeast Neighborhood Housing Strategy, the Division Bus Rapid Transit Planning, and the A Home for Everyone effort, and others.

The PHAC BAC recognizes that the budget continues to be a significant ask, and remains committed to working to ensure that a comprehensive assessment and understanding of impacts of the City's investment are known. These impacts include not only housing related outcomes, but the Bureau's success in achieving its racial equity goals and understanding its overlap with economic and workforce development. As members of the bureau's advisory committee, we commit ourselves as a body of accountability to which the bureau must be

able to respond. It would be unacceptable if the City's increased investment did not yield increased outcomes for Portland households along the housing continuum.

While we understand that the budget cut exercise is one that has been required by the City Budget Office, the PHAC BAC does not support cuts to homeless services or affordable housing development. Of particular concern would be cuts to any services that are preventing homelessness, such as short term rent assistance and deeply affordable rental housing. Keeping individuals and families who are on the edge of housing stability housed is critical, as the human and financial cost as people become homeless is extraordinary.

Although not directly related to the request budget, the PHAC BAC is excited to see that City Council continues to have robust policy and budget discussions with regard to homelessness, affordable housing, and renter protections. We strongly encourage City Council to engage with PHAC as new initiatives are being developed and new policies being considered. PHAC members have a wealth of knowledge and expertise that should be leveraged in service to the City.

Thank you for the commitment to addressing the unmet housing needs of the people of Portland and for your support of the PHAC and PHB. We strongly support fully funding the requested budget and ask that you support it as well.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Sarah Zahn".

Sarah Zahn
PHAC Chair