



P.O. Box 1097, Yakima, WA 98907
www.justicehousing.org (509) 406-6443

August 7, 2020

TO: Mayor Patricia Byers
City of Yakima Council Members

FROM: David Helseth
President, Justice Housing Yakima

RE: Letter of Support

Justice Housing Yakima (JHY), a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization in Yakima is requesting a letter of support from the City of Yakima for the application we will be making to the Washington State Department of Commerce to their 2020 Community Housing and Cottage Community funding grant. The application is due September 29, 2020.

The mission of Justice Housing Yakima is to build and maintain a micro (tiny) housing complex that will help formerly homeless folk with affordable housing in a caring and supportive community. This will be a Permanent Supportive Housing model where residents will pay rent (up to 30% of their income). JHY will partner with other agencies in Yakima to provide the case management (supportive services) that are essential for their wellbeing.

We are currently purchasing 3.34 acres of land behind Milroy Park for this project from the Baur family who previously operated a family garden nursery on this site. They were excited to work with us on making this project happen. The site is ideal for Cottage Hill Village in that is near a bus line, close to services like grocery store and medical services.

In your letter of support, you may want to reference steps the City of Yakima has taken to address housing issues and in particular housing for homeless. For example,

- The City of Yakima recognizes the need for at least 300 new housing units every year.
- Serious shortage of affordable housing units for low income families/homeless
- The City of Yakima voted to recognize micro (tiny) housing developments as multi-housing project - R-3 zoning. The property we are purchasing is already zoned R-3
- The need to infill lots within the City of Yakima - this project addresses the maximizing of limited lots.
- The City of Yakima supports organizations seeking innovative forms of housing.

Because Justice Housing Yakima is a fairly new organization (2016), we lack proven capacity to undertake all aspects of this project. The Department of Commerce Housing Trust Fund is looking for organization with this proven record which puts us at a disadvantage. To that end, we are currently seeking to connect with an established organization in Yakima that has the financial, technical and administrative resources that will partner with us to make this a stronger

proposal. You will need to recognize this element in your letter. The Housing Trust Fund is looking for organizations with this proven record, which puts us at a disadvantage. Hopefully you can support our efforts in finding a potential partner.

Thank you for your support in this effort. We will keep in touch with you as this project moves forward. Together we want to make Yakima a stronger and better community. Providing affordable housing for people experiencing homelessness is a major step in reaching this goal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David C. Helseth". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping 'D' and a trailing flourish at the end.

David C. Helseth
President
Justice Housing Yakima