



February 15, 2018

House Revenue Committee
Oregon Legislature – 2018 Session

Re: Support for Amendment to HB 4027

Dear Chair Barnhart and members of the House Revenue Committee:

We are writing to specifically request that you approve the amendment to HB 4027 that would allow a cemetery exemption to be transferred to an existing non-profit housing entity without penalty. This would allow for a lower land cost that could assist in getting a project for affordable housing built.

Our organization, Cascade Housing Association, a 501(c)(3) non-profit, was formed in 1993 with a mission to provide affordable housing to income qualified residents throughout the western United States. Our team works from Springfield to provide housing in Oregon, California, Idaho and New Mexico. We have developed or rehabilitated over 1600 units of affordable housing in regions ranging from large cities to small, rural towns. We know how to do affordable housing right and are very proud of our portfolio.

In many communities, including Eugene, available rental housing stock is priced much higher than the monthly budget for a large percentage of residents. The opportunity to provide 172 multifamily units here, in our home town, to better serve your constituents will be one of our teams' proudest accomplishments to date. The gap between market rate rents and affordable rents is continuing to grow. The cost of 10 years of back taxes will likely make this project unfeasible. The Cathedral Park acreage that we intend to buy and use for the sole purpose of developing affordable housing is ideally located in the desirable south hills of Eugene. With schools, grocery stores, public transportation and parks in such close proximity to better serve our future residents and to facilitate a true sense of community. There has been a considerable investment by the owner for onsite work; portions of city sewer, irrigation ditches, and the clearing of brush which make the site shovel ready to develop.

These projects are built for a life cycle of over sixty years and are designed to add to the quality of the existing neighborhoods. Based on the funding we anticipate receiving from the state, the Cathedral Park development will remain as affordable housing for a minimum of 55 years and quite possibly longer. The housing that is constructed will be of high quality and will serve our

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community well. This property holds a great opportunity to provide for those that are less able to afford market rate housing, while at the same time providing those families and individuals with a quality living environment.

This is our tentative plan to build 172 units of affordable housing on excess land owned by a cemetery:

Unit Type	Unit Size	# of Units	Sq. Ft.
1 Br	626	17	10,642
2 Br	952	104	99,008
3 Br	1021	51	52,071
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		172	162,721
	Laundry/Maintenance/Office/Community (combined)		3,600
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			165,321

As time passes, the growth in the need for controlled income and rent housing continues to outpace the supply. This is especially critical in Oregon and, more specifically, the Eugene-Springfield area. The residents who occupy these communities are the seniors who must adjust to lower incomes after retirement, as well as manage burgeoning medical costs. Adults who are still recovering from the recession may find themselves working lower paying jobs after years in a secure, family wage position. Young parents may find that the only jobs offered are part-time or minimum-wage and may also have debt from student loans. These are the commuters you drive alongside every day, the seniors you shop next to at Saturday Markets, or the parents you always sit by at school board meetings. To achieve our mission, we operate as a public benefit nonprofit, and partner with cities, counties, and state agencies, including HOME and the Low Income Housing Tax Credit program, to develop our apartment communities.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and desire to provide affordable housing and allowing the transfer of a cemetery tax exemption to a non-profit affordable housing entity.

Sincerely,



Millie V. Burke, President,
Cascade Housing Association
www.cascadehousing.org