

To: The State House Committee on Wildfire Recovery and The Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire Recovery.

From: Shelley Engle, Council President, City of Detroit

Thank you for the opportunity to share with you the experiences, impacts and the recovery needs for the City of Detroit.

As you know, the Lionshead fire that roared through Detroit on the night of September 7, 2020 for all intents and purposes destroyed the City of Detroit. We experienced a completely destroyed water system, the City Hall and Fire station were burned to the ground. All hotels, restaurants and gas stations were destroyed. Also lost was a grocery store and the buildings that housed the two marina offices.

Now standing is one small convenience grocery store, a small take-out restaurant, and the U.S. Post office. Consumer Power Inc. and Ziplly Fiber have been able to finally restore electricity and internet to most of the citizens in town. These are the only public services that the City now has.

Approximately 80% of all homes were destroyed. Very few were damaged-the homes were either obliterated or are livable. There are less than 20 homes left, and 264 homes were destroyed. One of the largest rv parks is gone.

Due to the extraordinarily heroic efforts of our Marion County Sheriff's department and the 911 system, we suffered no loss of life. There was the loss of one of our fire trucks, but all our firefighters survived, although many lost their homes.

The number is staggering as to the loss of our beautiful trees, mostly Douglas firs. We have lost a minimum of 450 large trees, within the city limits.

The dire need is the restoration/replacement of our water infrastructure. It has now been over 5 ½ months with no water and this is now a public health crisis. We were told this week that the OHA is requiring us to have all 400 water meters tested for volatile organic compounds (VOC's), rather than sampling. This will take 6 more weeks of work, which after almost six months, is unacceptable. Again, let me reiterate that there only 20 houses remaining, not 400 homes. The Oregon Health Authority has not made an appearance in Detroit or offered any assistance, only more requirements, and hoops to jump through. We need water now, and funding to pay for boots on the ground to get water into the homes of our citizens. We have been given a grant from the USDA to help pay for the replacement of the destroyed water system, but we need help and dollars now to secure temporary water service to our citizens.

The second step to facilitate the recovery of Detroit and the rest of the canyon who suffered from the fires, is funding for a sewer system. The report from the engineers as to how it will be placed and constructed is due next week. In fact, the town hall is tonight-during this same hearing. The North Santiam Sewer Authority is ready to ask for money to build this sewer system. However, if the agencies and funding streams could provide/award us funding for the system now, before

we have to go hat in hand asking for it, this sewer system could be built in a much shorter timeline. The NSSA has been officially recognized as a OR 190 entity and have now met for their 50th time. This sewer would allow homeowners to rebuild on their small lots, and small lots that have not been built on before, now could be developed. The concern is that if homeowners have to wait three or four more years to build, they will move on and out of the canyon. If this happens, we will lose tax revenue, property taxes to pay for schools and services, and the income into the city that pays our employees' wages.

With a sewer system, commercial and retail will also be able to re-build and provide needed services in Detroit. Without a sewer system, it is quite likely they will not bother rebuilding in Detroit-due to drain field and septic system requirements.

The third step to facilitate the recovery is to recognize that the citizens of Detroit have lost their homes. Although many of the houses were second homes, a great number were primary residences. The situation now is that many homeowners have waited over 5 ½ months for ODOT to come and clean up their lots. The city still looks bombed out and depressed and gives the impression that Detroit is dying and will not recover.

Any and all aid, money, personnel, and other resources that the State can provide to its constituents are highly needed and would be helpful.