

I attended the live hearing tonight. Regretfully, I was past the deadline to request time to speak. My family and I are survivors of the October 8th 2020 Alameda fire. I have attached a picture of the home we lost in said fire. The corridor of housing affected was largely mobile home communities, like mine. Affordable, non-subsidized housing that included such amenities as private garden space and shared community spaces and resources. Before the fire, homes like mine would often sell for \$10,000 or less, being that they were older and many with unpermitted grandfathered additions. I had a compact 3 bedroom home (including the make-shift ad-on) and garden space, which I paid \$500 monthly space rent for. I was able to support my family with 3 children on my own, without subsidy, and with far more dignity and amenities than all current offers of low-income housing available. As a result of the fire, many individuals and families like mine have experienced severe gentrification, due to there being no remaining equivalent housing affordable at our given home values. We are being forced to sacrifice our way of life. I have relocated 3 times since the fire, and am now living in a tent in a backyard, paying \$200 more a month to dwell here than I did to have a home with rooms for my children, a kitchen, a bathroom, a garden, a very modest living space. Previous to the fire, neighbors gardened and traded food and services amongst each other, and kept rabbits and chickens, and pets as well.

The owner of my former park decided to do what was most profitable, and only allow newer homes being established in the rebuild, being out of price-range of all previous residents, as well as disallowing outdoor animals. I testified at a phoenix city council meeting, where I was told that it's out of the governments hands how private land owners chose to rebuild. If the only incentive to build housing is profit, we are going to see increasingly diminished quality of life for the working class. The money I got from FEMA was only enough to have bought a 5th wheel, with no way to transport it, and nowhere to park it at the time, as the fire affected so many of our RV parks along the Bear Creek Greenway. It used to be a strip of some of the most affordable housing in the valley, but is now being revamped for luxury appeal. The working class is being pushed through a system of inadequate temporary housing, especially for families. Dilapidated motels have been converted into studio apartments in the most crime-ridden parts of town. This is the life and hope being given to us who have lost so much, and now losing our dignity. All of the assistance has deadlines, and many of us are hopping from one boulder waiting for another one to appear before us so we can find out way through. It all seems very bleak.

Since the fire, I have become obsessed with how we could ever possibly get our life back and secure a future of stability. One small community, The Jackson Wellsprings, managed to save their land and homes by working with the firefighters and draining their own natural spring to defend the land. Me, I turned on my mister line and begged God crying to protect my house before evacuating. Year after year, these fires come and threaten lives, homes, livelihoods, communities, infrastructure. I want to feel optimistic about the future, but I personally find the solutions a day late and a dollar short. As a person who has had a lot of experience being poor and struggling to provide a quality life for my family, despite never being unemployed, I can say that I don't feel that I will ever be able to afford security and stability, as long as it is profit that is the motivation for housing. I think there needs to be greater space for family-safe housing outside the profit model.

We are on land abundant of natural resources being squandered for profit, pricing the working class out of housing. I believe there should be areas of land designated for land stewardship by sustainable communities, designed to be resilient and promote sufficiency. At present, many people like me can't possibly work enough to support our families, even living simply. I have spent months studying how such "off-the-grid" sustainable communities are operating throughout the world, and I am humbly impressed with the health of the environment and many supportive benefits. This is what we need. In the fire, we lost small communities, and we have been scattered. Village communities provide so much support for the vulnerable; those of us who have little have more when we are able to combine resources and work together. At present, much low-income housing is quite isolating, lacking sufficient community space or even the ability to have guests or visitors. The continuation of these methods for low-income housing

will perpetuate the hopelessness and loss of dignity for the working class. I dream of RV and tiny home communities built around incredible earthship systems as community hubs. If you aren't aquatinted with the concept of a fire-resistant self-sustaining earthship or biotecture, please do take the time. Michael Reynolds has done incredible work in Taos, New Mexico, where his water harvesting systems are able to sustain on less than half our annual Oregon rainfall. The land stewardship sustainable communities I dream of would live surrounded by permaculture, food forests, cellar storage, community workshops, greenhouses, and natural pools. We would be able to thrive, even with little, through our willingness to work together. This is what we need.

I send this with my hopes and prayers. I did beg God, and I hope to see my prayers fulfilled in my lifetime. Please do all you can to give us hope for a future.

Shannon King,
Admin of Rogue Valley for Sustainable Living

