

## **Presentation to the House Interim Committee on Housing and Homelessness**

November 7, 2023

Good morning committee members.

My name is Rose Ojeda. I serve as the Director of CASA of Oregon's Manufactured Housing and Cooperative Development Center. We are an Oregon non-profit organization focused on affordable housing development, individual economic development, a community lender and preserve manufactured dwelling parks as Resident Owned Communities.

In 2008 we became a contract affiliate of the National ROC USA program based in New Hampshire. Since that time, CASA, working hand in hand, with homeowner residents has preserved 25 parks throughout Oregon. Our 26th park is underway and should achieve acquisition by the end of 2023.

I want to share with you today one particular park we preserved, Filbert Grove Cooperative, previously known as The Patrician, located in Springfield Oregon. Residents of this park had worked diligently prior to the park being for sale to avoid a rezone of their property. That rezoning effort was led by the park owner who had plans to build a hotel, which would have ultimately displaced 82 mostly senior households and approximately 150 individuals. While the park owner's rezoning request was approved, his plans were disrupted by the pandemic's economy. In the spring of 2021 he began to receive unsolicited offers to buy his park. As required by Oregon statute he notified residents of his plans to sell the park. The residents were terrified when they contacted CASA to see if we could help. They were certain the recent rezoning of their property would still lead to their displacement if another investor buyer purchased the property. We moved quickly and the residents successfully purchased their property with a bridge loan from NOAH and CASA, but they had to agree to a \$150 monthly space rent increase due primarily to the high purchase price. It was the highest per space price we had seen at that time.

Since their purchase in July 2021, the senior homeowners have been successfully operating their park, completed a first phase of park renovations, completed their permanent financing and now are working on a second phase of major infrastructure improvements. They are meeting their financial metrics and reporting obligations, have opened an onsite food pantry, issue a monthly newsletter to keep residents well informed about park governance and operations. Last September, Filbert Grove Cooperative won the Golden Key Award from Housing Oregon for their exemplary "Best New Homeownership Project". We are so proud of their achievements.

While CASA guided the resident's purchase effort and continues to provide ongoing technical support, ***it is the homeowner residents who lead the way and make all the operational decisions on behalf of their homeowner community.*** Filbert Grove Cooperative, like our other 24 Resident Owned Communities exemplify how effectively residents can successfully operate their own affordable housing. Thank you for allowing me this time to highlight our ROCs.