

December 8, 2021

Port Commissioners  
Port of Olympia  
606 Columbia St. NW, Suite 300  
Olympia, WA 98501

Joe Downing, District One Commissioner,  
Bill McGregor, District Two Commissioner, and  
E. J. Zita, District Three Commissioner:

We, the Thurston County Regional Housing Council, are writing this letter in support of the proposal by the Thurston County Housing Authority to develop low-income senior housing at the site of the Oyo Hotel at 1600 74th Avenue SW in Tumwater. The project would convert an underused hotel to permanent low-income housing and add 58 low-income housing units for seniors to Thurston County. The project has the support of a willing hotel owner, approved funding, and cooperation from regional governments.

It has come to our attention that the Port of Olympia has made a decision to submit a formal request to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to "release" this land from FAA restrictions. We appreciate and support this decision to prepare and submit the necessary application. RHC jurisdictions are fully supportive of this request and commit to providing staff support to the Port to complete the FAA paperwork in a timely manner. We are also committed to support and be part of the process to achieve FAA lifting the restrictions on this property.

As stated in the Housing Action Plan and Housing Needs Assessment developed by the Thurston Regional Planning Council in January 2021, the population of seniors living in Thurston County is projected to increase by about 35,000 individuals by 2045. As a result, increasing the stock of housing options for seniors is a key need identified in the Housing Action Plan.

The Regional Housing Council has recently developed a strategic framework to create 150-200 units of permanent supportive housing by the end of 2024. One critical strategy of this framework is the acquisition of existing hotels for conversion into permanent supportive housing. Acquisition of existing hotels is both a cost-effective and time-efficient strategy for creating the additional affordable housing units that our community desperately needs to reduce the number of people living unsheltered in our community.

There is an urgent need for more permanent supportive housing in Thurston County and this project can provide a tremendous benefit to low-income seniors. We encourage you to complete the formal request to the FAA as soon as possible.

Regards,



Jim Cooper  
Chair, Regional Housing Council



Carolina Mejia  
Vice Chair, Regional Housing Council

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