

Catherine Nicewood  
17401 NE Couch St.  
Gresham, OR 97230

RE: Sunrise Center Development

Dear GRDC, and Emily,

In the memo by Dr. Mason dated September 28, 2021, the number one unmet need is food and nutrition. Currently the Rockwood CDC provides a food entrepreneurial program in the Sunrise Center. Several businesses have started in the kitchen and have now moved on to be independent. The kitchen has a diverse ethnic mix and cultures. It has provided an opportunity that is not provided anywhere else for starting and growing food businesses, and provides job training.

A Slavic senior day care was held at the Sunrise Center before the COVID shut down. Three churches held services at the Sunrise Center before the COVID shutdown.

The Rockwood CDC has provided many listening sessions with the different ethnic groups in Rockwood. They have provided the best services to the diverse citizens in Rockwood and know their needs well. They have also provided English Language Learner Classes for Hispanic parents.

The Rockwood CDC has also provided office space upstairs for various businesses that need a space to meet clients. They have hosted several vaccine clinics, health fairs, and a Thursday Farmers Market.

I do not know of a better organization than the Rockwood CDC to continue to provide services at the Sunrise Center site.

I agree with all of the possible uses for the Sunrise Center Site except housing. Following is a list of the current housing in planning or construction currently in Rockwood:

181 NE 182<sup>nd</sup> Place, 33 single family homes that are two story with three bedrooms

165<sup>th</sup> and Burnside, 4 stories, 97 units,

179<sup>th</sup> and Stark, two story senior independent living and memory care

Downtown Rockwood, over 100 units, mix of affordable and market rate

772-876 NE 162<sup>nd</sup> Ave, 150 affordable units

17526 E Burnside, 24 market rate apartments

Rockwood 10, 185<sup>th</sup> and Yamhill, over 200 affordable units

407-465 SE 172<sup>nd</sup> Ave. 8 units market rate

Rockwood is already the most densely populated neighborhood in the City of Gresham. Rockwood is also the youngest neighborhood of children under 18. What I have suggested is a multi-use community/youth center, gym, and outdoor public space that the diverse community in Rockwood can enjoy. The Gresham Neighborhood Enforcement Team tell me that most of the crime in Rockwood is from 162<sup>nd</sup> Ave to 202<sup>nd</sup> Ave. along the MAX line.

When the PAL Center closed on 172<sup>nd</sup> Ave, the number one need parents told me is that they have no place to take their children after school or weekends when they have to work. They don't have the resources to pay for child care. We desperately need a community space for the many children in Rockwood.

I have sat on the Housing Stakeholders Group and the Community Center Advisory Group. When the City of Gresham put the vote for a Community Center on the ballot, the citizens in Rockwood overwhelmingly voted for it. The Housing Stakeholder Group stressed the need for affordable housing throughout the City of Gresham and not all of it in Rockwood. Currently Rockwood has most of the Home Forward and Human Solutions affordable housing in the city.

What the citizens of Rockwood need is a multi-use community campus that provides a food kitchen for small businesses, meeting rooms, and community space for health and exercise classes, child care, senior day care, a gym for youth and adult sports, GED classes, worship services for the diverse community, and listening sessions for the police to interact with the community. Dr. Steven Holt hosted at the Sunrise Center listening sessions for the police and the citizens of Rockwood, and then they were all of a sudden stopped. They need to continue.

In conclusion, I envision the Sunrise Center as a multi-use campus and I can't think of a better developer than the Rockwood CDC who currently has operated the Sunrise Center through hard and difficult times, and they have held the Center together. They know the diverse community in Rockwood better than anyone. They meet all of the requirements you are looking for in a developer.

Hoping for better days,

Catherine Nicewood

Rockwood President

Board Member, Rockwood Prep. Academy

Board Member, Gresham Senior Center

