

**Richmond City Council Budget Meeting**

**April 22, 2019**

My name is Dorothy Hollahan and I am a member of the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Richmond.

I am here with the RISC Organization to ask for your leadership in solving our city's eviction crisis, because eviction has a serious impact on homelessness in our region.

I am recently retired from a career working with children and families in local and state agencies. I see the efforts to address evictions and housing as a very important issue for children and families.

Eviction creates an immediate risk of homelessness & loss of personal property. Nationally, 40% of people experiencing homelessness had received an eviction notice, and 39% had been forcibly evicted from their housing.

Families often move into poor quality housing, and their entire quality of life is affected. An eviction also makes it much harder for a family to rent another unit.

We have the tools to stop this epidemic and the life-long impacts eviction has on families!

Affordable Housing Trust Funds are a proven tool used in 700 cities to increase access to affordable housing. Housing Trust Funds are shown to deconcentrate poverty by funding mixed-income developments and providing seed funding for developers to include affordable housing in typical developments.

A Trust Fund is NOT a subsidy for individual families. It IS gap financing for well-known and respected developers and service providers in our city to build housing that working-class people can afford.

Richmond's Trust Fund, with just under \$4 million invested over 4 years, is effective. In fact, according to the latest data from the city, the Trust Fund is paying for itself. Annually, developments that were funded generated an increase of \$1.3 million in tax revenue for the City. Over 4 years, these developments have generated an additional \$1.6 million in permits and fees for the City.

I am asking that you would prioritize funding for the Affordable Housing Trust Fund and Eviction Diversion program, making sure that the Affordable Housing Trust Fund remains in the budget at \$2.9 million and the Eviction Diversion Program at \$485,000.

I look forward to seeing you at RISC's Nehemiah Action Assembly on May 2nd to directly address these issues with 1,200 of your constituents.