

EAST PORTLAND ACTION PLAN REPORT

IF YOU WISH TO SPEAK TO CITY COUNCIL, PRINT YOUR NAME, ADDRESS, AND EMAIL.

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Steve  
Novick  
Commissioner

December 11, 2014

Leah Treat  
Director

Portland City Council  
1221 SW 4<sup>th</sup> Ave  
Portland, OR 97204

RE: Support for the Transition of East Portland Action Plan

Dear Mayor Hales and Commissioners:

I am writing to share the Bureau of Transportation's (PBOT) general support for the East Portland Action Plan (EPAP) and the supporting committee and representatives.

The Action Plan was convened by the City of Portland, Multnomah County, and U.S. Senator Jeff Merkley to provide "leadership and guidance to public agencies and other entities on how to strategically address community-identified issues and allocate resources to improve livability for neighborhoods in the East Portland Neighborhood Office (EPNO) coalition area."

Since its inception, the EPAP has successfully partnered with PBOT staff and leadership to identify near-term opportunities to improve livability as well as develop long-term strategies to address community challenges. The persistent efforts of the EPAP members, advocate, and leadership have contributed to the successful completion of specific EPAP action items like the East Portland in Motion (EPIM) strategy. We have also made progress on other transportation policies, plans, and infrastructure improvements within east Portland, always achieving better outcomes through partnering with EPAP.

Of 39 of action items that PBOT is lead on implementing, the East Portland in Motion strategy is a prime example of what PBOT has achieved working with EPAP. EPIM supports multiple EPAP action items. EPAP members provided meaningful direction to the project. EPAP members helped staff identify needed safety projects from each neighborhood and the area school districts. They provided meaningful input to staff on developing criteria and setting

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priorities. This collaboration helped staff to finalize a list of priority projects, particularly sidewalks and enhanced crossings that were already strongly supported by the east Portland community. We are now able to continue to refer to the list and further prioritize projects to quickly bring these safety improvements to east Portland.

Since adoption in 2012, over half the priority projects in EPIM have been implemented. PBOT has successfully helped allocated over \$47 million in funding towards these projects.

We are addressing deficiencies in east Portland's transportation network and working to achieve equity across the city. Still, more work remains. Ongoing EPAP advocacy and support is critical for us to move forward meaningful projects like EPIM for east Portland residents.

Stakeholder input will continue to be needed. Therefore, ongoing engagement with EPAP committees and representatives will be of benefit. EPAP helps bring a broad and diverse range of community-based voices to the table to provide input, build consensus and ultimately achieve a unified voice. When time-sensitive or difficult decisions are required, this can be an asset. Without staff support and the organizational capacity that committed, ongoing staff provides, such engagement would require more time and effort on the part of the city and community stakeholders. We look forward to strengthening our partnership with the East Portland Action Plan community.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "April Bertelsen". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

April Bertelsen

Senior Transportation Planner

## United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 11, 2014

The Honorable Charlie Hales, Mayor of Portland and Members of Portland City Council  
Portland City Hall  
1221 SW Fourth Ave., Room 130  
Portland, OR 97204

Dear Mayor Hales and Portland City Council Members:

I am writing to express my support for the East Portland Action Plan (EPAP) Transition Plan Report, which is scheduled to come before City Council for acceptance on December 11, 2014. I particularly want to ask for your strong consideration of recommendations in the Transition Plan that will assist in assuring that EPAP can continue its work into the future.

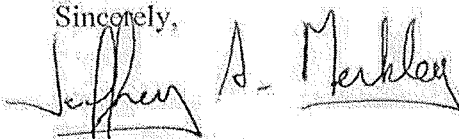
Since 2007, EPAP has played a fundamental role in convening a diverse group of stakeholders to address long-standing social, economic and safety concerns in East Portland. As a resident of East Portland, I participated in the early work of the group, and have been proud to watch as EPAP has expanded to involve community members in 13 neighborhoods and five business districts. EPAP has empowered residents by providing opportunities to develop local leadership and to advocate for necessary changes to be made.

East Portland is comprised of 25 percent of Portland's residents and 40 percent of the City's students. Median household income is at least 23 percent lower than citywide and East Portland continues to experience challenges that impact the quality of life for residents. Some challenges are the result of a slow economic recovery and limited resources in the area. Additionally, the number of families moving to East Portland to find affordable housing continues to rise. These problems are multi-layered and will take EPAP, in collaboration with elected officials a considerable amount of time to solve.

Despite these obstacles, the momentum and passion among members is unyielding. Monthly EPAP meetings produce a substantial number of attendees who are ready to volunteer their time. EPAP's presence in the East Portland community remains invaluable and is greatly needed. Ongoing funding and resources from the City of Portland will assist EPAP in executing their goals.

Thank you for your full and fair review of EPAP's Transition Plan. Should you have any further questions, please contact Samaura Stone in my Portland office at 503-326-3386.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey A. Merkley  
United States Senator