

**Testimony of Raihana Ansary
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Portland Business Alliance
Before Planning and Sustainability Commission
Regarding Employment Zoning Project
October 27, 2015**

Good evening Chair Baugh, Commissioners.

My name is Raihana Ansary, here on behalf of the Portland Business Alliance. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed employment zoning project. We believe that the project is a step in the right direction toward meeting growth capacity shortfalls in the Portland Harbor, Columbia Corridor and dispersed employment areas in the city of Portland.

The project is absolutely critical to preventing the extraneous conversion of prime industrial land which is a significant generator of middle-income jobs, particularly for those with less than a four-year college degree. As our recent *Middle Income Jobs Report* shows, our region has regained jobs lost at the low- and high-end income levels, but not the middle-income jobs lost during the recession. In addition, BPS' own report, *The Industrial Middle of Portland's Changing Income Distribution*, finds that communities of color and East Portlanders frequently rely on jobs located on industrial lands.

Since the last comprehensive update, the city of Portland has lost about 1,000 acres of industrial land that have been converted to other land use designations. We understand that market forces evolve and play a significant role in driving demand for different types of development. This project strikes the right balance between ensuring that there is an adequate supply of industrial land and still preserving the right to a legislative zone change. In other words, the project discourages conversion but does not absolutely restrict it. ~~For example, the mitigation fee proposed does not prevent one from converting industrial land but will cause people to pause and consider carefully the opportunity cost and value of conversion.~~

We understand that we are land constrained and that land intensification and enhancement strategies are recommended for different land uses including industrial land in the way of brownfield redevelopment. Unfortunately, a land intensification strategy alone is insufficient in making up for our industrial lands shortfall and for meeting the needs of industrial businesses because of their unique spatial layouts and associated traffic patterns.

It is, therefore, critical that the amendments proposed in the employment zoning project be made to protect our limited supply of industrial land. Thank you.