

January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2016  
Portland Planning and Sustainability Commission  
1900 SW 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Portland, OR 97201  
RE: Powell/Division City of Portland Local Action Plan

Dear Chair Baugh and commission members,

Thank you for again making the time to examine the Powell/Division Local Action Plan. We would like to thank the commission for recognizing the importance of understanding and responding to the community stabilization needs along the project corridor and the City of Portland staff for their efforts to attach costs and timelines to key elements of the Action Plan. Much of the corridor is already at risk of housing and commercial vulnerability and displacement, and the tasks most closely related to stabilizing the corridor remain unfunded. There is a sizable gap between funding needed to support communities in the corridor and the funding that has been secured, we hope that this analysis encourages Planning and Sustainability Commission members and City Commissioners to direct attention and resources towards raising that revenue.

We are happy to see many of the economic development tasks, especially those focused on retaining and growing opportunities for current corridor businesses, fully or partially funded. It is heartening to see “Better Multi-dwelling Standards” funded as well. We are also happy to see that the Community Outreach Coordinator position is partially funded, supporting the Action Plan’s intent for the position to “develop and implement a community involvement plan.” As the project moves into implementation, it is critically important that the community has a voice in issues that may not traditionally be part of the implementation engagement process – including those related to the public benefits of transit oriented developments and other land use issues.

Several of the tasks best aligned with our community stabilization goals have been subsumed under the broader description of “Use the N/NE Neighborhood Housing Strategy as a model including support for...”. While we are particularly happy to see:

- Increased Access to MULTE Program
- Rental Housing Inspection Program,
- Improving Conditions for Mobile Home Communities, and
- Initiate a High Capacity Transit Community Development Fund

included in the plan, we are concerned that these still do not have a cost or potential funding source attached to them.

While the N/NE Strategy includes several programs that may prove effective, the strategy was developed in reaction to historic and current events in North and Northeast Portland, built upon a small amount of secured funding. Home ownership is a strong focus of the N/NE Strategy, with nearly \$9 million of the \$20 million focused on creating new homeowners and stabilizing current owners. The needs along the Powell/Division corridor, where housing costs in several areas are significantly lower than in the N/NE area, may prove to be very different. Without more information about residents and

residences along the corridor, we would like to see more clarity around the plan for affordable housing preservation and production than “Use the N/NE Neighborhood Housing Strategy as a model.”

Overall, we recognize that the Action Plan represents significant progress in how the region plans for a major transit investment. We appreciate the time and attention that has gone into including strategies – both to ensure that the residents and businesses along the corridor will benefit from the transit investment and to help mitigate the growing cost pressures affecting communities across the city and in the corridor.

This transit investment provides an opportunity to leverage our public investment to both provide transportation benefits and reduce displacement and vulnerability.

Thank you for your consideration,

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