

May 10, 2017

Mayor Ted Wheeler and Portland City Commissioners
Council Chambers
Portland City Hall
1221 SW 5th Ave.
Portland, OR 97204

Cc: Portland City Council Clerk

Dear Mayor Wheeler and Commissioners,

I am writing to express TriMet's support for the City of Portland funding the implementation of the **Economic and Community Development Initiatives** in the Powell-Division Transit and Development Project's Portland Local Action Plan, which was adopted by the Portland City Council in July 2016. TriMet is excited to bring improved transit service to the citizens of Portland through implementation of the Division Transit Project. The communities in the area need a variety of capital and economic and community development efforts to realize its vision and potential. The City's Action Plan seeks to support the community in a variety of important ways.

We encourage the City of Portland to include funding for this important effort to support the community and community-based organizations such as Jade and Division Midway Alliance Neighborhood Prosperity Initiatives. This funding would provide resources in this corridor for community outreach, business development, and workforce navigation. Funding these efforts now will help prepare the communities and community businesses to best take advantage of the opportunities with the other investments in the corridor while helping avoid potential negative impacts to current business and residents of improving access in the corridor. During the project, TriMet's will encourage work on the project by Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs) and deliver the project in ways that help residents in the corridor have the opportunity not only to benefit from the completed project but to participate in the construction of the project itself. We hope that together, we can improve the lives of many thousands of people who live, work, and travel throughout this corridor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Alan Lehto".

Alan Lehto
TriMet Director Planning and Policy



600 NE Grand Ave.
Portland, OR 97232-2736
oregonmetro.gov

May 10, 2017

Portland City Council
1211 SW 5th Ave.
Portland, OR 97204

Dear Portland City Commissioners:

We are writing to support funding the implementation of the *Powell/Division BRT Local Action Plan- Economic and Community Development Initiatives* in the PDC budget. Funding PDC to implement this element of Portland's Action Plan builds on a tremendous amount of financial and human resources that have been and will be spent on this important regional project to date and in the future. Metro was pleased to provide the City with Community Development Block Grant funds to develop its Local Action Plan and this proposed funding package directly supports important next steps from the Action Plan.

As co-chairs of the Powell-Division Transit and Development Project from 2013-2016 we worked hard with our committee members to craft solutions that would not only address the unmet transit and safety needs in the Division corridor, but would also build upon and strengthen the economic assets and opportunities in the area. Funding from this package to support a Community Development Team would be a strong acknowledgement that local jurisdictional partners are keenly aware of the intersections between transportation, economic development, housing and community stabilization. Funds for a Community Outreach Worker, Workforce Navigator and Business Technical Assistance Advisor will help assure that ongoing planning for the new rapid bus line will be comprehensive and consider the long-term assets and needs in the community.

A bus rapid transit investment of this size has great potential to create positive change for community members and businesses along Division Street and surrounding neighborhoods. Our experience has been that significant infrastructure investments often come with very real development pressures that can lead to community destabilization and displacement of residents and small businesses. As we've learned from previous transit projects, preparing businesses for future investment in their areas is an important element of mitigating future business displacement. In addition, the workforce support that would be available with these funds is key to connecting residents to living wage jobs related to transit investment.

The future rapid bus line on Division Street will undoubtedly play a role in addressing unmet transit and safety needs in the corridor. Increased funding for business, workforce and community support will help ensure that this does not become another cautionary tale about the unintended negative consequences of planning a transit investment without strong emphasis on strengthening business and community opportunity at the same time. Please don't hesitate to contact us to talk more about our support for this budget request.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Shirley R. Craddick in black ink.

Shirley Craddick, Councilor
District 1

Handwritten signature of Bob Stacey in black ink.

Bob Stacey, Councilor
District 6



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Mayor Ted Wheeler and
Portland City Commissioners
Portland City Hall
1221 SW 5th Avenue
Portland, OR 97204

cc: Portland City Council Clerk

RE: Budget Add Back Request Advocacy for Powell/Division BRT Local Action Plan Implementation – Economic and Community Development Initiatives

Dear Mayor Wheeler and Commissioners,

Division Midway Alliance is writing today to request that the Mayor and Commissioners accept the Portland Development Commission's add back request for Powell/Division BRT Local Action Plan Implementation – Economic and Community Development Initiatives.

Because most of the background work that went into the Action Plan was created in the previous administration, I believe it is important to provide the current Council with a brief history of the community input and involvement that went into the creation of the Local Action Plan and the reasoning behind the action items in question. DMA has been working on this project from the beginning. DMA staff represented the district's business and residential community as a Steering Committee Member on the Powell Division Bus Rapid Transit & Development Project. At the first steering committee meeting, members adopted project goals that included frequent and efficient high capacity transit, safe, healthy neighborhoods and improved access to social, educational, environmental & economic opportunities and reduced disparities and equitably distributed benefits and burdens of change and benefit current residents.

Community groups, like DMA, APANO, Jade, EPAP and OPAL, recognized the opportunity to bring a holistic development project to East Portland, and in November 2014 committee members released the list of Community Stability Goals. Together, these organizations worked with City of Portland bureaus, TriMet and Metro to create an Action Plan designed to mitigate the gentrifying force new transit lines can create.

One of the most important aspects of the Transit Action Plan is the strong and early connection to communities and businesses along the transit route. Area demographics show that the majority of independent business owners and residents living along the corridor are of minority and / or refugee status. The cultures represented in DMA's business demographics vary from Asian (~50%), to Latino (~20%), Slavic (~15%), Middle Eastern (~10%), and African (~5%) immigrant status.

Because of these diverse demographics, DMA has learned that outreach must be tailored differently from culture to culture, and that outreach requires additional time and consistent effort. After three years of consistent outreach to all DMA business owners, DMA staff has been able to establish authentic relationships with the majority of the district's businesses. Business owners have learned to rely upon DMA as a resource for challenges they may encounter. However, DMA's staff is at capacity, and the transit project will bring increased demand for services. PSU's Business Outreach Program staff and DMA staff have talked about the need for early and consistent outreach to businesses so they feel comfortable reaching out when and if issues arise.

On the community level, this past year DMA volunteers began providing resources out of DMA's office for the Myanmar and Bhutanese communities that ranged from homeless issues to citizenship status, as well as health care enrollment and employment support. As the transit line moves forward, the community will have opportunities to access construction and transit jobs. By building skills and relationships now, community members will have the tools needed to access those living wage jobs when available.

I want to thank you for understanding the holistic nature of the Powell / Division BRT Local Action Plan Implementation – Economic and Community Development Initiatives and supporting the \$275,000 add back request.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Lori Boisen". The signature is written in dark ink on a light background.

Lori Boisen
Executive Director
Division Midway Alliance