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37591

Resolution

Declare City Council support to form stakeholder advisory groups to support post-pandemic economic recovery in the Central City and Neighborhood Business Districts

Adopted

WHEREAS, Portland’s post-pandemic economic recovery is lagging in parts of the Central City District and in some Neighborhood Business Districts; and

WHEREAS, although the challenges to economic and community vitality vary across the city, many districts experience common challenges related to public safety, right-of-way improvements and activations, housing access and affordability, customer attraction, BIPOC-Q diversity of property and business ownership, and the future of returning office-based workers; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor intends to establish two stakeholder groups to provide recommendations to the Mayor, with one group of stakeholders focused on the Central City (“Central City Expediting Group”) and another focused on the economic corridors in neighborhood business districts throughout the city (“Neighborhood Economic Corridor Expediting Group”). These groups are intended to provide expert input to the Mayor on economic recovery and will not exercise any government powers (Exhibit A and Exhibit B); and

WHEREAS, ECONorthwest, a Portland-based economic analysis firm, is completing an assessment of post-pandemic economic performance and needed recovery interventions; and

WHEREAS, based on ECONorthwest’s work, these groups will be tasked with developing recommendations for the Mayor’s consideration to improve the communication, coordination and alignment of activities that are needed across City government, the private sector, and community-based organizations in an action-oriented and urgent manner; and

WHEREAS, the density of office buildings in parts of Central City poses a unique challenge because of the change in work patterns that has increased office and retail vacancies caused by reduced numbers of office-based workers; and

WHEREAS, Central City subdistricts that had a more balanced mix of residential to employment uses fared better in response to the pandemic according to ECONorthwest’s analysis; and

Introduced by

[Mayor Ted Wheeler](#)

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Requested Agenda Type

Regular

Date and Time Information

Requested Council Date
October 26, 2022
Time Requested
15 minutes

WHEREAS, a key focus of the Central City Expediting Group will be to recommend to the Mayor options to speed more office to residential conversions that drive greater building safety, centrally-located affordable housing, and mixed-used vibrancy; and

WHEREAS, economic corridors that lost a significant number of businesses and employees during the pandemic need reinvestment and reinvigoration through improved connections to neighborhoods, public realm upgrades, and increasing visitor activity; and

WHEREAS, a key focus of the Neighborhood Economic Corridors Expediting Group will be to recommend how additional affordable housing can be added to those corridors that lack it; and

WHEREAS, because the Stakeholder groups are created through Council resolution, time spent participating in the group is not considered lobbying under Portland City Code 2.12.020.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Portland City Council hereby expresses its support for the Mayor's formation of these two expediting groups and their work to support post-pandemic economic recovery and revitalization throughout the City of Portland.

Documents and Exhibits

 [Exhibit A](#) (603.87 Kb)

 [Exhibit B](#) (660.55 Kb)

Impact Statement

Purpose of Proposed Legislation and Background Information

The recovery of the business corridors and neighborhoods is vitally important to the overall recovery of the entire city of Portland. The central city and the various business districts across the city are the most densely populated areas in the region and serves as economic, cultural, and civic hubs. Decades of investment for improved transportation options, mixed-used housing options, cultural spaces, and entertainment options have positioned the central city and the economic corridors as indicators of the overall health and livability of the city of Portland.

Throughout 2021 and the beginning of 2022, the recovery across the city has varied by district. Districts with greater density and mixes of housing, commercial, and cultural establishments are experiencing a stronger economic recovery than areas with more single-focused uses and less residential units. Community members, business owners, and residents across the city are working daily to improve the cleanliness, storefront activation, overall perceptions of public safety, and building shared resiliency to vandalism and graffiti.

These efforts are expected to have greater impact if they are aligned and coordinated to be complementary and focused. The City will convene interested stakeholders, ensure that the city government is a participatory where appropriate, and facilitate the sharing of ideas and strategies for recovery across the districts. The expediting groups will recommend and advise on short and medium-term actions that will directly impact economic recovery and resilience.

Financial and Budgetary Impacts

The expediting groups have no direct financial or budgetary impact. The groups are facilitated by members of the Mayor's staff with representation from staff across the offices of interested Commission offices and some involved bureaus.

The expediting groups may recommend actions and initiatives for quicker implementation and future investments, but the groups do not have an implementing budget and executive function.

Community Impacts and Community Involvement

The Expediting Groups are made up of stakeholders from across the city. With a focus on economic issues, the business districts comprise many of the invited stakeholders and are rounded out by stakeholders from the arts, neighborhood, public safety, and local government communities. The expediting groups are working on matters related to; right-of-way improvements and activation, the future of work and returning workers, public safety improvements, and housing production and conversion.

100% Renewable Goal

Not applicable.

Agenda Items

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Adopted

Commissioner Mingus Mapps Yea

Commissioner Carmen Rubio Yea

Commissioner Dan Ryan Yea

Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty Yea

Mayor Ted Wheeler Yea