

Written Testimony - Agenda Item 194

Agenda Item	Name or Organization	Position	Comments	Attachment	Created
194	Patrick Fleming, Boke Bowl	Support	Dear Mayor and City Council Commissioners, Hello, my name is Patrick Fleming, owner and chef of Boke Bowl restaurant in CEID on Water Avenue. Please see my attached statement/thoughts on item 194 - Expanding the Downtown Business Incentive Credit Code to include the CEID. This would be a huge life line for my business and others as our inner city commerce continues to recover.	Yes	02/24/24 2:40 PM
194	Barbara Bennett	Support	The past few years have been very tough in our great city of Portland. Amending the D. B. I. C. C. to include my neighborhood of the Pearl, and other communities as well, for the benefit of businesses, the housed, and the unhoused, will greatly assist in recovery so we can move on, assist w/empowerment, and restore Portland to its rightful place as a great place to invest, work and live. Thank you.	No	02/26/24 7:14 AM
194	Central Eastside Industrial Council	Support		Yes	02/27/24 10:01 AM
194	Vasili Rozakis	Support	<p>Thank you for taking the initiative for giving businesses seeking to make a home in the Central City every possible reason to make that decision.</p> <p>We are facing so many headwinds to make this (people invest and make downtown the home for their businesses) happen and we are passionate about bringing vitality back to our City and I strongly support this move to expand the area and help bring people and businesses back to our fantastic City's downtown.</p> <p>There is no magic bullet that will solve our problem - but the more that we collectively make improvements and moves to achieve wins, both mini and large, for our City's people and businesses - the sooner people start saying "Have you been to Portland recently - it's back baby!!!"</p> <p>We are starting to see more businesses sign leases and make the moves to reinvest in the Central City and I look forward to continuing to work with our neighbors to make this happen and turn Portland around!</p>	No	02/27/24 10:53 AM
194	Yasmin Ibarra, SEIU Local 49	Support		Yes	02/27/24 12:05 PM

Patrick Fleming
Boke Bowl
1028 SE Water Ave
97214

Dear Mayor and Commissioners,

Hello, my name is Patrick Fleming. I'm the Chef and Owner of Boke Bowl restaurant residing 1028 SE Water ave in the heart of Central Eastside. I am writing to encourage you to consider expanding the boundary of the Downtown Business Incentive Credit Program to the Central Eastside Industrial District (CEID) and other districts close-in to the city.

Having been fortunate to be in business for 12 years at this location, I have experienced the highs and lows of this great city. The past few years has shown us that the business community can be as fragile as any ecosystem found in nature. Once an invasive species is introduced, it shakes the foundation at the core. However, if there are sufficient resources for communities within the ecosystem they can overcome such invasive intruders if they stick together and adapt. I believe the small businesses of Portland are what made this city great. We are much more resilient than larger corporations that have decided to move out. However, if we keep continuing to lose more small businesses such as Legacy Modern and a number of restaurants that recently closed in the area, our foundation will erode.

You all have heard the horror stories that we have had to deal with the last few years and they are true: constant break ins, vandalism, and destroyed property. Incidentally, our fixed costs have also significantly increased- my cost of goods sold (COGS) have increased by 40-50%, labor costs are up by 30%, utilities up by 20%, and our liability insurance was raised by a whopping 70% this year due to the current state of our city (their justification) and more common natural disasters. Having a business tax incentive would significantly aid our cash flow problems in the short term until we can see more economic recovery. It would encourage businesses to stay put and re-negotiate leases for long term tenants, as well as attracting new ones--thus creating more revenue on the back end for the city.

Loyal customers often congratulate and thank us for the business surviving the pandemic, but truthfully even those of us who have proven to be nimble and fiscally responsible are having a tough time foreseeing what the future holds. Longevity is our goal, and we appreciate any partnerships we can make with the city for our business to be here for the long haul.

Thanks for Your Consideration
Patrick Fleming



To:

Mayor Ted Wheeler
Commissioner Gonzalez
Commissioner Mapps
Commissioner Rubio
Commissioner Ryan
Andrew Fitzpatrick

Subject: Recommendation to Amend City Code Section 7.02.875 Downtown Business Incentive Credit

The Central Eastside Industrial Council (CEIC) is aware that a recommendation will be presented to City Council on February 28 to amend City Code Section 7.02.875 concerning the expansion of the Downtown Business Incentive Credit Program into Central Eastside Industrial District. We value your attention to this program, which has already showed positive impacts to Portland's Central City.

As the Central Eastside's business association, the CEIC represents the interests of our members. Encompassing 22% of Central City's total acreage, our district is home to 1,200 businesses and 22,000 employees spanning diverse industries. Our advocacy for the program's expansion aligns with our mission of fostering a vibrant, prosperous, safe, and inclusive district.

Expansion to the Central Eastside Industrial District signifies an inclusive stride towards our collective objectives: supporting Central City's recovery through business expansion, reducing tax burdens, improving financial viability, and enhancing competitiveness for our eligible district businesses.

We appreciate your consideration of this matter and urge you to vote in support of the expansion to further strengthen our shared economic goals and revitalization endeavors in the Central City.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "CH", enclosed within a hand-drawn oval.

Carlyne Holcomb
Executive Director
Central Eastside Industrial Council and Central Eastside Together



Testimony to the Portland City Council
Provided by Yasmin Ibarra
Political Director
SEIU Local 49

Re: Support for expanding the Downtown Business Incentive Credit

February 28, 2024

Mayor Wheeler and Commissioners,

SEIU Local 49 submitted testimony in support of the Downtown Business Incentive Credit in September 2023 when it first came before Council. We continue to seek partnership with the City and with the business community as we work together towards the mutual goal of revitalizing our downtown core, and are pleased to now voice our support for the geographic expansion of the Downtown Business Incentive Credit.

We maintain our expectation, however, that as the City works to find ways to support downtown businesses that it will also prioritize investments in good jobs that will result in an economic recovery that works for everyone. Our members – specifically those that work as subcontracted janitors and security officers in downtown Portland- are an integral part of the fabric of our City and are as invested in Portland’s recovery as all other stakeholders. As we work to encourage business to keep and bring their employees back to work in our downtown office spaces, we also hope that building owners will continue to invest in Responsible Union contractors to clean and secure their properties. We continue to look forward to finding ways to partner with the City on a robust and equitable downtown recovery.

Thank you.
Yasmin Ibarra
Political Director
Service Employees International Union, Local 49

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Agenda Item	Name or Organization	Position	Comments	Attachment	Created
194	Mike Larkin, NAI Elliott, Central Eastside Together Board President	Support	<p>Thank you to the Mayor and Counsel members for recognizing the importance of this agenda item. Portland is an integrated economy made up of primarily local property ownership and small to mid-sized companies. The intent to support the return of businesses to our City's core is important, as evidenced by the Governor's focus on Portland as a regional revitalization effort. This incentive program as originally written, has created an incentive that can result in trading existing tenants from one district, for a vacancy in another (mere blocks away in some scenarios) creating no net benefit to the business trade area.</p> <p>Central Eastside being a hub of emerging and vibrant businesses is susceptible to lose tenants under this current program. Our districts ability to have retained tenants marginally better than another should not be penalized by district boundaries. I encourage your support of this measure to correct the unintended consequences of the original, and welcome effort, to encourage a sustainable employment base throughout the downtown region.</p>	No	02/27/24 3:15 PM
194	Beam Development	Support		Yes	02/27/24 4:13 PM
194	Northwest Tenant Group	Support with changes	<p>Thank you for considering an expansion of the boundaries of this program. Your intentions are admirable, but desperate times call for desperate measures, and frankly, this program feels like a half-measure. As a commercial real estate broker, I support clients in their search for viable, safe office space for their business, and the number of clients who want out of Multnomah County (especially downtown) is astounding. The volume of real estate work I've done in Multnomah County has slowed to a trickle. I highly suggest you include all of Multnomah County in this program, and I would dramatically increase the amount of incentive. 1% is not enough for businesses to put their employees at risk. Thank you for your consideration.</p>	No	02/28/24 7:02 AM
194	Jones Lang LaSalle	Support	<p>I work as a commercial real estate advisor with both tenants and landlords in our downtown, and I support the expansion of the current geographic boundaries for the Downtown Business Incentive Credit. Our urban core is a very small geographic area and this incentive should not discriminate against a business who is 1 block outside of the boundary, or for that matter tenants in 200 SW Market, who are on the wrong side of Market Street. We need all the help we can get to bring life back to our urban core. I have landlord clients who are having the same struggles with occupancy of their office building as the others in our downtown, but they are at a disadvantage when trying to lease their space because their asset is outside of the boundary by a few blocks.</p>	No	02/28/24 7:51 AM
194	Sean Turley, Jones Lang LaSalle	Support	<p>I have leased office space in the Portland CBD for 25 years. It is clear that taxes and safety are the top issues with tenants leasing space in the CBD. In order to rebuild a vibrant downtown, we need office tenants to renew and draw new tenants to the urban core. Office tenants activate the streets and promote retail to return. I am strongly in favor of the Business Tax Incentive Program and expanding it.</p>	No	02/28/24 9:58 AM
194	Daniel Snair	Support	<p>Need to expand this incentive and get activity in downtown. The heart of this city is hardly beating! Need to continue to encourage businesses to head back to the CBD.</p>	No	02/28/24 12:00 PM
194	Anonymous	Support with changes	<p>ad section to include NW Vaughan Street up to NW 25th ave and over to NW Lovejoy Street</p>	No	02/28/24 1:54 PM

February 27, 2024

Mayor Wheeler
Commissioner Rubio
Commissioner Gonzales
Commission Mapps
Commissioner Ryan

Re: Expansion of the Downtown Business Incentive Tax Credit

Mayor and Commissioners,

Beam Development is an owner and developer of creative office properties throughout the Central Eastside Industrial District (CEID). The challenges facing owners of office properties in the CEID since the onset of the pandemic and the subsequent safety and livability issues have been profound. We have seen the largest tenant in our portfolio downsize into a space downtown less than one-third their previous size. Re-leasing large and medium sized spaces in our portfolio has been very difficult even at discounted lease rates. Several of our largest tenants have asked for significant rent reductions due in part to their inability to attract their employees back to the CEID stating concerns over safety. Our retailers in the district have been suffering due to the lack of occupancy in our buildings and the associated reduction in foot traffic.

Our challenges in the CEID are no different than the CBD or Lloyd districts. However, once the city adopted the initial DBITC program in those and other districts, brokers representing tenants started asking us how we could offset the lack of available incentive CEID. The Central City effectively behaves as a singular commercial office market and therefore engineering a competitive disadvantage for the CEID is not productive when our goal is the overall recovery of the entire Central City.

I greatly appreciate this Council's creative problem solving as evidenced by the creation of the DBITC program and I am urging you to vote in support of expanding the DBITC program throughout the Central City.

Respectfully,



Jonathan Malsin, Principal
Beam Development



Council Written Testimony

Row 7

Agenda Item	194
Position	Support with changes
Comments	
Name or Organization	Mia Birk
Email	miabirk1@gmail.com
Submitted	02/28/24 3:08 PM
Attachment	Yes
Final Meeting Date	02/28/24

2/2/24

Greetings City Council,

I am the co-owner of 711 SE Grand, just on the other side of the Morrison Bridge, back door to River City Bicycles. Called the Nathaniel Hawthorne building, it's a 10,000 sq. foot building, on the historic register, built in 1892. I am also the co-founder and former CEO of Alta Planning + Design, a groundbreaking consulting business specializing in creating active communities. I started Alta's Portland office in the kitchen of my 1000 sq ft. house on SE Clinton St back in 1999. Since then, Alta has grown to 250 staff in 25 offices.

As you may have heard, Alta recently relocated downtown. As a huge fan and supporter of Alta, I'm proud and happy for them. It's smart business on their part to move where they got a tax credit that was not available to them in the central eastside.

As the building owner, however, I'm bummed!

We bought the building as an investment in the central eastside 15 years ago, just before the streetcar went in. We lovingly renovated down to the studs, reusing or recycling 98% of the parts and pieces, in compliance with costly historic oversight rules. We've been paying our portion of the streetcar LID. We bought it, in part, because of the tax abatement on historic buildings, which just expired, shooting our property taxes to \$24,000 a year. Really bad timing!

Knowing Alta was moving, we've been trying to rent or sell, to no avail. And why would a rational business choose the central eastside, when they can get a tax credit just across the river or to the north in the Lloyd District? As it currently stands, the tax credit effectively kills the central eastside rental market. Not only that, it poaches current renters like Alta. This is unfair and counterproductive.

I own one commercial building. I don't have the wherewithal to withstand years of vacancy. I can't spread the pain over dozens or hundreds of doors like the big real estate owners.

I strongly urge you to extend the tax credit to the central eastside, with one amendment: offer the tax credit to purchasers of owner-user buildings under the same conditions as a lease.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mia Birk". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a small dot above the "i" in "Birk".

Mia Birk

Home: 826 SE 53rd Ave

Portland OR 07215

Portland City Council Meeting
Wednesday, February 28, 2024 - 2:00 p.m.
Verbal Testimony

Agenda Item	Name
194	Mia Birk
194	Jared Mees
194	Jon Isaacs
194	Glenn Traeger