

Oregon Department of
Economic and Community
Development
1945 SE Water Avenue
Portland Oregon 97214
503 797 4000

CONFIDENTIAL

December 15, 2015

RE: R/W #8030, SE Harrison St, East of SE 3rd Ave.

Dear Planning and Sustainability Commissioners,

As an organization that attracts nearly 1 million visitors a year, our most important priorities are to provide a safe, vibrant, and engaging place for children, families and adults to gather, explore, and learn. Over the last few months, we have met with the Mayor, his staff, city commissioners, and other Central Eastside community members to carefully consider the city's transitional camp proposal and we join with our neighbors to oppose this proposed relocation, and now, street closure.

The city's intended actions are counterintuitive to the city's own planning process for the Central Eastside, of which we have been an active and supportive members. This utter disregard of city policy and lack of transparency throughout the entire process, and once again in this street closure proposal, is alarming and sets a dangerous precedent for the city and its representatives.

Additionally, we share our neighbors' concerns that this camp will negatively impact public safety and local businesses in the area. Of particular concern is the closure of SE Harrison next to Eastside Plating, an environmentally conscious business which operates under an industrial wastewater permit, required by the Clean Water Act. Harrison street is their emergency egress route, as well as an access for delivery of certain regulated materials. Closure of this street has major business implications for this long-term Central Eastside firm and other businesses needing access through this street.

OMSI has already seen an increase in damage and altercations on our property caused by those camping in the vicinity, which have cost us money as we make repairs and bring on additional security to handle these issues. The city has not shown any indication that they will help alleviate these problems, which will likely only be further exacerbated by bringing yet another camp to the area and closing Harrison street will only serve to impede life safety access to an industrial plating facility.

Finally, we feel that those in the homeless community would not benefit from this relocation, even with the street closure. The proposed property sorely lacks access to crucial social services, is located next to heavy freight traffic, and is centered in an industrial area neighboring a company that processes hazardous materials. We stand by the recommendations made by the CEIC and the Hosford-Abernethy Neighborhood association regarding other properties that would be a more appropriate fit to serve the homeless community; we strongly encourage the city to explore transitional shelters and permanent housing as viable alternatives. This site is not a long-term option.

Sincerely,



Nancy Stueber
President and CEO