



PORTLAND BUSINESS ALLIANCE

Leading the way

June 8, 2010

The Honorable Sam Adams
City of Portland
1221 SW 4th Avenue, Room 340
Portland, OR 97204

Dear Mayor Adams:

The Portland Business Alliance looks forward to working with you, the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability and others on the Central City 2035 Plan, a long-range development plan for the central city. This comprehensive planning effort provides an opportunity to identify critical investments that will continue to grow the city's business and employment base. Over the past five years, central city job growth has remained stagnant. Given that the central city is the city's primary economic center, the Central City 2035 Plan must address the barriers to economic investment in the central city and promote job creation.

As you know, the central city plays a critical role in our entire city and region's success. To this end, the City of Portland, Metro and others have already spent considerable effort updating existing plans and implementing short-term strategies to ensure that the central city land use and transportation system is supporting the economic role of the central city. Many Alliance members have been involved in these planning and strategy efforts toward improved economic development and livability. As this process begins in earnest, it is essential that existing plans and concurrent planning efforts be integrated into the Central City 2035 Plan to ensure the central city remains economically viable.

We applaud the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability's commitment to integrate the Central City 2035 Plan with the Central City Transportation Management Plan. Transportation issues related to access, mobility and parking management are essential to preserving or improving the central city's portal capacity and internal circulation. Addressing these transportation issues in tandem with land use, real estate development and economic development planning will be critical to ensuring that the central city can accommodate employment and residential growth.

As the city continues this integration of existing plans, we urge you, the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability and others to incorporate past and current planning efforts and policies into the overall Central City 2035 Plan strategy and implementation to resolve barriers and promote economic investment in the central city. In particular, we ask that the Central City 2035 Plan:

- Identify planning strategies that support the City of Portland's Economic Development Strategy goal of growing 10,000 jobs in 5 years;
- Incorporate the findings in the Freeway Loop Studies to mitigate land use impacts associated with the central east side freeway as well as other transportation access, land use and urban design issues related to the I-5/I-405 freeway loop;
- Address the land use and transportation access issues related to the entry and exit points of the central city and the Interstate freeways on both sides of the river;
- Resolve issues with the on and off ramps of I-5/I-84 at the Rose Quarter. These findings should specifically be integrated into the ODOT study of the I-5 "pinch point" near the Rose Quarter area;
- Re-examine parking management in the Parking Meter District Policy to optimize parking utility for all uses in the central city; and
- Include a broad spectrum of representatives, in addition to local stakeholders, in the quadrant planning process, due to the citywide importance of the central city.

Metro's population modeling anticipates considerable growth over the next twenty years, and that the central city in particular will absorb a higher percentage of residential and employment growth than has been the case over the past two decades. The region relies on the central city to accommodate these growth goals. To the extent that the Central City 2035 Plan can serve as an opportunity for convening ODOT, the city, neighborhoods and businesses to resolve inherent conflicts between land use, transportation access, and mobility, as well as to implement planning work already done, the greater and more expediently we will be able to accomplish those goals.

It is critical that integrated planning through the Central City 2035 Plan position the central city for future growth and economic prosperity. Thank you for considering these issues, we look forward to participating in the Central City 2035 planning process.

Sincerely,



Sandra McDonough
President & CEO

cc: Commissioner Amanda Fritz
Commissioner Nick Fish
Commissioner Randy Leonard
Commissioner Dan Saltzman
Susan Anderson, City of Portland