



**Commissioner Mingus Mapps**  
City of Portland

May 7, 2024

Dear Andrew,

Thank you for your recent letter regarding our shared interest in restoring Portland's livability and the recovery of the Central City. This has been a key focus of my office and of the public works bureaus under my purview. Public-private partnerships will be central to our recovery efforts, and I welcome the Chamber's ongoing partnership in this collective effort.

We wholeheartedly agree on the role public infrastructure investments will play in accelerating our recovery efforts. My office and our public works bureaus, including PBOT, fully support the Broadway Corridor and OMSI District projects. It is disappointing to hear the Chamber is under the impression that there is a lack of commitment or "stonewalling" of these projects – that could not be further from the truth. PBOT is actively engaged in both efforts and will continue to be a collaborative partner under Director Williams leadership.

For the OMSI District, the team at PBOT is partnering with OMSI on accelerating the design of New Water Avenue, a critical early investment that will unlock development in the District. PBOT has agreed to deliver the project on behalf of OMSI to speed implementation and lower overall costs. My office brought an agreement between OMSI and PBOT to City Council on March 20<sup>th</sup> of this year formalizing this partnership. PBOT has committed a team of staff and \$500,000 to this effort and has been actively supporting efforts to identify additional federal, state, and local dollars for the project in collaboration with Prosper Portland, OMSI, and the City's Office of Government Relations. We are committed to helping OMSI close their remaining funding gap.

The same can be said for Broadway Corridor, where PBOT has gone above and beyond to commit leadership, staff, and resources. The Johnson Kearney Street Extension project will play a similar role to New Water Avenue for Broadway Corridor – it is a key first move in unlocking development in the district. The Johnson Kearney Street Extension project has been led by PBOT in close collaboration across Bureaus and Prosper Portland. The project is funded in part with \$4.6m in PBOT Transportation System Development Charges. In support of this effort my office brought an ordinance to City Council on March 14<sup>th</sup> of this year allowing us to bid this work. The project is now approaching final plans and we anticipate construction to begin this fall.

In our view, the 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue project is a similarly strategic investment in Portland's Central City. While I understand there are stakeholders who still share concerns about the provision of a northbound bicycle facility in the downtown, the identification of which street would be the least impactful home for such a facility was thoroughly evaluated and discussed during Central City in Motion planning process in 2018. Extensive technical analysis at the time clearly demonstrated that the two alternatives proposed by the Chamber at that time (placing downtown bike facilities on the transit mall in lieu of vehicle lanes and cutting down the trees in Waterfront Park in lieu of



It is the policy of the City of Portland that no person shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in any city program, service, or activity on the grounds of race, color, national origin, disability, or other protected class status. Adhering to Civil Rights Title VI and ADA Title II civil rights laws, the City of Portland ensures meaningful access to City programs, services, and activities by reasonably providing: translation and interpretation, modifications, accommodations, alternative formats, and auxiliary aids and services. To request these services, contact the Portland Bureau of Transportation at 311 (503-823-4000), for Relay Service & TTY: 711.

repurposing the lane on Naito) were prohibitively expensive, far more impactful, and lacking in broad public support.

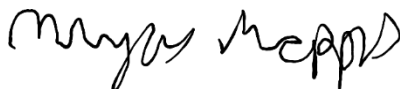
Like New Water Avenue and the Johnson Kearney Street Extension, the SW 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue Improvement project is a transformative investment about so much more than a bike lane. First and foremost, it is a paving maintenance project. As anyone who commutes on 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue knows, the pavement on the street is failing, resulting in rutting and persistent potholes. Surface cracking is at the point now where water is intruding and beginning to wash away the road base underneath. This project will repair and restore SW 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue with fresh new pavement all the way from SW Lincoln up to W Burnside. This smooth new durable road surface will last for decades to come.

PBOT will also be improving pedestrian crossings and replacing dozens of rusting streetlights up and down the corridor. The SW 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue benefits from a mix of committed funding from multiple partners (including TriMet and Prosper Portland) that is not fungible. City Council approved a construction contract for the work with Brown Contracting in February and issued notice to proceed to the contractor in April. Early construction has begun with survey markings, protective fencing, and mobilization. The first few months of the project will include a host of work in preparation of repaving, including the installation of modern ADA ramps (a federal requirement of all paving projects), utility upgrades (including stormwater and water line repairs that are the most cost effective to do now), and underground electrical work in support of the new streetlights and traffic signal upgrades. Early work will be focused between SW Lincoln and SW Mill, and then proceed north.

Delaying this work would be disruptive for our contractor, lengthen construction time, and make the project more costly overall. PBOT staff have been actively engaging residents, businesses, and property owners on SW 4<sup>th</sup> for months in advance of this construction and have found that while nobody relishes the construction impacts of a paving project, there is broad understanding of the importance of this work - be it from partners like Portland State University, the Downtown Neighborhood Association, or businesses for whom 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue is their front door. I have asked my staff and PBOT to meet with stakeholders who remain concerned to walk through the construction plan and continue to find solutions to mitigate their concerns where possible.

I feel strongly we share the same goals. A vibrant Central City with more activity, more people and growth in visitors. We want people to return to the Central City whether they come on foot, on bike, on transit or by car. All three of these projects will be significant investments in our recovery. I appreciate your letter and welcome the opportunity to correct the record on our commitments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mingus Mapps". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional but personal style.

Mingus Mapps, Portland City Commissioner