



600 NE Grand Ave.
Portland, OR 97232-2736
oregonmetro.gov

August 25, 2020

Director Kris Strickler
Oregon Department of Transportation
355 Capitol St, NE MS 11
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Director Strickler:

I'm writing to formally, and explicitly, call upon the Oregon Department of Transportation to fully implement the Oregon Transportation Commission's commitments and make the Executive Steering Committee's work to establish the outcomes-based framework guiding project development, design, and construction the top priority for the Rose Quarter Improvement Project.

The technical work for the project cannot exist outside of, or outpace, the policy work – we all need to take the time to get this right. This work is essential to ensure that the process creates space for community building, and that subsequent decisions uphold our collective values, are developed in partnership with the community, and are continuously reaffirmed through specific actions and strategies.

In simpler terms: Before blueprints are drawn up, engineering is completed, or anything resembling a final plan is proposed, ODOT's work to ensure the restoration of the Albina community must be well underway. Interstate 5 is a state asset that must serve all Oregonians – and the North Star on this project must be decided by the residents of the community who now, and in the past, have been impacted by the initial construction of the freeway.

In its April 17, 2020 letter, the OTC agreed with agency partners that an outcomes-based process was necessary to bring restorative justice and environmental and economic progress to the Albina community. The OTC said that the Executive Steering Committee was essential to identifying the elements of a comprehensive plan for project development and formulating the path forward for a thoughtful, transparent, and equitable process. Central to this effort was partner agency coordination in drafting a letter of understanding and timeline for actions and investments for Executive Steering Committee discussion.

These OTC commitments and many concerns previously and repeatedly raised by agency partners and the community (outlined by staff in the attached memo) still await a sufficient response. Metro stands with our agency partners and the community in declaring that doing business differently requires more than a statement or structure – it requires action. ODOT must embrace accountability and direct its full attention toward establishing performance metrics for evaluating success related to project outcomes, and developing a community benefit agreement that commits to addressing these concerns.

We share the sentiments and concerns expressed by our partners who have left the project. We still believe ODOT can meet the expectations laid out by the ESC, which is why Metro will stay at



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the table to advocate for this project to lead with racial, economic and environmental justice. It is long past time for this to be a shared, meaningful commitment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lynn Peterson".

Lynn Peterson
Metro Council President

cc: Brendan Finn, ODOT Urban Mobility Office Director
Megan Channell, Rose Quarter Project Director