



PORTLAND FREIGHT COMMITTEE

July 6, 2015

Mayor Hales and City Council Members

On behalf of the Portland Freight Committee we want to thank you for the opportunity to provide our comments on the recommended draft of the Southeast Quadrant Plan. The PFC appreciate the hard work on part of the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability staff in preparing a plan that provides a vision for increasing and broadening the spectrum of industrial employment uses in the district while enhancing and supporting the role of freight operations. The PFC also appreciated the extra efforts by City staff in addressing several key issues of concern that were raised by many of the PFC stakeholders that were involved in developing the SEQ Plan and we offer the following observations and recommendations:

Freight District Designation (Portland Transportation System Plan and Freight Master Plan)

The Central Eastside is one of the Portland's oldest industrial districts and continues to serve its historic function as a major wholesale and central distribution center supported by freight-related activities. The adopted Freight Master Plan and Transportation System Plan identifies the Central Eastside as a designated Freight District which are: ..."intended to provide safe and convenient truck mobility and access in industrial and employment areas serving high levels of truck traffic and to accommodate the needs of intermodal freight movement." Based on adopted City policy, the PFC believes that freight-activities should be prioritized over other activities within the district. The PFC also recommends that development and/or street improvements that occur within the public right-of-way which reduces the core function of accommodating freight movement and related loading and unloading activities be mitigated in proportion to those impacts.

Morrison Bridge Ramps (West Quadrant Plan)

The west side Morrison Bridge ramps provide an essential connection for maintaining southbound I-5 access from the Central Eastside Industrial District. Recent traffic analysis conducted by PBOT as part of the West Quadrant Plan has shown that removal of the ramps connecting westbound traffic to Naito Parkway is not a viable option for maintaining southbound I-5 access. The PFC recommends the following amendments to the existing action:

Work with Multnomah County to study the feasibility of reconfiguring the ramps and approaches to the Morrison Bridge to create more developable land parcels and improve multimodal connectivity to the river. Maintain southbound freeway access from the Morrison Bridge on freight trips originating from the Central Eastside.

Balancing Multi-Modal Transportation Needs (SEQ Plan, Chapter 3, page III-3, item #4)

While the PFC recognizes the need for balancing multimodal uses this can also create unintended modal conflicts and safety issues with current freight operations within the district. The current language in item #4 of the SEQ Plan appears to prioritize active transportation over freight which conflicts with the previous language in item #3: "...minimize conflicts with active transportation modes such as bicycles." The PFC recommends the following amendments to the existing item #4 language:

4. Balance the Needs of Multi-Modal Transportation. Support the growth of multimodal transportation options (pedestrians, cyclists, transit users, and carpoolers) through infrastructure that supports and encourages the use of these modes. Promote safe and easily identifiable routes that accommodate local freight service and prioritize and promote active transportation options that do not diminish freight operations.

Green Loop (SEQ Plan, Chapter 3, page III-3, item #4)

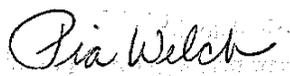
The concept of a Green Loop for locating a major bicycle and pedestrian route through the middle of an industrial district appears premature at this stage without a more detailed assessment of the potential impacts to the existing businesses and current freight operations. While the PFC recognized the Green Loop is still in its conceptual phase we recommend that a more thorough planning level analysis be conducted to identify potential route alignment alternatives and impacts to existing freight operations.

In short, the plan maintains and enhances the role of the Central Eastside as a designated Freight District, while balancing and improving access for other modes that use the district. Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this plan.

Sincerely,



Debra Dunn
PFC Chair



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PFC Vice Chair

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