

July 3, 2018

The Honorable Ted Wheeler  
Mayor, City of Portland  
1221 SW Fourth Avenue, Suite 340  
Portland, Oregon 97204

Dear Mayor Wheeler:

As Greater Portland's chamber of commerce, the Portland Business Alliance represents more than 1,900 small, medium and large businesses throughout the metro region, including several in Clark County. The Alliance has long supported a regional multimodal transportation system that serves all users and, as traffic congestion worsens throughout the region, local leaders must give serious consideration to alternative modes such as waterborne transportation.

According to public opinion polling commissioned by the Alliance last December, conducted by DHM Research, traffic and congestion are a top concern for Portland residents --- coming in second only to homelessness. Indeed, in the same poll, residents stated that maintaining and expanding public infrastructure like roads, bridges and transit should be one of the highest priorities for local government. As our region addresses congestion and explores mitigation strategies, the Alliance strongly supports feasibility research on Willamette River transit opportunities as called for in the Central City 2035 Plan, and that research should be extended to review Columbia River transit options that would connect Portland and Vancouver.

Through the Central City 2035 Plan's recommended River Transit Feasibility Study, the city has opportunity to explore funding mechanisms, phasing, and methods for implementing river transit as an alternative transportation mode for passengers requiring professional or recreational access to the central city. As Portland has demonstrated in the past, river transit can be an effective tool to connect people in the metropolitan area and foster growth for our region's businesses. It is only logical to leverage our natural water passageway for this purpose.

This effort will require a strong coalition of public and private sector leadership to bring the vision to fruition. Indeed, private businesses already are exploring potential river transit options and the city should encourage that effort. The Alliance is committed to helping build support from the private sector and we welcome any opportunity to partner with elected officials to advance this concept.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Dave Robertson  
Chair

City budget letter  
Page 2

cc: Portland City Council