

April 21, 2025

Portland City Council



Re: Support for Frog Ferry

Dear Mayor Keith Wilson, Council President Elana Pirtle-Guiney, Council Vice President Tiffany Koyama Lane, Councilor Steve Novick, Councilor Dan Ryan, Councilor Olivia Clark, Councilor Mitch Green, Councilor Sameer Kanal, Councilor Candace Avalos, Councilor Jamie Dunphy, Councilor Loretta Smith, Councilor Angelita Morillo, Councilor Eric Zimmerman:

As Executive Director of the Human Access Project (HAP), I am proud to offer our enthusiastic endorsement of Frog Ferry and its vision to reintroduce passenger ferry service to Portland's waterfront.

The mission of HAP is Transforming Portland's Relationship with the Willamette River. Our vision is a City in Love with its River. HAP has one of the strongest water-based nonprofit Board teams in the State of Oregon. Our role in the community is catalyzing cultural change around how people feel about and interact with the Willamette River. We want the community to view the Willamette River as an asset, something to be valued and protected. We want to foster and drive a connection between the people of Portland and the river that runs through our community. As such, our goals include improving Willamette River edge spaces for recreation, developing creative activation/programming around these spaces, fostering environmental stewardship, community investment and connection with these spaces, and identifying and removing barriers to people feeling comfortable interacting with the Willamette River. Since 2010, HAP has driven the opening of seven Willamette River swimming areas in Portland (including catalyzing the replacement of the Cathedral Park Dock and repurposing the Kevin Duckworth Dock as a swimming dock), brought over 35,000 people to the Willamette River through events, and have removed nearly 500 tons of concrete and riprap from river beaches and access spaces. The Frog Ferry is an essential partner in this movement.

Frog Ferry represents not just a transportation solution, but a transformational opportunity for how Portlanders interact with their river. By providing clean, efficient, and accessible water transit, Frog Ferry will help reduce congestion on our roads, cut greenhouse gas emissions, and open up new ways for people to experience and appreciate the Willamette.

Our work has shown that when people are invited to engage with the river, they begin to care for it. Whether through beach cleanups, swim events, or advocacy for better river access, we've seen firsthand how proximity leads to stewardship. Frog Ferry's proposed network would bring thousands of people to the river daily, many for the first time. That's not just transit—it's transformation.

Moreover, Frog Ferry has demonstrated a thoughtful commitment to equity and sustainability. Its emphasis on affordability, accessible dock design, and zero-emissions vessels aligns with HAP's values and Portland's broader goals of inclusive, climate-resilient infrastructure. This isn't a

novelty project—it's a well-researched, community-driven solution grounded in best practices from cities around the world.

Portland's relationship with its river is evolving. Where once we turned our backs to it, we now envision a city that embraces the waterway as central to its identity and future. Frog Ferry is a bold, forward-looking project that brings us closer to that reality.

HAP is proud to stand behind Frog Ferry. We urge our fellow community members and leaders to do the same and help chart a new course for Portland—one that moves with the river, not just over it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Willie Levenson". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Willie Levenson
Executive Director
Human Access Project