



October 21, 2020

Dear Mayor Wheeler and Commissioners,

We are writing because we are aware that you have a working group session this week to go over the ESD audit.

Last year, businesses came together for the creation of the first Enhanced Services District (ESD) in Portland in 18 years, "Central Eastside Together" (CET). Thanks to your support of our proposal, as of October 1, 2019, all services have been district wide.

We have worked hard with you and with district representatives to ensure that our district stays clean and safe for **all**, especially during these most challenging of times. When COVID-19 struck, we worked closely with the Joint Office to ensure that our houseless community was well informed and distributed hygiene kits to prevent the spread of the virus. When the wildfire smoke came, they distributed N-95 masks. Our Safety for All Team distributes an average of 50 meals per day and keeps a watchful eye on properties, as many businesses have had to close or work remotely.

Our programs remain innovative and nimble to best suit the district's evolving needs. A four person Care Team, most with lived experience of houselessness, is embedded in our Safety for All team. They focus on offering hygiene resources, access to mental health and medical services, and shelter and housing options to our houseless community. All Safety for All team members are unarmed and trained in trauma-informed care and de-escalation techniques. All incidents are closely tracked using a situational protocol with daily reports. Central Eastside Together is currently launching a pilot for the paid stewardship of our bioswales in partnership with the Bureau of Environmental Services and Trash for Peace through the Ground Score program, which we hope can serve as a stewardship model for other natural areas.

We are also elevating the district through \$107,000 of community grants in 2020 and 2021 supporting nonprofits with district specific workforce development, placemaking, houseless services, and sustainable community building projects. A list of Spring grantees: gather: make: shelter (for the C3PO privacy screens), Hygiene 4 All PDX, Portland Street Medicine, Milagro Theatre, murals with Portland Street Art Alliance, a documentation film project of Trash for Peace, and the Architectural Heritage Center.

We are committed to our programs being transparent and having adequate oversight and input from a wide variety of district stakeholders. In fact, the report prepared by the City Auditor pointed to the built in transparency mechanism in Central Eastside Together as a signature feature of our ESD. Currently five of our 20 Central Eastside Together board members have lived experience of houselessness. The Sidewalk Operations Oversight Committee meets monthly to review detailed service reports, providing recommendations to the Board of Directors that shapes program delivery. We have quarterly public meetings and submit a report to the Mayor with any public comment from the meeting and any complaints. Monthly and Quarterly reports are also posted online.* As a part of Central Eastside Together's commitment to trauma-informed care, we offer trauma-informed care training sessions to all board and oversight members through an Licensed Clinical Social Worker, who we also contract as an outside advisor to our Care Team. We conduct ongoing business surveys, hosted an online

open house this past May, and contracted Groundscore, a non-profit run by people experiencing houselessness, to survey the houseless in our community about Central Eastside Together services.**

We will be coming back to you in 2022 and hope that this hard work will be acknowledged through your support of its renewal. We know we have a ways to go until that time. ESD's are, by definition, enhanced services that should not and can not replace fundamental city services anywhere, including the CEID. Please know that we will continue to strive in close partnership with the City to be a model for innovative community programs and for ESD's to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kate Merrill". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each name being capitalized and prominent.

Kate Merrill
Executive Director
CEIC and Central Eastside Together

*Link to all online reports :

<http://ceic.cc/centraleastside-together/central-eastside-together-reporting/>

** Please find Ground Score survey attached in accompanying email