



TO: Andrew Fitzpatrick, City of Portland, Director of Economic Development; Christine Leon, City of Portland, Director Public Environment Management Office
FROM: Carolyn Holcomb, Executive Director, CEIC and Central Eastside Together
DATE: January 26, 2024
SUBJECT: Urgent Support for Water Ave Corridor

Dear Andrew and Christine,

Thank you for quickly addressing my request to support Central Eastside's Water Ave corridor. I have taken some time to connect with businesses in the impacted area and have compiled their responses, which I have attached to this email. I have removed identifying information but have otherwise left their comments unedited.

Since our last communication, I have received information that the PEMO/Impact Reduction teams have scheduled the posting and removal of mass encampments and RVs on the vacant lots along Water in early February. On behalf of our business community, I appreciate your swift response to this urgent matter.

In addition, I would like to draw your attention to the following issues impacting business retention:

Pedestrian and Bike Safety:

- We request that the City mobilize its departments to assess and address safety and accessibility issues at the Hawthorne pedestrian/bike ramp and Morrison stairwells and ensure the removal of camps, biohazards, and waste to guarantee employee and visitor safety.
- We request that the City evaluate and remove remaining camps, RV's, and biohazards in the grassy area at the intersection of Water and Yamhill streets to facilitate safe passage moving to, through, and from the Central Eastside.

Lighting and Safety:

- We request that the City evaluate and significantly improve lighting at transit stops and ramps on the Hawthorne and Morrison bridges.
- We request that the City improves lighting along Water Ave Corridor, Madison, Salmon, and Taylor streets—areas heavily traveled by employees and residents, yet consistently plagued by camping and RVs. As of today, these locations exhibit concerning issues such as stray dogs, remnants of burned-out RVs, abandoned automobiles, bike chop shops, and open drug use. In my time at CEIC, I have never seen these lots more adversely affected.

Today marks one year from the 90-Day Reset, during which our team, community, and the City achieved significant improvements in the Central Eastside. However, recent news of [another violent crime along the Esplanade](#)—the third in several months—coupled with [Viewpoint's exit from the District](#), citing safety concerns at these aforementioned locations, dampens our efforts. We need your support to maintain a clean and safe environment for the 1,200 small businesses that call the Central Eastside home.

Thank you for your ongoing partnership and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Holcomb
Executive Director
Central Eastside Industrial Council and Central Eastside Together