

September 20, 2023

Dear Chair Jessica Vega Pederson and Commissioners Brim-Edwards, Meieran, Jayapal, and Stegmann:

On behalf of the Central Eastside Industrial District (CEID), we would like to express our thanks for considering a proposal to illuminate the viaducts in the Central Eastside under the Hawthorne, Morrison, and Burnside Bridges by using \$232,000 in American Rescue Plan funds.

As you may know, the City has contributed generously towards improving the Central Eastside's cleaning, safety, and accessibility initiatives. This has helped us leverage and stretch Central Eastside Together's (ESD) budget which primarily focuses on cleaning and safety. Additionally, street tree lighting throughout the District is underway, but we do not have a budget to cover viaduct lighting (a desired extension of the project), which continues to rate as a top safety priority among our members businesses, and the community at large.

In 2019, we distributed a survey to our business community asking for their feedback on public safety concerns. Overwhelmingly, they cited the lack of lighting under the bridges as one of the biggest safety concerns. Four years later, our business association continues to discuss viaduct lighting challenges with some of our District's largest employers. Notably, their employees are trepidatious about traveling on foot or parking under the bridges at all hours of the day.

We share the concerns of our District businesses and advocate for improvements to address these critical public safety concerns. We respectfully ask that funding for this project be approved. Doing so will create a safer environment for District employees, residents, and visitors and ensure a path to the CEID's continued economic recovery and stabilization.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Holcomb  
Interim Executive Director

Eric Cress  
Board Chair