

**FOSTER AREA
BUSINESS ASSOCIATION**

fosterarea.com



Mayor Ted Wheeler
Portland City Hall
1221 SW 4th Ave, Room 340
Portland, OR 97204

December 19, 2017

Dear Mayor Wheeler,

On behalf of the Foster Area Business Association (FABA) and the 196 businesses in the Foster Area Business District, I write today regarding the Foster Road Shelter Plan that was discussed at last night's community meeting. **We would like to invite you to attend our board meeting on January 9th at 6pm at Carts on Foster (5205 SE Foster Road) to discuss the shelter plan further.**

As you know, since 2015 the City of Portland, at the direction of Commissioner Fish and in partnership with Venture Portland, has invested significantly in the economic success of the Foster Area Business District. Since the beginning of our partnership, FABA has implemented two annual community events, developed strong relationships with the Foster-Powell and Mt. Scott-Arleta Neighborhood Associations, supported the Foster Freelancer's Group, implemented a community branding process to strengthen district identity, and published an annual district map. Through consistent and compelling programming and our achievements building a sense of place, we have grown our membership by 256%—bringing diverse new business leaders into FABA.

The City's investment follows a decades-long legacy of structural neglect in East Portland. In spite of hardship, Foster business owners, through grit, creativity, and hard work, have helped make Foster Road the most vibrant and exciting growth area in East Portland. Those efforts were put to the test last year when hate speech erupted in our neighborhood. FABA's all-volunteer board united the community to speak out against hate and promote our values of diversity and tolerance as published in *East Portland Stands Together*. In addition, we built community goodwill for the streetscape plans, and enjoyed a productive collaboration with PBOT that allowed us to proactively address community concerns and create solutions for our community.

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Those strong ties within the community strengthened neighborhood businesses and directly contributed to Foster's economic growth. As noted in the City Budget Office's General Fund Forecast (FY 17-18 – FY 20-21) from spring of this year, **business license tax revenue increases were the only significant revenue increases in the budget** and are expected to add a total of \$18 million in new revenue through FY 20-21. As your partner in Foster's growth, we were disappointed when we were not contacted in advance of public comment. This lack of transparency contributed to the less than productive tone of last night's meeting.

In the future, we encourage the City to contact us early in the timeline of major projects that affect our business district so we can utilize the creativity and knowledge of our members to proactively identify and solve community concerns. We are committed to the success of this business district and believe that your office will have a more positive impact in our community if you meaningfully engage with local partners.

We hope that the Foster Shelter plan will be part of the holistic investment in community police presence, neighborhood resources and transportation infrastructure that has historically been lacking in East Portland. It is in the context of our shared interest in the success of East Portland, and meaningful support for Portland's most vulnerable populations that we invite you to our January 9th board meeting. We are interested to hear more about your proposal to have a higher barrier to entry for the shelter. We hope that by working together with you we can begin to develop this and other creative solutions to address community concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Matthew B. Micetic". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Matthew Micetic, *President*
Foster Area Business Association
1125 SE Madison Street, Suite 112 Portland, OR 97214

Cc: Jamie Dunphy, Senior Policy Director, Commissioner Nick Fish