

Councilor Robert Liberty

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METRO

October 11, 2007

RE: Invitation to a Discussion about the Future of our Neighborhoods in a Growing Region

Dear Colleague,

I represent Metro Council District 6. About 240,000 people live in the district, which includes most of Southeast Portland, much of Southwest Portland and a bit of Northeast Portland (south of I-84 and NE Halsey Street). Metro Council District 6 lies at the heart of the Portland metropolitan region, home to about 2 million people, with many more arriving.

Over the last few years, the way in which our region and our neighborhoods grow has been changing. More and more people want to live near the center of the region. For a variety of reasons, less and less of overall development is occurring on farm and forestlands at the edge of the region.

The signs are everywhere: from the towers rising in the South Waterfront, to the new three, four and five condominium developments along Division and Hawthorne Streets and Multnomah Boulevard, the new apartments being built on big lots in east Portland, and new houses being built on small, formerly vacant lots throughout the district.

We see changes in the commercial and retail development along our main streets; new stores and shops are moving in and others moving out.

There are changes in the demographics of our neighborhoods: where families locate and where children attend schools. Some schools in District 6 are bursting at their seams while others are being closed.

Family incomes in some parts of district are rising rapidly but in other areas, average incomes are falling. Some families enjoy an expanding choice of good neighborhoods where they can live, while at the same time other families face a narrowing range of options.

I am sending you this personal invitation to join a preliminary discussion about what is happening in District 6 and participate in examining how our neighborhoods can shape and guide the changes we are experiencing.

For our first gathering, I am asking various experts from around the region and the District to present factual information about the nature of these changes and what changes we can expect in the future – if current trends are allowed to continue. You and I will have the chance to discuss that information.

At the end of that evening, we will consider what Metro, and other public and private institutions, could do to make our neighborhoods better and stronger, with more choices in housing and transportation and with jobs closer to where we live.

We will be meeting at the Metro Regional Center, 600 NE Grand Avenue in Portland on Tuesday November 13 from 7 PM to 8:30 PM. A light dinner of pizza and salad with drinks will be available starting at 6:30 PM.

The Metro Regional Center can be reached from the Blue and Red Lines on MAX from either the Convention Center or the NE 7th & Holiday stop. It is served by TriMet bus line 6 on MLK and Grand Avenues. the #74 bus on NE Multnomah and Holladay, and buses #8 and 10 on NE Multnomah. Parking is available for visitors in the adjoining parking structure.

Please let me know if you can attend by November 1 by telephoning my policy coordinator, Emma Stocker, at 503-797-1543 or by sending her an e-mail at stockere@metro.dst.or.us.

Thank you for all of your work on behalf of strong neighborhoods.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Liberty". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and "L".

Robert Liberty
Metro Councilor