



November 1, 2021

Dear Commissioners Rubio and Ryan:

Thank you for taking the time on October 19 to meet with the leaders of the four cultural organizations located in Old Town. As former directors of non-profits yourselves, we realize you can understand our perspectives and challenges, particularly during a pandemic. We very much hope that you can see and understand the crisis of humanity we are dealing with every day.

Commissioners Rubio and Ryan, we appreciate your support for more funding for police, particularly in response to the gun violence currently gripping our city. We heard you say you want to do more to provide suitable shelter for our houseless neighbors. And we will take the time to evaluate proposals emerging this week as part of the fall BMP.

We were dismayed, however, to hear during our October 19 meeting that you think many of the problems plaguing Portland are not the city's to solve. We respectfully disagree. The situation in Old Town is urgent, unsafe and desperate for leadership.

Now that you've had a chance to hear from us and from others who care deeply about Old Town, we are writing again to ask you to identify what you can do right now to ease the suffering that is only becoming worse every day. We need action now and strongly urge you to develop 30, 60, and 90-day plans so that we know that more immediate solutions are being considered.

It's heartbreaking to think the city and its leaders would turn their backs on Portland's oldest neighborhood, home to immigrants who overcame decades of discrimination and indignity. If this city gives up on Old Town, on the desperate human beings who are currently suffering the indignity of living on the sidewalks and streets, then we fear we have lost the Portland we all loved.

Please don't give up on Old Town.



Sincerely and in service to our city,

Lynn Fuchigami Parks Elizabeth Nye Judy Margles Anna Truxes

Lynn Fuchigami Parks, Executive Director of Japanese American Museum of Oregon; Elizabeth Nye, Executive Director of Lan Su Chinese Garden; Judy Margles, Director of Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education; Anna Truxes, Interim Executive Director of Portland Chinatown Museum

Connie Masuoka Raymond Cheng Jeff Mazer Harris Matarazzo

Connie Masuoka, Board President of Japanese American Museum of Oregon; Raymond Cheng, Board President of Lan Su Chinese Garden; Jeff Mazer, Board President of Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education; Harris Matarazzo, Board President of Portland Chinatown Museum

Cc:

Therese Bottomly, The Oregonian
Helen Jung, The Oregonian
Nigel Jaquiss, Willamette Week
Pat Dooris, KGW
Dan Haggerty, KGW
Maggie Vespa, KGW

Jeff Gianola, KOIN
Elizabeth Dinh, KOIN
Wayne Garcia, KPTV
Pete Ferryman, KPTV
Steve Dunn, KATU
Lincoln Graves, KATU
Kirk Johnson, New York Times