



November 1, 2021

Dear Commissioner Meieran:

Thank you for taking the time on October 21 to meet with the leaders of the four cultural organizations in Old Town and to discuss the deteriorating conditions within our neighborhood.

We appreciate that you, as a physician, have first-hand knowledge and experience treating the mental health and substance abuse problems that contribute to violence and despair. We also appreciate that Multnomah County is pursuing long-term plans to provide services and shelter to those who are houseless.

We are interested in hearing more about Scott Kerman's plan to station specially trained mental health specialists in Old Town and we'd like to know more about the six-month harm reduction plan you mentioned.

Most importantly, however, we would very appreciate hearing from you on much-needed more immediate solutions. Commissioner Meieran, the situation in Old Town is urgent, unsafe and desperate for leadership.

Please 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 county, city and our leaders would turn their backs on Portland's oldest neighborhood, home to immigrants who overcame decades of discrimination and today home to many who suffer the indignity of living on the sidewalks and streets.

Please don't give up on Old Town. The neighborhood, its residents, its businesses and its cultural institutions cannot wait months – or longer – for relief.



Sincerely,

*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