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## East Portland Chamber of Commerce Presentation

Good Morning and thank you. I'm excited to be here. Since I've announced my candidacy I've been talking about four critical issues that Portland is facing. One is the economy and jobs, another is transforming our public safety system, the third is the challenges facing outer East Portland and the fourth is making sure that Portland's schools are preparing our children for the jobs of tomorrow. Today, I'm pleased to share my plan for growing jobs and the local economy with you. I hope you'll invite me back to address the other topics sometime during the campaign.

My understanding is that the mission of the East Portland Chamber of Commerce is to provide a voice for businesses on the eastside to support economic growth and development. As the next Mayor of Portland you can add my voice to yours - and count on your mission becoming Portland's mission. Our success will be Portland's success. Our gains – Portland's gains.

And perhaps at no other time in our history is it more critical than right now to create new opportunities, new industries and new jobs.

Portland is a great place to live but a tough place to find a job.

Portland should be one of the best places in the country to open a small business.

Portland should be a great place to find a stable job and raise a family as it has been for previous generations.

We have a choice – continue down the path of a slow and unacceptable decline – or elect new leadership who refuse to let Portland slump for even one—more--day. We can accept a Portland that sends our children away to find jobs – or we can band together, gather our collective creativity and

make our city a great port city again – a port for young people and a port for entrepreneurs in America’s economic storm.

That’s what Portland was for me - and for thousands of men and women for many generations. In fact, frustration with our struggling economy is the key reason I decided to take my hat, which I have been wearing as a civic leader, a non-profit leader, a local business leader and throw it into the race for Mayor.

Any parent in this room can relate to the empty feeling I had when my daughter graduated from college and wanted to move home to Portland to begin her professional life, but struggled just to find a job. I’ve spoken with parents across this city who also watched as their grown children experienced a painful search for gainful employment here. And I’ve also met with hundreds of people who are stuck in part time jobs, are underemployed or are worried they could lose their job any day.

I’m worried that Portland is losing its momentum, its edge and ultimately its talent.

The facts speak for themselves:

Portland’s unemployment rate is 9%. Under-employment is much higher.

And some communities – like East Portland are much harder hit.

More than 50 percent of all African-American families with children under age five are living in poverty.

And, Portland’s response to this recession has simply been too slow. We have not rebounded as well as we have in the past and we haven’t done well compared to similar metro areas.

Think of the great cities you’ve been to; they all have a tremendous cultural centers, unique neighborhoods that you can get lost in, a strong transportation hub and a world class higher education system. But in order

to support all of that they have a thriving economic center and strong civic leadership.

Right now Portland is a good city – but we should be a great city.

Good jobs mean a strong tax base to pay for education, human services, and infrastructure improvements, which lead to a higher quality of life and is a platform for creating more jobs – it's a circle of prosperity.

That's why I want to be Portland's next Mayor - I will do what it takes to help make Portland a great city and get our families back on their feet.

In other times, a candidate for mayor might have told you about the shiny new buildings they envisioned. And while there will be new buildings constructed in my administration, I believe now is the time to invest in people, neighborhoods and jobs.

Our future depends on it.

I am running for Mayor because we need a leader who has the experience of turning small ideas into big ideas and real results.

Consider some of my history. As a twenty four year old mother of two making five dollars an hour at Nature's fresh Northwest– I was on the inside of the natural foods industry at a time when it was a small, struggling idea – but along with a handful of others – I could see how it could grow into a strong sustainable industry that would create billions of dollars in economic activity.

The same is true with digital multi-media. It seemed crazy to many, for me to leave a perfectly good job at Nature's to head off into the tech sector before anyone even knew what the heck a CD ROM was and almost nobody was surfing the web.

As geniuses like Steve Jobs and Bill Gates were bringing their ideas to market I decided to risk my career to help create some of the first digital

high tech products like educational CD ROMs. I had a front row seat to the new American economy as it grew into a multi-billion dollar industry.

But I didn't believe – as others had predicted – in the end of the traditional bricks and mortar economy. In fact, when many analysts in the grocery industry were saying the future of grocery shopping was online - my husband Brian and I risked our entire life savings, joined with two other families, and about fifty of our friends to start New Seasons Market.

We knew that we could build a socially responsible business based on the Portland ethic – a grocery store that specialized in homegrown, local foods; a grocery store that could serve as a neighborhood village square; a company that could support our regional farmers, fishers and ranchers – a company that would offer hundreds of neighborhood jobs with top of the line health benefits for every single worker and their families - including domestic partners - whether they worked full-time or part-time.

I know what it's like to have thousands of people depend on you for a paycheck to support their families.

One of my first responsibilities at New Seasons was writing the employee handbook, setting the tone for a family friendly work environment, and creating one of the most progressive work places in our country.

I'm so proud that we built ten stores in and around Portland, which employ about two thousand people. We strengthened neighborhoods, and re-invested most of the profits back into the community.

I believe there is a myth here in Portland that says we can't have both a progressive set of values and a thriving local economy. We have to break through that myth and commit to growing jobs. And we need to do it now, because if we don't, we will be left with green buildings that are empty, and streetcars without passengers.

I've shown that we can grow our economy AND maintain our values. I know from my own experience that it can be done. I have helped to build several landmark, values based businesses and organizations in Portland including

Nature's fresh Northwest, New Seasons Market, the Chinook Book, Ecotrust and Zenger Farm.

While we can't run government like a business, we certainly can run our government so that it can move great ideas forward faster, so that it can empower its citizens to be educated, learn new skills, start a small business, or expand an organization.

I'm an entrepreneur and I want to bring an entrepreneur's sense of urgency to City Hall. I love entrepreneurs and I even married one. I've always bragged that I can spot one across the room.

Entrepreneurs are the yeast for job creation. We must create a community ecosystem that supports entrepreneurs and encourages venture.

Because small businesses are critical job generators in Portland, we need to focus on supporting small businesses to start up and grow. We need to retain and increase jobs at our larger employers who have already invested in Portland. We need to recruit targeted industries and make sure we have people prepared to work in those industries.

If we're truly going to grow incomes long term here in Portland and compete globally we know we have to find a way to build and create things again in the City.

And as we look to the future and know we have to build a sustainable economy - with a smaller carbon footprint - we also know we must manufacture more of the things we need locally. By jump-starting a sustainable, local manufacturing sector, we can create more good paying jobs and protect the environment.

And when the public steps up and invests tax money in business ventures, the public should get a return on that investment just as any other investor would. The return on investment for the public may be a commitment to create family wage jobs or revenue sharing or some other method that creates public value.

Now, I'd like to tell you exactly what steps I'm prepared to take as Mayor to revitalize Portland's economy.

I will consolidate all business permitting in the city; a single place where you can get all of your questions answered, your paperwork filed and your business permits issued. Right now I believe we have a job delaying permitting process. I will change it into a job accelerating process.

I will seek reductions on SDC charges for targeted new and expanding businesses. This simple change can catalyze the creation of hundreds of new small businesses. By reducing their start up costs we will significantly increase their chances for success.

As Mayor, I will work directly with PDC to develop financing for a rapid expansion of local, shared manufacturing centers. I envision a shared metals manufacturing center, a strong sewing center for our now thriving local fashion industry and more community processing kitchens for our budding food entrepreneurs. These centers will help small businesses, which are ready to grow, expand their manufacturing at lower costs.

By accelerating the development of these centers we can create hundreds, maybe thousands of new jobs and support our thriving local industries.

We want more manufacturing jobs and we want to increase our exports in the national and international market. Manufacturing jobs are critical to our long-term economic growth.

And I will create what I call an Economic Catalyst Team to work directly with our existing large employers to help them accelerate their growth.

Let me tell you what happened recently when I visited one of our largest employers – an employer here who recently created many, many new jobs. They showed me their strategic plan to grow for the next 30 years.

But when I asked them who in the city they were strategizing with to accelerate those plans, to tackle land use, transportation or other needs, you know what their answer was? Silence. There was nobody at the city helping them at that level.

This is not acceptable and my new Catalyst Team's job will be to serve as a point of contact with our business and labor community, to pull everyone together and get projects moving.

We need to be nimble, innovative, responsive to customers, and be co-creators, co-producers and co-investors with businesses and citizens.

As Mayor, I will work with Metro and other municipalities to fast track the development of available industrial lands, and brown field cleanups - to help recruit new large employers to Portland.

And, I will strongly back the creation of a citizen utility rate review board to keep the cost of city services down for families and businesses.

So, how does all this apply to East Portland? Everything I have said applies to East Portland - but East Portland has not received the focus it deserves. It has too long been the Cinderella of the city --- hard working, waiting to be discovered, with many assets to build on.

East Portland has hard working, no-nonsense, diverse people, and an untapped potential. East Portland is served by light rail, two freeways, and it is a gateway to significant natural areas and assets.

I will embrace and bring East Portland issues to City Hall. And, as I did in my campaign kickoff speech, let me again make this commitment to East Portland – a commitment that a community leader named Arlene Kimura asked me to make. I won't over promise, I will be honest about what we can achieve, what resources are available, and I will help to use these resources wisely to build a better East Portland.

Under my leadership we will deliver desperately needed economic growth in East Portland.

The East Portland Action Plan is a tremendous asset for Portland and demonstrates what can happen when citizens get engaged around issues that matter to them.

I will move forward on the development of an International Marketplace for SE 82<sup>nd</sup>, which will create a thriving economic center in East Portland. This will help start dozens of new businesses and create hundreds of jobs, and will draw people from across the city to East Portland.

One thing I learned in the business world is that great plans just collect dust if you don't know how to put them into action. As Mayor I will create a culture in Portland for "doing" rather than endlessly planning with few results or outcomes for our citizens.

I support a full economic development assessment of East Portland's commercial corridors, industrial and employment lands, home-based businesses, and business development resources.

As Mayor, I will listen carefully to employers who have already made Portland their home and to neighborhood groups and unions and communities of color.

As Mayor my focus will be on what is by far Portland's biggest stumbling block to greatness – creating new jobs, opportunities and lasting economic growth.

Let's be America's port in this economic storm and keep our children here working at home.

Thank You.



