

POVA Speech -

Thank you so much for asking me to come here today. It is an honor to speak to you-- even at this early hour.

I am not going to talk to you about the tourism industry, because I don't want to tell you all what you already know. What I really want to talk about today is building partnerships to enhance our city and add to tourism because it is so clean and safe.

Nobody knows better about building partnerships than you. It is the reason why Portland is the way it is today. Partnerships are behind what has made Portland unique. Why so many cities send their council members, their architects, their planners and their engineers to Portland. It is the supreme compliment on a job well done. They want to copy what has worked so well for us and what has clearly made us the front-runner for being the most innovative of cities in the nation.

Partnership is the best example of Portland spirit. I know of few other places that encourage partnering between private industry and governments. We are indeed a rare example of how to do this and why people keep coming to Portland to see how we are able accomplish all that we have done. Together we have created a model for furthering tourism and bringing value to our city and to our region.

The best example of partnership is what we have done working together with the City of Portland, Multnomah County, Metro, Tri-County lodging association, the car rental industry and MERCThe funding mechanism that was created between all of these groups enabled all of us to expand the convention center, preserve the PCPA and the Civic Stadium. At the same time, we are answering the pressing demand for additional meeting spaces and hotels while still maintaining the convenience and elegance of Portland's legendary first class accommodations. With all of this to offer, it is no wonder the population is growing at the rate it is. I personally, can't imagine living anywhere else.

An additional and crucial piece of the partnership puzzle is the introduction of the light rail line that will link the convention center to the Exposition Center. Now, thousands of people per day will be able to go from one place to another with ease and we will be providing much needed community development and access for all of our neighborhoods in North and NE Portland. We will be cutting down on traffic and pollution and we will be enhancing our economy and bettering our environment.

For those of you who know me, you know what importance the environment plays in my role as City Commissioner. One of the programs I am working on at this moment and a program that again includes that important link between Private Industry and the Public Sector is our new Green Building Program. This is going to have a tremendous impact in our region and is going to be yet another innovative plan that will draw onlookers to our door.

Now I would like to tell you about a final program that is of paramount importance to me and one that I will be talking about at City Club next week--The Clean River Plan. You can go back a hundred years and look at the Oregonian and read about how polluted the Willamette River is. About the concern of citizens and how they are striving to do some sort of clean up. Pollution is not a 20th century innovation. Cleaning up our river is one of my primary goals for Portland. It will have a huge environmental impact on our city and I believe that it is another progressive accomplishment that we will be able to achieve in all of our lifetime.

It is programs like the Green Building Program and the Clean River Plan that will help to enhance our city and that will add to its beauty and the richness. We want to continue to make Portland the kind of city that people will want to visit and live by our example.