

November 17, 2020

To: Mayor Jenny Durkan
Council President González
Councilmember Teresa Mosqueda
Councilmember Dan Strauss
Seattle City Attorney, Peter Holmes

Cc: Seattle Police Department Chief Adrian Diaz
Seattle Office of Economic Development Director Bobby Lee
Seattle Department of Neighborhoods Director Andrés Mantilla

Dear City of Seattle Elected Leaders:

Recently, a survey of 88 Ballard businesses – representing a broad scope of industry sectors – was conducted by the Ballard Alliance, the North Seattle Industrial Association and the Ballard Brewed Coalition. The survey findings shed new light on the increase in crime in Ballard and articulates the significant financial impact that criminal activity presents for businesses struggling to survive the economic impacts of the Coronavirus pandemic.

Here are the key takeaways:*

- More than 75% of business owners surveyed indicated an increase in crime experienced by business owners between April 1 and September 2020 when compared to the same period last year.
- Ballard businesses reported more than 7,000 instances of crime or criminal activity; that's an average of 40 crimes per day experienced by just 88 Ballard businesses over the last six months.
- Ballard businesses estimate **financial losses of more than half a million dollars** because of increased crime during the last six months. This includes property crimes, shoplifting and break-in theft and illegal dumping.
- More than 50% of businesses indicated their employees feel unsafe working in the Ballard area.
- 17% of respondents indicated loss of employees due to non-COVID related safety concerns,
- Ballard businesses estimate an average of 81 hours of staff time per business dedicated to cleanup and repair resulting from criminal activity during the last six months. That represents a total of 7,192 hours – or approximately \$108,000 in lost wages.

**All data reflects the six-month time period between April 1 and September 30, 2020.*

For many crimes that are reported online, businesses are required to acknowledge that they “have no expectation of follow-up investigation” for the report. The crimes will never be investigated, and unfortunately that means successful criminals will return again and again. This is not about

statistics; this is about rampant criminal activity happening in Ballard every day to the detriment of local business owners.

As our elected leaders, here is what we urgently request from you:

1. A formal response from the Mayor's Office, the City Council, the City Attorney's office and the Seattle Police Department that acknowledges the increase in crime and the significant impacts it has upon Ballard businesses; and
2. A commitment to developing near-term solutions that will significantly reduce criminal activity in our neighborhood.
3. With the new statewide restrictions, we anticipate a significant number of temporary business closures, especially restaurants, which will likely create additional safety challenges for the next four plus weeks. To that end, we also request a stepped-up emphasis in Ballard, particularly during third watch.

Ballard's diverse small businesses are what make this neighborhood a vibrant place to live, shop, work and play. Additionally, these 88 small businesses that took the survey are responsible for the livelihood of 1,422 employees, many of whom are also residents of the neighborhood.

While our businesses are varied in nature and in size, one thing we all have in common is that we are deeply rooted in Ballard – we care about and are connected to the community we serve; we are all suffering from the economic consequences of the Coronavirus pandemic, and we are all significantly impacted by the rapid increase of crime that has gone unchecked. The City needs to provide immediate resources to reduce crime in Ballard.

Sincerely,

Mike Stewart, Executive Director
Ballard Alliance

Eugene Wasserman, President
North Seattle Industrial Association

Ballard Brewed Coalition
A Coalition of Ballard's 12 Breweries