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TO: Lents Town Center Urban Renewal Advisory Committee

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CC: Amy Miller Dowell, E/SE Neighborhood Manager, UDD
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SUBJECT: September 8, 2009 URAC Meeting
9.7 – Transportation Priorities & Investments

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Commission Chair

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Commissioner

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The purpose of this memorandum is to inform you about the establishment of a new transportation committee that will help set funding priorities and investments relative to the annual “Infrastructure” budget. Historically, the URAC has had a transportation subcommittee, but it has not met in the last few years. Given the amount of work to do in the URA, the demand for projects using URA funds, and the remaining resources in the URA devoted to infrastructure investments in the next ten years, it would be prudent to reestablish a committee to assist with project selection and prioritization.

Background

PDC is not a transportation agency. However, it uses its tax increment financing (TIF) funds to leverage other public and private funds to invest in transportation infrastructure. PDC partners with the Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT) to design and fund transportation projects within the URA. There are three distinct transportation focus areas in the current FY 09-10 Budget: Streets/Sidewalks Local Improvement District (LID), Neighborhood Transportation Safety Improvements, and Lents Town Center Redevelopment. The latter is used to fund transportation elements of a larger redevelopment project, such as the street improvements in front of Assurety NW building. PDC has funded numerous transportation projects in the first ten years of the URA.

The transportation committee’s role would be advisory to PDC and work very closely with the URAC. Any recommendation developed by the committee would be reviewed and vetted by the URAC.

The committee referred to as the “Transportation Task Force” will be charged with three tasks:

1. Review current projects and set priorities for this fiscal year 09-10.



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2. Develop a transportation strategy that will guide investment decisions for the next ten years or the remaining life of the URA.
3. Review new requests from the City or recognized neighborhood groups or business associations.

The Transportation Task Force would meet regularly – every other month – until the initial assignment of prioritizing 09-10 projects is completed and then meet quarterly to develop the second task of a transportation strategy. The Lents URA does not have an existing transportation plan or implementation strategy outside of the town center that guides funding decisions. In addition, there is no systematic inventory of what has been accomplished and spent in the last ten years.

The Interstate Corridor Urban Renewal Area Advisory Committee (ICURAC) - via its Transportation Subcommittee - recently completed a Transportation Implementation Strategy (July 2009). The Lents Transportation Task Force would ideally use this effort as an example and adjust it to meet local needs. Enclosed are copies of two documents from the ICURA Transportation Strategy that illustrate the process:

1. Transportation Matrix – April 2008
2. Update Map – August 2008

In addition to the above examples from the ICURA process, the final product can be found on the PDC website: <http://www.pdc.us/ura/interstate/transportation-and-parks/transportation-strategy-update.asp>.

Next Steps

Establish the Transportation Task Force and create a charter that focuses it work on guiding transportation investments in the URA. The task force will consist of 5-7 members and report regularly through the “Briefing Paper” or on a specific agenda item at a URAC meeting. The memberships will include broad geographic and constituent representation in order to have a more in depth discussion, reach decisions, and deliver the best outcomes for the community. Any recommendations developed by the task force will need to be reviewed by the URAC before any action is taken.

PDC staff will work with the URAC leadership and PBOT to select committee members. Once those selections are made, a schedule of meetings will be developed based on participant needs. This schedule will be shared with the URAC and the general public.