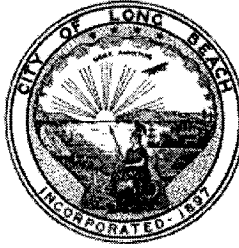



City of Long Beach
Working Together to Serve



Suja Lowenthal
Councilmember, 2nd District

Date: April 10, 2007

To: Mayor and City Council

From: Suja Lowenthal, Councilmember, Second District 

Subject: Downtown Revitalization Efforts in Portland, Oregon

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Receive and file report on my trip to Portland, Oregon, to learn more about their innovative approach to redevelopment and revitalization in their downtown neighborhoods and business sector.

BACKGROUND:

On March 28th & 29th, I toured the Pearl District and other neighborhoods in Portland to get a first-hand view of their revitalization strategies aimed at bringing the downtown back to life. Over the past 20 years, Portland has taken a comprehensive, regional approach to dealing with issues facing any urban area: mobility, affordable housing, re-engineering its job sector after the decline of the timber industry, enhancing education, and environmental stewardship. The result of this effort is increasingly evident.

The Pearl District's ongoing redevelopment from an underutilized industrial warehouse district to an integral residential neighborhood was evident. New residential buildings ranging from two-story town homes, converted warehouses, and new high-rise buildings, combined with new parks and open space, are the backbone of this area. The parks satisfy the need for active recreation areas as well as passive park opportunities, and combine modern storm water management techniques with traditional park features.

The South Waterfront District is an emerging high-density residential center within Downtown Portland, combining high tech jobs and environmentally sensitive development on in a prime location along Portland's waterfront. We toured Oregon Health & Sciences University's (OHSU) new campus, including a Platinum LEED- certified Center for Health & Healing office building, which included a "green" roof, significant reductions in electrical consumption and wastewater generation, and on-site power generation through photovoltaics, solar air-heating systems and other innovations. This building is linked to other portions of the OHSU campus with an aerial tram service.

Linking both of these areas with the rest of the Downtown core is the new Portland streetcar system. This relatively new (opened in 2001) system augments Portland's existing light rail line and traditional bus routes, and is immensely popular. It connects the Portland State University with other parts of Portland, including the Pearl District and South Waterfront, and is innovative in its efforts to link the student population of the city with its other amenities.

Portland is demonstrating its commitment to mobility through the implementation of alternative transportation options, such as the new streetcar and aerial tram, but also through designated bike paths and bicycle parking areas, pedestrian friendly plazas, parks and sidewalks, and designated Flex Car parking areas. It is through this commitment that Portland is emerging as a leader among urban cities.