

Editor's Urban Development Journal:
An Adams Agenda?
New Directions for Urban Development

Professor Will Macht, Editor



There has been extensive debate about newly elected Mayor Sam Adams' ethical lapses, but in the Portland development community, there has been little discussion of the steps that the Mayor has already undertaken that could potentially be one of the most far-reaching aggregations of tools for transforming urban development in Portland since Mayor Neil Goldschmidt's activism in the 1970s. If the tools are integrated well, Portland could be on the leading edge of a new wave of urban development. If not, Portland could be saddled with high debt in support of high-risk projects with marginal ability to add to our urban networks.

Within the Mayor's purview will be planning, economic development, community development, sustainable development, transportation, management, finance and law. In policy terms, only Commissioner Fish's housing bureau, which acquires the previous housing activities of the Portland Development Commission, will be outside the mayor's immediate supervision, and the

water and development services functions, primarily operating line entities, will function separately. How will the mayor use these tools to formulate an Adams agenda for Portland's urban development?

To make this discussion more tangible, let us revisit some of the local public policy decisions I outlined just one year ago in a piece here entitled "An Invisible Urban Development Agenda" [CRE Quarterly & Urban Development Journal, 1st Quarter 2008, February 2008 http://www.pdx.edu/media/r/e/RE_Quarterly_08_1Q.pdf] Let us view some of these issues through the lens of the new mayor's roles and suggest some of the ways that Mayor Adams could integrate some of his new multidisciplinary functions in ways that could transform projects into far more than their individual pieces and into effective urban networks.

Portland Development Commission [PDC]

For all intents and purposes, the mayor will have license to integrate all the urban development policies of the city as well as to set both the agenda for, and oversee the projects of, the city as a public partner in urban development. This is particularly true since the independence of the PDC in recent years has been substantially reduced as the Council has asserted its authority.

Once led by PDC Commissioners who were primarily developers chosen for their development expertise, now only a single developer sits on the Commission. Urban renewal districts within which tax increments have financed large bond issues are about to expire. The Council has supported satellite appendages with no rational nexus to the district. Authority to acquire private property by condemnation for the purpose of sale to other private owners for development is now limited by changes in reaction to a Supreme Court decision.



Mayor Adams and the newly elected city council members will need to address how to revitalize the PDC, increase its development expertise, augment its resources and refine its goals. Public-private deal-making is a challenging art not susceptible to traditional governmental decision-making. Experience and sophistication in negotiating with the developers whom the PDC assists, or with whom it enters into public-private partnerships, is absolutely vital to protect the public interest and to produce sustainable projects.

Independent development agencies have been used in various cities around the country to do what neither the private nor the public sector has been able to do as well alone. By its very nature, development involves definable physical projects that require literally thousands of detailed decisions to be made quickly with only the interest of the project's success as the primary criterion for decision-making. Publicly elected officials need the insulation of an independent development entity to be able to deflect the necessity of saying no to certain constituent groups or, often worse, saying yes when other rivals for public largesse see harm in benefiting their competitors.

For example, existing hoteliers have resisted public subsidies for a convention center headquarters hotel precisely for that reason. An independent development entity charged with making such judgments solely on the basis of development feasibility and long-term sustainability not only will make better decisions but will also insulate elected officials both politically and economically from conflicting decisions, either actual or perceived.

Economic Development:

By necessity and by design, the Mayor and Council will need to devote scarce City resources towards innovative forms of economic development. The traditional, and most expensive, approach towards economic development has been to entice and subsidize large corporations from elsewhere to set up local plants in Portland through the construction of infrastructure to create so-called “shovel-ready” industrial parks. These expenditures are usually supplemented by generous tax abatements and other enticements as corporations play one city off against another for a race to the bottom in terms of tangible economic benefits that accrue to the city.

This conventional wisdom and approach is not only expensive, it is also outmoded. Large manufacturing companies have been more likely to retrench than expand. The lion's share of job growth has been in smaller companies as well as in local ones. According to the U.S. Small Business Administration, smaller companies have generated between 60% and 80% of all net new jobs in the last decade and over 98% of all jobs within inner cities. Moreover, most of that growth is locally generated. A good example of these conclusions is the experience of Seattle with Microsoft, Amazon and Starbucks that grew in place as indigenous companies, without subsidies, creating more jobs in the local area, with lower public risk.

Moreover, the largest number of jobs is created both by and for the creative class, who are college-educated 25 to 34-year-olds that Portland has been so successful attracting with no public investment, as compared with other American cities, most of which have lost population of their creative class. So the mission of the PDC from the Council should be to find and nurture those startups and young companies that our creative class has generated in places like the Eastbank Commerce Center, Olympic Mills and other affordable venues created by local entrepreneurs. And the most likely kinds of companies will likely be in the areas of green building, alternative energy and other sustainable urban technologies for which Portland has justly become noted. With the mammoth economic recovery plan of the Obama administration emphasizing those areas for growth, the PDC should have the wind at its back in this search.



Urban Infrastructure:

On the local level, the ways in which the Mayor and Council prioritize federal projects to repair and rebuild urban infrastructure, both hard and soft, can have an enormous effect on the ways in which developers are able to build to accommodate the growth projected for the metropolitan area. How are we going to fix and fund a staggering backlog of under-investment in urban infrastructure and deferred maintenance of roads, bridges and railroads? Do we simply repair potholes or can we devise smarter ways to control traffic? Can we overhaul our taxi franchise system to integrate taxis, shuttles and towncars into an efficient para-transit system? Can we overhaul our zoning laws to eliminate single-use zoning in favor of mixed-use zoning that eliminates the need for multiple trips and shortens their distance, lessening urban infrastructure demand? These elements of soft infrastructure can be as important as hard.

Crossings:

There is no better example of the need for multidisciplinary thinking and action than the so-called Columbia River Crossing. Its name in the singular denotes its single-minded genesis as a freeway bridge replacement. Even though at its cost of at least \$4.2 billion it would be the

single most expensive infrastructure project ever in the Portland/Vancouver metropolitan region, it did not derive from a cost-benefit study, which has not been undertaken to this day. Arguments about the number of lanes and iconic symbols miss the essence of the problem.

It's planning did not integrate with planned urban development of the more than 2,300 undeveloped acres just to its west, 1900 of which are already in public ownership. It avoided integrating the twin problems of rail and river congestion that plague the crossroads of north-south and east-west transportation on the largest river and at the busiest rail corridor in the West. Nor did it even consider alternatives to connect the 5-mile long, 1,500-acre Hayden Island to the two states by means other than a freeway bridge. And it adds not one single connection to the urban network of streets and bridges that stitches the region together. That is because it never analyzed traffic congestion in the context of an urban network. The current discussion about design in terms of adding essentially ornamental wind turbines to sell the bridge as "sustainable" misunderstands the fundamental need for a sustainable network, to which the replacement bridge does not add.

To understand this graphically and simply, point the fingers of both of your hands at each other and connect only your two long middle fingers. Each finger represents an arterial road on each side of the river but the only place they can connect is through the single crossing. Every car and bus and truck on all eight arterials must converge at that central point to continue its journey. Of course it is congested and will continue to be so after a single freeway bridge replaces three lanes in each direction with three through lanes. The source of the congestion is the mandatory convergence, not the bridge's lane capacity. How vital would Portland's commerce be if the only connection between its east and west sides was the Marquam Bridge rather than the seven bridges that traverse its downtown? Yet downtown Vancouver, an area the same size as downtown Portland's 380 city blocks, has only a single bridge connecting it to Portland despite the fact that it carries more north-south traffic than does Portland, east-west.



Mayor Adams was a member of the Columbia River Crossing Task Force that, strangely, was formulated by the two state transportation departments in such a manner that elected officials are purely advisory to technocrats, rather than vice-versa, as one would expect in a democratic government. Moreover, he is *primus inter pares*, first among equals, on the Project Sponsors Council, as the leader of the largest city in the region and without whose blessing the project cannot proceed in its current form. So he essentially, with the Council, holds veto power over the project as presently conceived. That confers leverage to devise better alternatives, of which there are several, at far lower cost and greater benefit for the city and the region.

An intensive 11-week PSU development workshop recommended that the lift span of the I-5 Bridge be eliminated by raising the 530-foot long center high span by as little as 18 feet, which permits removal of the anachronous drawbridge lift span, while seismically reinforcing bridge piers. Removal of the lift span recovers the 38 feet between the spans and permits adding there two reversible lanes in the center, without the need for any interchange reconstruction or right-of-way acquisition. In addition we recommended an arterial road and rail bridge, with light rail and commuter rail, which would be a twin to the BNSF Rail Bridge a mile downriver, that would connect to Marine Drive and North Portland Road, divert traffic between the Ports of

Portland and Vancouver, be 500 feet shorter, far less expensive, reinforce the urban street network and tie Hayden Island to both states. The cost for the two bridges was less than a quarter of the \$4.2 billion cost for one freeway replacement bridge. [CRE Quarterly & Urban Development Journal, 2nd Quarter 2008, May 2008 http://www.pdx.edu/media/r/e/RE_2008quarterly.pdf and [CRE Quarterly & Urban Development Journal, 3rd Quarter 2008, August 2008 http://www.pdx.edu/media/r/e/RE_3Q08.pdf]

With his new tools to link transportation and planning, sustainable and community development with economic development, think what Mayor Adams could do for the metropolitan area if he articulated a better alternative for Portland and the region, at a savings on the order of \$3 billion, to build two crossings instead of one, both of which could sustainably stimulate urban and economic development in both states. And since the proposals have seven different sub-projects that are easily phased with the least disruption, think of the benefits of being able to build them more quickly, and with less disruption, than the behemoth bridge:

1. Replace the narrow 175' rail bridge swing span with a 300' center lift span.
2. Build a low twin road & rail arterial twin bridge for cars, trucks, light & commuter rail.
3. Reinforce I-5 Bridge pier footings and seismic performance of existing spans.
4. Raise the east span of the I-5 Bridge 18' at its 530'-long center span.
5. Raise the west span of the I-5 Bridge 18' at its 530'-long center span.
6. Eliminate the I-5 Bridge lift spans
7. Insert two reversible center lanes in the 38' between the I-5 Bridge spans.

The only right-of-way needed is a narrow strip on Hayden Island owned by the Port of Portland. There is no work or cost necessary for new on-ramps and off-ramps. Phasing is less disruptive and cheaper. Traffic is dispersed, bottlenecks reduced and homeland security enhanced. Embodied energy and materials are re-used and sustained. History is preserved. Light rail and inter-city rail are connected. Light rail stimulates dense urban development in the center of Hayden Island and the west end of downtown Vancouver and on the redeveloped Boise Cascade waterfront. Future waterfront development is stimulated on the 800 acres on the west side of Hayden Island owned by the Port of Portland and the 1,100 acres owned by the Port of Vancouver. Tolls that would act economically as tariff barriers in the center of the metropolitan area are unnecessary. Tolling I-205 is also unnecessary. Political costs of imposing tolls on those who do not benefit, such as those in East Vancouver and East Portland, are avoided. Rather than just short-term construction jobs, permanent jobs are created and will be sustained because of the permanent nature of the economic development that will occur with downtown and waterfront development on both sides of the river.

Para-Transit:

In the summer of 2008, [CRE Quarterly & Urban Development Journal, 3rd Quarter 2008, August 2008 http://www.pdx.edu/media/r/e/RE_3Q08.pdf] I described how Portland franchise regulation constricts the growth of para-transit. In Portland, the taxi system is inefficient, among other reasons, because hailing a cab is almost impossible by reason of the very small number of taxis is permitted by the City of Portland, and the practice of taxi companies of clustering cabs at taxi stands only at high traffic locations. Portland caps the number of taxis at 382, or only one for every 1500 residents. By way of contrast, Seattle has nearly twice as many [651 taxis or one per 890 residents].

Rather than a static, inefficient, isolated taxi and shuttle model, think what could happen if the City, Metro and/or TriMet started and operated a real-time metropolitan urban taxi dispatch network that ties all the taxis, town cars, limousines and shuttles together into a real-time GPS,



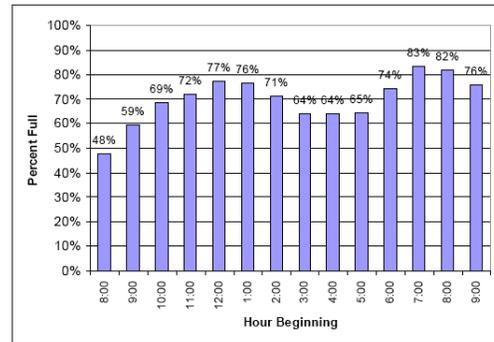
cell phone and computer dispatch network that sends the nearest vehicle immediately to the site of the caller.

The result would be a smarter, inter-connected taxi/ shuttle/ towncar network that creates an alternative urban transportation system based on existing assets and investments. Para-transit ridership could increase significantly because more vehicles would be available to get quickly to where users need them, when they need them. Unlike mass transit, point-to-point travel times would be reduced because para-transit both solves the first mile and last mile travel problems [getting to and from transit stops, from origins and to destinations] as well as transit schedule delay problems. Taxi franchise regulation is wholly within City control and the Mayor should lead the reform.

Parking:

Parking is the most powerful tool in the planners' tool chest, but planners who view automobiles as unwelcome visitors in the urban landscape often misunderstand it. If used wisely, smarter parking policies are essential to be able to create dense, vital mixed-use urban centers. There are several major components of parking policies that Mayor Adams should address:

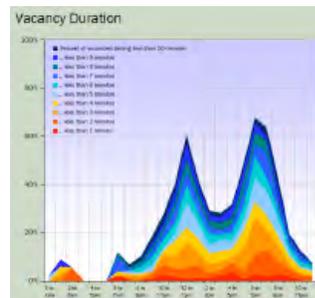
Parking Management: Cities control more parking than any developer and the parking policies to manage that supply are critical public functions, every bit as much as the management of traffic on city streets.



Detailed inventories of both actual and functional capacity are necessary. Some of that has been recently completed by Kittelson & Associates for the City [<http://www.portlandonline.com/transportation/index.cfm?c=36899&a=224235>]. While a large portion of that study was a survey of opinion rather than observation of facts of occupancy on multiple days, time periods and seasons, it can form the beginnings of analysis for more innovative parking management policies.

Urban Parking Network: The combination of on-street and off-street parking should be treated as an urban parking network where dynamic real-time pricing is integrated across all downtown facilities to better adjust supply and demand. In Urban Land magazine, [*Parking Street Smarts*, W. P. Macht, *Urban Land*, June 2006 pp. 141-143] I have written about the Streetline Networks' system of wireless mesh sensors that link both on-street and off-street parking spaces into a real-time information network that shows every space, whether it is occupied or vacant and the time of arrival and departure.

Enforcement: The Port of San Francisco has installed a pilot demonstration of the Streetline system that showed that 45% of metered parking was unpaid because of the inefficiency of random enforcement. But the potential goes far beyond efficient enforcement. Using a criminal law enforcement system is not only very aversive for downtown visitors, it also leads to inefficient use of scarce parking resources. Rather than hold the threat of an expensive ticket to shorten parking times and increase turnover, the City could eliminate the criminal system and use price as a regulator, at lower cost both to the City as well as to the parker. By linking the system with smart meters, payment can be made via cell phones. If the City structures a graduated price structure, cost will regulate parking time. For example, the City could price the first hour at \$1.00, the second at \$2.00, the third at \$3.00 and so on. Different parts of downtown could be priced differently depending on actual real-time occupancy.



Way-finding System: Germany, Japan and many other countries have sophisticated electronic systems on the street and online that show just how many spaces are available at any parking



facility. Rather than drive around spewing carbon into the atmosphere wishing randomly for a vacant space, drivers know before they arrive just where empty spaces are. Portland should be on the leading edge in adopting these urban technologies.

Multiblock Underground Parking: In an extensive article I described how multiblock underground parking greatly increases the efficiency and occupancy of expensive parking spaces for a mixture of uses. [http://www.pdx.edu/media/r/e/RE_2007REQuarterly3q.pdf] The greater the use of any parking space, the greater the density of uses it can support. A multiblock structure like the 1,300-space Brewery Blocks garage, or the 1,477-space Fox Blocks garage, supports smarter shared parking for a much wider variety and greater density of retail, office, residential and other uses, which could include a hotel, than each of those uses could collectively with separate but equal numbers of spaces divided by use. Since the City owns the streets under which such garages must run, it must be a partner in their development.



Smarter Parking Spaces: The City can increase the on-street parking supply with a variety of techniques. The simplest is reducing the length of the spaces and, particularly, the wasted space between lined parking places. Since the City has installed central smart parking meters



in downtown that dispense stickers to be placed in any car, no meters would need to be replaced. Long stalls with spaces between them may ease parallel parking, but they decrease efficiency, incentivize larger vehicles and artificially reduce shared parking, which all on-street spaces represent. Another way to increase on-street shared parking is by converting wide streets to diagonal parking, which acts as a traffic calming device too as drivers slow down to watch for cars backing out. The City has been progressive in buying Smart Cars, which are only 8 feet long,

the width of most parking spaces. But the City should also be smarter in incentivizing their use by providing areas where Smart Cars can park perpendicular to the curb. Smart Cars are only 5 feet wide and at least three can park in a single 20-foot parking space.

Smarter Meters: The City has been progressive in purchasing smarter meters that can accept credit cards. However the City could much more effectively tie smart meters into a real-time network with wireless mesh sensors to monitor actual occupancy in real time. Moreover, the City should tie the system into cell phone payment systems so that parkers could simply add time to their monthly cell bills.



Plug-in Meters: In a City that prides itself on being sustainable, in a state whose Governor is promoting electric cars, the City should install plug-in meters all over downtown and, especially, in its SmartPark garages. That will not only incentivize electric car ownership, it will also increase income for the City. Since a large number of cars park for long periods of up to 8 hours during the day, such meters could cover the typical charging cycle and double the range of electric cars.

Coliseum Reuse: Over seven years ago, at a time when one developer was advocating its conversion to an athletic center, I taught a workshop on the reuse of the Coliseum. We developed four alternative reuses for the Coliseum, each one of which was viable. Supported by 2,600 under-utilized existing parking spaces owned by the City, with some additional spaces, they included [1] a 650-room convention headquarters hotel within the structure; [2] a 540,000 square-foot Sustainable Technology Center housing up to 2,000 jobs in energy and environmental technologies; [3] a retail Urban Home Center anchored by IKEA (before it was considered for Cascade Station) and an EXPO Design Center or [4] a Memorial Arts Center housing Portland ballet, opera, symphony, drama and film institutions along with an 80,000 square-foot commercial broadcast center, 10-screen Cineplex, a 10,000 square-foot Powell's arts and music bookstore and a 15,000 square-foot terrace restaurant overlooking the Willamette River and downtown Portland. Seven years later, the City has not pursued a single one of these five alternatives, or any other alternative. Mayor Adams should convene a task force to reexamine these options and/or pursue others.

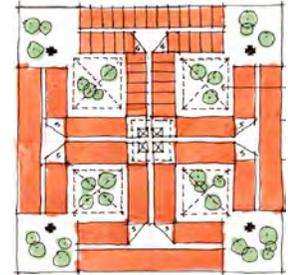


Headquarters Hotel: Metro is now the locus of decision-making for a potential headquarters hotel for the Oregon Convention Center (OCC), although Mayor Adams has expressed considerable interest in having the City take a more leading role in the project. Advocates say a headquarters hotel is needed to help ensure viability of the OCC. Public ownership and subsidies have been issues that have generated a backlash among existing hoteliers. Public activists are concerned about priorities for public spending. Some economists question the validity of projections about the feasibility of capturing forecasted shares of a market that grows more competitive with the construction of additional convention centers and headquarters hotels, in many cases subsidized by other cities. [http://www.brookings.edu/metro/pubs/20050117_conventioncenters.pdf] Others note that a headquarters hotel cannot likely survive on convention business alone and question whether a headquarters hotel in that location can capture the business and leisure traveler markets needed to reach viability.

Convention centers are one of the most competitive types of development projects in the country with cities subsidizing both their capital costs and operating expenses in hopes of luring large groups to their cities. Large conventions themselves are more threatened than ever as large institutions have splintered, the convenience of travel has been restricted by security

procedures and the low economic cost of more ubiquitous communication and video conferencing has supplanted considerable need for larger and more expensive conventions.

This is especially true as the extraordinarily weak economy has made travel and lodging unaffordable to many and among the first of the expendable items to be cut from a company's or government's budget. Headquarters hotels, usually avoided by business travelers unaffiliated with the conventions because of their size and more limited services during conventions, will be especially vulnerable in a location like that of the Portland OCC that needs such business travelers for survival. At a minimum cost of \$205 million in public tax-exempt bonds floated in an uncertain municipal market, the project represents a high-risk venture in a declining marketplace for which the City should exercise extreme caution. If it concludes that a headquarters hotel is a high priority, it should consider building one inside the Coliseum where the subsidy could be the lowest because the City already owns the land, the building, the parking and a 40,000-square-foot public exhibition hall.

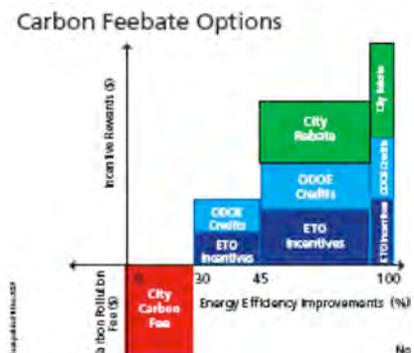


Accelerated Mixed-Use Zoning: Single-use zoning is less than 85 years old in Portland. By definition, zoning land for a single use reduces its ability to accommodate different uses and any mixture of them. Urban growth boundaries in the Portland/Vancouver area restrict the supply of urban land in order to reduce urban sprawl. Some argue that the boundaries should simply be expanded to accommodate growth. But with two-thirds of spending controlled by aging Baby Boomers and their children, the Echo Boomers, and with each at a period in their lives when they are making major housing decisions and expressing a preference for close-in urban mixed-use environments, does it make sense to expand at the periphery?

The city zoning code is also replete with provisions beyond single-use zoning that restrict density and encourage sprawl. Among them are maximum lot coverage requirements, minimum setback requirements, restrictions on accessory dwelling units and home occupations, requirements that restrict residential use in commercial and industrial areas and others that restrict the sharing of residential parking. In many ways, zoning codes are perpetuating outmoded planning principles and restricting the very density and “messy vitality” that planning professionals since Jane Jacobs have espoused. Mayor Adams should direct an overhaul of the Portland zoning code.

Urban Density Bonuses: In addition to mixing uses, accommodating substantial numbers of new residents will require increasing urban densities. Multiple tests of visual preference analyses show that it is not density *per se* to which many people object, but rather in-artful density. With its Living Smart (Skinny House) and Courtyard Housing Competitions, the City of Portland has dipped a toe into design waters but scarcely into development. And the relatively low-density nature of these solutions belies the significant increases in density they can accommodate that can still be urbane. What kinds of urban density bonuses can be crafted to reward developers to try new approaches to projects? Can Mayor Adams and the Council articulate them in simple terms to the public that lead to their development? Rather than restrict the use of Accessory Dwelling Units [ADUs] can the City award density bonuses for their development?

Carbon Feebates: Portland City Commissioner Dan Saltzman and his Office of Sustainable Development have proposed a system of “feebates”, a combination of rebate carrots financed by carbon pollution fee sticks, for development that exceeds, matches or fails high performance green building standards. In addition to reducing energy consumption and creating



more healthful buildings in Portland, they hope to stimulate the creativity and commitment of the local development community in a way that will foster local economic development along with the ability of Portland developers to export their expertise and skills as Gerding-Edlen and Williams & Dame have done. Will Mayor Adams and the new City Council support the feebate system in a way that can incentivize developers for using it? The development community has resisted the idea of penalties for meeting all the standards of the energy and building codes. Can the codes be revised to increase the standards with incentives for exceeding them?

University Development: Portland State University is not only the largest university in Oregon, it is also the largest landowner in downtown Portland with over four million square feet of space on over 45 city blocks and over 4,000 parking spaces. Its projected growth and development from 27,000 to 35,000 students in less than a decade will require enlightened development policies and creative public private partnerships on an unprecedented scale. The University of Oregon has expanded its beachhead in downtown Portland with its lease of the White Stag Building, rehabbed for its occupancy. OHSU's plans for a new medical campus on South Waterfront have been set back by the removal of the liability cap on malpractice claims against the partially state-supported institution.



All of these university developments require public discussion, leadership and action on the part of state, local and academic leaders on the full range of potentials and pitfalls of these growth plans. The academic background of the new Portland State University President, Wim Wiewel, is in his expertise on universities as developers. Portland State should grow to the east as well as to the north and south. Can Mayor Adams accelerate that development?

The principal tenant in the new Student Recreation Center under construction at the Urban Center is the City archives. While it pays market rent which is badly needed by the University, it strikes many as ironic that old records need to be stored at the very heart of the University, at the convergence of Light Rail and the Streetcar. The new building is right next to the College of Urban Affairs and the Toulan School of Urban Studies & Planning, both of which are bursting their seams and also need to have multi-disciplinary joint instruction with other entities like the Schools of Architecture, Engineering and Business. Joint high-technology classrooms are desperately needed to teach multi-disciplinary urban development studies. Can Mayor Adams figure a way to relocate the archives and jointly use the reclaimed space with his new Bureau of Planning & Sustainable Development, just two blocks away?

Multifamily Modular Workforce Housing: The term “affordable” has now come to mean subsidized housing. But there is a large need for housing that is not subsidized and is typically for younger workers who may earn from approximately 80% to 120% of median family income.

Now termed “workforce” housing there is a paucity of development incentives to developers to build to that market segment. While local governments can award density bonuses, how can the local government adjust its housing policies to address these needs?

In the four decades since the architect Moshe Safdie demonstrated the potential of urban multifamily modular housing with Habitat at Expo 1967, American ingenuity has languished while European progress has continued. As I explained in an earlier article, [CRE Quarterly & Urban Development Journal, 1st Quarter 2008, February 2008 http://www.pdx.edu/media/r/e/RE_Quarterly_08_1Q.pdf] Seattle developer Unico is taking the first steps in that direction with its research, development and demonstration of its Inhabit modular system that I call iMods. It clearly offers a system that is faster, cheaper and better in terms of structural integrity. Moreover, it has been designed to be scaleable and flexible so that it can be built on small, scattered urban sites while still reaping the benefits of economies of scale essential to reduce the price of producing workforce housing. Can Mayor Adams reduce the impediments from zoning and building codes, work rules and financing obstacles to lead to wide-scale development of affordable multifamily modular housing in Portland? Can he go one step further and make it possible to build units from shipping containers as the University of Amsterdam has done for the 1,000-unit Keetwonen project, at left?



Can he go one step further and make it possible to build units from shipping containers as the University of Amsterdam has done for the 1,000-unit Keetwonen project, at left?

Post Office Blocks: The plan our BOMA development workshop developed last summer would add over \$1 billion dollars to the Portland tax base, provide four income streams to the PDC, foster economic opportunity and over 5,000 jobs, exclusive of construction jobs. Called ParkPlace, the plan would transform the 13.4-acre obsolete postal facility into a green, mixed-use urban center as the extension and terminus of the North Park Blocks. It was conceived as an economic development catalyst with space for over 5,000 jobs and a Sustainable Technology/Green Building products mart and incubator; a 2.5-acre rooftop Urban Greenhouse Farm; a diverse urban neighborhood with over 1,800 apartments, condominiums



and hotel units housing the creative class workforce, young families, empty nesters, retirees and visitors, and a complete 270,000 SF urban retail center anchoring the NW Lovejoy retail corridor, larger than the Brewery Blocks. An efficient multi-block underground shared, smart parking structure supported the highest urban density at ParkPlace, Union Station & Old Town and incorporated a sustainable district-wide energy system. The PDC is negotiating a purchase

of the property. Can Mayor Adams lead a plan like this one that develops the multi-block parking structure that supports it and lease the air rights above it to produce maximum development density as well as long-term income for the City?

PGE Park & Lents Stadium: Private business interests that own the Portland Beavers baseball and Timbers soccer teams have advocated that the City issue \$85 million in City-backed bonds to upgrade PGE Park for a new soccer franchise and build a Triple AAA baseball stadium in Lents. Mayor Adams has expressed interest in this plan and has formed a task force to study it. In an era when Oregon's unemployment exceeds 9%, when City and State budgets face daunting shortfalls, when education, housing, transportation and health care demand larger resources, why should City credit be pledged to support private sports entertainment? In an era of extremely finite and scarce resources, what could elevate sports complexes above educating, employing, housing and feeding its citizens?



Mayor Adams' decision to take control of planning, economic development, community development, sustainable development, transportation, management, finance and law could prove to be a golden age for progressive urban development in Portland. With ambition to do great things, along with the aggregation of power to implement them, can come extraordinary results. It will require innovation in conceptions, prioritization of projects and judicious application of scarce resources.



Respectfully yours,

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