

TENTH AMENDMENT TO AIRPORT WAY URBAN RENEWAL PLANIF YOU WISH TO SPEAK TO CITY COUNCIL, **PRINT** YOUR NAME, ADDRESS, AND EMAIL.

NAME (print)

ADDRESS AND ZIP CODE

Email

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## EAST PORTLAND ACTION PLAN

March 9, 2010

RE: Proposed Airport Way URA Changes

Dear Portland City Council,

The East Portland Action Plan is opposed to the proposed transference of acreage in the Airport Way Urban Renewal Area (URA) to an area in Portland's Central City area. While we understand the arguments in favor of eliminating wetlands and right-of-way from the Airport Way URA, we strongly urge City Council to keep the amount of URA acreage currently in Airport Way within the area of East Portland.

The East Portland Action Plan (EPAP), an advisory committee of residents, businesses, and community organizations within East Portland, is advocating for equitable distribution of public resources more reflective of our current population base (now estimated as 28% of Portland's population). In a recent meeting with Mayor Adams, the Mayor demonstrated his commitment to equity for East Portland by helping to establish a greater East Portland voice in City government. In addition, the Mayor has asked each City Bureau to report its expenditures by geographic area so that it can be clear which areas are receiving more — or less — of the City's resources. Our hope is that the PDC will do the same in its role as a public institution, and focus on a fair and equitable resource distribution.

To remove URA acreage and value from the Airport Way URA and reassign it to a new Central City URA flies directly in the face of efforts to increase city-wide social equity and assurance that East Portland receives a fair share of the City's resources. We request that no decision be made on removal of land from the Airport URA until a proposal to keep that land in East Portland can be fully investigated, developed and approved simultaneously.

If the Airport URA land were transferred to SW or NW Portland, such a move would strengthen a commonly held perception in East Portland that the attention of our city's leaders remains focused on the downtown area, to the exclusion of the needs of 28% of the City's traditionally disenfranchised citizens.

We offer the following in support of our stance in favor of keeping the Airport URA acreage in East Portland:

- The recently published Portland Economic Development Strategy identified several clusters that the City will target and aggressively pursue. Two of those clusters in particular, Advanced Manufacturing and Activewear, would seem ideally suited for the Airport Way URA. Our concern is that by removing acreage from the Airport Way URA and reassigning to the Central City URA, the likelihood of those businesses being located in East Portland would be greatly diminished.
- Discussions have taken place regarding the opportunity to expand the Gateway URA along 2 corridors, Halsey and Stark, out to 122nd Avenue. This action would enhance Gateway's ability to generate TIF dollars and can be more easily accomplished if Airport Way acreage is not reassigned to a new Central City URA. To this point, the Gateway URA has under-performed, and a likely contributing factor is that it was drawn too small. Applying the Airport Way URA acreage to Gateway could serve to address performance issues.
- We propose a study be undertaken of Portland's Glenfair and Centennial neighborhoods, to ascertain if an URA would be a viable tool to spur development and infrastructure improvements in these areas. It is our contention that an Urban Renewal Area that abuts the Rockwood, Gresham URA may provide synergistic benefits to both Portland and Gresham. Again, this opportunity is lost if Airport Way URA acreage is transferred to the proposed Central City URA.
- The conditions that define blight, according to ORS 457.010, and the declaration of necessity spelled out in ORS 457.020, are much more prevalent in portions of East Portland than they are in downtown Portland (which has seen steady, ongoing development for many years). The lack of investment in East Portland has exacerbated these conditions and has resulted in East Portland residents asking for their "Fair Share" of public resources and city leadership attention.

East Portland, with a population over 162,000 and growing, is composed of 13 neighborhoods and five (5) business districts. The area represents 28% of the City of Portland's population. Located primarily east of the I-205 freeway and west of the city of Gresham, East Portland includes some of the most recent areas to be annexed to the City. Over the last decade, East Portland has been transitioning from its once suburban and semi-rural form into an increasingly urban community, a fact that brings both benefits and challenges to the area. This change is heightening awareness of the area's needs and issues. Our residents deserve better connections to schools, parks, and employment opportunities, and more focused attention on our economic development.

While we will continue to explore every program and opportunity in order to build strong, vibrant, diverse, and safe neighborhoods, we strongly oppose the ongoing demonstration of inequity and unfairness in City resource distribution. This unfairness is exemplified by moving one of our valuable assets to another portion of the city that is already receiving more than generous support. We support our public institutions in their

ongoing attempts to behave in a responsible and equitable fashion. Keeping the Airport Way URA acreage in East Portland is one way to reflect such responsible behavior.

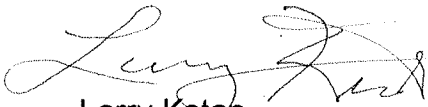
Sincerely,



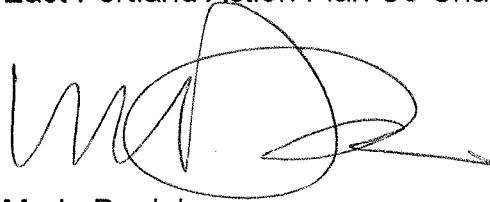
Arlene Kimura  
East Portland Action Plan (EPAP) Co-Chair



Brian Heron  
East Portland Action Plan Co-Chair



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EPAP Economic Development  
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**EAST PORTLAND ACTION PLAN**

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