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The expansion would give the organization access to loans and grants from the PDC to renovate the organization's 6,000-square-foot building so that it can be used to provide space for emerging non-profits, she said.

"It's giving everyone the same opportunities," said Livingston of the expansion, who hopes the PDC will keep the lessons from the past in mind as it moves forward.

The St. Johns Neighborhood Association is also supportive of having an urban renewal area encompass its commercial center and Roosevelt High School.

Clinton Doxsee, the association's land use chair, said that after a long process it became clear to many in the North Portland neighborhood that the money could give the streets a facelift, put some empty lots to use and generally make St. Johns a destination that might even get a write-up in *The New York Times*. He also said the association is cognizant of urban renewal's potential of gentrification and aims to use the money inclusively.

"We basically asked people, who wants in?" said PDC Business and Equity Director John Jackley, speaking of the feedback process with area residents interested in the benefits of urban renewal.

Jackley also points to an endorsement for the expansion of ICURA by the 21-member ad hoc community advisory committee that included representatives from minority business organizations, neighborhood groups, the county, the schools, the Portland Trail Blazers, social service nonprofit Central City Concern, a resident of the New Columbia Housing project and others.

The committee met for nine months beginning in August 19, 2009 at the newly renovated Billy Webb Elks Lodge, a historic social hub for the city's African American community, to discuss investments, economic development in area, housing, gentrification, and the historic role of the PDC. However, the ICURA's primary advisory committee — each URA has a standing advisory committee — voted to oppose most of the expansion over concerns it would spread resources too thin and drain money from existing projects.

The North Portland Neighborhood Chairs Network, which represents neighborhood associations in areas that would be affected by the expansion, sent a letter supportive of the expansion to the committee with its own list of urban renewal projects.

Sam Brooks, an African American entrepreneur who founded a successful staffing firm, wrote a letter of support for the expansion to the committee as well, arguing that it could help spur black entrepreneurship. The trade association he founded, the Oregon Association of Minority Entrepreneurs, has also adopted sent a similar letter.

On May 19, 2010, the committee voted to support the PDC's expansion plans while also prioritizing a \$70 million list of projects including parks, housing and other undertakings dubbed the "Gem List." The committee punted on the prickly issue of the Rose Quarter redevelopment while the details of the deal were being worked out elsewhere.

When city officials pitched the idea of creating ICURA in the late 1990s, they argued that gentrification was already creeping into North and Northeast Portland and claimed that the central goal of the new urban renewal area would be to make investments that would benefit existing residents, preventing their displacement.

Two months before the City Council voted to create ICURA, a writer in the *Oregonian* issued a prescient statement:

"In 20 years, neighborhood leaders make clear, the district won't be measured by the Starbucks, fancy restaurants or penthouse condominiums built. Instead, the yardstick will be whether the area continues to include everyone. History suggests the city won't be able to pull it off."

The plan for ICURA states that it would be used to "primarily benefit existing residents and businesses," create housing for all income levels, be a driver of jobs, be a force that would help struggling seniors, and transform the part of the city that has suffered from deliberate disinvestment into a vibrant, attractive and inclusive place.

The plan also explicitly acknowledged how the area has been on the wrong side of progress, like the creation of I-5, which resulted in some households and businesses getting the boot. The document also stated that there would be no condemnation of property, especially in the Eliot Neighborhood, a clear reference to the neighborhood-wrecking Emanuel Hospital expansion.

Shortly after the Interstate URA was created in 2000, it was expected to

generate 6,700 jobs and 2,600 new homes over the course of 20 years. No one from the PDC responded to requests if this goal had been met. (In May, County Commissioner Loretta Smith, who represents the North and Northeast region, held a forum of African American men on their concerns and vision for a more equitable community. With hundreds of men in attendance, the prevailing concern was over the access to jobs.)

According to Margaret Bax, who worked on housing policy for the PDC when ICURA was being created, the primary purpose of the urban renewal area was to help finance the MAX Yellow Line, but its goals were steadily expanded to other projects, such as driving home-ownership and creating rental properties.

"We knew we had to spend the train money, but there was an absolute commitment to other projects," said Bax.

By PDC figures, the stock of rental housing in the Interstate Corridor had been declining while sale prices of homes soared during the housing boom of the 1990s and early 2000s as houses were purchased and "flipped" for a profit.

The same report also paints a troubling picture with more than one-third of all households in the Interstate Corridor paying more than 30 percent of their income on housing costs and 17 percent paying more than 50 percent. The Coalition for a Livable Future's Equity Atlas also found that between 1995 and 2004, nearly every neighborhood in both urban renewal areas in North and Northeast Portland and nearby saw the median sale price of single-family homes rise by over 100 percent.

"I wouldn't say it's been good at mitigating gentrification," said Lew Frederick, a Democrat who represents part of Northeast Portland in the Oregon House of Representatives. "It's done the opposite."

"Whomever is commanding money needs to be a lot more mindful of who the most vulnerable are, or they need to be clear that this policy (urban renewal) is not about abating gentrification," said Michael Anderson, a long-time affordable housing advocate. Anderson says urban renewal has a "spotty record at best" on housing and has done more to spur gentrification rather

than ease it. Although he did note that urban renewal is not the sole cause of gentrification, he said that too little investment in affordable housing, which would have helped longtime residents, has come too little too late.

Portland State University professor Gretchen Kafoury, who had recently left Portland City Council shortly before the urban renewal area was formed, said she was cynical about the Interstate URA early on. However, Kafoury recalled hundreds of abandoned or decrepit homes that filled the area's neighborhoods prior to urban renewal that have been revitalized. However, she questions if it has stabilized and preserved neighborhoods.

"Urban renewal itself contributes to gentrification," said Karen Gibson, an associate professor of planning and urban studies at Portland State University.

"It sounds kind of hilarious," she said of the notion that urban renewal could slow gentrification. She explained that the very mechanism of urban renewal intrinsically lends itself to gentrification. In order for it to work, she said, it requires that property values rise.

John Jackley, however, defends the PDC's record.

"It's apparent to everyone that there is a growing segment of Portland that doesn't have the same equity of opportunities as everyone else. So what are we going to do about this?" said Jackley.

He ticks off a list of accomplishments he's particularly proud of that have helped historic residents of North and Northeast Portland, including the June Key Delta Community Center, which will be run by an

African American sorority in a rehabilitated gas station on North Albina Street with financial and technical support from the PDC.

Jackley also said that the PDC provides apprenticeship training on all its projects, partnering with organizations like the Irvington Covenant and Oregon Tradeswomen to help provide job training. He also said that business programs have been instrumental in helping African American small business owners, and points to the MAX Yellow Line and New Columbia as worthwhile investments. The MAX Yellow Line, which opened four years after the ICURA was created, cost \$350 million, \$28 million of which came from urban renewal money. The PDC contributed \$6.4 million for the \$20.2 million New Columbia project that created 854 housing units.

But not everyone is sold on the numbers or promises. Without more detailed information, the Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods declined to take a clear position for or against expanding urban renewal. The coalition said it wouldn't take a position on the expansion without information from the PDC on resident displacement, criteria for future projects, an analysis on whether original goals of the ICURA have been met, and an assessment of urban renewal, among other issues.

"We are not against investing in the neighborhoods and not against expanding the URA," the coalition said. "However, because this decision involves so many factors and so many viewpoints, we continue to believe that complete information is essential to guide the decision."

The Portland City Council is scheduled to finalize the expansion in July.

I Am War

Wallace E. High

I am war,
I am a living, breathing, beast,
Mercy I know it not,
My fuel is diesel and blood,
Bleak detritus of forceful men
Who once knew honor,
Who once knew love,
But power stole their souls.

I am war,
Unleashed bequeathed upon the earth
Where no segment lies untouched,
Carried by the winds hastening
To escape the horror that stirs them,
That makes the cyclone a child's toy,
A mere puff from a lad's lips
Blowing at dandelion's laces.

I am war,
I am ravenous beyond sating,
Starving for destruction,
There is no justice here within
For there is no heart in this;
This is the madness of men,
Cruel beyond imagining,
Relentless in pursuit of death.

I am war,
I am brilliant in my scheming,
My intelligence soars seeking,
Leaping like a springbok
For meaner ways to erase
Memories of faces smiling,
Baby's tiny fingers grasping,
Laughing at daddy's nose.

I am war,
I am the master of waste
Making mothers pale and cry
For dying children torn from the breasts;
My breath comes in napalm blasts,
Clouds of sinister, seeping gases
That stifle feeble efforts at life
And turn good deeds to mockery

I am war,
I am a strident voice ringing
In cloistered halls where
Old men gather to vent their ire
With the lives of stalwart sons
And daughters directed to the fray
Beguiled and betrayed to stand
Before the maws of howitzers roaring.

I am war,
I am misery beyond reckoning,
The greedy grinder hastening
The return to the earth of dust
Made of moldering bones
Strewn by deadly claymores leaping,
Blasting upward from concealment,
Scattered by jackals on desert sands.

I am war,
I am relentless in my pursuits,
Making no distinction in the dying,
Man, woman, child or beast,
What care I where shrapnel flies;
Suffice to say I am here,
My history written in blood, darkly,
Learn from this, my child, and fight no more