

# Leary Reappointed to MERC Commission

## Business leader serves region

The Metro Council has reappointed Ray Leary to serve a second term on the Metropolitan Exposition Recreation Commission.

"I am pleased to reappoint Ray to the MERC commission," said Metro Council President David Bragdon. "He has served the region well in his first term and will continue to bring his wealth of business, economic development and community-building skills to the table."

In his first term as MERC Commissioner, Leary worked to expand business and economic development opportunities, such as the Oregon Convention Center Headquarter Hotel, and played a key role in shaping the vision and strategic planning of the Commission.

"Ray's leadership in the Portland business community has proved invaluable to the MERC Commission," said Don Trotter, MERC Commission Chair. "I am thrilled that he will be continuing his service to the community as a MERC Commissioner."



PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER  
Carl Talton (from left), Jeana Wooley and Ray Leary celebrate last January's grand opening of Vanport Square, an owner occupied retail development in the heart of Portland's African American community.

Leary is the principal officer of Portland-based ERL, LLC, a local firm specializing in urban real estate development, marketing, workforce

development and training. As former manager of the adidas America's national urban marketing unit, he played a crucial role in opening the

company's first full-line retail store in the United States on Northeast Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Alberta Street.

He co-directed Self Enhancement Inc., a nationally-recognized youth empowerment program in north and northeast Portland and led the capital campaign to build its \$10 million youth facility.

He also served as director of development and temporarily, as interim president of the Urban League of Portland.

Leary is a Portland native and graduate of Jefferson High School and San Diego State University. He was first appointed to the MERC Commission in 2004 and his new term will expire in 2012.

"The economic and cultural opportunities facing the region are constantly changing and the future we face is even more challenging," said Leary. "I look forward to continuing this important work for MERC and our region."

MERC is a service of Metro and manages the Portland Center for Performing Arts, Oregon Convention Center and Portland Expo Center. It serves as a catalyst and advocate for community, culture and economic development. Visit [www.mercvenues.org](http://www.mercvenues.org) for more information.

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## ODOT Reinstates Disadvantaged Contracting

*continued from A15*  
tration approve the program changes.

The federal waiver allows ODOT to add narrowly-tailored DBE utilization goals to contracts in the Portland metro area on a case-by-case basis, requiring prime contractors to

hire more Asian-American and African-American-owned businesses as subcontractors.

One of the first contracts to include these hard goals will be the Oregon 217 Modernization Project about to go to bid. The \$25-\$35 million project will widen OR 217 northbound to three through lanes from

Oregon 8 (Tualatin Valley Highway) to U.S. 26 (Sunset Highway).

Construction should begin in the spring of 2009 and finish at the end of fall of 2010. More information and project graphics are online at [oregon.gov/ODOT/HWY/REGION1/hwy217/](http://oregon.gov/ODOT/HWY/REGION1/hwy217/).

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