

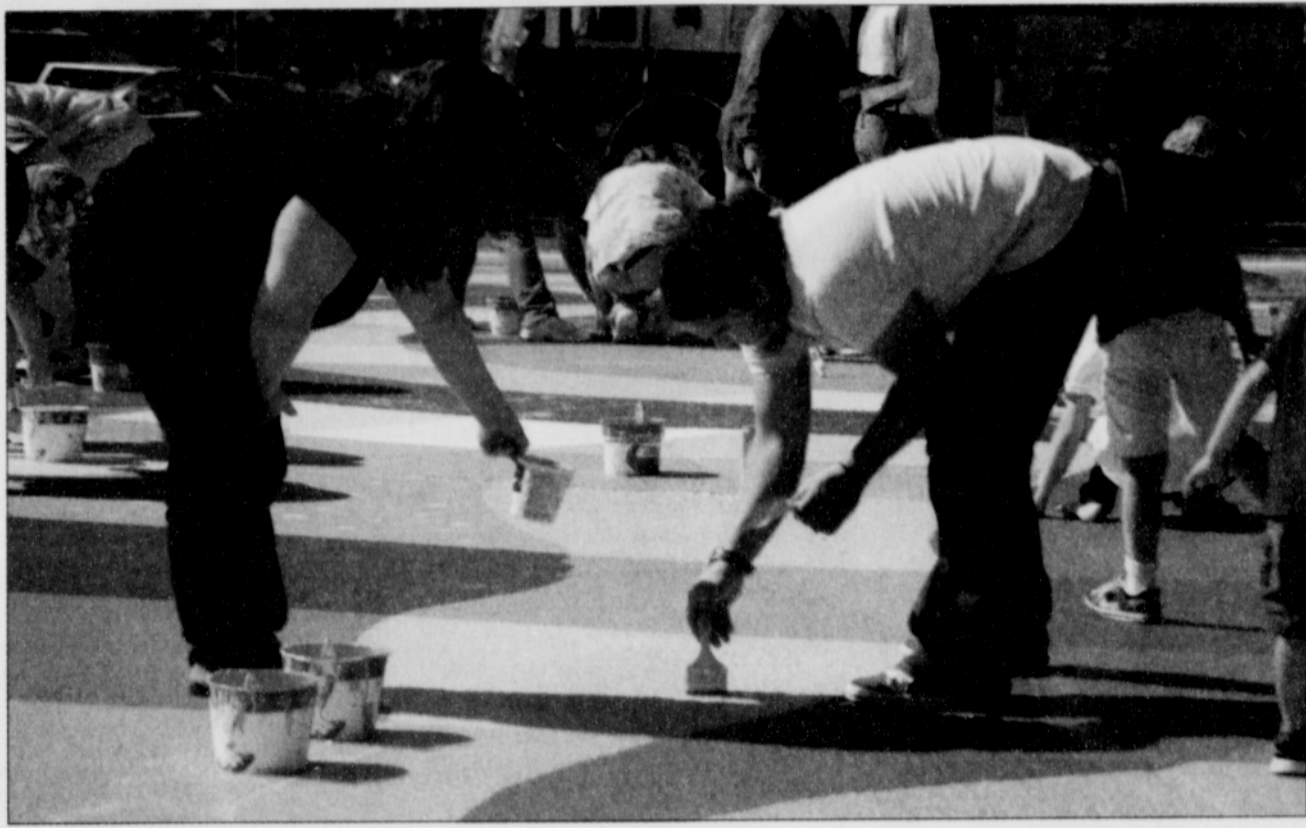
Rockwood Plaza PAINTED

Minimum Wage Won't Change

Volunteers painted a large, ground-mounted mural in the heart of Rockwood Friday.

The Plaza del Sol is a painted, astronomy-oriented pattern by Michael Orelove, designed to teach children about the solar system.

Gresham city officials said the event spotlighted the importance of having parks in urban spaces by transforming parking spaces into temporary parks, offering a unique envisioning about the way we see and use public spaces.



Volunteers paint a mural depicting a solar system, transforming a parking space to art in the heart of Gresham's Rockwood neighborhood.

Labor Commissioner Brad Avakian says that Oregon's minimum wage workers won't be getting a raise next year.

Oregon voters approved a 2002 ballot measure to raise the minimum wage and then tie it to the Consumer Price Index, a measure of U.S. inflation. The wage gets recalculated every September.

Avakian says the CPI declined 1.5 percent between August 2008 and August 2009, so Oregon's minimum wage will remain \$8.40 an hour.

Oregon is one of ten states that annually adjust the minimum wage based on inflation.

The Oregon ballot measure did not include a provision for cutting the minimum wage when prices are falling.

Portland Development Under the Microscope

continued **▲** *from Front* vices in our community."

According to figures provided by the PDC, about 41 percent of people in north and northeast Portland are ethnic minorities. City wide that number is about 26 percent. The area also has a large quantity of small businesses, estimated at about 4,000.

Roy Jay, president of the African American Chamber of Commerce and member of the initiative's Community Advisory Committee, wants to use the initiative to "start laying out a new roadmap."

He's hoping that the initiative will connect people from the community with local businesses. Jay suggested that the businesses be given loans that will be forgiven if they can meet certain bench-

marks. "PDC is a sleeping giant," said Jay.

John Jackley, director of communications and business equity for the PDC, said that Jay and Posey's ideas are feasible under the initiative, pointing to sites on Swan Island that could accommodate industrial jobs.

Jackley also proudly pointed out that last year that the PDC hit 25 percent in diversity in its contracted work force, and 22 percent of people who got a construction journey card working on the South Waterfront last year were people of color, which is impressive considering Portland is one of the nation's whitest cities.

Jackley also mentioned that the PDC has adopted "social equity" as one of its

overarching goals. "We're going to set an example for the rest of the country," he said.

However, the PDC might have a rough road ahead of it. For years the PDC has been seen by African American residents of north and northeast as just another arm of a city that is indifferent, if not outright hostile, to them.

In the 1960s and 70s the city of Portland displaced black homes and businesses in north and northeast Portland with the building of Memorial Coliseum, the expansion Emmanuel Hospital, and the installation of the I-5 freeway.

Karen Gibson, associate professor of urban studies and Portland State University, said that for years the area has experienced "dis-

investment" from housing discrimination and banks withholding credit to local businesses. The PDC also neglected the area for decades, while it focused attention on downtown, she added.

Gibson described it as "ironic" that the blight in north and northeast Portland the city contributed to is the reason why the PDC has turned its attention to the area.

The PDC's activity has caused property values to soar, pricing out historic residents.

This distrust was evident at the first of 11 public meetings held by the initiative's Community Advisory Committee, composed of stakeholders from the community, last month at the Billy Webb Elks Lodge.

"Every time development comes, it jumbles the neighborhood," said Adrian Hampton, a long-time resident of the area at the meeting.

Posey questioned whether the PDC had "the guts" to do what was really needed.

"At the end of the day we all know that we're not intelligently looking at what the needs are, and applying the resources to the needs," said Posey, before adding, "PDC is doing better."

Jackley said that the commission is aware of the bad blood between it and residents of north and northeast Portland, and sees the initiative as an opportunity to rebuild trust.

"There's a tremendous amount of past history that has to be overcome, and the only way you do it is with

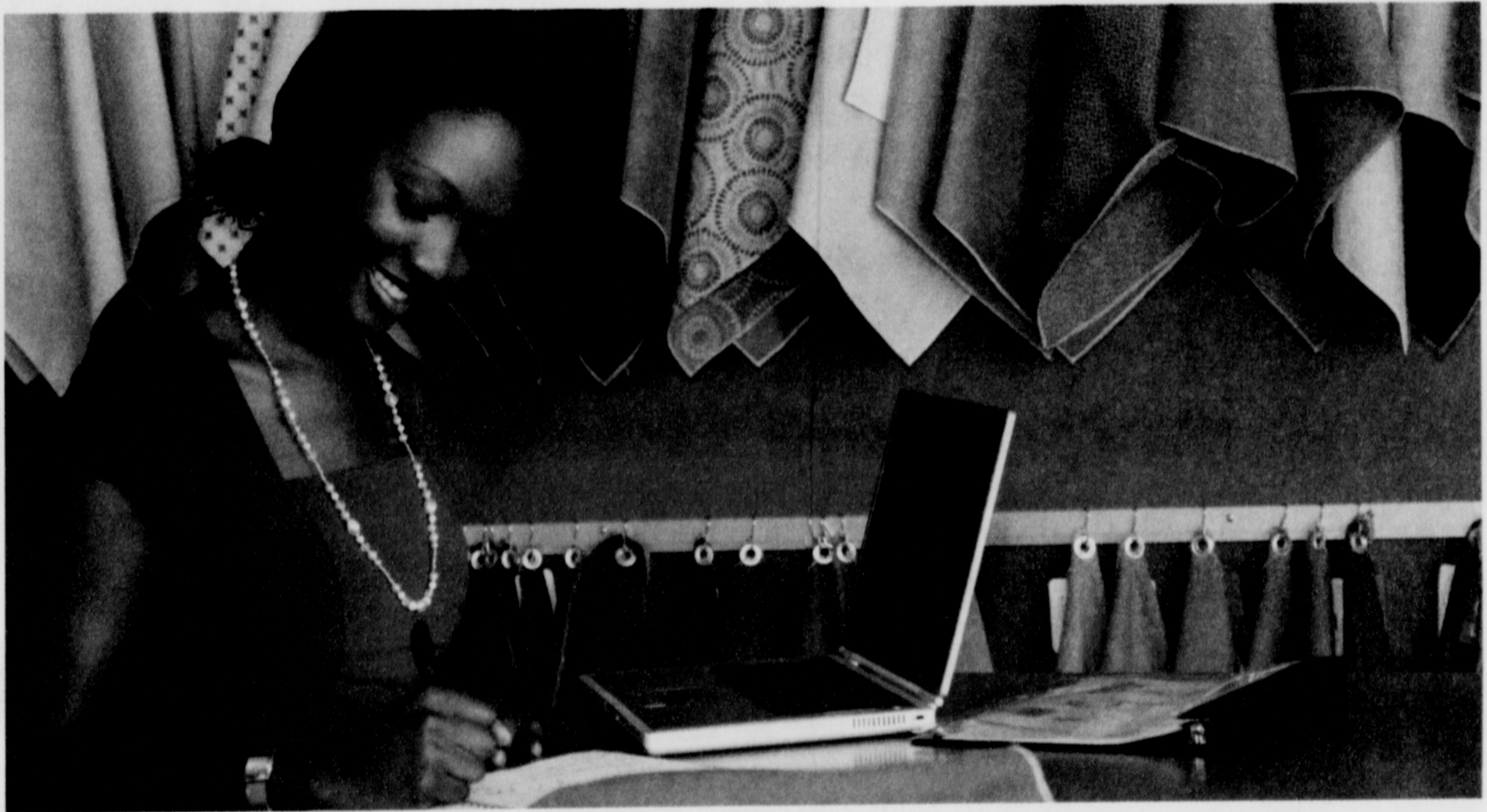
actual hard results," said Jackley.

Gibson remains skeptical that the PDC can slow gentrification with this initiative since it relies on rising property values to fill its coffers.

Because the PDC borrows against future property taxes in an urban renewal area to fund its programs it has a vested interest in seeing them rise, which displaces residents and businesses, explained Gibson. Such a financing arrangement is "the definition of gentrification," she said.

The PDC is looking to expand the boundaries of its urban renewal areas under the initiative, which presents community members with a big bargaining chip, she explained.

WELLS FARGO



With you when you're a company of 1

Even when it feels like you're on your own, we've got your back. With Wells Fargo, you get the support you need for your business. We offer free financial reviews, educational tools and other resources to help you succeed. As the leading small business lender in the U.S., we are committed to helping you find financing solutions. In 2008, we celebrated lending \$1 billion to African American small businesses over the prior ten years. Now, our new goal is to lend an additional \$1 billion by 2018. Wells Fargo is with you to help you finance the future you've designed for yourself.

Together we'll go far



wellsfargo.com

© 2009 Wells Fargo Bank, N.A. All rights reserved. Member FDIC. (123688_13516)