

**Old Town Community Association**  
**5-Year Action Plan Priorities**  
**2018 – updated draft 6/6/2018**

The Old Town Community Association has discussed updated Action Plan priorities at each of its Community Meetings, Board Meetings and Land Use meetings since January, including information regarding the Prosper Portland proposed budget. The community association recommendations for priorities takes into account tax increment (urban renewal area funds) of approximately \$30 million in Downtown Waterfront and \$24 million in River District. A map showing the boundaries of each is attached. Below is an updated recommendation based on feedback heard at these meetings for additional review prior to a scheduled meeting with the Mayor’s office on June 22, 2018:

**Public Safety**

We heard the community is interested in continuing a focus on public safety and livability in the neighborhood.

- There is a strong interest in working with the “caring community” to make sure that in its implementation, the unsheltered on our streets are not criminalized in the process of ensuring public safety for everyone.
- It appears that by actively engaging with community-based organizations the community association can:
  - Advocate for ways in which partnerships can be created to address crime against both the unsheltered as well as the sheltered.
  - That any additional police services be directed towards Portland Police (PPB) units and teams that work directly with the community based services, including the Service Coordination Team, the Behavioral Health Unit and the LEAD program.
  - There have been coordinating efforts of private security in the neighborhood to provide better security for commercial businesses.
  - There appears to be a continued lapse in reporting between Clean and Safe and PPB, whereby calls to Clean and Safe are still not documented with Portland Police. This has been an issue for many years and needs to be fixed, now.

**Housing**

We heard that additional housing in the neighborhood generally will be one of the strongest solutions to public safety, livability and neighborhood vitality. With more people living in Old Town, there will be more eyes on the street more often, discouraging activities detrimental to all. There was a specific request for affordable “workforce” housing, generally defined at a 60% Median Family Income level as it is currently in the most need.

- A project at 3<sup>rd</sup> and Ash is under construction with 133 fully market rate units (no inclusionary housing), a second fully market rate project proceed at 5<sup>th</sup> and Glisan (OMNI project).
- Block 33 is proposed with inclusionary housing as will all other proposed housing going forward. Currently, Block 33 has obtained the necessary density and height of 200 feet on the western half of the block to proceed.

A 2008 Portland Development/Prosper Portland Study considered development options on Blocks 24, 25 and 26, the three blocks that surround the Lan Su Chinese Garden to the west, northwest and south, plus Block A&N (Fire Station #2) and potential gateway projects on 3<sup>rd</sup> and Glisan.

- Since that study, height limit reductions have been proposed for Blocks 25 and 26 (as well as Blocks 35 and 36) from 350 to 200 feet.
- NW Natural's announcement to move from the neighborhood has resulted in the sale of Block 24. The Lan Su Chinese Garden has publicly announced that is submitting a bid to purchase Block 24 to the north. If the purchase goes through, potential development could include a cultural center, restaurant/banquet facility and hotel among other program uses – the block has significant development potential up to 350 feet.
- The vacant portion of Block 25 (also location of Blanchet House and old Blanchet House) will also be free of a 90 year parking obligation, opening up the vacant land for development
- There is currently no discussion of development on Block 26

Advocacy for housing has been the strongest of any feedback the community association has received. Therefore, it is recommended that significant resources be allocated for this purpose. Significant investment in workforce affordable housing can make it more feasible. The community also has the most influence in recommending that all publicly owned property for development (Blocks 25, A&N and 29, aka 4<sup>th</sup> & Burnside) be considered for affordable housing. Larger housing projects can be more catalytic to other development.

### **Business Vitality**

The community association has also received feedback to continue to invest in ground floor business vitality. Suggestions for improvements in business vitality have included:

- Ensuring that any retail strategy include recruitment of resident services such as grocery, day care and other conveniences for which residents currently have to travel out of the neighborhood. This could be added to investment in new housing projects.
- To attract more retail business, the community association has approached Prosper Portland about bringing their commercial affordability efforts in North and Southeast to Old Town. This would likely involve master-leasing retail space at market rates and offering leases to target communities at lower lease rates and investment in tenant improvements.
- The community association has also suggested it take over a pop-up program and tailored specifically to Old Town. For instance, the most prevalent, and most well-known retail in the district currently is streetwear/sneakerware with six stores (Compound, Index, Deadstock, Upper Playground, Unspoken and Calskate).
- There has been interest in encouraging night clubs to open their restaurants during the day, thus far difficult due to lack of potential business. Improvements to public safety and livability and more residents may be required.

### **Seismic Improvements**

The River District expansion boundary was drawn to include all many properties still in need of seismic upgrade because it was anticipated at the time substantially more money would be available. Decisions including purchasing the Post Office and funding the Gladys McCoy Health Center which traded Downtown Waterfront funds previously allocated for the Courthouse. Concentrations of properties in need of seismic retrofits include:

- Along the west side of 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue at Everett south (three buildings)
- Along the northside of Couch between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>, and Oregon Leather on 2<sup>nd</sup>
- Along the east side 4th between Burnside and Couch
- Along the westside of 5<sup>th</sup> between Burnside and Davis (two blocks).

## **Parking**

There continues to be much debate about the state of structured parking. While the need is high today with the expectation that it will only increase once now vacant blocks develop, long term forecasts needed to support the long term financing of structured parking have been significantly influenced by the prospect of self-driving cars and ride services, decreasing forecasts of future demand. Prosper Portland has stated that any investment in parking will require convertibility, adding to costs. Due to the required significant investment for any structured parking and other demands for money, investing in parking is less likely to impact other priorities if the investment comes from Downtown Waterfront.

Potential locations for investment in parking include:

- Naito-Davis Garage (Downtown Waterfront) – An engineering study was to have commenced at the beginning of 2018. The Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT) owns this garage. PBOT has been highly reluctant to build additional structured parking and partnership with Prosper Portland has been challenging. Financing garages through the City will take significant leadership by the Mayor and involved how the financing of garages relies upon the entire system of publicly owned garages.
- Block 33 (Downtown Waterfront) – constructing a third tray will be costly both due to convertibility and the shallow water table.
- Block 24 (Downtown Waterfront)
- Block 25 (River District) – There has been some community resistance to above-ground structured parking across from two residential buildings. Building underground is significantly more expensive, particularly in seismic liquefaction areas

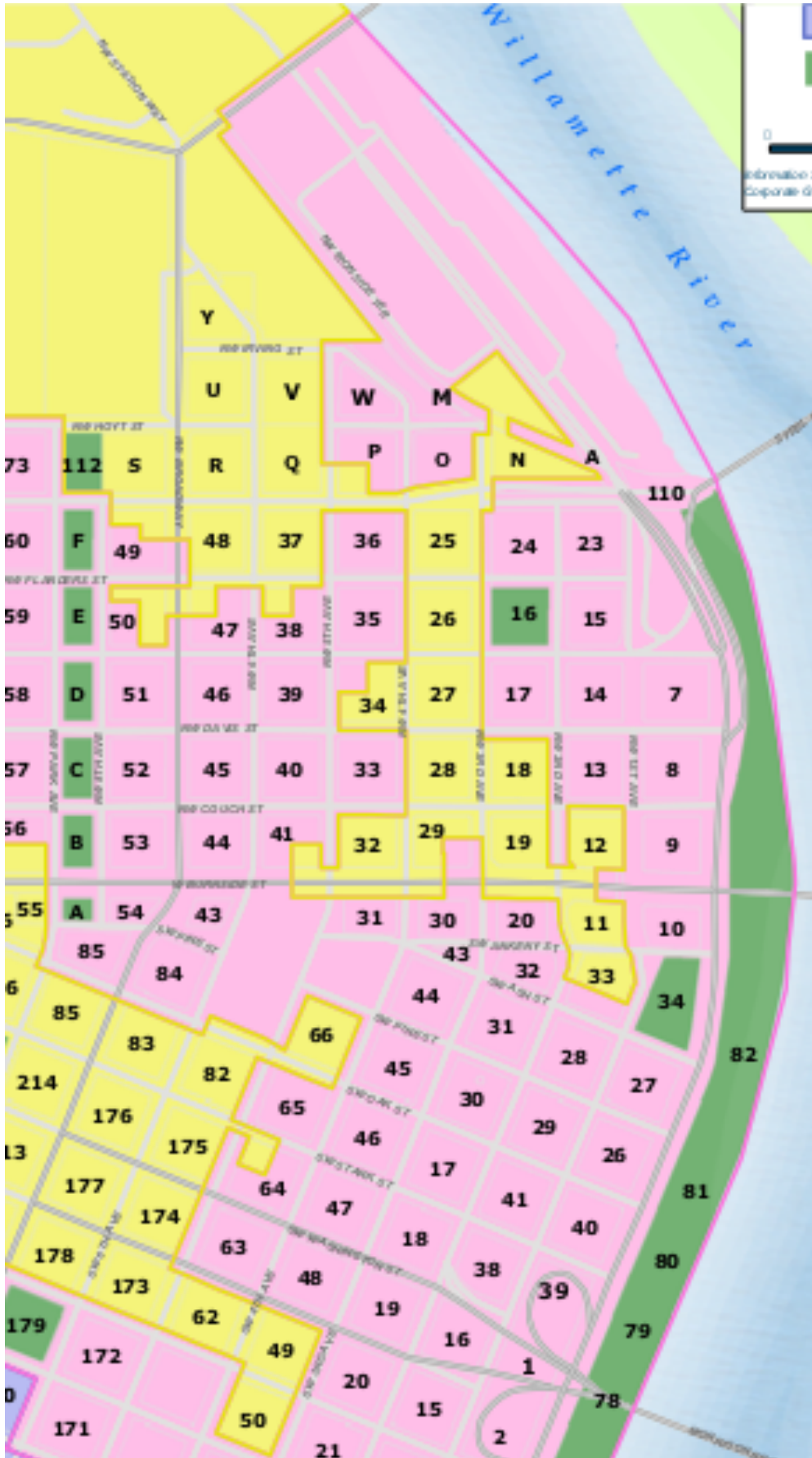
## **Big Picture**

There has been some discussion of reducing the size of the Action Plan Area to exclude west of Broadway (not technically in Old Town) and areas included in the Broadway Corridor, such as Block R, Union Station and Greyhound. Justification is focusing investment in the core of the district, including the two historic districts and the vast investment planned within the Broadway Corridor. There has already been significant public investment on Block U, location of Bud Clark Commons and the new Gladys McCoy Health Center.

There has also been discussion that the financial resources in each district be generally split between large, catalytic projects and smaller initiatives. In River District, that could mean reserving \$12 million for each, where demand could be high for seismic upgrades as well as all the publicly-owned development sites.

In Downtown Waterfront, large projects may include involvement in Block 24 (a portion of which could be suggested for housing) and parking.

Recommendations would include business vitality in both districts.



Pink = Downtown  
Waterfront Urban  
Renewal Area

Yellow = River District  
Urban Renewal Area