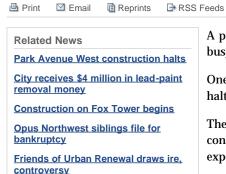
Friday, September 25, 2009 | Modified: Tuesday, September 29, 2009

## City considers financial aid for TMT

Officials want to finish the high-profile project

Portland Business Journal - by Andy Giegerich Business Journal staff writer



A proposed city strategy to revitalize downtown Portland could transform four busy sites into large-scale retail and housing projects.

One of the sites is the Park Avenue West tower, on which construction has halted until the developer, **TMT Development**, can find more financing.

Comments (1)

The city could step in to help complete the \$200 million-plus project if construction on the scaled-down project doesn't begin again in January as expected, according to the latest Downtown Retail Strategy draft.

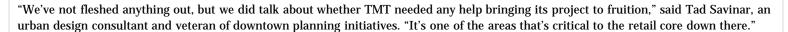
Portland-based TMT Development halted construction of the 33-story tower at

Southwest Park Avenue and Yamhill Street earlier this year, citing lack of construction financing for the building, which was to contain both office and residential space as well as two floors of retail and underground parking.

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TMT last month received city approval for a scaled-back building and plans to restart construction early next year.



The reason: The project sits in the middle of downtown and, for the time being, has only yielded a big hole in the ground.

The city and **Portland Development Commission** could contribute part of the \$1 million-plus required for site improvements. Some of the money could come from urban renewal funds if the site is folded into a new central city and west side district.

## other initiatives on the table

The development strategy will also help shape several future retail and office development initiatives.

The other three high-profile projects could take place at the Southwest 10th Avenue and Yamhill Street Smart Park garage, the Smart Park garage at Southwest Third Avenue and Alder Street and the lot at Southwest Ninth Avenue and Alder Street, currently home to several mobile food carts.

The city, PDC and Portland Business Alliance haven't decided on specific designs for any of the sites, though the 10th and Yamhill project has been discussed for years. At one point, city officials estimated a \$160 million makeover could require \$30 million in public funds.

Mayor Sam Adams' office, the Portland Development Commission and the Portland Business Alliance devised the newest downtown strategy. It's the first time the three sides have jointly developed a central city retail and office development footprint.

## Defining a retail core

Among other possibilities, the proposals would designate a "retail core" area that stretches between Southwest Second Avenue to Southwest 12th Avenue between Salmon and Washington streets. The strategy's final version could also shape how the Portland Development Commission sets geographic boundaries of a new central city urban renewal area.

It also calls for retailers and the tourism group Travel Portland to determine ways to brand and market downtown. The city could encourage store owners, developers and property owners to privately fund branding programs. The city could also add standards that unify storefronts, lighting and signage.

The idea drew qualified raves from John Helmer III, president of John Helmer Haberdasher at 969 S.W. Broadway.

"If they can turn things back to a more traditional storefront look, then I'm all for it," said Helmer.

As the groups shape the downtown plan, they'll try to address retailer complaints that so-called "road warriors" have lately commandeered Portland's sidewalks. The term loosely refers to panhandlers and transients who verbally harass downtown workers and shoppers. The complaints have grown worse since Portland's sit-lie ordinance was deemed unconstitutional this summer.

Adams and Commissioner Nick Fish hosted a Sept. 11 forum at which downtown retailers called for new versions of the sit-lie rule.



The law, developed earlier this decade by business and homeless advocates, prohibited persons from impeding pedestrian traffic in certain retail areas.

Social services providers had recently contended that safety officers used the law to target homeless persons.

"There will be no 'son of sit-lie," Fish said this week. "But we're working on a plan that recognizes we have to protect the free flow of people on the sidewalks and maybe enforce laws in dedicated zones. Whatever we come up with will be a compromise."

Fish said one idea would split parts of certain sidewalks into two or three zones. Certain sections could then be deemed acceptable for congregating and other activities such as protesting or panhandling.