

Lents Neighborhood Association

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Portland Development Commission
222 NW Fifth Avenue
Portland, OR 97209

cc: Commissioner Nick Fish
Lents Urban Renewal Advisory Committee Chair John Notis
Pleasant Valley Neighborhood Association Chair Linda Bauer

February 20, 2012

Commissioners:

I write to urge the restoration of funding for the Leach Botanical Garden in the FY 2012-13 budget. Funding for this important project was inexplicably pulled from the budget for the coming fiscal year; we believe this to be a mistake.

While not in the Lents neighborhood, the Leach Botanical Garden is nonetheless an important economic development tool for our community. The garden is a regional draw, and the easiest access to it is off of Interstate 205 for drivers and the Springwater Corridor for cyclists. This brings customers into the Lents Town Center, furthering our goals for economic development. It's my understanding that Leach was added to the urban renewal area specifically for the purpose of using TIF money to fund improvements to this important destination attraction.

Queries to staff as to why \$1.2 million for "Parks Public Improvements" was pulled from the 2012-13 budget have not been answered. This is discouraging. Our trust in the PDC's efforts to successfully increase the taxable value and economic vitality of the Lents neighborhood is incumbent on good communication.

The Lents Neighborhood Association Board voted on Feb. 9 to express the LNA's support for restoring funding for the Leach project. I encourage the PDC to listen to the voices of eastside residents in making funding and planning decisions for capital projects.

As always, I encourage you to contact me at 503/952-6757 or nick@ilovelents.com to discuss this or other issues related to the progress of the Lents urban renewal district.

Sincerely,

Nick Christensen
President
Lents Neighborhood Association