Introduction and Overview

Introduction

Supported by ULI Trustee James J. Curtis, ULI launched a new infrastructure program in August 2008 with the goal of enhancing the leadership position of ULI at both the national and local level. The ULI/Curtis Regional Infrastructure Project emphasizes the relationship between infrastructure and land use, including sustainability and housing, and develops models for better infrastructure decision making.

After a competitive application process, ULI selected four District Councils to participate in the ULI/Curtis Regional Infrastructure Project:

- ULI Minnesota/Regional Council of Mayors, Connecting Transportation and Land Use Systems (CTLUS). Executive Director: Caren Dewar; CTLUS Co-Chairs: Mayor Bill Hargis, City of Woodbury and Jay Lindgren, Dorsey and Whitney.
- ULI SE Florida/Caribbean, Connecting Florida (an all-Florida initiative). Executive Director: Carla Coleman; Infrastructure Committee Chair: Debbie Orshefsky, Greenberg Traurig.
- ULI Seattle Infrastructure Project. Executive Director: Kelly Mann; Infrastructure Task Force: Pete Stone, ING Clarion Partners, Tom Fitzsimmons, Lorig Real Estate Development and Management Services, and Jeffrey Munger, Kennedy Associates.
- ULI Chicago Regional Infrastructure Project. District Council Coordinator: Cindy McSherry; Infrastructure Committee Chair: Gregory Hummel, Bryan Cave LLP.

ULI’s Infrastructure Initiative manages the Curtis Project. Work began in October 2008 and included forming infrastructure committees at the District Council level, hiring staff support in ULI’s Infrastructure Initiative located in the Georgetown office, and developing work plans.

This annual update covers Year One of the three-year grant and includes organizing principles and summaries of the accomplishments of ULI’s Infrastructure Initiative and the four Curtis District Councils.

Work Regionally to Develop National Models

The Curtis Project rises out of collaboration between ULI Georgetown and the selected District Councils. The District Councils’ regional contexts – leveraging their opportunities to better link infrastructure, housing and sustainability – led the shaping of their organizational structures and work programs. This regional variation allows for developing and testing different techniques for integrating infrastructure and land development, and for experimenting with approaches to linking infrastructure, housing, and sustainability.
At the same time, the Curtis Project is evaluating selected techniques and processes for their potential as national models. Specifically, ULI’s Infrastructure Initiative is examining tools and mechanisms that other regions can replicate or that inform national-level discussions. These models range from substantive tools that inform public decision-making to process engagement models that develop ULI’s leadership, including at the District Council level. This part of the Curtis Project is in its initial phase, and all four of the Curtis District Councils have projects with the potential to turn into national models. These potential models are identified in the Curtis District Council summaries as Models under Evaluation.

Also connecting the regional and the national level, the Curtis Project has supported the participation of ULI members and Executive Directors from the four Curtis Districts in the ULI National Transportation Dialogue. The Curtis Project participants engaged in the Dialogue’s examination of federal transportation policy, bringing regional lessons forward to national discussions, while carrying federal developments back to their District Councils. The Dialogue recently produced the report Transportation for a New Era: Growing More Sustainable Communities (2009).

Organizing Principles

Through the efforts of the first year, the Curtis Project has developed three principles that organize and guide the work of integrating infrastructure and land use:
- Convene the resources of the private, public and non-profit sectors.
- Take advocacy into the implementation stage.
- Advance technical innovations.

Convene the resources of the private, public and non-profit sectors.

Convening is a traditional ULI strength that is all the more important given the nature of infrastructure and land development. Coordination happens at the nexus of (mostly) private land development and (mostly) public infrastructure, where site-specific development meets regional infrastructure systems. In addition, the timeframe is long; there is a need for institutions that can transcend the next business or election cycle. ULI and the non-profit sector help bridge the gaps of scale and time.

The four Curtis Districts exercise leadership by building relationships among the three sectors and by strengthening and even creating institutional mechanisms that support coordinated infrastructure and land use.

Take advocacy into the implementation stage.

“Advise-and-leave” consultation methods and pretty plans on websites do not, all by themselves, provide the kind of sustained effort over time that coordinating infrastructure and land development requires. With the Curtis Project, the Districts are experimenting with taking advocacy into the implementation stage, which includes getting needed projects funded and funded projects built well. These activities encompass looking at specific projects, corridors and funding mechanisms.

Advance technical innovations.

The Curtis Project has identified a need for specific tools that coordinate infrastructure and land development and that provide metrics for measuring the sustainability of alternative investment and
development choices. These include indicators, metrics and other means to operationalize evaluation and decision-making criteria. Common “scorecards” and evaluation standards can change and coordinate both public sector and private sector investment decisions.

Curtis Project Activities

ULI Infrastructure Initiative, Georgetown Office

ULI’s Infrastructure Initiative provides technical assistance and coordination among the District Councils. Maureen McAvey, Executive Vice President, Initiatives, and Rachel Mac Cleery, Managing Director, Infrastructure Initiative, have traveled to the Curtis District Councils in support of Curtis Project activities. Sarah Jo Peterson, Senior Research Associate, participates regularly in District Council Curtis Project activities, joining work teams on the ground in the four District Councils and providing research consultation.

Over the next year, ULI’s Infrastructure Initiative will continue to function as the Curtis Project coordinator and communication nexus, facilitating the interchange of ideas among the District Councils. The Infrastructure Initiative is also taking the lead in evaluating individual Curtis Project activities for their potential as national models and designing dissemination methods. Additionally, the Infrastructure Initiative will expand efforts to share the Curtis District Council experience and lessons learned with ULI leadership, other District Councils, and audiences outside of ULI, raising the profile of the Curtis Project.

ULI Minnesota/Regional Council of Mayors
Connecting Transportation and Land Use Systems (CTLUS)

“Our selection as one of the ULI/Curtis Regional Infrastructure Project District Councils created the stature for ULI MN to engage powerful leadership and supportive funding to build our ULI MN CTLUS Initiative. ULI Curtis staff have been key to helping design a rich work program that builds on national best practices and has the potential to be a national model. We deeply appreciate not only the opportunity to do this work, but also the ULI staff partnership to ensure its success!”

— Caren Dewar, Executive Director, ULI Minnesota

The overarching mission of the CTLUS initiative (pronounced “cut loose”) is to advance the region’s understanding of the importance of the connection between transportation and land use in support of mobility, livability, sustainability and job growth. Conducted in partnership with the Regional Council of Mayors, a committee representing the real estate development community, public officials from the local, regional and state level, and non-profit institutions guides the CTLUS work. With the high level of interest in the CTLUS initiative, the committee has grown from the original 15 members to 25 members. Each of the four CTLUS initiative meetings has included substantive presentations and lively discussions. [See attached committee roster.]

With additional support from the McKnight Foundation, the CTLUS initiative has also partnered with the Center for Transit Oriented Development, Reconnecting America, Strategic Economics, Brookings Institution (Christopher Leinberger), Citiventure Associates (Marilee Utter), and the Counties Transit Improvement Board.
CTLUS is conducting action-oriented research on metropolitan centers and corridors, walkable urban places, bus rapid transit, and public/private partnerships for transit. The research topics and case studies address real challenges and opportunities identified as part of the implementation process for planned regional transportation improvements, including light rail and bus rapid transit corridors.

ULI’s Infrastructure Initiative has been closely involved with the CTLUS initiative’s many moving parts. Maureen McAvey introduced the Curtis Project to the Regional Council of Mayors at their December meeting, and project staff have conducted research, drafted papers, and participated actively in multiple work team meetings that have been key to planning, advancing and completing Curtis Project activities.

**Figure 6. Walkable Center Levers for downtown Minneapolis and Golden Triangle North**

![Figure showing the range of indicators applied to two different centers, excerpted from Identifying and Evaluating Regionally Significant Walkable Urban Places.](image)

Models under Evaluation

**CTLUS initiative as a model of collaborative regional organization.** The Curtis Project is examining the collaborative relationship among private, public and non-profit sectors that is guiding the CTLUS initiative as a model for other metropolitan regions.

**Sustainable metropolitan centers: a complete investment framework.** The CTLUS initiative has identified several innovative concepts that are shaping cutting-edge thinking on transportation and land development. These concepts including putting the focus on regionally significant employment centers, making walkable and “transit-ready” places in advance of regional transit service, and adopting a “complete investment framework” for both regional mobility and personal mobility. The Curtis Project is writing a White Paper that will distill the CTLUS metropolitan centers analysis and complete investment framework into a process that other regions can implement.

**Tool for metropolitan centers: walkability indicators.** In partnership with the Center for Transit Oriented Development, the CTLUS initiative has prepared a report, *Identifying and Evaluating Regionally Significant Walkable Urban Places* (2009). The ten indicators measure land use, access, and multi-modal...
system performance. The Curtis Project has identified the potential for the report’s walkability indicators, once avenues for dissemination and application have been developed, to be a critical tool in regional sustainability efforts underway in metropolitan areas across the country.

Next Steps

The CTLUS initiative is continuing to build on its successful organizational strategy and work program. It is seeking additional funding from McKnight and other external sources to continue the partnerships on walkable communities and “transit-ready” places that developed in the first year. Developing and implementing measurable criteria for sustainable communities, including housing, that can be adopted in advance of the construction of a planned light rail corridor (the South-west Corridor) is a major project in the planning phase.

ULI SE Florida/Caribbean Connecting Florida

Connecting Florida is led by a committee representing the five Florida District Councils and includes members from the public, private and non-profit sectors. ULI SE Florida/Caribbean coordinates this diverse group. [See attached roster.] Connecting Florida began with each District Council examining its own transportation and land use opportunities with the intent of developing the Connecting Florida effort around key commonalities.

In response to significant decisions at the state level made during Spring 2009 that threaten the viability or existing and planned regional transit service, the Connecting Florida effort decided to focus on the importance of regional transit service to Florida’s metropolitan regions. Although Florida’s growth management system provides tools and procedures for the coordination of transportation and land use, without a commitment to strong regional transit systems, these planning tools can not move Florida beyond automobile-oriented land use patterns. By combining ULI’s Florida resources into a statewide effort that can work at both the state and the regional level, Connecting Florida will support the growth of sustainable and globally competitive communities.

At a workshop held July 7 in Orlando, Connecting Florida set the following overall goals:

1. Increase connectivity statewide -- within regions and between regions.
2. Strengthen the role of transit in regional transportation systems.
3. Build coalitions statewide and at the regional level to support required legislative changes.
4. Conduct educational campaigns about the importance of regional transit and needed changes.

ULI’s Infrastructure Initiative works in partnership with ULI SE Florida/Caribbean to help shape the Connecting Florida agenda. Maureen McAvey facilitated the July 7 workshop and project staff are in the midst of a significant data-gathering effort on population, demographics, transportation and economics for each of the metropolitan regions represented by the five Florida District Councils.

Model under Evaluation

Statewide coalitions. The Connecting Florida coalition building effort is being tracked as a method for ULI advocacy at the state-level and targeting state government activities.
Next Steps

Connecting Florida is next meeting September 25, 2009 to finalize a multi-year strategy for conducting educational campaigns and building coalitions around increasing support for regional transit service at the metropolitan and state level.

ULI Seattle Infrastructure Project

The work of the ULI Seattle Infrastructure Project is guided by a small group of ULI members who make up the Infrastructure Task Force. The project’s strategic objectives through 2011:
- Objective 1: Expand ULI Seattle’s position as a recognized resource for information and analysis on infrastructure for the region.
- Objective 2: Support the planning and development of a light rail transit system that reduces driving and promotes compact development and workforce housing.

ULI Seattle is sponsoring a six-part Infrastructure Speaker Series in 2009 in support of Objective 1. Featured topics to date have included federal transportation policy, green infrastructure, and ULI’s Infrastructure 2009 report; affordable housing, the city in 2050, and climate change complete the planned series for 2009. Attendance ranged from 140 to 215 attendees, including about 15% from the public and non-profit sectors. ULI Seattle’s growing leadership on infrastructure is reflected in the city of Seattle’s request for it to produce a report on the Alaskan Way Waterfront and provide information in the debate on the Washington state legislature’s HB 1490, a transit-oriented development bill.

In support of Objective 2, ULI Seattle is implementing a series of major events including Technical Assistance Panels and an Advisory Services Panel. The first, an Innovations Workshop on vibrant transit neighborhoods, produced in conjunction with the ULI Center for Balanced Development in the West, was held June 24-25, 2009. Three future light rail transit station areas, representing a range of urban and suburban contexts, were selected. In a day of concentrated effort, small groups representing public officials and expertise from local and external sources worked together to craft a conceptual vision for each site, anchored to a small set of critical, concrete ideas. At the end of the day, the three groups presented the visions – and their critical ideas – to a public audience.

ULI’s Infrastructure Initiative has supported the speaker series and consulted on the Innovations Workshop. Maureen McAvey and Bill Hudnut, emeritus senior fellow, each led a program in the speaker series. Rachel MacCleery and Sarah Jo Peterson participated in the development of the Innovations Workshop, attended the event as observers, and provided detailed feedback.
**Model under Evaluation**

**Techniques to sustain interest – Innovations Workshops on vibrant transit neighborhoods.**
Coordinating infrastructure and land use requires staying engaged over the long term; this means having processes or techniques focused on the different stages of the infrastructure development process. The Curtis Project continues to consult with the Center for Balanced Development in the West in the development of the Innovations Workshop as a model convening that supplements ULI's Advisory Service Panels and Technical Assistance Panels.

**Next Steps**

Among its activities, ULI Seattle is developing ways to continue the momentum coming out of the Innovations Workshop and continuing to pursue an Advisory Service Panel for the Puget Sound region’s planned light rail extensions.

**ULI Chicago
Regional Infrastructure Project**

“As a participant in the ULI National Transportation Policy Dialogue and the chair of the ULI Chicago Regional Infrastructure Project, I’ve been struck by the ways ULI national and District Council activities have reinforced one another. The Dialogue afforded cutting-edge information which informed the ULI Chicago’s thinking in a number of ways… Our Regional Infrastructure Committee in turn has generated a methodology which may be replicable. The key has been taking our time to think through all infrastructure planning and then set it variously into different geographic segments… We look forward to ranking our planned infrastructure projects in a way that will recognize their economic competitiveness, opportunistic character, sustainability, political and financial feasibility and ultimate costs, being mindful in this last instance of real limits to what the public can afford to spend.”

– Greg Hummel, Chair, Regional Infrastructure Committee

ULI Chicago has organized a large Infrastructure Committee made up of over 45 members from the real estate development community and the non-profit sector. The work to date has also involved contact with numerous elected and public sector officials.

ULI Chicago began with taking the broad view to understanding infrastructure investments in the greater Chicago metropolitan region. The effort encompasses transportation; water, sewer, and stormwater; parks, trails and open space; and energy-related infrastructure. With the assistance of three summer interns, the Infrastructure Committee has developed a list of all planned infrastructure projects. To analyze the project list, the committee established criteria including the following:

- Economic competitiveness
- Opportunity
- Sustainability
- Political/financial support
- Project cost.

Working through two subcommittees – the Lakefront Subcommittee and the Suburban Subcommittee – they are seeking to identify those catalytic infrastructure projects that will be rich with potential to
attract both private investment and private development. The two subcommittees will be producing a series of “working papers” documenting their analysis results.

ULI’s Infrastructure Initiative has contributed project staff to the Regional Infrastructure Project, working with the Infrastructure Committee chair, subcommittee co-chairs, and interns to provide project support. Future research activities are in the planning stages.

Model under Evaluation

Regional infrastructure analysis: a holistic approach. ULI’s Infrastructure 2009 identified the need for a holistic approach to infrastructure, and ULI’s core priority areas link infrastructure, housing, and sustainability to land use. ULI Chicago’s multi-faceted regional infrastructure analysis is developing a technique for the needed holistic perspective that could be adopted by other ULI District councils. Also, by focusing on planned infrastructure projects for a region, the effort defines a manageable task and a useful product, while building relationships among the private, public and non-profit sectors.

Next Steps

The Infrastructure Committee is continuing with the regional infrastructure analysis, adapting it to different segments of the lakefront region and various suburban models of development. Once completed, the next step will be to disseminate the work and use it to build relationships with private, public and non-profit sector “champions.”

Conclusion

In Year One of the three-year ULI/Curtis Regional Infrastructure Project, ULI has developed the Curtis Project organizational structures in the four District Councils and the Infrastructure Initiative and launched four separate work programs that are quickly producing both short-term and long-term results. Targeted infrastructure and land use activities cover an impressive range of issues, from bus rapid transit to intercity rail, from walkable centers to regional water systems, and from transit-oriented development to statewide funding mechanisms.

The Curtis Project is successfully linking infrastructure, sustainability, and housing to land use. It is tailoring its efforts to the specific needs of the different regional contexts, while at the same time developing models that can be deployed across the nation.

The Curtis Project’s many activities coalesce around being a catalyst to move public policy and make real changes on the ground. Minnesota’s CTLUS committee, with its membership drawn from the private, public and non-profit sectors, exemplifies the leadership potential of ULI’s convening tradition. Seattle’s Innovations Workshop, Connecting Florida’s statewide initiative, and Chicago’s outreach efforts also model different ways to build relationships and exercise leadership. All four Curtis District Council efforts are also taking advocacy into implementation, with Minnesota’s and Seattle’s focus on planned regional transit corridors, Chicago’s analysis of planned infrastructure investments, and Connecting Florida’s educational and advocacy campaign for changes at the state level in support of regional transit. Finally, work such as Minnesota’s sustainable metropolitan centers and Chicago’s regional infrastructure analysis are developing models that advance technical innovations in the deployment of a set of criteria that coordinate infrastructure and land development.
Attachments

1. ULI Minnesota, CTLUS Advisory Committee Members
2. Connecting Florida, All-State Roster
3. ULI Chicago, Infrastructure Committee
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nickname</th>
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<tr>
<td>Milo</td>
<td>Aguilar</td>
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