

MAYOR ANNOUNCES URA / BUNCHER PARTNERSHIP READY TO MOVE ALLEGHENY RIVERFRONT DEVELOPMENT FORWARD

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Mayor Luke Ravenstahl today announced that the City is about to take a critical step toward reconnecting the Strip District neighborhood to the Riverfront. Upon approval from its Board of Directors, the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) will lease, with the option to purchase, the Produce Terminal to The Buncher Company. The lease will run for five years with the purchase price being \$1.8 million.

"This is a transformative moment for the City," said Ravenstahl. "We have the opportunity to be a model for riverfront redevelopment, setting the standard for cities across the globe. The Strip District has always been an international destination for shoppers, and by recognizing the new demand for residential addresses that will have front door access to the diverse array of merchants on Penn Avenue, and a backyard that enjoys the beauty of the Allegheny, we are on the verge of leveraging more of what makes the Strip such a special place while enhancing what makes it so unique.;"

The Buncher Company has already begun related planning processes, and has hired DL Astorino Architects to design a masterplan for the 55 acres of surface lot parking behind the building. The master plan will include space for at least 75 units of residential rental space on the river's edge. MacLachlan, Cornelius & Filoni Architects, Inc will work with The Buncher Company and the Urban Redevelopment Authority on the renovation and preservation plans for the Produce Terminal. Once all plans are complete, The Buncher Company will determine if they will move forward with the purchase of the facility.

"Our intent is to preserve the integrity of the property, while breathing new life into the neighborhood," said Tom Balestrieri, President of The Buncher Company. "It is our hope that our redevelopment strategies will align with the community's interest and benefit the City of Pittsburgh."

The Buncher Company will manage the property and all existing tenant leases will be honored through 2012.

"I really feel we're at a rare moment when this building is near the end of its useful life, and is ready for its reincarnation," said Rob Stephany, URA executive director. "It's exciting that The Buncher Company is ready to move on this project and has assembled a team of grade-A talent to boot.;"

State Senator Ferlo added, "This is a great opportunity to begin developing Pittsburgh's last frontier on its river fronts. The Allegheny River from the Strip District to the Highland Park Bridge represents enormous opportunity. The Buncher property and adaptive re-use of the underutilized Terminal Building

coupled with the master planning activities that the Mayor and I have pushed for will produce economic activity for decades to come."

"The agreement between the Buncher Company and the Strip District is representative of the positive that can come when the public and private sectors meet towards a common goal," said Councilman LaVelle. "We have been given an opportunity to develop one of the most underutilized parcels in the City of Pittsburgh, a prospect that could generate millions in revenue for Pittsburgh.";

"We have been working on a month-to-month basis with the URA on strategies as well as opportunities to upgrade our facilities, grow our businesses and become more competitive in the marketplace," said Linda Sasinoski who runs JE Corcoran Company, produce wholesaler.

"We look forward to working with The Buncher Company on the development of their property and helping the Strip to rediscover its riverfront," said Becky Rodgers, executive director, Neighbors in the Strip.

The URA Board of Directors will meet this Thurs., Dec. 9 at 2 p.m.

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