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ULI held meeting on "Infrastructure 2008 - A Competitive Advantage"

June 05, 2008 - Front Section

On May 20th, the Urban Land Institute held a breakfast meeting at the Marriott Long Wharf Hotel on "Infrastructure 2008 - A Competitive Advantage" The theme was "Ante up or fall behind"

The preliminary handout to attendees stated that "Civilizations are built and sustained by the quality of their infrastructure. It has been more that half a century since the Federal Highway Act of 1956 was passed, creating the Interstate Highway System. Now, nearly 50,000 miles of superhighways have been constructed. Along with all of the other infrastructure that makes up our public highways, by-ways and transit systems, it is in desperate need of repair."

"Infrastructure 2008: A Competitive Advantage" is the second of the Urban Land Institutes's annual reports. This year's report focuses on the importance of infrastructure to a city or a country's economic competitiveness with an emphasis on rail, road, water and freight movements. Domestically, ULI commissioned research on 23 metropolitan areas, including Boston to determine whether their long range plans are capable of accommodating the large population increases expected over the next 30 years.

The discussion focused on infrastructure -or the lack of recent development of it both in Greater Boston and nationwide. Some major issues and trends included the need for planning, global warming, land use, user fees, the need to overcome sticker shock, cost of living, the need for a railroad renaissance, constructions costs, public and private sector partnerships and infrastructure financing.

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