

EUGENE CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY



Public Hearing: Envision Eugene

Meeting Date: February 22, 2011
Department: Planning and Development
www.eugene-or.gov

Agenda Item Number: 4
Staff Contact: Lisa Gardner
Contact Telephone Number: 541-682-5208

ISSUE STATEMENT

Envision Eugene is a collaborative community-based effort to balance the sustainability triple-bottom-line framework of social equity, environmental stewardship and economic prosperity in planning for 34,000 new residents anticipated in the next 20 years. This public hearing provides an opportunity for the City Council to hear from the general public about the draft set of strategies and tactics for accommodating growth.

BACKGROUND

The City is legally required to provide enough residential, commercial and industrial land to accommodate 20 years of growth, and establish a Eugene-only urban growth boundary (UGB). Equally important, Envision Eugene is describing how we want to grow; creating a future picture of what Eugene will look like, and how we will accomplish council and community goals for social equity, environmental stewardship and economic prosperity.

During previous work sessions, the City Council was introduced to the triple-bottom-line framework and the relationship between each of the three elements of the framework and Envision Eugene, as well as how they serve as a foundation and inform upcoming discussions. At the joint work sessions on February 9 and 16, the City Council and Planning Commission began an overview of the pillars, strategies and tactics (Attachment A). **Since that meeting, draft strategies under the “Provide for adaptable, flexible and collaborative implementation” pillar have been completed, and are included in the attachment.**

The majority of these strategies focus on accommodating future housing and employment growth within the existing urban growth boundary (UGB), which is consistent not only with state law, but also with community values. If all of the projected residential, commercial and industrial land need cannot be accommodated within the existing UGB, then any unmet need will be earmarked for UGB expansion.

Like the pillars, the strategies and tactics were informed by a variety of sources including public meetings and open houses, youth art contests, staff research, boards and commissions, and the Community Resource Group best outcomes and comments. The large collection of ideas from these sources were compiled into a library, and then distilled and assembled into goals, strategies and tactics for accommodating growth over the next 20 years.

This draft proposal is being broadly distributed to the public on the Envision Eugene website and in print forms, through news releases and emails to interested parties, and during open houses. The Community Resource Group provided feedback on the emerging strategies and tactics at their meeting in early February. Other outreach efforts include meetings with the Sustainability Commission, the Housing Policy Board, the Historic Review Board, neighborhood associations as requested, an on-line survey (www.envisioneugene.org), and this public hearing.

It is expected that between now and the council's March 14 work session, the strategies and tactics will be refined based on feedback received through these various distribution and outreach efforts, including this public hearing.

The City Council will deliberate on this revised proposal at their March 14 work session. To ensure adequate time for community members to review the pillars, strategies and tactics and have a meaningful opportunity to provide comment, a second public hearing is proposed for April/May, with City Council final action occurring at a meeting following the second public hearing.

RELATED CITY POLICIES

Growth Management Policies

COUNCIL OPTIONS

The council is holding a public hearing; no formal action is required

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION

No action is required on this item. Therefore, no recommendations are offered by the City Manager.

SUGGESTED MOTION

No action is required on this item. Therefore, no motions are suggested.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Pillars, Strategies and Tactics (including new strategies under the "Provide for adaptable, flexible and collaborative implementation" pillar)

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Staff Contact: Lisa Gardner 541-682-5208

Staff E-Mail: lisa.a.gardner@ci.eugene.or.us

Project Website: www.envisioneugene.org

Envision Eugene

Two primary goals of the Eugene City Council's Envision Eugene project are to: 1) determine how Eugene will accommodate the next 20 years of growth in our community, as required by state law, and 2) create a future that is livable, sustainable, beautiful and prosperous.

The Envision Eugene project deliberately gathered information from many places: open houses, neighborhood listening sessions, surveys, and a youth art contest, to name a few. The most substantial block of input was received from the Community Resource Group (CRG).

The CRG comprises community members with diverse backgrounds who, for the past eight months, collaboratively discussed and addressed the typically contentious issues that arise when we consider where and how to grow. Beginning with 50 members representing interests as varied as home builders, neighborhood groups, environmentalists and business owners, this Envision Eugene Community Resource Group grew to over 70 active participants as they worked to understand, respect and resolve differences.

The Envision Eugene document below is the result of the blending of all this input. The document is titled "Envision Eugene: A Legacy of Livability," to reflect the community's most prized values that emerged in countless discussions. Seven pillars, or major objectives, assure that Eugene's growth is sustainable and in line with community goals. The pillars also frame the strategies and tactics that are organized to accomplish the outcomes of each pillar. The pillars and strategies are interrelated, and should be considered holistically, rather than in isolation.

Like the process that was used to develop it, this plan is thoughtful, intentional, and evolutionary. Through built-in checkpoints and reviews we can check our predictions for the future against the actual changes we experience. While the plan will continue to evolve based on additional feedback and input, this document received substantial agreement from the CRG participants.

The document will be updated over the coming weeks to include strategies and tactics that further address our land supply for economic development and single-family housing. Please contact Terri Harding at terri.l.harding@ci.eugene.or.us or (541)682-5635 with your questions and comments.

For additional information:

- Visit the project website www.envisioneugene.org
- Attend a Council work session:
 - February 23, 12:00 noon, McNutt Room of City Hall at 777 Pearl
 - February 28, 5:30 pm, McNutt Room of City Hall at 777 Pearl

Envision Eugene: A Legacy of Livability

Draft Pillars, Strategies and Tactics

2.2.11

Provide ample economic opportunities for all community members

To meet the economic needs of Eugene residents today and in the future, we will pursue a multi-faceted approach that utilizes several strategies:

1. Meet all of the 20-year commercial land needs (office and retail) within the existing urban growth boundary (UGB).
 - Re-designate 100 to 200 acres of marginal industrial lands (generally 2 acres or less in size) to commercial lands.
 - Redevelop core commercial areas, corridors and downtown. (*See map for definition/general location of core commercial areas, corridors and downtown.*) (*See the Promote Compact Urban Development pillar for additional strategies and actions to facilitate redevelopment of commercial uses in core commercial areas and corridors.*)
 - Change the land use code to increase flexibility for compatible uses allowed within industrial and commercial zones.
2. Implement the Joint Elected Officials *Regional Prosperity Economic Development Plan* dated February 26, 2010, to proactively support the startup and growth of local businesses. Additionally, complete the following actions in support of the *Plan*:
 - Conduct feasibility study of developing a green industry cluster around wood product production with increased local content and value, potentially integrating local FSC-certified lumber with favored distribution of LEED-related products in the Seattle-to-San Francisco region, including rail transportation.
 - Conduct feasibility study of developing an intermodal rail-truck transport hub.
3. Consolidate, and develop or redevelop vacant lands and developed sites (including contaminated sites) within the existing UGB.
 - Develop an Industrial Land Trust to operate an Industrial Land Bank (using approaches demonstrated successfully in the West Eugene Wetlands Partnership), and seed the Industrial Lands Bank with public funds within five years of Council approval. The bank would work to consolidate sites and prepare developed sites for redevelopment, including contaminated sites.
 - Pilot a project to identify, remediate and certify for industrial development, one brownfield site of at least 20 acres.
 - Reduce constraints, appropriately, on current vacant or developed industrial lands, especially those larger than 25 acres, with a goal of greatly increasing the readiness of these sites for development.

4. Identify, and support development or redevelopment of industrial brownfield sites that are and will remain outside the UGB as part of a regional strategy.
 - Work with Lane County and the City of Springfield to determine the feasibility of establishing an employment center in Goshen. The intent of all Envision Eugene pillars and strategies will apply in determining feasibility, i.e. Protect, Restore and Enhance Natural Resources.

5. Determine what specifically would constitute an appropriate portfolio of industrial sites to support community economic development goals, both in supporting the expansion needs of locally-owned businesses, and in attracting new prime employers.
 - Consider the potentially different needs of both I-2 or campus industrial uses, and I-3 or heavy industrial uses.
 - Target lands of at least 50 acres and ensure that the needs for larger parcels up to 100 acres are addressed.
 - Address the need for locating lands in different areas to provide site choice based on the specific needs of different businesses.
 - Work with industry experts and community members to provide realistic siting criteria for various uses.

6. Additional work is being completed to determine the timing and amount of acres of industrial land to be provided outside the existing UGB, to meet the defined economic development sites portfolio.
 - Establish legal parameters to ensure that these industrial sites cannot be rezoned for single-family, multi-family or commercial use.
 - Explore the concept of a “just in time” inventory of future industrial lands outside the UGB that would be pre-approved to bring in for industrial purposes only.

Provide affordable housing for all income levels

To meet the growing and changing housing needs of all Eugene residents today and in the future, we will undertake the following strategies:

1. Plan for a higher proportion of new housing stock to be multi-family than the 39% of multi-family that currently exists. Increasing the proportion of multi-family housing increases the amount of housing accessible to all income ranges.
2. Expand housing variety and choice by facilitating the building of smaller, clustered and attached housing.
 - Develop and apply design guidelines, in collaboration with Infill Compatibility Standards (ICS) to address compatibility, while increasing flexibility in land use regulations to achieve desired outcome.
 - Complete evaluation of land use code, other programs, and permitting processes to identify barriers to clustered and attached housing, alley access lots, and secondary dwelling units.
 - Promote existing incentives such as system development charge grants (for affordable home ownership/rent), and EWEB small house incentives.
 - Assess benefits of new incentives such as minimizing systems development charges, (SDCs) implementing a marketing program for small, clustered and attached housing, and providing loans that reduce the risk of attached housing financing.
 - Continue existing programs such as Homebuyer Assistance Program, which offers down payment assistance for low-income, first-time homebuyers.
3. Assess the utility of a housing and transportation affordability index. This index rates neighborhoods based on the combined cost of housing and transportation costs which may be a better indicator of affordability than housing costs alone.
4. Support subsidized affordable housing projects with a goal of providing 500 affordable housing units every 5 years, consistent with the Eugene-Springfield Consolidated Plan 2010.
 - Continue existing programs such as Low Income Rental Housing Property Tax Exemption, Multiple-Unit Property Tax Exemption (MUPTE), Landbank Program, system development charge (SDC) grants, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, permit fee reductions, HOME Investment Partnership Program and Controlled Income Rent density bonus.
 - Identify new incentives such as a new foreclosure assistance/purchase program, increasing local subsidies, and providing infrastructure to affordable housing projects.
 - Evaluate land use code and permitting processes to identify and remove barriers to affordable housing (i.e. requirement for commercial on ground floor).
 - Evaluate publicly-owned land for future affordable housing developments.
 - Integrate housing for various income levels into existing neighborhoods consistent with the City's housing dispersal policy.

- Look for opportunities to incorporate affordable housing projects into area planning (such as coordinating the landbank program with planning of key corridors).
5. Support preservation and maintenance of existing affordable housing stock by continuing existing programs that extend the life of existing housing stock such as funds for acquisition of existing rental housing, rental rehabilitation loans, homeowner rehab loans, and emergency home repair loans.
6. Adopt development guidelines and requirements in residential expansion areas (if needed) that provide affordable housing, reinforce compact urban development and are compatible with adjacent uses. (A determination to expand/not expand the UGB to meet single-family residential development has not yet been made.) Guidelines could include:
- Develop and apply design guidelines, in collaboration with ICS, to address compatibility.
 - Develop flexible land use codes, including opportunities to reduce minimum allowable lot size from 4,500 square feet and create smaller houses.
 - Develop a tool box of financial incentives, such as variable SDCs, to encourage smaller lot/smaller home development.
 - Identify key transportation and utility locations.

Plan for climate and energy uncertainty

To protect our environment and our population, and to mitigate and prepare for future uncertainties of a changing climate and rising fuel prices, we will undertake the following strategies:

1. Create more *20-Minute Neighborhoods* where residents can meet most of their daily needs within walking, biking or transit distance from their homes.
 - Complete city-wide *20-Minute Neighborhoods* assessment including location opportunities, and assessment of need for flexible codes, transportation infrastructure, parks, open space, partnerships and incentives.
 - Plan residential expansion areas (if needed) to support *20-Minute Neighborhoods*.
2. Complete assessment of implementing variable system development charges (SDC), with the purpose of supporting development towards the core of the city.
3. Integrate climate and energy projections into an assessment to understand the risks that climate change and energy volatility pose for the transport of goods and services, housing costs, food and water supplies, energy systems, and the location of emergency services.
4. Facilitate urban agriculture by evaluating barriers in the land use code to the development of home-grown food sources, including backyard and community gardens, urban food orchards, and micro-livestock, in accordance with the *Food Security Scoping and Resource Plan*.
5. Continue City efforts to reduce greenhouse gas impacts from housing and transportation. These include development of a new Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan, collaboration with Lane Transit District (LTD) to complete the EmX bus rapid transit system, and efforts to encourage existing and new houses to be energy efficient, particularly by using solar energy.

Promote compact urban development and efficient transportation options

To integrate the closely-connected needs of land use and transportation (i.e. walking, biking, riding and driving) in our community, and to make the most efficient use of land and financial resources, we will undertake the following strategies:

1. Meet all of the 20-year multi-family housing and commercial (office and retail) lands needs within the existing UGB, through development of vacant lands and also focusing new development and redevelopment in core commercial areas, corridor areas and downtown.
 - Redevelop core commercial areas, corridors and downtown. (See map for definition/general location of core commercial areas, corridors and downtown.)
 - Change the code to increase flexibility for compatible uses allowed within industrial and commercial zones.
2. Transform key transportation corridors and core commercial areas as mixed-use neighborhoods that foster active, walkable, community living by providing a mix of residential, commercial, retail, and public uses in close proximity to one another- in many cases within a single building.
 - Create area plans that integrate land use, transportation, parking, parks and open space, and urban design.
 - Identify focus areas that are ready for change, economically viable, and poised for success.
 - Recognize the unique characteristics of each area and provide localized consideration and treatment in planning and as necessary, in the land use code.
3. Protect adjacent neighborhoods and provide housing options by creating transition areas between commercial and higher density residential uses and lower-density, single-family neighborhoods in accordance with the goals and recommendations of the Infill Compatibility Standards and Opportunity Siting Task Teams.
 - Recognize the unique characteristics of each area and provide localized consideration and treatment in planning and as necessary, in the land use code.
 - Utilize Opportunity Siting and other area planning efforts to establish transition areas.
 - Identify and apply implementation tools, such as overlays, form based code, and design review.
4. Make compact urban development of core commercial areas and corridors easier.
 - Remove regulatory barriers (i.e. reduced parking requirements, ground floor commercial requirement, and eliminating the requirement to complete a Traffic Impact Analysis within the identified core commercial areas and corridors).
 - Complete a feasibility study for the formation of a Compact Urban Development District the purpose of which is to reduce the financial and regulatory obstacles to develop core commercial areas and corridors. As part of the study, explore options for administering and financing the district.
 - Complete an assessment of implementing variable SDCs, with the purpose of supporting development of the core commercial areas and corridors.

- Explore feasibility of applying additional incentives such as tax incentives, loan programs, and infrastructure and placemaking improvements.
 - Identify and apply implementation tools, such as overlays, form based code, and alternative path that increase flexibility.
5. Conduct a pilot project, incorporating strategies 2, 3 and 4 to demonstrate how builders, neighbors, and the city can come together to foster best outcomes.
 6. Assess the need for additional parks in core commercial areas and corridors as densities increase.

DRAFT

Protect, repair, and enhance neighborhood livability

As new development brings change throughout Eugene's neighborhoods, we will undertake the following strategies to help ensure a high level of livability, avert negative impacts, and make positive changes:

1. Do not increase densities in neighborhoods above those allowed by existing regulations, or undertake new strategies that impact neighborhoods unless they are in accordance with the goals and recommendations of the Infill Compatibility Standards and Opportunity Siting Task Teams.
2. Complete the Infill Compatibility Standards (ICS) project to achieve the goals of ICS, preventing negative impacts and promoting positive impacts of residential infill development on neighborhoods.
 - Bring to council, code changes to adopt R-1 Implementation Team recommendations addressing flag lots, lot coverage, sloped setbacks, secondary dwelling units, and alley front lots.
 - Complete and implement ICS work on remaining issues including subdivision conservation tools, needed housing code, cluster development tools, pre-application process, natural resources mapping and incentives, and multi-family standards.
3. Implement the Opportunity Siting (OS) goal to facilitate high density residential development on sites that are compatible with and have the support of nearby residents. Sites can be located in any residential area, as long as sites are identified through a collaborative process.
 - Complete Opportunity Siting pilot project in South Willamette.
 - Conduct a second OS pilot project on a specific site to demonstrate how builders, neighbors, and the city can come together to foster best outcomes.
 - Implement a toolbox of incentives following a comprehensive assessment of existing incentives and consideration of new incentives that support the achievement of OS outcomes. Incentives may include:
 - Regulatory (flexible codes, design review)
 - Facilitative (no cost pre-application meetings)
 - Financial (MUPTE, variable SDCs)
 - Affordable housing (land bank program, Low Income Rental Housing Property Tax Exemption, SDC grants)
 - Infrastructure (streetscape, parking, and sidewalks)
4. Create neighborhood plans to address unique situations and impacts in different neighborhoods.
 - Complete area planning for the University neighborhoods to address the interface between the University of Oregon, high density housing and surrounding single-family neighborhoods.

- Complete area planning for the River Road and Santa Clara neighborhoods to address impacts of increasing urbanization.
 - Beginning in 2015, select at least one neighborhood every two years as needed, for completion of area planning.
 - Continue Strategic Neighborhood Assessment and Planning (SNAP) program to provide opportunities for neighborhood-based planning activities.
5. Recognize the value that historic properties contribute to community character and livability and work to preserve those properties. Continue the work of the Historic Review Board as an informational resource for the community about historic preservation issues, partnerships, and grant funding.

DRAFT

Protect, restore, and enhance natural resources

To meet the environmental needs of Eugene residents today and in the future, we will undertake several strategies:

1. Encourage the protection and voluntary stewardship of valuable resources inside the UGB.
 - Develop recommendations for incentives and habitat conservation tools for preserving valuable natural resources within subdivisions, in coordination with the work of ICS.
 - Complete feasibility study of tools, such as transfer of development rights, tax incentives, and conservation easements, for protection of valuable natural resources and farmland.

2. Protect, maintain and restore high quality oak woodland and oak savanna habitat, high quality native upland and wetland prairie, the confluence of the Willamette River and McKenzie River, and tributaries to the Willamette River, such as East Santa Clara Waterway and Spring Creek (*See map for general locations*), in accordance with the intent of:
 - Rivers to Ridges Vision – endorsed in 2003
 - Ridgeline Open Space Vision and Action Plan – endorsed in 2008
 - Willamette River Open Space Vision and Action Plan – endorsed in 2010

3. Preserve valuable farmland outside the UGB. (*See map for general locations*)
 - Identify valuable farmland in and surrounding the UGB.
 - Identify partnerships and public funds to support the placement of permanent easements on valuable farmland outside the UGB.
 - Collaborate with regional partners to complete feasibility study of establishing long term protection of valuable farmland.

Provide for adaptable, flexible and collaborative implementation

To help ensure that the goals of Envision Eugene are realized to their full potential, the following strategies will be undertaken as cornerstones of implementation:

1. Create an ongoing monitoring system to collect and track key information.
 - Identify specific plan goals and objectives to be monitored
 - Identify types of data needed to collect to support monitoring, such as population growth, density, housing mix, housing units constructed, redevelopment rates, job growth and other key dimensions of employment land use and need, supply of homes available for the entire range of income levels, and rate of land consumption
2. Develop systems for tracking the key information described above, and producing clear, publically available reports, for the purpose of continuous evaluation of the effectiveness of the Envision Eugene strategies.
3. Create a dynamic Eugene-specific comprehensive plan to address emerging needs.
 - At least every 5 years, evaluate the effectiveness of the Envision Eugene strategies
 - At least every 10 years, consider the evaluations and determine whether the comprehensive plan and implementation tools should be adjusted
 - Consider phasing of public services to expansion areas in accord with monitoring and evaluation results
 - Identify and respond to any impacts that future regulations and programs may have on the buildable land supply
4. Continually evaluate and regularly adjust regulations through a collaborative ongoing code simplification program.
5. Collaboratively plan and partner with surrounding jurisdictions and agencies on such efforts as regional public facilities and services, regional transportation/climate planning, and protection of high-value farm land and natural resources.
6. Develop an implementation tool, such as design review or through Opportunity Siting, to support efficient and flexible review of development proposals that address the needs identified in Envision Eugene and have broad neighborhood support.