

3. VISION

A. RIVERFRONT CRITERIA

The planning for the redevelopment of the EWEB Riverfront Property began with the four Riverfront Criteria laid out in the 2004 Downtown Plan. The Downtown Plan states that the plan for the Downtown Riverfront will be evaluated for consistency with the following criteria:

1. Create a “people place” that is active, vibrant, accessible and multi-use.
2. Provide appropriate setbacks, deeper where environmental or habitat issues are more critical, shallower in other areas.
3. Incorporate appropriate building and site design techniques that address environmental concerns.
4. Incorporate an educational aspect, so that our riverfront improvements teach us about our river, our history and our city.

B. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Community Advisory Team approved a vision statement and a set of seven Guiding Principles to inform the master planning process for the Downtown Riverfront. The riverfront planning process was structured to meet these principals, meet the Riverfront Criteria, and address the requirements of the 2007 MOU between EWEB and the City.

Vision Statement

The vision for the redevelopment of Eugene’s Downtown Riverfront is based upon the understanding that our community’s social, ecological, economic and sustainable concerns are interdependent. The redevelopment of the EWEB riverfront property offers the unique opportunity to advance these interests simultaneously for the benefit of all Eugene, and to revision our Downtown Riverfront as a place that participates actively and graciously with the community that surrounds it.

Sustainable Urbanism

The redevelopment of the EWEB riverfront site should transform the vacated utility property into a thriving, pedestrian-oriented, sustainable community.

Balance of Uses

This plan should include a diverse mix of public and private spaces, with a variety of uses and opportunities layered within each.

Connection

The plan should reconnect the city with the river, and extend the riverine landscape into the city.

Ecology

Ecological objectives should focus on education and habitat enhancement, and direct efforts toward the creation of a managed, functioning ecology along the Downtown Riverfront.

Identity

A 9-acre Cultural Landscape that teaches about the history, ecology, art, and industrial heritage of the riverfront. It is welcoming and accessible to all.

Economics

The plan should contribute to the vitality and economic sustainability of Eugene.

Feasibility

Feasibility should be considered in terms of existing conditions, standard practices, political climate, and community support for a project.

C. KEY DESIGN CONCEPTS

The following design concepts describe how the Guiding Principles were translated into a specific design direction:

An Interdependent and Sustainable City

The redevelopment of the EWEB's riverfront property models green strategies and demonstrate balanced, environmentally conscious, economically viable redevelopment. To contribute to the development of a more sustainable city, the plan recommends a focus on green infrastructure, natural systems, residential capacity, and energy-efficient design with the redevelopment of this property.

A Great Loop

The plan creates a "Great Loop" by connecting Eugene's Great Streets through the riverfront property, establishing a quality of public access and civic structure that benefits the entire city.

Urban Repair & Habitat Enhancement

In re-purposing this impervious utility yard as a pedestrian-oriented neighborhood and public open space, the plan repairs a defining piece of Eugene's urban fabric and reconnects the city and the river.

Interwoven Habitat: An Undulating Edge

Rather than employing a boilerplate setback on a previously developed site, the plan blurs the boundary between the natural and urban environments. Native vegetation reaches into the city, and green redevelopment offers a connection to the river. All new construction will be set back farther than 100' from the top of bank, and the design also pulls the river landscape deeper into the site at three locations: the "green extension" of 5th Avenue, Millpond Swale, and Pollinator Prairie.

Special Place: A Cultural Landscape

The 2004 Downtown Plan describes the need to support and maintain the "special places" in our city, including the Willamette River, nearby open space, and historic properties like the Steam Plant. This plan delivers on a community-inspired wish to reveal the history imbedded in this site, and to create a special place for people to enjoy along the Downtown Riverfront.

Allow for Future Opportunities

Extensive community outreach revealed other adjacent opportunities (e.g., a daylight Millrace, Downtown Quiet Zone, additional at-grade railroad crossings, and a new pedestrian bridge to Alton Baker Park) that could be coordinated with the redevelopment of the EWEB site. The plan does not require these elements, but it also does not conflict with the realization of these goals in the future.

D. OBJECTIVES + CRITERIA

The redevelopment of the Downtown Riverfront (EWEB) property should accomplish the following objectives:

Connect Public Spaces

Maintain and enhance a continuous and diverse public realm through a network of streets, paths and public open space, including parks, promenades and plazas along the riverfront. Each development effort should contribute to the creation of a cohesive, activated public realm.

Encourage Variety & Diversity

Include a vibrant mix of uses and a variety of housing types that support a more diverse, active Downtown Riverfront. A variety of housing and building types should support a diverse population and promote an active, vibrant 18-hour neighborhood. Mixed-use development may be either horizontal or vertical, depending on the scale and intensity appropriate for a specific sub-area.

Create High-Quality Open Space

Design the open space system to serve as a city-wide resource, and celebrate the city's relationship with the Willamette River.

Create Active, Green Streets for People

Introduce ground-level activities and spatial relationships that enliven streets and public spaces, and connect the landscape character of public open spaces with the public rights-of-way when applicable. Create a pedestrian-friendly street network.

Establish View Corridors

Maintain and enhance views to the riverfront park and river.

Promote Excellence in Design and High-Quality Development

Guide building form and uses to reinforce the active, public character of streets, open space and riverfront amenities. Each site, building and street improvement should be treated as a long-term contribution to the overall quality of the city center. Exterior design and building materials shall exhibit both the permanence and quality appropriate to an urban, mixed-use district.

Connect to History

Reinforce the spatial characteristics of the Downtown Riverfront's unique setting, recognize its layered history, and build on cultural and historic assets without being historicist.

Model Sustainable Redevelopment

Support a lively, mixed-use, multi-modal neighborhood that integrates people, urban habitat, natural systems, green infrastructure, and green architecture. Site development and infrastructure should reflect a commitment to sustainability, and to a healthy, green community.

E. FRAMEWORK + ESSENTIAL FEATURES OF THE PLAN

The approved plan for the redevelopment of the Downtown Riverfront is a physical framework that includes essential features that give definition to the community-supported vision.

The framework of the approved plan extends the urban structure of Downtown to meet a new crescent-shaped park along the river (a total of approximately 8 acres of open space). The framework creates the structure for the development of individual blocks, public access, and the enhancement of the riverfront open space. It also provides context for the essential features of the plan.

1. Framework

By extending the existing urban framework of city streets and city blocks, and developing an arc of open space along the Willamette River, the framework diagram illustrates how the plan physically connects the city and the river. The elements of the framework include:

A Great Loop that reconnects the riverfront to Downtown by connecting the Great Streets of 5th and 8th Avenues through the site. This primary street forms a direct and graceful curve through the property, coming closest to the river near the EWEB Headquarters and then swinging away to meet the relocated railroad crossing aligned with 8th Avenue.

An arc of riverfront open space forms a Cultural Landscape. This park space includes a new public plaza, public art, riparian enhancement, native plants, educational aspects, the Steam Plant, and a large area of public open space along the Ferry Street axis that provides green infrastructure and could allow for a future connection to the historic Millrace. This landscape is designed with a focus on education and habitat enhancement, and it primarily utilizes native and non-invasive introduced plant species that require minimal supplemental water, fertilization or pest or disease control.

Secondary streets follow utility easements and provide the redundant life-safety access that allows Riverfront Street to be closed to traffic during festivals. The street network is public and provides nearly 300 on-street parking spaces to support retail and restaurant uses.

Well-formed urban blocks that allow for a wide range of redevelopment programs and support a legible, pedestrian-friendly urban fabric.

2. Essential Features

Within the framework, these essential features are fundamental to the approved vision:

Green streets that integrate bike and automobile transportation, and include landscaped stormwater treatment and on-street parking to accommodate retail uses.

A series of interpretive sites that teach about the history of the Willamette River, Eugene's African-American community, and energy production and water-related industry on this site.

Restaurant Row, a public boardwalk, and 5th Avenue Plaza overlook the riverfront open space and create a "vibrant, active, people place" that is a focus of urban activity. Restaurant Row offers a prime location for cafes, restaurants and amenities along the river. Pedestrian passages along view corridors create an open and accessible threshold between the city and the riverfront open space.

New residential capacity is a required component of the high-density development envisioned for this site as a whole.

The continuous Riverbank Trail, relocated and set back from the top of bank. This allows for the re-grading of the riverfront open space to a gentler slope that will create space for public amenities and improve connections to the water. The pedestrian boardwalk is grade-separated from the adjacent Riverbank Trail to allow for multiple modes to move safely through the area.

Promotes adaptive re-use of the Operations Warehouse, Steam Plant and Midgley's Building.

Pollinator-friendly open space planted with native plant species on the capped, former manufactured gas plant (MGP) site.



FIGURE 3-1: ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN

1	Bioswales / Green Extension	Public Boardwalk
2	Native Green Space + Riparian Enhancement	Repaired Riparian Zone
3	Restaurant Row w/ Habitat Roofs	Open Space / Native Plants
4	Continuous Riverbank Trail	Public Streets with Bioswales
5	Millpond Swale / Potential Millrace	Bioswale / Possible Millrace
6	At-Grade Railroad Crossing @ 8th Avenue	Existing Buildings
7	Public Boardwalk / Plaza	New Construction
8	Pollinator Prairie + River Overlook	

F. POLICIES

The following policies articulate the vision for the redevelopment of the Downtown Riverfront.

General

- New development shall promote the vision of the Downtown Riverfront as a unique, sustainable neighborhood through the implementation of a network of public and private open space areas that include parks, green infrastructure, urban agriculture, enhanced habitat, gathering spaces, and interpretive sites.
- New development shall utilize design strategies and construction techniques that integrate built and natural environments and contribute to the establishment of a high-quality riverfront district that includes urban uses, green infrastructure, cultural landscapes, and open space.
- New development shall contribute to a diverse public realm through an interconnected network of paths, streets, and open space areas.
- New development shall contribute to a mixed-use riverfront district that includes commercial/retail and residential activities and highly accessible public open space.
- New development shall contribute to the establishment of a vibrant, accessible, multi-use Downtown Riverfront by incorporating uses and amenities that invite the community to eat, gather, live, work, and play.

Urban Design

- New development shall promote an active, diverse, green, mixed-use neighborhood and strive for excellence in site and building design.
- New development shall enliven streets and public spaces by incorporating amenities and active ground-level uses with either a high degree of transparency with commercial uses or a frequency of entries with residential uses.
- New development shall maintain and enhance views to riverfront open space and the Willamette River.
- Building form shall reinforce the active and public nature of streets, open space areas, and riverfront amenities.
- Site, building, and infrastructure design shall contribute to a healthy and livable community by following sustainable development practices to the greatest degree practicable.

Infrastructure

- Extend the Downtown transportation network to serve the riverfront and safely accommodate pedestrian, bicycle and vehicle traffic along public streets, paths, and accessways.

- Implement the “Great Loop” concept in the EWEB Riverfront Master Plan, which builds on the “Great Streets” concept in the Eugene Downtown Plan, through the provision of a direct and efficient street connection between High Street and 8th Avenue that connects through the riverfront property and provides access to the riverfront open space.
- Preserve and enhance visual connections to the Willamette River through the establishment of View Corridors as shown in the EWEB Riverfront Master Plan in conjunction with the construction of the transportation network (streets, paths, accessways and trails).
- Encourage non-vehicular transportation by accommodating multi-modal pedestrian transportation amenities and through the design of a pedestrian-friendly street network.
- Public streets shall be constructed with green stormwater treatment systems to the extent feasible including, but not limited to, infiltration planters, rain gardens, flow-through planters, and vegetated swales.
- Public streets shall provide on-street parking that support commercial and retail uses and on-street bicycle parking to accommodate non-vehicular transportation.

Open Space

- Public and private open space areas shall be designed to emphasize connectivity, permeability, diversity, and sustainability.
- Design of public open space areas shall ensure safety and compatibility among adjacent uses and facilities, and comply with City design and development standards and specifications.
- Promote the development of a Cultural Landscape that consists of public green space, interpretive sites, public art, vistas, and historic structures that teach about the history of Eugene’s Downtown Riverfront.
- Use the riverfront landscape to teach about our community’s history, in a variety of ways and at a variety of scales.
- Envision and manage habitat areas as small samples of habitat whose primary purpose is to foster education and demonstrate the potential for ecological enhancement in urban environments, and recognize that, due to their relatively small size and human use impacts, these areas cannot achieve the level of ecological function that is possible in larger, undisturbed habitat areas in non-urban settings.

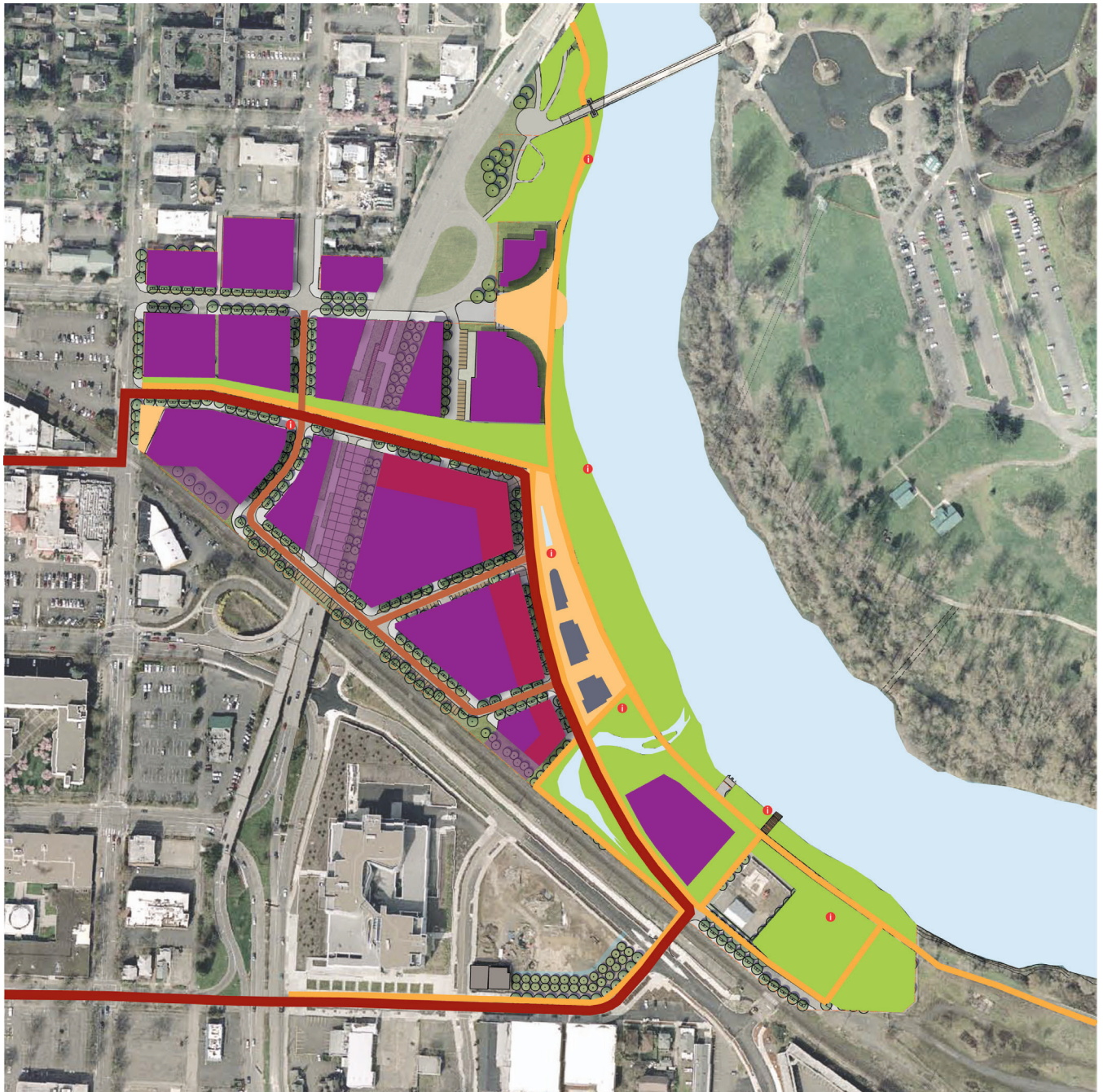


FIGURE 3-2: FRAMEWORK DIAGRAM

- Primary Street / Great Street
- Secondary Streets
- Pedestrian / Bike Paths
- Plazas and Pedestrian Gathering Spaces
- Public Open Space
- Redevelopment or Adaptive Re-use Site
- Residential Requirement
- Restaurant Row
- Interpretive Site