

# EUGENE CITY COUNCIL

## AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY



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### Work Session: Eugene Water & Electric Board Riverfront Master Plan

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Meeting Date: May 15, 2013  
Department: Planning and Development  
[www.eugene-or.gov](http://www.eugene-or.gov)

Agenda Item Number: A  
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#### **ISSUE STATEMENT**

This work session will include an overview of Eugene Water & Electric Board's (EWEB) Riverfront Master Plan process to date, and provide an opportunity for the council to learn more about the land use applications included in the request, in advance of the upcoming public hearing.

As a reminder, this is a quasi-judicial process which requires that the initial work session be limited to factual information and questions about the request. The council should avoid prematurely expressing opinions or deliberating on the merits of the proposal in advance of the public hearing, which is scheduled for June 17, 2013.

#### **BACKGROUND**

The Eugene Code and Downtown Plan require the council's approval of a master plan for the EWEB riverfront site, prior to any redevelopment. In 2007, EWEB and the City entered into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) that directed the development of a master plan for the site. To help accomplish this task, a nine-member community advisory team (CAT) was jointly appointed by the council and EWEB Board of Commissioners to help guide the creation of the EWEB Riverfront Master Plan.

The CAT met bi-weekly over the course of two years with the assistance of EWEB staff and their consultants, as well as City staff, in the development of the conceptual master plan. After a series of public meetings, stakeholder interviews, and focus groups intended to solicit a broad cross-section of community input, the conceptual master plan was completed in April 2010, and unanimously approved by the EWEB Board of Commissioners in June, 2010.

Since that time, EWEB's consultant team has prepared a package of proposed land use applications that, if adopted by the council, will ensure the City's regulations allow the riverfront site to be redeveloped in accordance with the conceptual master plan. This package of land use applications received a unanimous (7:0) recommendation for approval by the Eugene Planning Commission on March 11, 2013, following the initial public hearing and deliberations. The recommendation includes a number of modest refinements to the proposed code which are being incorporated into the draft ordinance for the council's consideration.

The formal land use applications that will implement the EWEB Riverfront Master Plan, and are recommended for approval by the Planning Commission, are briefly summarized below:

**Metro Plan Amendment (MA 12-1)**: amends the Metro Plan diagram to reflect the master plan vision for mixed-use redevelopment; changes land use designation from primarily heavy industrial to mixed use.

**Refinement Plan Adoption & Related Amendments (RA 12-1)**: adopts the EWEB Downtown Riverfront Specific Area Plan; also amends the Downtown Plan and Riverfront Park Study to remove obsolete sections and ensure consistency.

**Code Amendments (CA 12-4)**: amends the Eugene Code to establish a new (S-DR) Downtown Riverfront Special Area Zone including form-based standards for future redevelopment; also includes related code amendments to integrate the new zoning with existing code sections.

**Zone Change (Z 12-6)**: rezones the site from public land and industrial zoning to the new (S-DR) Downtown Riverfront Special Area Zone.

**Willamette Greenway Permit (WG 12-4)**: approves a Willamette Greenway Permit for future development that is consistent with the new plan and zone.

At the upcoming work session, the focus will be on building an understanding of the conceptual master plan and these regulatory actions that establish the intended framework for redevelopment. EWEB proposes a “hybrid” form-based code which uses a combination of traditional zoning and form-based development standards tailored specifically to the EWEB riverfront site. These tools are similar to those recently applied to Walnut Station including user-friendly graphics, use controls, urban design standards, and design review. The intent is to achieve a balance between certainty and flexibility in the redevelopment process; to support the appropriate enhancement of riverfront habitat; and, to promote a mix of uses that complement existing downtown development and multiple riverfront uses.

As staff will cover in greater detail, several key features of the proposal include approximately eight acres of proposed public open space including a riverfront park; a pedestrian-oriented street system; new parcels for mixed-use redevelopment; and, adaptive reuse of existing buildings on the site. These key features are briefly described below:

### **Riverfront Open Space**

- Expanded open space includes a variety of new amenities, space for recreational activities, and riparian restoration along the river’s edge.
- Public amenities will include a new public plaza as well as informal seating areas, a relocated pathway and boardwalk, interpretive sites and overlooks, gentler grades for better access to the river, and native plantings for habitat enhancement.
- A Willamette Greenway setback is established to ensure protection of the expanded open space, riparian area and scenic values along the river.

### **Pedestrian-Friendly Streets**

- A “Great Loop” reconnects the site to downtown from 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> avenues. This primary riverfront street is a key design feature that incorporates pedestrian-friendly and green infrastructure elements, and sets the framework for the proposed block pattern and riverfront park.
- Secondary streets are oriented to help to create pedestrian-friendly view corridors toward the river. These streets provide a convenient and walkable streetscape, and would allow closure of the primary riverfront street for festivals or other public events.

- Street trees, planters, green stormwater infrastructure, narrow street widths, and curb extensions at intersections and mid-block crossings are required. On-street parking is also provided to support mixed-use redevelopment potential, create separation for pedestrians, and facilitate traffic calming.

### **Mixed-Use Redevelopment Parcels**

- New capacity is created for a mix of residential, office, commercial and employment uses. Estimated build-out would create between 250-400 new dwelling units, roughly 22,000-28,000 square feet of new retail space, up to 14,000 square feet of restaurant use, and 40,000-315,000 square feet of additional office uses.
- Form-based design standards and use controls along key street frontages are intended to ensure an active streetscape, appropriately scaled buildings, and pedestrian-friendly character. Maximum building envelopes, minimum building heights, step-backs for taller buildings, articulation and window transparency requirements, and main entrance orientation are examples of types of the form-based standards that are utilized to achieve the intended result.
- “Restaurant Row” establishes a key destination adjacent to the new riverfront park, boardwalk, and public plaza. This location is intended to create a “vibrant, active, people place” that is a focus of urban activity with open seating areas, convenient access to the boardwalk, and views of the river.

### **Adaptive Re-Use of Existing Buildings**

- The site’s historic character is promoted through code provisions that encourage adaptive-reuse of the existing buildings including the steam plant, operations warehouse, Midgely’s Building and EWEB headquarters. A series of interpretive facilities are also proposed to teach about the history of the site.
- Allowance for up to 30 percent expansion of existing buildings, and use of interim surface parking areas (already existing on the site) is intended to encourage cost-effective tenant infill. These expansions are limited so that no encroachment within the Willamette Greenway setback is allowed, and additional building height is limited consistent with the new zoning.

An excerpt of the plan is provided as Attachment B for quick reference, which describes these key features in greater detail. The excerpt includes an illustrative plan, framework diagram, and plan policies which articulate the vision for redevelopment and serve as a basis for crafting the form-based code standards.

For more information and detail, a complete copy of the master plan, the proposed code, and related materials is available on the City’s website at: <http://www.eugene-or.gov/index.aspx?NID=2358>. A hardcopy of the full record of materials is available for review in the City Manager’s Office.

### **Next Steps**

- A follow up work session is scheduled for June 12, 2013.
- A public hearing is scheduled for June 17, 2013.
- Following the public hearing, additional work sessions will be held for deliberations and council action.

### **RELATED CITY POLICIES**

The Eugene Code and Downtown Plan require the City’s approval of master plan for redevelopment of the EWEB riverfront property. The adopted policy reads as follows:

A master plan for the EWEB riverfront property must be approved by the City before any redevelopment, land use application, rezoning, Metro Plan or refinement plan diagram amendments are approved for uses not associated with EWEB functions. The master plan shall be evaluated based on the master plan's consistency with principles 1 through 4 below:

- (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 the riverfront improvements teach us about our river, our history and our city.

The master plan shall be considered using the City's Type II application procedures, unless the applicant elects to have the master plan reviewed concurrently with a Type III, Type IV or Type V application.

EWEB's proposed land use application package is intended to fulfill this policy and to implement the land use regulations needed to ensure that redevelopment of the site remains consistent with the conceptual master plan. Findings addressing the applicable Statewide Planning Goals and other adopted City policies for this request are included in the applicant's written statement for the land use application package.

#### **COUNCIL OPTIONS**

This is an informational work session. No action is necessary.

#### **CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION**

As noted above, this is an informational work session; no action is necessary.

#### **SUGGESTED MOTION**

None.

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

- A. Vicinity Map
- B. Plan Excerpt (includes illustrative plan and framework diagram, with related text and policies)
- C. Council Memo

#### **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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