

EUGENE CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY



Work Session: Regional Economic Prosperity Update

Meeting Date: September 10, 2014
Department: Planning & Development
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Agenda Item: B
Staff Contact: Denny Braud
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ISSUE STATEMENT

At this work session, staff will provide an update on the “Big Look” process that has been initiated to evaluate new approaches to economic development to better serve Regional Prosperity Economic Development Plan goals.

BACKGROUND

In 2010, the Joint Elected Officials of Eugene, Springfield, and Lane County approved the Regional Prosperity Economic Development Plan which established a shared vision of the region’s economic future. Several of the key strategies in the Plan are linked to the integration of regional economic development goals, the provision of business assistance services to help local businesses and entrepreneurs prosper, and the attraction and retention of jobs within targeted industries.

To help advance the Regional Prosperity Plan goals, Eugene, Springfield, Lane County, and the Eugene and Springfield Chambers of Commerce initiated the “Big Look” process to evaluate new approaches aimed at rejuvenation of regional economic development strategies, and exploration of how a regional economic development organization would support implementation of the Regional Prosperity Economic Development Plan through regional cooperation. The existing economic development organization (Lane Metro Partnership) has been operating at a reduced level with an interim director.

Over the past several months, the Big Look partners engaged the services of an economic development consultant (Allison Larson, TadZo Consulting) to help develop a comprehensive strategy for a regional economic development organization with a renewed focus. The draft Big Look Strategy is included in Attachment A. The Big Look process included a collaboration of Eugene, Springfield, Lane County, and private sector/Chamber of Commerce representatives. The consultant-led work also included input from many regional public and private stakeholders. Additionally, a comprehensive regional competitive analysis was conducted which considered regional assets such as real estate availability, transportation, utilities, human capital, incentives, regulatory environment, sustainability, and overall business climate.

The draft Big Look Strategy primarily focuses on a renewed mission for an economic development organization, updated strategic initiatives, proposed organizational structure and governance, and funding targets. The strategy envisions a public-private model with updated bylaws and board membership that aligns with the proposed new structure. Ultimately, the Strategy outlines an economic development organization with a funding model supported 60 percent through the private sector and 40 percent through the public sector. The anticipated next step would be the establishment of an interim board that could begin the decision-making processes necessary to launch the updated and repurposed organization.

COUNCIL OPTIONS

Information only.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION

Information only.

SUGGESTED MOTION

No motion required.

ATTACHMENTS

A. Big Look Strategy

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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