

EUGENE CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY



Work Session: Eugene Water & Electric Board Riverfront Redevelopment Project Update

Meeting Date: October 20, 2014
Department: Planning & Development
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Agenda Item Number: A
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ISSUE STATEMENT

The adopted Eugene Water & Electric Board (EWEB) Riverfront Master Plan and EWEB's recent selection of the University of Oregon Foundation to redevelop the riverfront property presents a unique opportunity to transform the former industrial and utility use into an iconic waterfront that reflects the values of compact urban development, economic opportunity, neighborhood livability, and enhanced natural resources expressed in the Envision Eugene pillars. An update on the EWEB Riverfront Redevelopment Project will be provided at this work session.

BACKGROUND

For more than a decade, the community and City Council have been actively involved in visioning, planning, and implementing the EWEB Riverfront Redevelopment Project. The 2004 Eugene Downtown Plan identified the EWEB property as the best opportunity for downtown to connect to the riverfront. The Downtown Plan specifically identified "partner with EWEB to develop a master plan for the EWEB site" as a key project. The Downtown Plan also stipulated the process by which the riverfront could be developed, and required that a master plan first be completed with extensive public engagement and then submitted to the City Council for approval.

Based on a 2007 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City and EWEB, a jointly appointed Community Advisory Team (CAT) began working with EWEB, City staff, and consultants to develop the Master Plan. Development of the Master Plan was guided by the CAT which held over 40 public meetings, along with design team led charrettes, stakeholder interviews, presentations, and workshops. The extensive public involvement process resulted in creative input and comments from over a 1,000 community members. Ultimately, a community-supported design for the entire 27-acre property emerged and was unanimously approved by the EWEB board.

In March 2012, the City and EWEB entered into a second MOU which outlined continued collaboration with respect to the riverfront redevelopment project. The required regulatory framework was developed to provide the code and plan amendments for the Master Plan. In July

2013, the Master Plan, captured in code as the Downtown Riverfront Special Area Zone, was approved by the City Council.

The adopted code and Master Plan identify a portion of the riverfront property for cultural landscape and open space. In February 2014, the City and EWEB amended the 2012 MOU to outline agreements related to the desired publicly-owned park within the riverfront redevelopment project. Development of the park property is intended to enhance public access to the riverfront as well as to create a valuable amenity to future private development. The MOU provides for certainty that the park will remain in public ownership and sets forth a general timeline for the future development of the park. The basic terms of the MOU agreement include development of an approximately three-acre park, EWEB deeding the park property to the City for one dollar, the City funding not less than \$3 million of the park improvements consistent with the Master Plan and contingent on the appropriation of necessary funds, and EWEB providing not less than \$500,000 for future maintenance of the park property. The intent of the agreement is to have the park development occur concurrent with private development of the property, or within five years, whichever is sooner.

In March 2014, EWEB issued a Request for Qualifications/Information (RFQ) for redevelopment of the downtown riverfront property. Four strong development teams responded to the RFQ: Paradigm Properties, Trammell Crow, University of Oregon Foundation, and Williams & Dame. The extensive RFQ review process included a review panel (with EWEB staff, City of Eugene staff, and consultants), a public presentation by the three development team finalists, an advisor panel (with the Eugene City Manager included), and input from members of the original CAT.

At its October 7, 2014, meeting, the EWEB Board unanimously selected the UO Foundation team as the successful master developer of the surplus EWEB riverfront property. The EWEB Board also provided direction to the General Manager to enter into negotiations with the UO Foundation for a period of up to six months to develop an initial agreement for the sale and redevelopment of the property. The selected team includes the UO Foundation as lead development entity; Seattle-based Spectrum Development as fee developer; Eugene-based deChase Miksis, project management; Eugene residents Hugh Prichard and Harris Hoffman as project advisors; Eugene-based Rowell Brokaw Architects; and Vancouver, B.C.-based PWL Partnership, landscape architects. Selection of the master developer for the EWEB Riverfront property represents the culmination of many years of planning and community engagement to determine the appropriate level of development and desired mix of uses for the riverfront, and also represents the beginning of a new phase of implementation and redevelopment for the site.

The committed participation of the City, working closely with EWEB and the UO Foundation team, will be essential to ensuring the best public benefit outcomes for this long-envisioned redevelopment opportunity. The primary focus throughout will be guiding redevelopment of the property consistent with the community's vision as expressed in the EWEB Riverfront Master Plan and codified in the Downtown Riverfront Special Area Zone.

RELATED CITY POLICIES

Redevelopment of the EWEB Riverfront property supports many goals for Eugene and downtown, including:

Eugene Downtown Plan

- Incorporate the Willamette River as an integral element to downtown planning and development.
- Collaborate with EWEB to encourage relocation of their utility facilities. Create a “people place” that is active, vibrant, accessible and multi-use.
- Facilitate dense development in the courthouse area and other sites between the core of downtown and the river.
- Stimulate multi-unit housing in the downtown core and on the edges of downtown for a variety of income levels and ownership opportunities.
- Downtown development shall support the urban qualities of density, vitality, livability and diversity to create a downtown, urban environment.
- Actively pursue public/private development opportunities to achieve the vision for an active, vital, growing downtown.
- Use downtown development tools and incentives to encourage development that provides character and density downtown.
- Facilitate dense development in the courthouse area and other sites between the core of the downtown and the river.
- Promote adjacent park and open space areas as a valuable complement to downtown’s urban places. Improve connections between downtown and nearby nature areas.

Envision Eugene Pillars

- Promote compact urban development and efficient transportation options.
 - Integrate new development and redevelopment in the downtown, in key transit corridors and in core commercial areas.
 - Meet the 20-year multi-family housing need within the existing Urban Growth Boundary.
 - Make compact urban development easier in the downtown, on key transit corridors, and in core commercial areas.
- Provide housing affordable to all income levels.
- Provide ample economic opportunities for all community members.
- Protect, repair, and enhance neighborhood livability.
- Protect, restore, and enhance natural resources.

Regional Prosperity Economic Development Plan

- Strategy 5: Identify as a Place to Thrive - Priority Next Step - Urban Vitality
 - As we foster a creative economy, dynamic urban centers are an important asset. Eugene, Springfield and many of the smaller communities in the region recognize the importance of supporting and enhancing vitality in their city centers. Building downtowns as places to live, work and play will support the retention and expansion of the existing business community and be a significant asset to attract new investment. The Cities of Eugene and Springfield will continue to enhance their efforts to promote downtown vitality through development and redevelopment.

Eugene Climate & Energy Action Plan

- Increase density around the urban core and along high-capacity transit corridors
- Continue to expand and improve Eugene's bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and connectivity to increase the percentage of trips made by bike and on foot.

City Council Goal of Sustainable Development

- Increased downtown development

COUNCIL OPTIONS

Information only. No options identified at this time.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION

Information only. No recommendation identified at this time.

SUGGESTED MOTION

No action required at this time.

ATTACHMENTS

None.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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