

EUGENE CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY



Work Session: Downtown Improvements - Continued

Meeting Date: February 8, 2016
Department: Planning & Development
www.eugene-or.gov

Agenda Item Number: A
Staff Contact: Amanda Nobel Flannery
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ISSUE STATEMENT

This work session is a continuation of council's discussion from January 27 on funding options for downtown improvements and will be an opportunity for the council to provide direction on next steps. During that work session, Councilor Poling made the following motion that was then postponed to this work session: *I move to direct the City Manager to prepare for council discussion a draft of an amendment to the Downtown Urban Renewal Plan. The draft amendment should include as possible projects (1) high-speed fiber, (2) downtown parks blocks/open spaces, and (3) a year-round farmers' market. The draft amendment also should be made contingent on approval by the voters at the November election.* Because Councilor Poling's motion was postponed to today's work session, that motion is automatically on the table. The council can table, amend, reject, or adopt that motion.

BACKGROUND

On December 14, 2015, the council directed the City Manager to schedule a work session to inform the council on the downtown high-speed fiber project and improved park blocks and all the mechanisms for funding these projects. On January 11, 2016, the council discussed the two projects and gave feedback on the scope to inform the January 20 work session on funding mechanisms. The overarching goal is to foster a vibrant downtown while boosting the local economy.

At the January 20 work session, the council discussed a variety of funding options and requested follow-up information that was provided at the January 27 work session. (See Attachment A and B for funding options for high-speed fiber and Park Blocks improvements, respectively.) In addition to postponing Councilor Poling's motion until the February 8 work session, councilors requested information on the financial impact that would occur when the downtown urban renewal district ceases to collect tax increment funds and for examples of other cities' fiber and financing methods. (See Attachment C).

RELATED CITY POLICIES

High-speed fiber and Park Block improvements address many goals for Eugene and downtown, including:

Envision Eugene Pillars

- Provide ample economic opportunities for all community members.
- Promote compact urban development and efficient transportation options.
- Protect, repair and enhance neighborhood livability.
- Provide for adaptable, flexible and collaborative implementation.

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.

City Council Goal of Sustainable Development

- Increased downtown development

Eugene Downtown Plan

- Downtown development shall support the urban qualities of density, vitality, livability and diversity to create a downtown, urban environment.
- Emphasize Broadway, Willamette Street, 5th and 8th Avenues as Great Streets through public improvements and development guidelines. Include portions of these streets as follows:
 - 8th Avenue between Willamette Street and the Willamette River.
- Enhance public places throughout downtown through the careful design of civic buildings, streetscapes, parks and plazas. Include public art and other elements to create special places for all ages.
- Connect special places downtown with enhanced street designs, public art, directional signs, transit routes and historic markers to create an inviting and memorable route through downtown.
- Support public safety activities that increase visibility, access actual and perceived safety for individuals and property downtown.
- Enhance functional designs for streets, sidewalks and related public improvements with carefully chosen design elements, including materials, alignments, plantings and streetscape elements.
- Use downtown development tools and incentives to encourage development that provides character and density downtown.
- Actively pursue public/private development opportunities to achieve the vision for an active, vital, growing downtown.

Climate Recovery Ordinance

An active, inviting, well-designed public open space downtown enhances walkability and livability, supports downtown as a 20-minute neighborhood, and reduces reliance on fossil fuels.

COUNCIL OPTIONS

The council is asked to provide direction on next steps.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION

No recommendation at this time.

SUGGESTED MOTION

The City Attorney can provide possible motions in advance of the work session, at the request of individual councilors.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. High-Speed Fiber Funding Options
- B. Park Block Improvements Funding Options
- C. January 27 Follow-Up Information

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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