

## Park Blocks & Open Space Improvements Project Summary

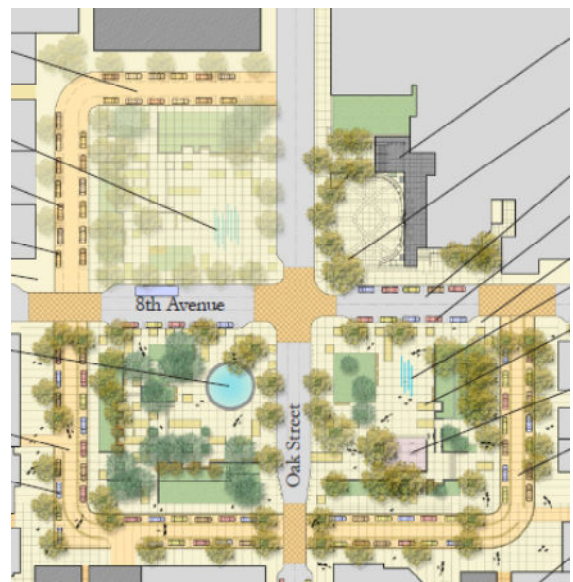
The Park Blocks are a living legacy of the forethought and civic spirit of the earliest founders of Eugene. The design, appearance and function of the Park Blocks are a critical component of Eugene's identity and economic health, the long term location for two beloved organizations, the Saturday Market and the Lane County Farmers' Market, and a key part of the Willamette to Willamette initiative. In addition to the Park Blocks, the plaza in front of the Hult Center as well as Broadway Plaza have the potential to become active, inviting places during programmed events or for incidental use. At present, the Park Blocks, the Hult Plaza, and Broadway Plaza are significantly underutilized, due to a lack of adequate seating, signage and public restrooms, inaccessibility and outdated infrastructure design.

With targeted improvements, these spaces can become significant urban amenities for the downtown neighborhood, supporting employees, the emerging innovation hub and the growing number of downtown residents. Together with the anticipated plaza in front of the new City Hall, these locations can also provide inviting open spaces in the core of the city for activities that draw visitors and community members downtown and help reinforce the identity of the city and region. Improving the amenities, character, and public identity of these spaces strengthens the opportunities for creating a high quality, inclusive and attractive public realm, increasing desired activities downtown, and advancing the revitalization of downtown. This attachment provides general background, description of the potential city actions, and information on the funding options to reinforce the Park Blocks as our historic town square, and to improve the other opens spaces downtown to create places that are a source of pride for the entire community.

### CITY ACTIONS

- Community engagement (*beginning summer 2016*)

The project will begin with asking the community about their hopes and vision for our town square, as well as a needs assessment for the open spaces and plazas in our growing downtown neighborhood. The results of that work will be documented in a placemaking plan (focusing on uses, amenities, activities and pathways), a programming plan (focusing on events and use), and a management plan (focusing on operations) to illustrate and implement the community vision. The geographic area could be limited to the Park Blocks or have a broader approach as "Park Blocks Plus," which could include other key downtown open spaces: Hult Plaza, Broadway Plaza, the plaza at the new City Hall, the new riverfront park, and the pedestrian path system that leads to these places.



- One-time capital improvements based on engagement results

The public engagement results will guide the specific improvements to be made, but could include development and installation of components of the Parks Blocks Master Plan as well as removing barriers on the southeast and southwest Park Blocks. Information provided by the City Council in addition to feedback from the downtown solutions forum and the 2006 Master Plan for the Park Blocks was used to estimate possible costs for a range of improvements. The estimated project costs range from \$8.2 million to \$25 million: A = \$8.2M, B = \$11M, C = \$25M. These amounts were used in both the urban renewal funding strategy and the alternative to urban renewal funding strategy presented on March 14.

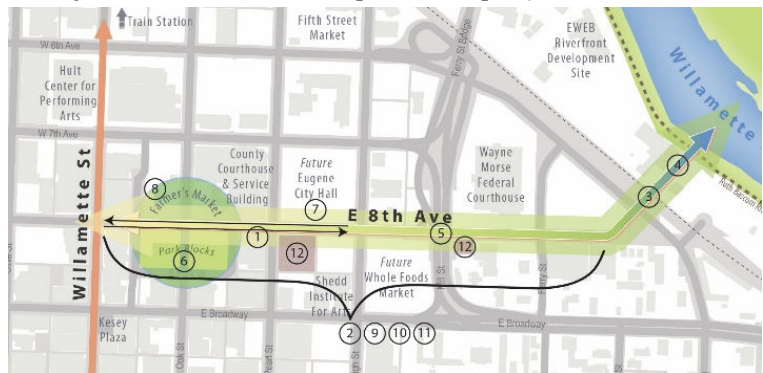
- Range of Options for Park Block improvements:

- ~ **Option A** – new restrooms; and repairs, upgrades and/or minor additions to lighting, security features, pavement, landscaping, benches, signage and other such amenities.
- ~ **Option B** – new restrooms; accessibility improvements; possible infrastructure improvements, such as a new canopy at the stage, curb extensions, textured street paving, or family-friendly fountain; significant improvement (including redesign) of lighting, security features, pavement, landscaping, benches, signage and other amenities.
- ~ **Option C** – all of the improvements listed above as well as significant street improvements, such as raising all of Park Street to create a curbsless street and enhanced pedestrian realm.

- Open Space improvements to Hult Plaza, Broadway Plaza, City Hall Plaza, and the connections leading to these spaces with art, furniture, and lighting:

- ~ **Options A & B**

- Hult Center Plaza improvements including accessibility, seating, lighting, signage and related enhancements and an outdoor information kiosk.
- Broadway Plaza improvements, including repairs, upgrades, additions to lighting, security features, pavement, landscaping, public art, benches, signage and other such amenities.
- City Hall Plaza improvements of either: defraying costs within the existing project budget; or allowing for higher quality materials and features, such as a fountain or art that may be beyond the current scope of the project.
- 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Willamette Street improvements, including pedestrian and bicycle path repairs or enhancements as well as lighting, landscaping, signage and other such amenities.



~ **Option C**

- Hult Center Plaza improvements, including accessibility, seating, lighting, signage and related enhancements, an outdoor information kiosk, and technology improvements such as an outdoor simulcast screen, allowing for greater equity and access to cultural and community events.
- Broadway Plaza improvements, including possible purchase of adjacent property for redevelopment as well as plaza enhancements such as possible pavilion, fountain, weather protection or other repairs, upgrades and/or additions to lighting, security features, pavement, landscaping, public art, benches, signage and other such amenities.
- City Hall Plaza improvements of either: defraying additional costs within the existing project budget; or allowing for more enhancements and higher quality materials and features such as a fountain and art that may be beyond the current scope of the project.
- 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Willamette Street improvements, including two way traffic, pedestrian and bicycle path repairs or enhancements as well as lighting, landscaping, signage, public art and other such amenities.

NEXT STEP

Start public engagement, which will articulate the community's vision and determine the specific improvements and needed investments to make.

