

EUGENE CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY



Action: Adoption of Resolution 5018 Authorizing Exception to the Limited Neighborhood Recognition Policy for the River Road and Santa Clara Community Organizations

Meeting Date: December 13, 2010
Department: Central Services
www.eugene-or.gov/neighborhoods

Agenda Item Number: C
Staff Contact: Michael Kinnison
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ISSUE STATEMENT

The City Council has provided the River Road and Santa Clara Community Organizations limited recognition as neighborhood associations, because both have a mixture of city and non-city residents, which restricts the kinds of staff support and resources that the City of Eugene provides. The council previously has approved a policy exception, and approval would be needed again to extend selected services.

BACKGROUND

Beginning in 1987, and again in 2002, the council approved resolutions adopting a limited neighborhood recognition policy for neighborhood organizations in the River Road and Santa Clara areas. The policy acknowledges that many issues involving the City of Eugene have an impact on, and are of interest to, all residents within the River Road and Santa Clara communities. The River Road and Santa Clara community organizations fulfill the role of neighborhood associations for these areas, which include city and non-city households and businesses. Current policy prohibits City staff support for neighborhood organizing or outreach efforts and use of public information funding for the unincorporated portions of the neighborhoods.

In June 2005, the council adopted Resolution No. 4839, authorizing an exception to the public information funding limitations of the limited recognition policy. This allowed a portion of the remaining River Road/Santa Clara Special Assessment Bond Funds to be used to cover the costs of printing and mailing neighborhood publications to non-city addresses. To date, the two organizations have spent approximately \$7,500, leaving an additional \$12,500 available for neighborhood publications. The exception has expired and an extension is requested to use the remaining funds for this purpose. If the community organizations were to lose access to these funds, it would hamper their ability to communicate with their membership.

The River Road and Santa Clara community organizations also have applied for a joint Strategic Neighborhood Assessment and Planning (SNAP) project, to assist with public outreach and education intended as a critical next step in the River Road/Santa Clara Transition Project. Eligibility for these community organizations to participate is contingent on council approval of this resolution. Neighborhood Services will be selecting two proposals from the current pool of applicants to begin the SNAP process in January.

The Transition Project began as an effort to address long-standing governance and service delivery issues in the River Road and Santa Clara communities. To make progress on these issues, the City of Eugene hired a consultant in April 2004, to improve communication among residents, community organizations, special districts, the City of Eugene and Lane County, and to prepare a transition plan for the unincorporated areas. Additional goals were identified during the process that included creating a vision for the future of these communities, identifying ways to preserve the unique character of the areas and amending the 1986 River Road – Santa Clara Urban Facilities Plan. In 2006, the City Council accepted the River Road and Santa Clara Transition Project Final Report. In 2007, the City entered into a memorandum of understanding with the community organizations authorizing the use of \$40,000 of remaining River Road/Santa Clara Special Assessment Bond funds for projects that implement strategies and actions of the Transition Report. To date, approximately \$1,000 of this funding has been awarded.

The work of organizing community support and implementing the report's findings was left to the River Road and Santa Clara community organizations. The neighborhood groups have made some progress on recommendations independently, and have recently renewed efforts in a coordinated fashion to move forward on a transition plan. A key conclusion of the project consultant was that future success will hinge on addressing the levels of distrust in the communities and engaging the "radical middle" of civic-minded individuals with a willingness to collaborate on creative solutions. The report strongly recommended that a broad outreach and education effort be pursued, which would be the focus of a SNAP. This would be followed by a statistically valid public opinion survey to provide community input for moving forward on the vision, goals, strategies and actions of the Transition Report. The survey is seen as important for the credibility of the transition process.

A SNAP would provide this transition initiative-focused support from Neighborhood Services to assist with goal-setting and work plan development. The strength of the SNAP process is a problem-solving approach that emphasizes collaboration, capacity-building and the need for involvement of all affected stakeholders. Trainsong Neighbors successfully piloted the first SNAP, which resulted in a two-year work plan that reflects neighborhood interests, identifies opportunities to link with City of Eugene and community resources, and improves the leadership abilities of the group.

If the River Road and Santa Clara community organizations were to participate in a future SNAP, staff would assist members in designing and implementing a broad public engagement effort in preparation for conducting the survey. The costs of the survey and other strategies would be borne by the remaining Special Assessment Bond funds approved by the council in 2007. Because these organizations have access to other funds, they would not receive all SNAP benefits. Neighborhood Services currently budgets \$5,000 as a grant to participating associations to aid in implementation of SNAP action items, and River Road and Santa Clara would not be eligible for such a grant.

A SNAP could help forge positive relationships and reduce community distrust —objectives that are critical to laying the foundation for discussion about transition issues, including annexation. This project is considered timely given that it coincides with the Envision Eugene process and could facilitate an update to this area's refinement plan. Without the assistance of a SNAP, the community organizations plan to move forward with this work within their own limited resources and capacities. However, conducting the outreach and education envisioned by the Transition Report will prove challenging for these neighborhood volunteers.

RELATED CITY POLICIES

Limited Recognition Policy for Organizations in the River Road and Santa Clara Areas (Res. No. 4705)

This item serves to further the following City Council Goals:

Effective, Accountable Municipal Government that works openly, collaboratively, and fairly with the community to achieve measurable and positive outcomes and provide efficient services. Relevant outcomes related to this item include transparent and interactive communication, public engagement that involves the community broadly and stronger partnership between government entities.

Fair, Stable and Adequate Financial Resources based on a fair and equitable system of revenues that are adequate to maintain and deliver municipal services. Relevant outcomes related to this item include, a long-term sustainable budget and new or expanded revenue sources.

This item would also further the economic prosperity and social equity objectives of the City's triple bottom line framework by laying the groundwork for improved service delivery efficiencies, strengthened community relationships, effective governance and overall livability of these communities. A SNAP-supported public outreach and education initiative will provide community members, stakeholders and interested parties with opportunities for meaningful participation and cultivate a shared sense of stewardship and commitment to the community.

COUNCIL OPTIONS

1. Approve the resolution granting the recommended exceptions to the limited recognition policy.
2. Reject the resolution.
3. Approve the resolution with changes.
4. Defer action and request additional information or a work session to discuss the matter.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION

The City Manager recommends approving the proposed resolution.

SUGGESTED MOTION

Move to adopt Resolution 5018 authorizing exceptions to the limited recognition policies for River Road and Santa Clara community organizations allowing for participation in the SNAP program and continued expenditure of Special Assessment Bond funds for printing and mailing of neighborhood publications to non-city addresses.

ATTACHMENT

A. Proposed Resolution

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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RESOLUTION NO. ____

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING EXCEPTIONS TO THE LIMITED NEIGHBORHOOD RECOGNITION POLICY FOR ORGANIZATIONS IN THE RIVER ROAD AND SANTA CLARA AREAS ESTABLISHED BY RESOLUTION NO. 4705.

The City Council of the City of Eugene finds that:

A. On February 25, 2002, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 4705, establishing a Limited Neighborhood Organization Recognition Policy for Organizations in the River Road and Santa Clara Areas (the "Policy"). The River Road Community Organization ("RRCO") and the Santa Clara Community Organization ("SCCO") fulfill the role of neighborhood associations for these areas. City Council has granted limited recognition to these groups in acknowledgement that a significant portion of neighbors within the boundaries of these community organizations are City residents.

B. The City of Eugene's Neighborhood Services department has created a Strategic Neighborhood Assessment and Planning ("SNAP") process which offers staff assistance to neighborhood associations and other neighborhood-based groups for purposes of assessing needs and developing a plan that outlines goals, strategies and actions to address those needs. City-recognized neighborhood associations are all eligible to participate in a SNAP process.

C. The City's Neighborhood Services' staff is interested in supporting RRCO and SCCO in a joint SNAP process, however, Section 1, paragraph (4) of the Policy requires that the City not provide staff support for neighborhood organizing or outreach efforts to organizations with limited recognition.

D. The SNAP process could be a valuable resource in helping the neighborhoods conduct outreach and education essential to implementing key recommendations of the River Road and Santa Clara Transition Project Final Report, 2006. Therefore, the Council finds that it would be in the public interest to authorize an exception to Section 1, paragraph (4) of the Policy in order to permit City staff to make the SNAP process available to RRCO and SCCO.

E. In addition to the issues addressed in the above findings, on June 13, 2005, Resolution No. 4839 was adopted granting an exception to the public funding limitations of Section 1, paragraphs (3) and (4) of the Policy, thereby permitting public information to be provided to non-City addresses within the River Road/Santa Clara area during the fiscal year 2005/06, contingent upon, and limited to, the funds being allocated from the River Road/Santa Clara Sewer Assessment Bond Fund under the City's adopted budget for the 2005/06 fiscal year. The City Council finds that the exception to the public information funding limitations granted by Resolution No. 4839 should be reestablished until such time as that funding source is exhausted.

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EUGENE, a Municipal Corporation of the State of Oregon, as follows:

Section 1. Based on the above findings, which are adopted, exceptions to Section 1, paragraphs (3) and (4) of the Limited Neighborhood Organization Recognition Policy adopted by Resolution No. 4705, are authorized to allow public information to be provided to non-City addresses within the River Road/Santa Clara area contingent upon, and limited to, the funds being allocated from the River Road/Santa Clara Sewer Assessment Bond Fund until such time as that funding source is exhausted; and to allow City staff to make the SNAP process available to RRCO and SCCO for purposes of helping those neighborhoods conduct outreach and education essential to implementing key recommendations of the River Road and Santa Clara Transition Project Final Report, 2006.

Section 2. The City Recorder is requested to append a copy of this Resolution to Resolution No. 4705, and to forward copies of this Resolution to the River Road Community Organization and the Santa Clara Community Organization.

Section 3. This Resolution shall become effective immediately upon its adoption.

The foregoing Resolution adopted the _____ day of December, 2010.

Acting City Recorder