

EUGENE CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY



Action: An Ordinance Concerning Downtown and Mixed Use Development and Amending Sections 9.2160, 9.2161, 9.2170, 9.2171, 9.2173, 9.4280, 9.4290, 9.4530, 9.8030, 9.8670, and 9.9650 of the Eugene Code, 1971, TSI Roadway Policy #2 of the Eugene-Springfield Transportation System Plan (TransPlan) And Policy F.15 of the Eugene-Springfield Metropolitan Area General Plan(City Files CA 13-1 and MA 13-1)

Meeting Date: July 22, 2013
Department: Planning and Development
www.eugene-or.gov

Agenda Item Number: 4
Staff Contact: Alissa Hansen
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ISSUE STATEMENT

The City Council will take action on a package of land use code and plan amendments to facilitate downtown and mixed use development.

BACKGROUND

As part of Envision Eugene, the City Council initiated amendments to facilitate desired mixed use development for downtown, along transit corridors and in commercial areas. Consistent with this direction, the purpose of these amendments is to facilitate compact urban development by changing land use regulations to better align with Envision Eugene.

These amendments are also necessary as part of the City's strategy to accommodate the City's 20-year need for commercial and multi-family housing inside the current urban growth boundary (UGB). Specifically, these amendments are part of a package of land use efficiency strategies the City is relying on to accommodate approximately 400 commercial jobs and 1,600 multi-family homes inside the UGB by increasing the likelihood of redevelopment in the downtown, along transit corridors and in core commercial areas.

A summary of the amendments is provided in Attachment A, and the proposed ordinance is provided as Attachment B.

On July 15, 2013, the City Council held a public hearing on the proposed amendments. At the public hearing, one community member spoke in support of the amendments. In her testimony she noted that these amendments help to implement Envision Eugene, and are a good start towards facilitating the transformation of the downtown, key transit corridors and commercial areas, and meeting the City's 20-year need for multi-family housing and commercial jobs inside the current urban growth boundary. Prior to the public hearing, a letter of testimony in support of the amendments was submitted (Attachment C). No other testimony was received.

Following the public hearing, Councilor Alan Zelenka asked for staff to provide an explanation of the problem each amendment is attempting to solve, and the rationale for the solution. Staff will provide this information prior to council action.

As noted in the previous meeting materials, prior to the City Council's public hearing, the Planning Commission recommended approval of seven of the eight proposed amendments. The Planning Commission vote was split on the proposal to allow housing on the ground floor of buildings in the C-2 commercial zone. This proposal would allow the ground floor of a building in the C-2 Community Commercial zone to be entirely housing, whereas currently a certain percentage of the ground floor must be in commercial use. Providing housing on the ground floor in the commercial zones is already allowed downtown.

Those Planning Commissioners voting in favor of the proposal expressed support for horizontal mixed use and increased housing opportunities in downtown, on key transit corridors, and in core commercial areas. They also cited the fact that the multi-family development standards would apply to these projects, thereby providing more protection than currently required for buildings with ground floor in commercial use with housing above. Those voting in opposition of the proposal expressed concern about the potential for increasing density in the C-2 zone without providing accompanying measures to address the transitions between higher density residential uses and adjacent lower density residential uses.

The attached draft ordinance (see Attachment B) includes the proposal that would allow the ground floor of a building in the C-2 Community Commercial zone to be entirely housing. Staff supports this amendment based on the following:

- Through Envision Eugene, specially the Community Resource Group, the understanding of the term "mixed use" was broadened to include both vertical (housing over commercial) and horizontal (housing adjacent to commercial). This amendment supports for and allows for both concepts.
- During the Envision Eugene public process, this proposal was suggested numerous times by the public as a way to provide flexibility in commercial zones and increased housing opportunities in downtown, on key transit corridors, and in core commercial areas.
- An all-residential building in the C-2 zone would be subject to the multi-family development standards, thereby providing more protections than currently required for buildings with the ground floor in commercial use with housing above.
- Regarding transitions between higher and lower density residential uses, buildings in the C-2 zone that are within 50 feet of a residential zone are limited in height to the maximum height allowed in that residential zone.
- During this amendment process, support for this amendment was expressed by local affordable housing providers as a benefit to affordable housing projects proposed in downtown, on key transit corridors, and in core commercial areas.

The attached ordinance contains minor revisions to sections 10 and 13 (as compared to the ordinance provided with the public hearing materials) prepared by the City Attorney's Office to reconcile the language based on the adoption of the code amendments related to the Eugene Water & Electric Board Master Plan.

RELATED CITY POLICIES

Findings addressing consistency with related City policies, including provisions of the Metro Plan and applicable refinement plans, are included as an exhibit to the proposed ordinance (Exhibit A of Attachment B).

COUNCIL OPTIONS

The City Council may consider the following options:

1. Approve the ordinance.
2. Approve the ordinance with specific modifications as determined by the City Council.
3. Deny the ordinance.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION

The City Manager recommends that the City Council approve the ordinance contained in Attachment B.

SUGGESTED MOTION

Move to adopt Council Bill 5096, an ordinance concerning downtown and mixed use development.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Summary of Downtown/Mixed Use Amendments
- B. Proposed Ordinance and Findings
- C. Written testimony submitted by Jim Welsh, Eugene Association of Realtors

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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