

EUGENE CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY



Work Session: Bethel Economic Development Task Force Report

Meeting Date: September 23, 2014
Department: Planning and Development
www.eugene-or.gov

Agenda Item Number: B
Staff Contact: Ethan Nelson
Contact Telephone Number: 541-682-5224

ISSUE STATEMENT

In 2014, the Planning and Development Department staff convened a group of local public and private stakeholders to create an actionable strategy for the Bethel area that aligns with the goals identified within Envision Eugene and the Regional Prosperity Economic Development Plan. This City Council work session provides an overview of the team's work.

BACKGROUND

The Bethel Economic Development Project (Building a Better Bethel) had the stated purpose to: Create an economic development strategy that supports increased activity within the Bethel Area, includes short and long term actions, and emphasizes redevelopment opportunities and support of the food industry. Four meetings were held between October 8 and December 10, 2014, with a team of targeted representatives from public agencies, local business, and community organizations.

Through the course of the four meetings, it became clear that this is a long-term process and the project represents a start, with the intent to build support for long-term investments in the Bethel area. The team also recognized that public agencies cannot do it alone; community organizations and business need to support the future vision.

The Task Team identified 12 action items that can improve economic conditions in Bethel and across the entire Eugene community. The 12 items are included within the attached Policy Report, but can be distilled into three themes:

1. **People:** Engaging the community through existing connections within the Bethel School District, Neighborhood Associations, civic groups, and City of Eugene Recreation programming. Highlighting the impact of workforce development advancements within the Bethel School District and strengthening the connection with private businesses and higher education institutions.
2. **Place:** Identifying high value public and private investments in infrastructure, parks and recreation amenities, and schools.
3. **Prosperity:** Creating a Bethel Business Alliance and targeting City of Eugene economic development incentive programs toward the Bethel Area.

Communicating the future vision for the Task Team was accomplished through the development of three deliverables to engage stakeholders, increase awareness, and encourage participation; these utilized the slogan of 'Building a Better Bethel' and include:

1. *Policy Report*. A policy document providing an overview of the task team, a snapshot of current conditions, and a listing of Next Steps/Action Items.
2. *Map*. A two-sided map document highlighting the Next Steps/Action Items for Building a Better Bethel vision.
3. *Website: www.betterbethel.com*. Web-based resource hosted on the City's website.

City staff is committed to the targeted strategies as part of the existing work programs that are implementing Envision Eugene and the Regional Prosperity Plan, with Task Team members taking responsibility for many of the community- and business-based initiatives. The intent is to provide an annual update to the council on the progress for these strategic actions.

RELATED CITY POLICIES

Envision Eugene, Regional Prosperity Economic Development Plan.

COUNCIL OPTIONS

No council action or recommendations are suggested.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION AND SUGGESTED MOTION

No council action or motions are suggested. This item is informational only.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Building a Better Bethel Report
- B. Building a Better Bethel Map (both English and Spanish versions).
- C. Task Team List

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Staff Contact: Ethan Nelson
Telephone: 541-682-5224
Staff E-Mail: ethan.a.nelson@ci.eugene.or.us