

MINUTES

**Eugene City Council
Harris Hall, 125 East 8th Avenue
Eugene, Oregon 97401**

**March 9, 2020
5:30 p.m.**

Councilors Present: Emily Semple, Alan Zelenka, Jennifer Yeh, Mike Clark, Claire Syrett, Chris Pryor

Councilors Absent: Betty Taylor, Greg Evans

Mayor Vinis opened the March 9, 2020, work session of the Eugene City Council.

1. **Work Session: River Road-Santa Clara Neighborhood Plan Project Update**

Senior Planner Chelsea Hartman, Principal Planner Terri Harding, Chair of the Santa Clara Community Organization Kate Perle, and Co-chair of the River Road Community Organization Jon Belcher gave an update about the River Road-Santa Clara Neighborhood Plan, including project phases, community outreach, and action plan highlights.

Discussion:

- Councilor Clark – thanked staff and the neighborhoods for their hard work; asked about the effects of HB 2001 on their efforts and goals; said he sees preserving the character and livability of the area and increasing density and complying with HB 2001 as being in conflict; said he wants there to be realistic expectations about what is going to happen; said he likes the idea of protecting farmlands within the UGB and asked if that included lands in the buildable inventory; said River Road and Santa Clara neighborhoods are great examples of living sustainably and urban farming and more legal steps to protect the ability to do that should be considered.
- Councilor Syrett – reported that she went to a recent Santa Clara Community Organization meeting focused on the land use parts of this project; said people generally supported the plan and understood that the City has made a commitment to grow more densely; said many people want to retain the quality of the neighborhood, but also enhance it with community and commercial centers; asked if the quarter mixed-use and quarter residential are proposed zones that the City does not currently have; said the new zones would have a lot of potential to meet the city and state's needs in rethinking commercial and residential mix, that could work in other parts of the city as well.
- Councilor Pryor – said this work has been groundbreaking and creative and he does not think it will end up conflicting with HB 2001; said he's on the state Department of Land Conservation and Development draft code advisory committee and he wants to bring this forward in Salem because that committee is trying to accommodate density in a reasonable way, without destroying neighborhood livability; encouraged the City to create its own code that reflects this balance.
- Councilor Zelenka – said he has seen many neighborhood planning efforts and this plan and process has been excellent; said the process has been collaborative, has disseminated accurate information, and was approached with the goal of making the neighborhood more livable; said this is a great model to be applied elsewhere; said the goals in the plan were good and balanced; asked staff how new land use designations would get integrated into the existing zoning framework; asked for a description of corridor residential and residential middle; said he has seen conflicts arise when different zones are abutting without transition and asked how those

areas have been addressed to minimize future conflicts; encouraged staff to focus on those points.

- Councilor Clark – asked for an explanation about how to incentivize people to maintain land for a particular use; asked if the plan included any way to discourage the sale of land to a developer for housing; asked if the neighborhood associations or the City, in gathering feedback, had a way of determining if respondents were City residents or renters to get a sense of who had authority and who was potentially guiding the new policies; said having the data on who supports the new plan is important; said he wants to make sure the interests of the City residents are being served because those are the individuals he is representing.
- Councilor Semple – said one of her goals for this project is that it would be a template for other neighborhoods; said the outreach and citizen involvement has been great; said she is interested in pursuing an agricultural land trust for many reasons.
- Councilor Syrett – said she appreciated the design principals and how they are captured to provide a clear and easy-to-understand picture; said she was glad to hear Councilor Pryor will take some of the information to state meetings; said she heard many creative ideas for buffers when two zones abut each other and she hopes those will be useful in other areas in the future as clear templates.

2. **Work Session: Franklin Boulevard Transformation Project Update #2**

Transportation Planner Larisa Varela presented information about the proposed Franklin Boulevard Transformation Project.

Discussion:

- Councilor Semple – said this is an exciting undertaking representing a big change for a corridor that is the entryway to the city and the university and not currently very attractive; said she's excited about the roundabouts and their ability to keep traffic flowing.
- Councilor Zelenka – said he has been eagerly paying attention to this process; said he liked the preferred alternative, including the roundabouts; talked about the safety aspects of roundabouts and their ability to decrease the time of traffic flow; asked how much time it currently takes to go from one end of Franklin to the other and what it would be after this project was implemented; asked staff to address pedestrian safety; asked questions about Walnut Station and East Gateway; talked about the funding for this project being the number one priority during the City's United Front trip to Washington D.C; asked for the total cost of the project; said he is interested in getting an upgraded entrance sign; asked if Springfield would also match funding for the grant requirement.
- Councilor Yeh – said she appreciates that this corridor is seeing a lot of change and that it has risen to a priority level, including a partnership with Springfield; said she's impressed with the creativity of these plans and likes that new concepts are being tried; said she has been convinced that roundabouts are a safe, viable option for the community; reported that she attended a walk audit and is glad thought is being given to the concept of keeping different modes of transportation separated and how those issues might be addressed within the confines of the limited available space; said she's looking forward to learning how the public reacts.
- Councilor Syrett – said the progress of this plan is smart and exciting; said she also supports the roundabouts and that they are the most sensible approach given the complexities of the corridor; asked about the awkward intersection at Villard street and whether there might be engineering changes there; asked more about the bike lanes and whether they might be one-way or two-way; pointed out that there is no sign on Highway 99 welcoming anybody to Eugene.
- Councilor Clark – asked how much time has been devoted to planning this particular corridor and what the total project costs will be; talked about the dangers of the Delta and Beltline intersection and the need to make that safer; said that plans and funding for this project came

about quickly by comparison and it doesn't seem equitable; asked why these monies weren't part of the process and efforts that are now underway at Delta and Beltline; said his constituents want to see their representative asking these tough questions and he hopes staff understand that.

- Councilor Pryor – said he remembers the presentation that ODOT did about improvements to Delta and Beltline and the price tag was \$250 million at the time which ODOT wasn't prepared to invest into the project; said that the City hasn't lost sight of how important that project is, but more work must be done to figure out the mechanism for funding such a huge project.
- Councilor Zelenka – talked about highway projects being ridiculously expensive; asked about the timeline for safety improvements at Delta and Beltline; said progress made on the Franklin Boulevard project is the result of coming together with partners like LTD and Springfield.

The meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Beth Forrest
City Recorder

(Recorded by Elena Domingo)

Link to the webcast of this City Council meeting [here](#).