

MINUTES

Eugene City Council Work Session and Eugene Urban Renewal Agency Meeting Eugene, Oregon 97401

November 9, 2022
12:00 p.m.

Councilors Present: Greg Evans, Matt Keating, Jennifer Yeh, Mike Clark, Randy Groves, Emily Semple, and Alan Zelenka

Mayor Vinis opened the November 9, 2022, meeting of the Urban Renewal Agency in a hybrid format at 101 W 10th Avenue, Eugene OR 97401.

1. **WORK SESSION: Riverfront Urban Renewal District**

City Manager and Agency Director Sarah Medary introduced Community Development Director, Will Dowdy, Business Development Analyst, Amanda D'Souza and Community Development Section Manager, Anne Fifield, who presented information on the Riverfront Urban Renewal District.

Council Discussion:

- Councilor Groves – asked how urban renewal funds would impact or be impacted by land acquired as part of the pending University of Oregon land swap; asked City Manager when more information will be available regarding the land swap; noted concern over ending a funding option that could limit options for the new land; noted preference to extend until land swap is decided.
- Councilor Yeh – supports option two; noted additional funds would help complete affordable housing faster; asked staff if the mixed funding sources in the summary provided is typical for this type of project; asked if the requirements to renovate the steam plant might limit or deter investors.
- Councilor Zelenka – asked staff about the ability to spend the district's balance on another project; noted that urban renewal funding is not normally used for affordable housing projects and he would be opposed to doing so; stated that the steam plant project would be a good amenity but he is opposed to putting more City funding into that project; asked staff to clarify various mobility options could be funded using Urban Renewal funds; would be in favor of using funds for park improvements; stated that he is not in favor of any of the options for extending or raising the Urban Renewal cap for the district.
- Councilor Semple – asked if the \$6.5 million estimate for the steam plant will increase with inflation; asked about other funding methods for the steam plant project; noted that she is in favor of renovating the steam plant; noted concern over public opinion related to funding; favors affordable housing in the riverfront area; noted that the projects are important but may not be worth renewing Urban Renewal; is concerned about wasting staff time on information gathering for the steam plant options.
- Councilor Evans – asked what the market analysis on tourism shows for local hotel capacity; asked if the City is over- or underinvesting in hotels; asked if there has been a return on investment study done regarding the steam plant redevelopment options;

noted he would like to see an independent market analysis done regarding the steam plant hotel project.

- Councilor Clark – noted that the City has already invested a large sum in the Riverfront Park development; asked staff to confirm that the steam plant would be demolished if the investment is not made; noted concern that public would be dissatisfied if the steam plant were demolished; stated support for extending the Urban Renewal to complete the project.
- Mayor Vinis – noted that the steam plant has been considered a part of the Riverfront Park project and it would be a mistake to not follow through with it; asked if the 75-units proposed was included in the Housing Implementation Plan; stated that the housing crisis will require use of every tool available; noted that option two would explore options and is not a final decision.
- Councilor Zelenka – asked how much the City is willing to invest in the steam plant to complete it; believes the steam plant is a risky project; noted that the costs have increased since the original estimate was created; asked staff how much the Riverfront district collects per year.
- Councilor Keating – stated his support for completing the steam plant project.

MOTION AND VOTE: Councilor Keating, seconded by Councilor Evans, moved to direct the Agency Director to draft a proposal to amend the Riverfront Urban Renewal Plan to expand the District’s financial capacity and to schedule a work session to allow the Board to review and comment on that proposal. **PASSED: 5:2**, opposed by Councilors Semple and Zelenka.

Mayor Vinis adjourned the meeting of the Urban Renewal Agency and opened the November 9, 2022, work session of the Eugene City Council.

2. WORK SESSION: Ambulance Transport Update

City Manager, Sarah Medary, introduced Eugene Springfield Fire Chief, Mike Caven, who presented information regarding the ambulance transport system.

Council Discussion:

- Councilor Groves – asked about the challenges created by the division of ambulance services between Eugene and Springfield; noted interest in how the Eugene Springfield Fire Governance might change this challenge; asked what percent of patients are unable to pay for services rendered; asked what the average drop time is at hospitals; asked if the single role paramedics are included in Fair Labor Standards Act or exempt; noted that skilled nursing facilities have high turnover which creates delays for training new staff.
- Councilor Zelenka –stated that the proposed plan for ambulance services is smart; asked when phase two of the plan will begin; asked staff to clarify the hourly wage for Basic Life Saving workers, Advanced Life Support workers and CAHOOTS; noted that peak hours include the majority of the day and asked staff to clarify; asked if the reimbursement rate is the reason that the non-emergency transport provider is not

renewing their contract; asked what the non-emergency transport staff hourly pay is; noted that moving non-emergency transport to Eugene Springfield Fire makes sense.

- Councilor Evans – asked if low priority calls are impacting overall service abilities.
- Councilor Semple – noted that the proposed plan is good; asked to clarify the wage for Basic Life Saving workers; stated she is in favor of moving non-emergency transport to Eugene Springfield Fire.
- Councilor Yeh – noted appreciation for the innovative methods that Eugene Springfield Fire uses; stated support for the proposed changes; noted appreciation for the work done to correct wages for staff; asked if there is an apprenticeship program for firefighters and paramedics.
- Councilor Keating - asked staff to clarify services provided by Basic Life Saving versus Advanced Life Support workers; asked staff to outline how cost savings were achieved.

Mayor Vinis adjourned the meeting at 1:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Katie LaSala
City Recorder

(Recorded by Sara McKinney)
Webcast of meeting available [here](#).