

MINUTES

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

**April 15, 2019
5:30 p.m.**

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

Mayor Vinis opened the April 15, 2019, work session of the Eugene City Council.

1. Committee Reports and Items of Interest

- Councilor Taylor – read opening statement of a proposed 5g resolution she will offer at the council's April 17 work session.

Mayor Vinis adjourned the City Council work session and convened a meeting of the Eugene Urban Renewal Agency.

2. Riverfront Urban Renewal Update

Community Development Director Michael Kinnison presented information about funding for Riverfront Park development, including an alternative funding proposal, district financial capacity, investment opportunities and future actions.

Council Discussion:

- Councilor Syrett – expressed concern that the presentation was too brief for her to take action after missing last week's presentation; requested a brief synopsis of the councilors' concerns about the proposed funding strategy and clarification of funding options.
- Councilor Yeh – thanked staff for coming back with alternatives; spoke to the importance of parks.
- Councilor Taylor – asked questions about the dollar amounts represented in Options A and B for alternative funding packages.
- Mayor Vinis – suggested putting Option B on the table for a vote.

MOTION AND VOTE: Councilor Taylor, seconded by Councilor Semple, moved to authorize the use of \$8 million of Riverfront Urban Renewal funds for the park and \$4 million for the plaza. **PASSED 7:0**, Councilor Zelenka absent.

MOTION AND VOTE: Councilor Taylor, seconded by Councilor Semple, moved to direct the Agency Director to come back to discuss funding strategies for other potential projects within the Riverfront Urban Renewal District.

PASSED 7:0, Councilor Zelenka absent.

Mayor Vinis adjourned the meeting of the Eugene Urban Renewal Agency and reconvened the work session of the Eugene City Council.

(Councilor Zelenka arrived at 5:45 p.m.)

3. Hwy. 99/Bethel Urban Renewal District

Economic Development Planner Anne Fifield presented information on how Urban Renewal districts can be used to achieve economic development goals, the potential for an Urban Renewal district to generate revenue for reinvestment in the area, and the steps to establish an Urban Renewal district.

Council Discussion:

- Councilor Evans – thanked staff for the presentation; referenced previous neighborhood improvements 30-40 years ago and suggested every part of the economic development toolbox should be used to leverage private and public investment; spoke about need for economic development in the area as well as different ideas for development; spoke to the need for investment and diversity in the city’s economic development profile; urged councilors to support development efforts.
- Councilor Semple – asked how the City would pay for services or needs initially paid for by Bethel/Hwy. 99 overlapping taxing districts, when incremental tax dollars go to a URD and how the system works; supported an alternative funding option to achieve economic development in the area.
- Councilor Pryor – expressed his thoughts about why Hwy. 99 would require commitment to put away money for development and spoke about the developments in recent decades; said Hwy. 99 development is important for the city, regardless of the tool.
- Councilor Clark – spoke about using UR funds for private projects rather than public projects; expressed concerns about UR in that district; commented on opportunities to develop Hwy. 99 and desire to do something.
- Councilor Taylor – spoke to the attributes and history of urban renewal in Eugene; suggested this tool be voted on by the public rather than the council.
- Councilor Syrett – thanked Councilor Evans for bringing this issue up for council discussion; spoke about the opportunities for development and expressed interest in further conversation; suggested potential funding strategies and opportunities; expressed interest in studying funding mechanisms; supported including an end date for this potential URD; expressed appreciation for Councilor Clark’s comments regarding private investments and supported the notion of a public vote for URD designation.
- Councilor Zelenka – expressed appreciation for the report; reiterated support for economic development efforts in the area but not using UR as a funding mechanism.
- Mayor Vinis – inquired about the dollar potential to leverage money through use of other mechanisms; asked where this idea fits into the scope of other neighborhood improvement efforts in the city.
- Councilor Pryor – asked what the UR funds would be used for, noting that communication of this information would be integral to establishing a URD; expressed desire to identify worthwhile projects.
- Councilor Evans – spoke about potential development at “4 Corners” area on Hwy. 99, including multi-unit housing development; suggested investment in this location by the City would demonstrate equity in funding and development decisions.
- Councilor Zelenka – expressed interest in learning about opportunities for other economic development tools, how they might operate, and their potential to generate funds; would like a project scope document for both the set-up of a URD in that area and potential projects with scoping documents.
- Councilor Taylor – voiced concern about not establishing an end date for the URD; spoke to private investments in the area.
- Mayor Vinis – reiterated idea of creating a full scope of options.

The meeting adjourned at 6:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Forrest

Beth Forrest
City Recorder

(Recorded by Samantha Roberts)

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