

MINUTES

Eugene Urban Renewal Agency Work Session Eugene, Oregon 97401

February 19, 2025
12:00 p.m.

Councilors Present: Eliza Kashinsky, Matt Keating, Alan Zelenka, Jennifer Yeh, Mike Clark, Greg Evans, Lyndsie Leech, and Randy Groves

Mayor Knudson opened the February 19, 2025, Eugene Urban Renewal Agency Work Session in a virtual format.

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

Agency Director, Sarah Medary, introduced Community Development Director, Will Dowdy, who was joined by Emily Proudfoot (Parks and Open Spaces) and Katie Marwitz (Public Works Engineering). Together they presented updates on the Riverfront Renewal District projects and funding proposals.

Councilor Discussion:

- Councilor Groves – asked how many parking spaces will be available for the development named “Portal”; asked if the plan would provide at least one parking spot per unit; asked for the cost difference to bury powerlines to reduce hazards; asked about the technical barriers to burying powerlines; asked what is planned for the eight acres from the land swap deal with the University of Oregon; asked for an understanding of impact of removing the south vehicle travel lane on Franklin Boulevard; asked staff to follow up and provide data from the consultant report regarding the traffic flow; asked staff to clarify the total cost of the proposed projects and the projected balance of funds.
- Councilor Zelenka – stated his excitement for the affordable housing project proposal; stated support for the project despite cost increases; noted the only affordable housing the City gets is subsidized housing; stated transmission line projects are expensive; stated an old estimate to bury basic powerlines is \$1 million per mile of line; noted concern for projects that are not necessary for reliability but believes this legacy project is an exception; is in favor of the project to make the Broadway corridor more aesthetically pleasing and safer to navigate.
- Councilor Clark – noted his past support of a larger financial expansion to the District for allocations in housing projects; is in favor of the proposed housing project; stated tax increment financing was created to add property value to privately owned property to build a larger tax base; stated that two of the projects proposed do not enhance the tax base; stated interest in voting on each proposed project separately.

- Councilor Leech – noted the Agency previously decided its biggest priority is housing; noted some projects are not directly housing, but will transform the District to be more attractive, enjoyable, and walkable for residents; stated the connector pieces of projects will be important to future improvements and is looking forward to a transformation of the area.
- Councilor Kashinsky – ask to clarify if the 1,000 units of new housing are standard, not subsidized; asked if the pedestrian improvements will improve the livability and experience of residents.
- Councilor Yeh – is happy to see the progress of the projects in development; stated appreciation for the way the projects have been developed with all of Eugene in mind, not just the District; supports the proposed projects.
- Councilor Groves – asked if Police and Fire have been consulted on the projects on Franklin Boulevard; noted that he still receives complaints about the traffic circle plans for Franklin Boulevard.
- Councilor Keating – is in support of increased housing; wants more blended income housing developments; stated preference for future festivals and celebrations, such as the World Athletics Championships, to be planned for the Riverfront plaza.
- Mayor Knudson – noted that this area used to be surrounded by razor wire fencing; noted she recently saw a school bus dropping off students at the new housing development; looks forward to mixed used neighborhoods in this area; noted these projects will enhance the walkability and connecting areas of Eugene.
- Councilor Evans – asked to clarify if the body wants the projects voted on separately.

MOTION: Councilor Evans, seconded by Councilor Leech, moved to approve the use of urban renewal funds for the projects in Attachment B to this AIS and to authorize the Agency Director to take all actions necessary to transfer ownership of the real property shown in Attachment C to the City of Eugene.

- Councilor Keating – asked for clarification on the language of the motion.
- Councilor Clark – clarified that the work on Broadway is necessary but questioned if Urban Renewal funds are the best option for that project.

VOTE: 8:0 PASSED

IN FAVOR: Kashinsky, Keating, Zelenka, Yeh, Clark, Evans, Leech and Groves

OPPOSED: None

Mayor Knudson adjourned the meeting at 12:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Katie LaSala', with a stylized, cursive script.

Katie LaSala
City Recorder

(Recorded by Sara McKinney)

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