

MINUTES

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

**April 10, 2023
5:30 p.m.**

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

Mayor Vinis opened the April 10, 2023, work session of the Eugene City Council in a hybrid format at 101 W 10th Avenue, Eugene OR 97401.

1. WORK SESSION and POSSIBLE ACTION: An Ordinance Establishing Urban Reserves for the City of Eugene; Amending the Eugene-Springfield Metropolitan Area General Plan; Amending the Envision Eugene Comprehensive Plan; Amending the Eugene-Springfield Metropolitan Area Public Facilities and Services Plan; and Providing an Effective Date.

City Manager, Sarah Medary, introduced Senior Planner, Rebecca Gershow and Planning Director, Alissa Hansen, to present information on the proposed ordinance.

Councilor Discussion:

- Councilor Zelenka – asked if the adoption or the expansion of Urban Growth Boundary triggers 10-year timeline; clarified the timeline would not begin if the Urban Growth Boundary is not expanded; noted his appreciation for the thoroughness of the materials provided.
- Councilor Groves – asked how quickly the Urban Growth Boundary can be expanded if needed; asked if the City has compared its Urban Reserves to other comparable municipalities; voiced concern over the City’s ability to react quickly if growth was needed.
- Councilor Keating – noted concern regarding preserving big game habitats in the south hills of Eugene; asked if Council can now, or in the future, deem the specified land as undevelopable based on its Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife big game habitat status.
- Councilor Clark – asked staff to clarify the difference between the Urban Growth Boundary and Urban Reserves; asked staff to clarify the selection process for Urban Reserves; asked about the criteria used to determine suitable lands for Urban Reserves; asked if land in the Urban Reserves were deemed suitable for urbanization; asked staff to explain the analysis used for included oak savannas; asked if there is a separate process to exclude unsuitable lands from the Urban Growth Boundary; asked staff to estimate what percentage of land will be excluded from the Urban Growth Boundary based on criteria.
- Councilor Evans – asked staff to explain what protections are being considered for big game on the land in the south hills included in Urban Reserves; clarified that Council is only being asked to adopt a map at this time.

- Councilor Semple – noted that Council is only being asked to adopt a map at this time; reiterated that Council is not making decisions about land use.
- Councilor Zelenka – noted that the process is not designed to move quickly, but the benefit of having Urban Reserves is that it streamlines the growth process when it is required; asked staff to state the process to move Urban Reserve lands into the Urban Growth Boundary; asked how excluded lands can be reviewed in the future for developability.
- Councilor Clark – asked staff to clarify how the governor’s promise to build more houses could impact the City; asked if the governor can change the Urban Growth Boundary; asked if Council can get an update on the City’s options in reference to the governor’s recent promise to build more homes; stated preference for Council to be transparent in discussing the potential impact of the governor’s proposed legislation.

MOTION: Councilor Groves, seconded by Councilor Keating, moved to adopt an ordinance establishing urban reserves for the City of Eugene; amending the Eugene-Springfield Metropolitan Area General Plan; amending the Envision Eugene Comprehensive Plan; amending the Eugene-Springfield Metropolitan Area Public Facilities and Services Plan; and providing an effective date.

MOTION TO AMEND: Councilor Keating moved to amend pursuant to OAR 660-021-0010 and -0030 lands determined as big game habitat as Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife’s maps include in our AIS are undevelopable. Motion not seconded; motion failed.

VOTE ON ORIGINAL MOTION: PASSED 7:1 (opposed by Councilor Keating)

Mayor Vinis closed the meeting of the Eugene City Council and convened a meeting of the Eugene Urban Renewal Agency.

2. **WORK SESSION: Proposed Downtown Urban Renewal Amendment**

Agency Director, Sarah Medary, introduced Community Development Manager, Will Dowdy, and Development Programs Manager, Amanda D’Souza, to present information on the proposed Downtown Urban Renewal Amendment.

Councilor Discussion:

- Councilor Zelenka – noted the general fund deficit and that he is in favor of adding revenue to the general fund; asked how much money would go to the general fund if the Downtown Urban Renewal area were to sunset; noted a preference for a shorter District lifespan; stated his preference to focus on housing; noted concerns about the expansion of the convention center or a cultural center on the emerging projects list; stated support for the revitalization of Park Blocks and Kesey Square.
- Councilor Semple – noted if the Downtown Urban Renewal is not extended there would be a loss of overall revenue; is in support of extension; stated she is not prepared to begin the amendment process today.
- Councilor Evans – noted that Urban Renewal is a good tool for investment in housing; noted a need to increase urban density; noted that there is a need to

restrict vehicles in downtown or increase parking; would support starting with a small expansion and reevaluating in the future.

- Councilor Yeh – noted that housing should be the focus of any future projects; believes investment in downtown should continue; stated that more information would be required to make a decision.
- Councilor Groves – noted support of proposed scenario B with more of the funds going towards housing in downtown.
- Mayor Vinis – asked for clarity on the potential distribution of funds at the continuation of this work session; noted that the Housing Implementation Pipeline has a goal of a thousand units; noted that Climate Friendly Equitable Communities would have an impact on parking in downtown.
- Councilor Semple – noted that Council is not being asked to allocate the funds tonight; noted that the items on the project list are potential projects.
- Councilor Zelenka – asked what the amount would be if it were extended by 10 years; stated that he would support more funds to housing; asked staff to bring back information on how the project list would be determined.
- Councilor Groves – noted his preference for allocating funds before voting to extend the Downtown Renewal Agency; would like to have more information on the timeline.
- Mayor Vinis – asked about the process to increase the frozen base.

Mayor Vinis adjourned the meeting at 6:59p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Katie LaSala
City Recorder

(Recorded by Cherish Bradshaw)

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