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EUGENE CITY COUNCIL AGENDA

September 28, 2020

5:30 p.m. CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Due to Governor Brown's Stay Home, Save Lives Executive Order to combat the spread of Covid-19, this meeting will be held remotely using virtual meeting technology. Information about online or other options for access and participation will be available at https://www.eugene-or.gov/3360/Webcasts-and-Meeting-Materials

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Meeting of September 28, 2020;
Her Honor Mayor Lucy Vinis Presiding

Councilors

Emily Semple, President	Jennifer Yeh, Vice President
Mike Clark	Greg Evans
Chris Pryor	Claire Syrett
Betty Taylor	Alan Zelenka

5:30 p.m. CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION

1. **WORK SESSION and POSSIBLE ACTION: Initiation of Land Use Code Amendments for Commercial Setback Requirements**

2. **WORK SESSION: City Manager Evaluation Process**

For the hearing impaired, an interpreter can be provided with 48 hours' notice prior to the meeting. Spanish-language interpretation will also be provided with 48 hours' notice. To arrange for these services, contact the receptionist at 541-682-5010. City Council meetings are telecast live on Metro Television, Comcast channel 21, and rebroadcast later in the week.

El consejo de la Ciudad de Eugene agradece su interés en estos asuntos de la agenda. El lugar de la reunión tiene acceso para sillas de ruedas. Se puede proveer a un intérprete para las personas con discapacidad auditiva si avisa con 48 horas de anticipación. También se puede proveer interpretación para español si avisa con 48 horas de anticipación. Para reservar estos servicios llame al 541-682-5010. Las reuniones del consejo de la ciudad se transmiten en vivo por Metro Television, Canal 21 de Comcast y son retransmitidas durante la semana.

For more information, contact the Council Coordinator at 541-682-5010
or visit us online at www.eugene-or.gov.

EUGENE CITY COUNCIL
AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

Work Session: Initiation of Land Use Code Amendments for Commercial Setback Requirements

Meeting Date: September 28, 2020 | Agenda Item Number: 1
Department: Planning and Development | Staff Contact: Chad Cramer
www.eugene-or.gov | Contact Telephone Number: 541.682.5561

ISSUE STATEMENT

This work session is an opportunity to discuss building setback standards and how they impact the pedestrian environment. It is also an opportunity to consider whether to initiate a land use code amendment process to update setback standards and related design requirements for buildings in commercial zones.

BACKGROUND

Eugene's community vision recognizes the critical role of our downtown, key transit corridors, and core commercial areas. These places are economic drivers for the community due to the concentration of commercial services, businesses, and denser housing coupled with convenient transportation options. To support thriving and walkable neighborhoods in these areas, special care must be taken with planning and urban design standards, including building setbacks, due to the complexity of interrelated uses and systems that make up the urban environment. The Eugene Downtown Plan, Envision Eugene, the Regional Economic Prosperity Plan, and the Eugene 2035 Transportation System Plan are some of the policy documents that recognize the importance of mixing uses and creating a walkable urban form in key locations.

Eugene's downtown has the largest concentration of employment in the region and is home to cultural, civic, and educational resources patronized by community members from neighborhoods throughout the metropolitan area. Major activity centers located just outside of the downtown core include the Riverfront Park, the University of Oregon and the Lane Events Center at the Fairgrounds. The city's efficiency strategies adopted as part of the Urban Growth Boundary in 2017 aimed to add 1,000 units of high-density housing in Downtown and Council has supported this development through incentives such as MUPTE and Urban Renewal.

Concurrently, the River Road - Santa Clara neighborhood planning process is developing land use code recommendations through the River Road Corridor Study that will address neighborhood action items and the unique context of the area to integrate mixed-use and housing options. This code has the potential to provide a model for how similar processes may work on our key transit corridors and in neighborhood centers in the future.

Council began a conversation about setbacks for properties in the downtown area with the intent of creating vibrant streetscapes and a walkable pedestrian environment. A copy of the Agenda Item Summary for the previous work session is provided as Attachment A. At that work session, which was prompted by several recent developments in the downtown area, staff presented current setback requirements and different factors that affect the quality of the pedestrian environment.

In their discussion, Council expressed concern with the current setback standards that allow for buildings to have residential units built adjacent to and level with the sidewalk. The lack of setbacks and transition space results in an uncomfortable environment due to the lack of privacy for pedestrians and residents of these buildings. It was noted that the current requirements for setbacks do not create the conditions for a safe, comfortable and attractive downtown environment as aspired to in the community's policy and vision documents. Council expressed a desire for a solution that creates a more livable, greener, healthier, vibrant and pedestrian-friendly downtown, while providing for more certainty and not causing undue costs to housing.

Today's work session is an opportunity to revisit the discussion and for staff to present additional information about best urban design practices. Since 2017, the Planning Division has published the Envision Eugene Community Vision, Urban Form Plan, and Community Design Handbook as guiding elements of our community vision around design. To implement these aspirations, the Council may choose to initiate land use code amendments that build on best urban design practices and have the potential to improve design conditions in our community, starting downtown. With a concentration of commercial zoning, a target for needed housing, and recent and planned housing projects taking shape throughout the city center, downtown is an ideal area to pilot code amendments aimed at enhancing walkability and increasing expectations for higher-quality built outcomes.

Best urban design practices consider the design, massing, use and relationships between buildings and public spaces in a holistic manner. Setbacks are part of this toolset and Eugene's land use code provides specific requirements based on the zoning and use of each site. Focusing on setbacks for buildings downtown is critical as these buildings are located along busy public sidewalks where their impact can be substantial.

Next Steps

Any update to the City's land use code requires City Council initiation. Initiation does not infer support for any proposed or specific changes, rather it allows for the start of a formal process. If initiated, the process will involve further public outreach with stakeholders, drafting of land use code language, and providing required notices. The process includes a Planning Commission public hearing and recommendation, followed by a City Council public hearing and action.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION

March 13, 2017

Although City Council did not provide formal direction at this work session, there was general agreement that the City Manager would return with a proposal for Council to consider.

COUNCIL OPTIONS

The City Council may consider the following options:

1. Initiate a land use code amendment process to update commercial setback standards and related design requirements for buildings in the downtown area, as a pilot project.
2. Decline to initiate a land use code amendment process.
3. Direct staff to return with additional information.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION

The City Manager recommends that City Council initiate a land use code amendment to update commercial setback standards and related design requirements for buildings in the downtown area, as a pilot project.

SUGGESTED MOTION

Move to initiate a land use code amendment process to update commercial setback standards and related design requirements for buildings in the downtown area as a pilot project.

ATTACHMENTS

A. City Council Agenda Item Summary, March 13, 2017

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Staff Contact: Chad Cramer
Staff Telephone: 541.682.5561
Staff e-mail: CCramer@eugene-or.gov

EUGENE CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

Work Session: Commercial Setback Code Requirements for Downtown

Meeting Date: March 13, 2017
Department: Planning & Development
www.eugene-or.gov

Agenda Item Number: C
Staff Contact: Zach Galloway
Contact Telephone Number: 541.682.5485

ISSUE STATEMENT

This City Council work session will explore setback standards in the land use code and other related development factors affecting the pedestrian environment in downtown Eugene. This is an informational item and no Council action is requested.

BACKGROUND

The Downtown Plan, Envision Eugene and the economic development-focused Regional Economic Prosperity Plan all recognize the importance of supporting a thriving downtown. To that end, City Council has taken recent actions to advance related policy objectives. The Downtown and Mixed Use Code Amendments and the reauthorization of the Multiple-Unit Property Tax Exemption (MUPTE) program in the area are actions intended to increase residential development. More recently, the Downtown Placemaking project seeks to activate our public spaces and manage them in a way that creates a welcoming and thriving downtown for all Eugene residents.

The pedestrian environment, or "streetscape" is the connective tissue between private establishments and our public spaces. Our streets are the largest component of public space in the downtown. Thus, the design, dimensions, and relationships between buildings and public spaces must be considered holistically in creating the pedestrian environment. Our community has shown a desire to support a thriving, walkable downtown and "20-minute neighborhoods" throughout the city. Land Use Code regulations should reflect these community values and help create a downtown that meets the community's needs and expectations.

The following questions were posed in advance of the work session.

- What are the current commercial development setback code requirements? Where do they apply?
- Should we eliminate the developer option for no setbacks which allows them to develop right up to the sidewalk (e.g., Capstone on 11th, new Hilton downtown, and others)? How does that impact the development costs? What are the public benefits?
- Should we require, in certain areas, landscaping between the sidewalk and the building/development? If so, what kind and how much?

Downtown is zoned C-3 Major Commercial and C-2 Community Commercial (Attachment A), both of which require buildings to be located within 15-feet of the front property line. The C-3 zone is limited to the downtown core, but the C-2 zone is found citywide, mainly along major streets. There are also several applicable special area and overlay zones. Notably for this work session, the /BW Broadway overlay zone was created after more detailed design and planning work that coincided with the re-opening of the street to vehicular traffic. The front setback along Broadway was reduced to no greater than two feet, thereby ensuring a continuous street frontage and sense of enclosure along one of our Great Streets. That sense of enclosure is an important element of a comfortable urban walking environment.

Examples of varying street and development conditions throughout the downtown will be presented at the work session. There are places where a small setback works well, such as along Broadway, and other places where increased setbacks may provide for a better pedestrian experience. Staff will discuss the various factors affecting the success of the pedestrian environment, including the following:

- *Street type and function.* The speed of travel and dominant function or mode of transportation affects the quality of the pedestrian environment.
- *Street width.* The public right-of-way width, number of lanes for various uses, and design can make streets function and feel differently.
- *Adjacent land use/ private development.* Building materials, active or inactive uses, the presence or absence of windows, the height of the first floor, setbacks and design features such as landscaping are private elements affecting the public realm.
- *Context within downtown.* As noted above, all buildings in downtown must be located within 15-feet of the front property line. However, this blanket standard fails to recognize the different context of downtown streets (e.g., Olive Street transitions from commercial to office to residential between 8th and 13th Avenues).

If the land use code were to be revised to increase required setbacks, the amount of leasable square footage on a given development site could be reduced. However, depending on the context within downtown, increasing setbacks may be one of several actions needed to create the desired street side character. Along residential frontages, landscaping is often used in urban areas as a means of delineating private space and creating privacy. Again, the location, width, and type of landscaping will be dependent on context. Examples of successful street frontages will be shared at the work session.

CURRENT RELATED EFFORTS

Several current projects address walkability issues in downtown and elsewhere in the community.

- *Street Design Standards*. Public Works is updating the current street design manual to reflect multi-modal and safety related policy directives.
- *Willamette to Willamette* will return 8th Avenue to a two-way street. This is a long-standing downtown priority.
- *Special Setbacks along Key Transit Corridors*. Council gave City staff direction to create special setbacks along Franklin Boulevard to preserve adequate width for implementation of a redesigned street. That direction will be extended through the Moving Ahead project, as the

setbacks are tailored to the locally preferred transit and street design.

- *Community Design Handbook*. The draft Community Design Handbook is a non-regulatory tool that offers guidance and photographic examples of best practices to create a walkable street with buildings that fit the context. This document has been employed in design review for MUPTE projects and regular Project Consultations.

RELATED CITY POLICIES

Regional Economic Prosperity Plan (2010)

An identified Priority Next Step is to "support and enhance vitality in [the] city center."

Downtown Plan (2004)

III. 1. Emphasize Broadway, Willamette Street, 5th and 8th Avenues as Great Streets through public improvements and development guidelines.

IV. 1. Enhance public places throughout downtown through the careful design of civic buildings, streetscapes, parks and plazas. Include public art and other elements to create special places for all ages.

IX. 3. Enhance functional designs for streets, sidewalks and related public improvements with carefully chosen design elements, including materials, alignments, plantings, and streetscape elements.

DRAFT Eugene Transportation System Plan (2017)

Pedestrian Policies

1. Encourage walking as the most attractive mode of transportation for short trips (*e.g.*, within one half miles) within and to activity centers, downtown, key corridors, and major destinations, and as a means of accessing transit.
2. Ensure that there are safe, accessible, comfortable, and direct sidewalk connections between residential areas, major destinations, and transit stops. Continually improve walking comfort, safety, and accessibility through design, operations, retrofits, and maintenance. Provide landscaped setback sidewalks of ample width and safe street crossings to encourage people to walk.

COUNCIL OPTIONS

Informational item. No action requested.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION

No recommended action.

SUGGESTED MOTION

Not applicable

ATTACHMENTS

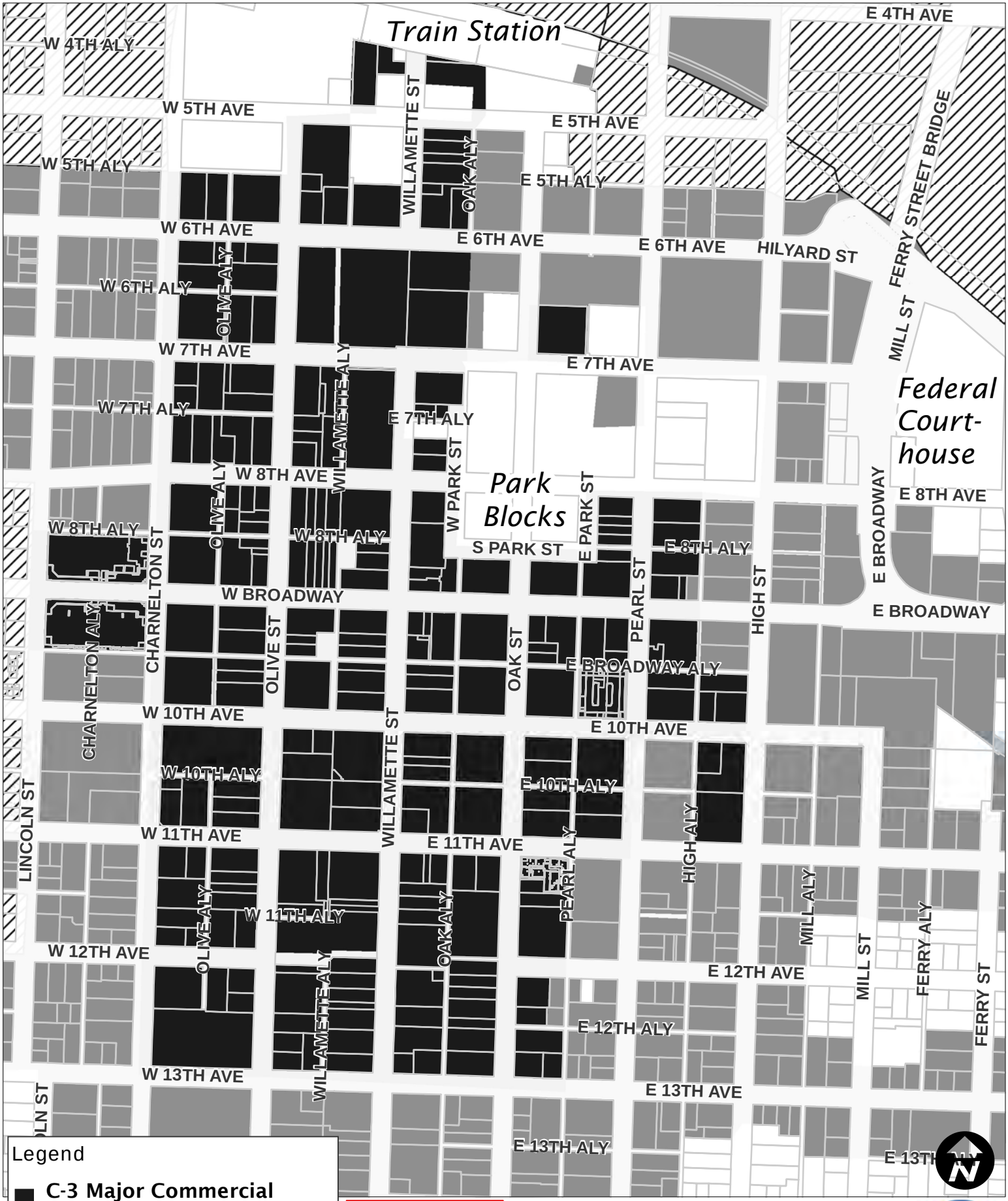
A. Downtown Zoning Map

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Staff Contact: Zach Galloway
Telephone: 541.682.5485
Staff E-Mail: zach.a.galloway@ci.eugene.or.us

Attachment A

Commercial Zones in Downtown Eugene



EUGENE CITY COUNCIL
AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

Work Session: City Manager Evaluation Process

Meeting Date: September 28, 2020 | Agenda Item Number: 2
Department: Central Services | Staff Contact: Sarah Medary
www.eugene-or.gov | Contact Telephone Number: 541-682-5336

ISSUE STATEMENT
As part of the City Manager appointment process, the City Council and City Manager agreed to discuss and agree to an annual evaluation process beginning September 2021. This work session is an opportunity for the City Council to give feedback on a proposed process and discuss initial high-level goals for the next year.

BACKGROUND
As part of the City Manager appointment process, City Council expressed a desire to refresh and renew the evaluation process for the City Manager. Council leadership agreed to work with the City Manager to bring back a proposed process for discussion as well as a timeline and approach for 2021.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION
Previous City Council direction was provided in the City Manager's employment agreement. In that, Council directed that, "Starting in September 2021 and continuing every September thereafter, the City Council shall review and evaluate Medary's performance. The eight City Councilors shall consider increasing Medary's compensation at the time of Medary's annual performance evaluation. In September 2020 the City Council and Medary shall establish a mutually agreed upon annual performance evaluation process. The City Council may conduct additional reviews of Medary's performance at any other time it deems appropriate."

COUNCIL OPTIONS
This work session is an opportunity for City Council to discuss and approve an annual performance evaluation process.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION
The City Manager will not make a recommendation, but instead work with Council to establish mutual agreement.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Staff Contact: Sarah Medary
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