



EWEB RIVERFRONT MASTER PLAN – Land Use Phase Frequently Asked Questions

What is a master plan?

Master plans come in many shapes and sizes. They provide a high-level planning and policy framework that guides the location and quantity of development and open space within a particular area. In the case of the EWEB Riverfront Master Plan, the project establishes a framework for the re-use of Eugene's 27-acre Downtown Riverfront.

What's included in the EWEB Riverfront Master Plan?

The master plan identifies new public rights-of-way (streets, paths and greenways), 8 acres of public open space (parks and plazas), and new city blocks for redevelopment (parcels). The master plan includes design guidelines for buildings and open space, a list of allowable uses for the site, a LEED® certification requirement for all new construction, and a list of recommended interpretive sites on the riverfront property. A riverfront park with nearby restaurants and the adaptive re-use of existing structures like the Steam Plant and Operations Warehouse are also envisioned.

How does this project connect to other Downtown redevelopment?

The Downtown Plan identifies the EWEB site as Eugene's best opportunity to reconnect the city with the river. The master plan complements both current and future Downtown redevelopment by creating the framework for an active mixed-use district with public amenities along the river. In doing so, the re-use of this property supports our community's larger vision of a strong downtown core and appropriately sited infill redevelopment that allows the City to move toward its sustainability goals.

Has the master plan been approved?

After two years of work, the nine-member Community Advisory Team (CAT) forwarded a consensus recommendation of the master plan's framework to the EWEB Board of Commissioners in spring 2010. The Board then unanimously approved the master plan in June 2010.

If EWEB approved the plan last year, what's included in the Land Use phase?

New regulations and zoning are now needed to implement the master plan's vision. The land use phase includes the necessary plan amendments and zone changes to allow for the re-use and redevelopment of the EWEB property. Currently, the EWEB property is zoned to accommodate the public utility's uses. The new zoning will allow for mixed-use redevelopment that can accommodate a wide range of residential and commercial uses and establish the new riverfront park space. In keeping with the City-EWEB agreement that structured the master planning process, City Council will be

asked to approve the master plan vision and associated land use applications concurrently.

Will the riverfront still be publically accessible? What about the bike path?

The master plan creates a publicly accessible neighborhood and new public park space from what is currently a fenced, inaccessible utility yard. The property's entire river frontage and path system will remain as public land, and the master plan proposes 8 acres of new public open space. The existing bike path will also be maintained and improved as the riverfront park is developed.

I'm interested in the riverfront open space. What does the park look like?

The master plan proposes a new crescent-shaped public park along the west side of the river, but does not provide a refined park design. The design team used the recommendations from the project's Ecological Report to develop a conceptual design for the open space that focuses on connections to the river, environmental education, stormwater management, and native plant communities. The master plan includes an extensive description of public open space types and the design requirements necessary to accommodate the proposed activities and urban habitat.

How far is new development set back from the river?

Though the EWEB property is a previously developed site, the master plan indicates that all new buildings will be set back more than 100' from top of bank. The Willamette Greenway and Water Resource (WR) overlay zone identify 100' as the conservation setback from the Willamette River (a Category A resource). This setback will create the space for a new riverfront park and riparian enhancement to happen on land now occupied by a utility yard paved with asphalt and gravel. The master plan also identifies areas where the setback is greater than 200'. The Steam Plant, EWEB Headquarters and Equipment Repair buildings are all located closer to the river than any proposed redevelopment. (The Equipment Repair building would be removed to create space for the public boardwalk, Restaurant Row, and additional riverfront open space.)

Is the Millrace included in this plan?

Currently, the outflow of the Millrace is conveyed through an underground pipe that runs beneath the EWEB property into the river. While the master plan does not require the Millrace to be 'daylit,' the design framework creates the opportunity to connect with this water feature in the future. The master plan proposes a large stormwater swale adjacent to the Steam Plant that could provide an ideal connection between this historic water feature and the Willamette River. With or without the Millrace, this proposed swale will serve an important stormwater cleansing function for the site.

What about the existing buildings on the EWEB site?

The master plan allows for the adaptive re-use of several existing structures. Both the Steam Plant and EWEB Headquarters (which still holds EWEB's administrative staff) will remain for the foreseeable future. The existing sheds and temporary trailers on the

operations yard will be removed. The Operations Warehouse will also be available for adaptive re-use when the land use phase is complete.

Why do we need a master plan for this property? Is EWEB staying on the site?

The Downtown Riverfront is like no other place in Eugene. The combination of its location along the Willamette and proximity to the Downtown core create unparalleled potential for this site to support Eugene's identity as a vibrant "river city." In 2007, the City and EWEB agreed that the utility would complete a public master planning process for this unique property, and that the necessary land use applications would be approved before any redevelopment began. Today, EWEB's Administrative and Customer Service departments are still located on the riverfront site, but the utility's Operations and Maintenance departments moved to West Eugene in November 2010. The central portion of the riverfront property is now vacated. This property cannot be re-used for purposes other than the utility's until the master plan and land use ordinances are adopted.

How does this plan relate to the UO Riverfront Research Park?

The EWEB Riverfront Master Plan and UO Riverfront Research Park are two separate planning projects. The two properties share a boundary near the Hilyard Street connection to the Riverfront Trail and, together, reach along the south side of the river from east of Agate Street to the Ferry Street Bridge. During the design phase, Rowell Brokaw Architects presented the proposed master plan design to the UO Riverfront Research Park staff, with a focus on improving path and landscape connectivity. The need for collaboration with neighbors and improved connections were key points raised in the Community Advisory Team's Guiding Principles for this project. The site proposed for the Oregon Research Institute (ORI) building is immediately to the east of the EWEB property.

What is the Community Advisory Team? Who was on it?

In 2008, a volunteer Community Advisory Team (CAT) was jointly appointed by City Council and the EWEB Board to guide the master planning and public engagement process. This volunteer committee established a set of bylaws, developed the criteria to choose the design consultant, and worked with Rowell Brokaw Architects to develop the master plan. The CAT met for two years before forwarding its consensus recommendation to the EWEB Board in May 2010. The nine-member team included Anita Van Asperdt, Dave Hauser, Tom Hoyt, Mark Johnson, Pat Johnston, Desiree Moore, Dean Papé, Mary Unruh, and Gary Wildish.

What were the master plan's Guiding Principles?

The project's Guiding Principles are a set of shared values approved by the Community Advisory Team that informed the creation of the master plan. These principles include: Sustainable Urbanism, Balance of Uses, Ecology, Identity, Connection, Economics and Feasibility. To guide the project's public involvement, the CAT also agreed by consensus that the master planning process would be meaningful, accountable, inclusive, transparent, realistic and outcome-oriented.

What criteria will be used to evaluate the master plan?

The City's Downtown Plan policies state that the EWEB Riverfront Master Plan will be evaluated for consistency with the following four principles. The master plan should 1) create a "people place" that is active, vibrant, accessible and multi-use; 2) provide appropriate setbacks, deeper where environmental or habitat issues are more critical, shallower in other areas; 3) incorporate appropriate building and site design techniques that address environmental concerns; and 4) incorporate an educational aspect that teaches about our river, city and history.

How will redevelopment occur?

Though not required, redevelopment is likely to occur in phases over several years and involve a combination of private-public partnerships. Developing a master plan for the riverfront site was the first step towards redevelopment. Establishing compatible zoning and redevelopment standards to deliver the master plan vision is the second step—that is the primary work of the land use phase. The plan amendments and code language adopted at the end of the land use phase will create a framework for future redevelopment that conforms to the master plan and maintains flexibility for unforeseen opportunities. The redevelopment standards established for the EWEB property will apply to any future property owner, public or private.

Who participated in this design process? Is there still opportunity for input?

In addition to the CAT, more than 1,000 Eugeneans participated in the focus groups, interviews, design charrette and public meetings held during the master planning process. We asked for input at critical points in the process, read every public comment, and were dedicated to ensuring a community-developed design. If you have comments or questions, please contact us at eweb@rowellbrokaw.com.