

TO: City of Coos Bay Planning Commission

FROM: Scott Vanden Bos, Elaine Howard Consulting, LLC

DATE: September 12, 2018

SUBJECT: Empire Urban Renewal Plan Amendment

I. PURPOSE

The Coos Bay Planning Commission is being asked to make a recommendation to the City Council regarding the Council's consideration and adoption of the proposed Empire Urban Renewal Plan Amendment (Amendment). The Amendment is designed for the Empire Urban Renewal Area (Area) that includes the Empire Business District within the Coos Bay city limits. The reason for this Amendment is to increase the maximum indebtedness to fund street, curb and sidewalk improvements.

The focus of the Planning Commission's review is the conformance of the Amendment with the Coos Bay Comprehensive Plan. This action does not require a public hearing, and the Planning Commission is not being asked to approve the Amendment, but rather make a recommendation to the Coos Bay City Council on the conformance to the Coos Bay Comprehensive Plan issue. There are no explicit review criteria for a Planning Commission for the review of an urban renewal amendment. The Oregon Revised Statute (ORS) ORS 457.085(4) states that "An urban renewal plan and accompanying report shall be forwarded to the planning commission of the municipality for recommendations, prior to presenting the plan to the governing body of the municipality for approval under ORS 457.095". The generally accepted practice is for the Planning Commission to provide input on the relationship of the Plan to the Local Goals and Objectives (Section IV of the Plan), and particularly to its conformance to the City of Coos Bay Comprehensive Plan.

II. BACKGROUND

The Agency and City Council have been evaluating the Empire Urban Renewal Plan (Plan) over the last year. In 2018 they adopted a minor amendment to update the projects in the Plan. The projects identified for the future are the Hollering Place Development, a Façade Program to assist businesses with improvements to their buildings, Street Improvements, Library Assistance and Signage. While completion of these projects are important, there is a strong desire from the community and the Agency to undertake some additional road improvements within the Empire District that are not affordable under the present spending limit for the urban renewal area.

As part of the minor amendment process, the financial projections of the Area were updated, and the City determined they would like to proceed with a substantial amendment to the Plan to increase the spending limit in the Area. This increase in the spending limit would allow for additional funding to be allocated to the reconstruction of streets within the Area.

III. PUBLIC NOTICE

The notice was published in the World newspaper on September 4, 2018 and was posted on the bulletin board at City Hall and the Library on September 6, 2018. The notice will be placed on the city of Coos Bay website on September 7, 2018.

IV. PROPOSAL

The Empire Urban Renewal Area (Area), shown in Figure 1, consists of approximately 273.54 acres of land including rights of way.

The purpose of urban renewal is to improve specific areas of a city that are poorly developed or underdeveloped. These areas can have old deteriorated buildings, public spaces which need improvements, a lack of investment, streets and utilities in poor condition or they can lack streets and utilities altogether. The Area has many properties that are undeveloped or under developed and lacks sufficient infrastructure within the Area. The specific projects proposed in this Plan are outlined in Section III of the Amendment and include the following categories Street, Curb, and Sidewalk Improvements.

Urban renewal is unique in that it brings its own financing source: tax increment financing (TIF). Tax increment revenues - the amount of property taxes generated by the increase in total assessed values in the urban renewal area from the time the urban renewal area is first established – are used to repay borrowed funds. The funds borrowed are used to pay for urban renewal projects.

Urban renewal is put into effect by the local government (the city in this case) adopting an urban renewal plan. The urban renewal plan defines the urban renewal area, states goals and objectives for the area, lists projects and programs that can be undertaken, provides a dollar limit on the funds borrowed for urban renewal projects, and states how the plan may be changed in the future.

The goals of the Plan are listed in Section I-C of the original Plan.

The proposed maximum indebtedness, the limit on the amount of funds that may be spent on administration, projects and programs in the Area is \$18,890,011. The proposed Amendment increases it from \$12,550,011 by \$6,340,000. This increase falls below the 20% threshold to require concurrence from the overlapping taxing districts. The maximum indebtedness does not include interest paid on any borrowing by the urban renewal agency. There is a proposed financing plan in the Report that shows that the Plan is financially feasible. It is understood that the Agency may make changes to the financing plan as needs and opportunities arise, typically during the annual budgeting process.

The Plan is administered by the Coos Bay Urban Renewal Agency (Agency). Major changes to the Plan, if necessary, must be approved by the Agency and City Council as detailed in Section VII of the original Plan.

V. RELATIONSHIP TO LOCAL OBJECTIVES

The Plan relates to local planning and development objectives contained within the Coos Bay Comprehensive Plan, the Coos Bay Development Code, and the Coos Bay Economic Opportunity Analysis.

The following section describes the purpose and intent of the Comprehensive Plan, the particular goals and policies within the Comprehensive Plan to which the proposed Amendment relates, and an explanation of how the Amendment relates to these goals and policies. The numbering of the goals, policies, and implementation strategies will reflect the numbering that occurs in the original document. Italicized text is text that *has* been taken directly from an original planning document. The Comprehensive Plan designations are shown in Figure 2. The proposed land uses conform to Figure 2, the comprehensive plan designations and the maximum densities and building requirements can be found in Title 17 Coos Bay Development Code.

This is not a comprehensive list of all parts of the Coos Bay Comprehensive Plan that are supported by this Amendment. This list includes the major Goals and Policies from the comprehensive plans that are in conformance with the urban renewal Amendment; however, there may be other Goals and Policies that are not listed, but are still in conformance with this Amendment.

A. City of Coos Bay Comprehensive Plan

This section of the Plan is deleted in its entirety and replaced with the following: *(please note the numbering in this section refers to the exact numbering in the source document) (Sections in ~~striketrough~~ have been deleted from the plan while sections in italics have been added to the plan)*

2. Energy Conservation – No change

3. Historic Preservation – No change

5. Economic Development

~~Strategy ED.7 Coos Bay shall encourage the development of commercial trade and service activities along the Empire/Charleston Highway, within the city limits, recognizing that this prime area can capture much of the tourist travel to the state park area.~~

Goal #1: Encourage and support economic growth.

Goal #2: Maintain and expand a diversified economy.

2.1 Encourage expansion of recreational, cultural and eco-tourism industries by supporting, enhancing and expanding amenities and infrastructure from waterfront development to lodging options, including shopping, arts and entertainment.

2.2 Direct public investments toward creating an attractive downtown and waterfront setting that enhances Coos Bay and the Empire districts as areas where people want to live and do businesses

2.3 Pursue the implementation of the Hollering Place Master Plan, adopted December 2, 2008, to create a public activity area on the waterfront that

serves residents and visitors; rebuild the dilapidated dock to promote more water-related activities; and, complement surrounding properties while connecting with the existing business district. A plan amendment from industrial to commercial or mixed-use will be required.

Goal #4: Work to retain, expand and strengthen existing local businesses.

4.1 Continue to support the creation of outdoor public gathering spaces as a way to strengthen community interaction with local businesses.

4.2 Continue to offer programs that strengthen local businesses.

4.3 Facilitate business investment and development by offering programs to fit their needs.

Goal #6: Maximize use of Coos Bay's unique geographic and recreational assets and cultural heritage.

6.3 Promote the waterfront as key to a recreational center and opportunity to increase awareness of Coos Bay's rich maritime and logging history.

Conformance to Comprehensive Plan Statement:

The Plan conforms to the Economic Development Section of the Comprehensive Plan as the projects to be undertaken by the Agency will support economic development in the Area.

Storefront loans will improve the look of the Area, improved signage will help identify the Area, street improvements will improve the transportation options for automobile, pedestrian and bicycle traffic.

7. Public Facilities and Services – No change

8. Transportation

~~T.7 Coos Bay shall continue to seek state and federal street and highway improvement grants health for its major streets, and to use serial levies as necessary to maintain local streets at an acceptable and condition, recognizing that the general public has an overall interest in maintaining major streets.~~

~~T.I.1 Coos Bay shall seek to improve and expand its 1975 Bikeway Plan recognizing that bicycle is an alternative, energy conserving, and healthy mode of transportation.~~

Goal 1: Transportation facilities designed and constructed in a manner to enhance Coos Bay's livability and meet federal, state, regional and local requirements.

Policy:

a. Maintain the livability of Coos Bay/North Bend through proper location and design of transportation facilities.

Goal 2: A balanced transportation system

b. Develop and provide a safe, complete, attractive, efficient, and accessible system of pedestrian ways and bicycle ways, including bike lanes, shared roadways, multi-use paths, and sidewalks according to the pedestrian and bicycle system maps and the Development Code and Engineering Design Manual and Standard Drawings requirements.

c. Provide connectivity to each area of Coos Bay for convenient multi-modal access. Ensure pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and vehicle access to waterfront, schools, parks, employment and recreational areas by identifying and developing improvements that address connectivity needs.

d. Develop neighborhood and local connections to provide adequate circulation into and out of neighborhoods.

Goal 3: A safe transportation system

b. Design streets to serve anticipated function and intended uses as determined by the Comprehensive Plan.

f. Provide satisfactory levels of maintenance to the transportation system in order to preserve user safety, facility aesthetics, and the integrity of the system as a whole.

Goal 4: An efficient transportation system that reduces the number and length of trips, limits congestion, and improves air quality.

Goal 5: Transportation facilities that serve and are accessible to all members of the community

a. Construct transportation facilities to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Goal 7: Implement the transportation plan by working cooperatively with federal, state, regional, and local governments, the private sector and residents. Create a stable, flexible financial system.

g. Provide adequate funding for maintenance of the capital investment in transportation facilities.

The Plan conforms to the Transportation Section of the Comprehensive Plan as the projects to be undertaken by the Agency will support economic development in the Area. Street improvements will improve the transportation options for automobile, pedestrian and bicycle traffic.

Commercial Areas

~~Objective 1—The City shall protect the integrity of established land use patterns to facilitate continued and compatible development.~~

~~Objective 2—It is important that the Central Business District (CBD) and its supportive commercial sub-districts remain efficient, prosperous, and easily accessible since commerce is a major source of revenue and is a necessity to the economic stability and future growth of the city. Efforts toward redevelopment of older, underutilized commercial areas will be encouraged.~~

Implementation

~~2. General Commercial. These areas are intended to provide for all other retail trade, commercial service and professional activities that constitute the essential base of the city's economy. Appropriate locations for commercial development include (1) established commercial areas, and (2) highway corridors not committed to less intensive land uses.~~

PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION AND VOTE

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission:

1. Review and discuss the proposed Empire Urban Renewal Plan Amendment
2. Find that the Plan Amendment conforms to the Coos Bay Comprehensive Plan, and optionally recommend the Plan Amendment's adoption to the Coos Bay City Council

Recommendation/Suggested Motion(s):

"I move that the Coos Bay Planning Commission finds, based upon the information provided in the staff report and the provided attachments, that the Empire Urban Renewal Plan Amendment conforms with the Coos Bay Comprehensive Plan

Optional additional language:

and further recommend that the Coos Bay City Council adopt the proposed Empire Urban Renewal Plan Amendment."

Attachments:

1. Empire Urban Renewal Plan Amendment
2. Report on the Empire Urban Renewal Plan Amendment

Figure 1 - Urban Renewal Area Boundary

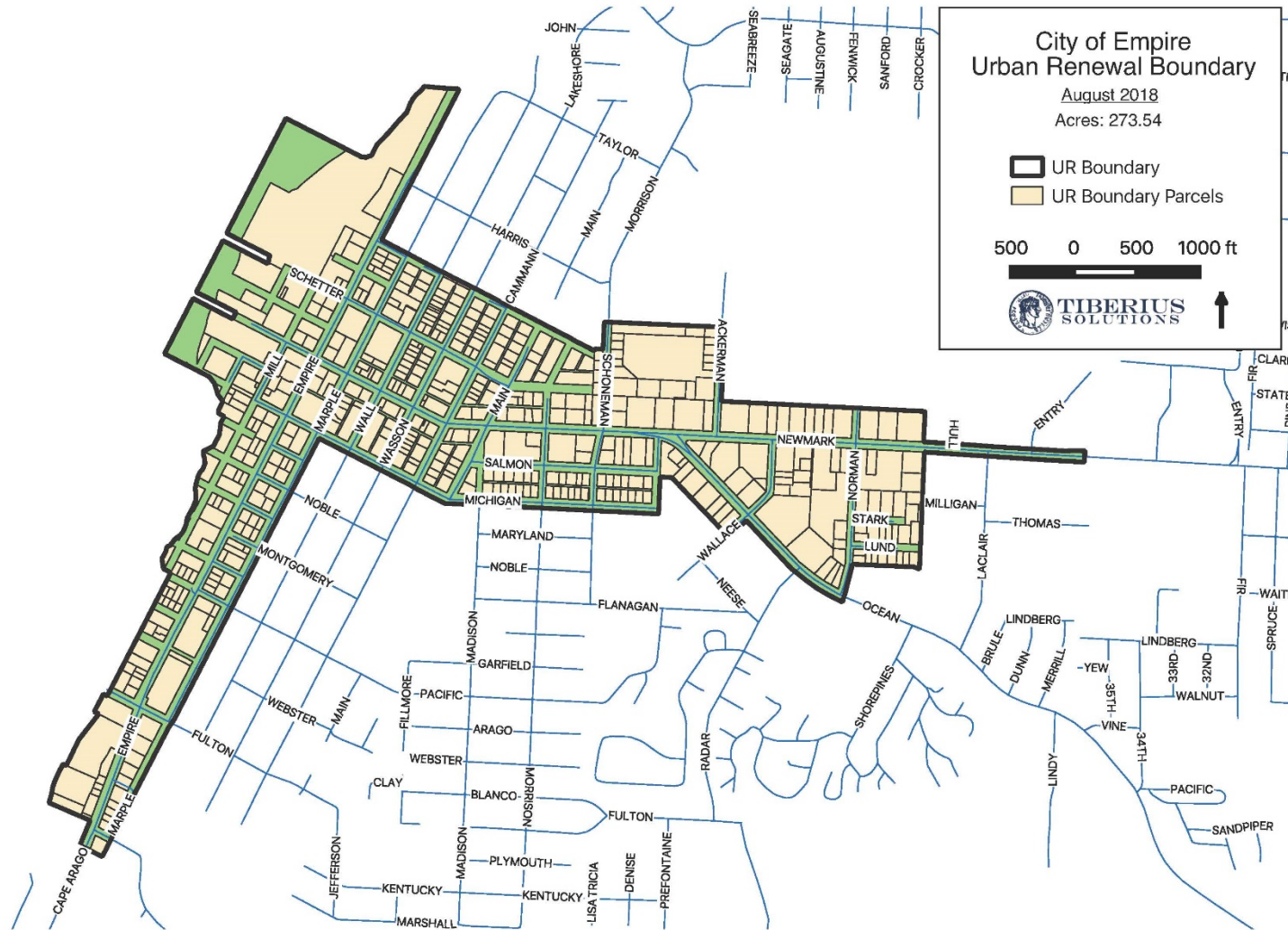


Figure 2 - Urban Renewal Area Comprehensive Plan Designations

