

IMPACT STATEMENT

Legislation title: Accept the Eastbank Crescent Riverfront Plan as a blueprint for redevelopment of the Eastbank Crescent (Resolution)

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Purpose of proposed legislation and background information:

The Eastbank Crescent is a three-acre site on the east bank of the Willamette River between the Hawthorne and Marquam bridges. The *Eastbank Crescent Riverfront Plan* (March 2017) outlines a feasible redevelopment concept that would restore significant fish and wildlife habitat and accommodate compatible improvements for public recreation including access to and into the Willamette River.

This project is consistent with and implements City Council-approved *Central City 2035 Southeast Quadrant Plan* (July 2016), which states a goal to: establish a southeast Willamette riverfront as a major attractor for visitors, residents and employees with parks, open space and recreational opportunities and in-water and riverbank habitat improvements. Additionally, in the *Central City 2035 Plan Proposed Draft* (June 2016) there are Central City-wide goals to enhance the role of the Willamette River for environmental health and recreation, improve the health of the river for fish, wildlife and people and increase public access to and along the river. There are numerous Central City-related policies: Willamette River Policy 41, Portland's Commons, Policy 44, Habitat, Policy 46, Willamette River Recreation and Appreciation, 58 Watershed Health, 62 Upland Habitat Connections and 63. Periodic Flooding. A Central City-wide goal for Health and Environment and accompanying policies and actions call for demonstrating how Central City can equitably benefit human health and provide resilience to climate change impacts such as urban heat island, and to natural hazards, including flooding and earthquakes. Climate resilience policies and actions in particular, seek to protect people and property, while improving conditions for fish and wildlife habitat. There are also Southeast Quadrant specific applicable policies: Urban Design, Policy 1, Willamette River, and Willamette River Policy 1, Active River Recreation. Finally, there are two action items, one Central City-wide (WR10) and one for the Southeast Quadrant (WR5) to develop a concept plan for fish and wildlife habitat restoration and public access and recreation along the riverfront between the Hawthorne and Marquam bridges.

Property ownership within the site includes the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry (OMSI), Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), Oregon Department of State Lands and Portland Parks and Recreation (PPR). The Bureau of Planning and Sustainability (BPS) coordinated plan development in collaboration with the Bureau of Environmental Services (BES), PPR and Prosper Portland (P2). Mayer/Reed, Inc. and GreenWorks PC, were hired to provide landscape design and river restoration consulting services. City Council acceptance of the plan establishes the conceptual vision to support public and private land redevelopment efforts at the site incorporating habitat restoration and public recreational features.

Financial and budgetary impacts:

Redevelopment of the Eastbank Crescent is unfunded at this time. The resolution accepting this plan includes a directive for City staff to continue to coordinate with OMSI and other property owners to seek funds to begin plan implementation. Continued work including plan refinement will bring more clarity on plan implementation specifics including costs, timeframe for completion, etc.

Relevant activities currently in progress, include OMSI's master planning for the future of their property, and the city's response to proposed changes to the federal National Flood Insurance Program to better protect and recover federally listed threatened and endangered salmon and steelhead. Both will inform specific partnerships, funding and other resource opportunities to reach the Eastbank Crescent Riverfront Plan's final design, engineering and construction activities.

Community impacts and community involvement:

The Eastbank Crescent site is complex and a variety of community members use and have an interest in the area. A heavily used segment of the Willamette Greenway trail runs through the Eastbank Crescent site. It is also a gateway to OMSI, a small light watercraft launch site (Holman Dock), an informal beach for sunbathers and swimmers, and an access point to a rare shallow-water section of the river, where there is interest to improve shallow water and riparian habitat. The riverbank is steep. There is an excess of pavement and minimal vegetation. The flow of pedestrians, bicyclists and boaters carrying non-motorized boats across the trail is confusing. In summer months boaters and swimmers compete for space on the Holman Dock.

The Eastbank Crescent Riverfront Plan was developed to improve in-water and riparian habitat and to enhance the site for its many users and interests. The initial discussion about the redesign of the site was conducted in Summer 2015 and included representatives of federal, state and local agencies responsible for permitting or expected to play a role in aspects of future development, owners of properties within the project site, and landscape design and engineering professionals. Participants shared the following design goals:

- Lay back the riverbank to create more habitat, vegetate with native plants, create undulating shallow water area with alcoves or backchannels
- Improve access to the beach for swimming, consider beach amenities
- Separate boat and swimming docks
- Improve flow of pedestrians and bicyclists and address conflicts at trail crossings

Prior to this planning project's initiation, CC 2035 planning staff received public input on the Eastbank Crescent area as part of Southeast Quadrant planning. A Southeast river walk was held in July 2015, providing public comments on the Eastbank Crescent area. And a public agency and property owner charrette event on the Eastbank Crescent was held in June 2015. The event brainstormed ideas, considerations and potential conflicts of pursuing multiple goals at the Eastbank Crescent site.

In Fall 2015 interviews were conducted with interest and user groups including boaters, swimmers and environmental organizations. BPS, BES, PPR and PDC worked with the consultant team to draft design concepts guided by the design goals and stakeholder interest

group input. The design concepts were presented at two stakeholder meetings in June 2016. Participants at the first meeting were representatives of owners and agencies responsible for properties within the site, including OMSI, ODOT, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, Oregon Department of State Lands, Portland General Electric, Lincoln Properties, PPR, Portland Bureau of Transportation and Portland Fire and Rescue. The second stakeholder meeting was attended by representatives of swimming, boating and environmental interests, neighboring property owners and businesses, the Central Eastside Industrial Council and the Oregon Marine Board.

A public open house was held in June 2016. Forty-five members of the public attended and provided written and verbal feedback, and approximately 30 comments were received via email. Design components attracting public support are reflected in the recommended Eastbank Crescent Riverfront Plan.

Throughout the planning process updates on the project were communicated through the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability's web site and Central City 2035 Plan and River Plan News e-newsletters. These efforts made the public aware of the project and encouraged their participation in it. Future Eastbank Crescent planning efforts will continue stakeholder and general public participation through outreach, communications and public input opportunities.

Budgetary Impact Worksheet

Does this action change appropriations?

☐ YES: Please complete the information below.

X NO: Skip this section

Fund	Fund Center	Commitment Item	Functional Area	Funded Program	Grant	Sponsored Program	Amount