

Urban growth divides council contenders

By MARY BETH BOWEN
Of the Emerald

The issue of urban growth seems to have polarized the Eugene City Council candidates into two distinct camps: those who favor increased growth and the economic activity it brings, and those supporting limited growth.

From these camps, at least three candidates have been accused by opponents as representing the "chamber of commerce" point of view — Brian Obie, running against incumbent Edna Shirey in Ward 8, Tom Moreland, running against Jack Delay in Ward 3, and Betty Smith, running against Jack Craig in Ward 2.

All three have ties to the business community and no affiliation

with neighborhood groups, which have traditionally fought for a stronger voice in local land use decisions.

Obie, 35, owns the multi-million-dollar Obie Communications Corporation, which includes Obie Outdoor Advertising, (a billboard firm), KUGN radio station, and a mobile home company in Junction City. His business holdings bring him into constant contact with Eugene's developers and businessmen.

Moreland, 40, is part-owner of a Eugene architecture and planning firm, Moreland, Unruh, and Smith, which among other things, designs planned unit developments for developers.

Smith, 40, is a housewife and YMCA activist. Her husband, Don,

is a partner in Moreland's architecture firm.

On the urban growth issue, Smith supports the current urban service boundary but would consider future expansion. Moreland and Obie support extending the urban service boundary in some areas because it is driving up land prices, and thus housing costs.

Moreland's opponent Jack Delay, 34, a computer systems analyst, has charged that expansion in the urban service boundary will indirectly benefit Moreland's architecture firm because it serves developers and that boundary expansion will increase land available for development.

Moreland has said that most of his firm's business lies outside the city. However, a check with the

Eugene Planning Commission showed that in the past month, Moreland's firm represented three different clients applying for permission to build planned unit developments. Moreland's firm also represents Breeden Bros., one of Eugene's largest housing developers.

Moreland contends his profession has given him an interest and understanding in the need for low-rent housing. He has warned that skyrocketing land costs could drive housing costs so high that "this town could become a place where only the elite could live."

Moreland has also said that in the event of a possible conflict of interest, he would abstain from voting.

Obie has also come under fire

for what detractors call a possible conflict of interest. He was the prime opponent of the Eugene sign code, which drastically reduced the billboard revenues to Obie Outdoor Advertising in Eugene. According to Eugene sign code administrator Patty Lathrop, the corporation has proposed revisions and filed appeals and variance requests since the code's inception in 1968, but has obtained only one minor revision.

An interesting sidelight in the Obie campaign is a KUGN station identification that has run at 9:30 a.m., 1:30 and 6:30 p.m. for the past few months. KUGN's station identifications usually say something like, "KUGN — voice of the Oregon Ducks" or "Eugene's personality radio station." The new identification says "KUGN — a division of Obie Communications Corporation."

KUGN program manager Bill Ford claims the ID is not a campaign advertisement. "It has nothing to do with the election," Ford said. "We change logos around here as often as we change shoes."

Some political observers say Obie, Moreland and Smith are running as a bloc, in a concerted effort to reestablish the business community as the dominant force in what has been a progressive city council.

"All three candidates seem to represent the point of view of private enterprise," said Wickes Beal, who is retiring from Ward 3 after eight years on the council. "If they are elected, I think we'll see a reverse of the progress the council has made."

However, others argue that the scenario of business interests versus neighborhood and limited growth groups is an unrealistic view of how city government really works.

"Dividing lines like that are very superficial," said Fred Mohr, a city council member in the late sixties. "It's just not that clear cut."

But whatever happens, whoever wins, one thing is for sure. It's gonna be a hot time in the old city council chamber.

McCARTHY SAYS HE DOESN'T CARE IF HIS VOTES HELP RE-ELECT FORD. WE DO.

Eight years ago we were working against a cruel, illegal war and an unresponsive government. We called for a candidate to lead us in the Democratic primaries. When those we first turned to declined our call, another answered. Our leaflets said, "He gave America new hope."

We continued to follow him when others entered the campaign. We believed that his courage would not serve as an example if we shunted him aside once the task of defeating an incumbent President had been accomplished. We followed him to Chicago and beyond; few of us transferred our energies to the nominee of our party in 1968.

So it is with sadness that we reject the call from that man now. Eugene McCarthy is running for President as an independent, and we cannot support him.

We have the greatest respect for Eugene McCarthy. Some of us are his friends. He is a man of intelligence, poetry, wisdom and wit. We know that he—and we who worked in the same cause—did not get a fair shot at the nomination in 1968; the delegate selection process was stacked against any challenger.

But in 1968 we began the process of reforming the Democratic party, ending the war and building a new political constituency.

Some of us worked in McCarthy's brief campaign for the Democratic nomination in 1972. Some of us would have preferred

to have McCarthy as the nominee of our party in 1976. Many of us **did** support candidates other than Jimmy Carter, and we lost.

In 1976 we had the most open nominating process ever. The people voted in primary after primary and in local caucuses all over the country. McCarthy did not compete. In 1968 we called McCarthy "THE PEOPLE'S CHOICE." This year the people chose Jimmy Carter.

We have a healthy skepticism toward our political system. Most of us have worked in the movement against the Vietnam war, for civil rights, against government-sponsored subversion abroad and spying at home. But our ideas are now welcome in the Democratic party. The Democratic candidate is running on a platform some of us helped write. He is intelligent and a talented administrator. His opposition to the precipitous use of nuclear power, to indiscriminate strip-mining and dam-building, to American support for dictatorships abroad, to the B-1 bomber, and to America's becoming the arms merchant of the world, as well as his stance on the issues of jobs and tax reform, make him a candidate we can support.

Many of McCarthy's ideas still make sense; his thinking has already permeated our party and should be welcome in any Democratic administration; certainly it will not be in a Ford administration. But he knows he will not be elected President in 1976.

The question, then, is who will be elected.

McCARTHY SAYS HE DOESN'T CARE IF HIS VOTES HELP RE-ELECT FORD.

We do. We are not cynical enough to believe that both candidates and the groups they represent are alike.

We have largely achieved our goal of 1968 of opening up the Democratic party. We have begun the task of reforming Congress. If we are to have a chance to put our ideas into effect, we must have a Democratic President.

The complexion of a Ford administration, Ford appointments, the actions of agencies and departments under Ford will take us further from our goal of a just society dealing with the nations of the world as a friend rather than an empire-builder.

With Democratic majorities, with many new members and new leadership in the House and Senate—and with a Democratic administration—we can make a new start toward this goal. After eight years of Nixon-Ford, it would be tragic to let this chance slip away.

The effect of voting for Gene McCarthy this year is to make it more likely that Ford will again be our President.

We, former 1968 campaign workers and supporters of Eugene McCarthy, urge others who were with us in 1968 and in other struggles over the years to join us in voting for the Carter-Mondale ticket.

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Sam Brown, Nat'l Staff
Billie Carr, Texas
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