

Delay

By JACK CONDLIFFE
Of the Emerald

A familiar figure pulls up a bench near the dart boards in Max's Tavern. Friends ask him if he'll be playing in the tournament this winter.

He says he's not sure, explaining that the city budget process is starting now.

City Council Pres. Jack Delay must now devote even more of his time to the pressing problems facing Eugene. Air pollution, taxes, housing rehabilitation, transportation and sewers all demand his attention.

Delay's presidency of the council this year signals a liberal shift as liberal Gretchen Miller and moderate Emily Schue assume councilor's seats they won last May.

Delay pours a beer and talks about his ideas for the next year.

"I don't see any new programs," he says. "I see trying to do better some of the things we are already doing. I am very concerned about citizens' involvement, neighborhood groups and planning.

"There's lots in managing the livability of Eugene that hasn't been done," Delay adds. "We're continuing to fall behind in our parks and recreation program."

Delay says that with booming land prices the city cannot afford to fall behind in purchasing parks land.

The new majority on the council, which also includes councilors Scott Lieuallen and Eric Haws, will help the city move forward in the areas he is concerned about.

"I've been on the wrong end of a lot of 5-4 votes where the mayor had to come in. That flimsy majority had no idea what it wanted to do," says Delay.

"I consider many of their acts obstructionist rather than representing any kind of program," Delay says of the conservatives who controlled city policy over the last two years.

Mayor Gus Keller and Councilors Betty Smith, Brian Obie and Bill Hamel are the four who remain from last year's five conservatives.

One controversial action by the old majority Delay hopes to resolve is the Cone-Breeden annexation. Almost two years ago, 390 acres of marginal farm land north of Eugene were annexed by the council, and the land has been tied up ever since in legal battles.

A citizen's group successfully challenged the rezoning of 270 acres of the land to residential use. Now they are appealing the light industrial zoning of the remaining acreage to the Oregon Court of Appeals.

Delay, one of two councilors who originally opposed the annexation, says his main interest now is to come to some sort of resolution between the citizens' group and the land owners — former Mayor Ed Cone and the Breeden Brothers Co.

Delay's major concern is that the courts should not be involved in zoning issues.

"I don't believe the LCDC was intended by the

Darts take back seat to budget as councilor faces problems



Photo by F.H.A.T. Axmacher

Legislature to be a zoning board of appeals. Their function is to assure areas have adequate plans," he says.

Delay loves to talk about issues. Politics and darts are his two main avocations. To earn a living Delay is president and part owner of Datanet, a small computer software firm begun less than two years ago.

Another beer is poured.

Also facing the city is the taxpayer's revolt. Eugene voters rejected Measures 6 and 11 last fall, but Eugene could be severely affected by legislative action taken in the next few months.

"I have seen no evidence in any of the departmental budgets that there is any kind of activity that doesn't need to be there," Delay says.

Delay does have a suggestion for new expenditures. For the acquisition of new park land, as an exam-

ple, Delay would place the issue before the voters with an explanation of the expenditure's purpose.

"I think we ought to outline some of these problems, budget for them, explain them, and let the community decide," he says.

Delay notes that this method was successful in passing the \$18.5 million bond issue for the downtown civic center.

These are the issues that make Delay look forward to his next two years on the city council.

"The council is dramatically different.

"I have a great deal of respect for the way Emily Schue and Gretchen Miller honestly debate the issues."

"In the past, particularly the past two years, there's been a great deal of raw exercise of power . . . which bypassed the issues," Delay says.

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