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# Group seeks to improve area

Planners created the Task Force to help tackle West University area issues

By A. Sho Ikeda  
Senior News Reporter

The West University Task Force met with the Eugene City Council in early June to propose strategies aimed at improving conditions in the area, and students can expect changes within a year.

The Task Force's long-term plan suggests that the University should revise the Student Conduct Code, educate students about housing, increase police activity and add more lighting to the area.

Situated between the University and downtown, the West University Neighborhood has been the scene of several cases of arson, robbery and rioting over the past few years. Other problems that face the district include aggressive panhandling, vandalism and public drinking. The Task Force created the presented goals to reduce the number of crimes and enhance the quality of life in the community.

"Our focus was on day-to-day, month-to-month and year-to-year livability," said Jan Oliver, University associate vice president of institutional affairs. She stated that the Task Force did not want to focus solely on riots and parties.

Oliver said she hopes the University can create a partnership with the city that will result in a safer and cleaner West University community.

"We want to turn the neighbor-

hood around and make it a better place to live," Oliver said.

Specifically, changes to the conduct code could include taking punitive measures against students for committing serious off-campus crimes, such as rioting.

Because many freshmen move to the West University area seeking low-cost housing, the University hopes to conduct an orientation for freshmen at the end of the school year, which would include lessons on basic tenant rights and responsibilities, off-campus behavioral issues and legal culpability.

Beginning Aug. 1, a police officer began patrolling the neighborhood by foot to build a police presence in the area. Assistant City Manager Jim Carlson said the University and the City of Eugene will split the cost of the officer.

Until the longer-term goals can be implemented, however, the Task Force proposed a variety of short-term initiatives. Most notably, the Task Force suggested notifying landlords when police respond to one of their properties due to a noise complaint or a party.

The Eugene Police Department will also continue its "knock-and-talks," where officers obtain and visit a list of residences where kegs of beer will be consumed to discuss the party host's responsibilities.

The Task Force strongly believes that the city needs to implement basic housing standards to improve living conditions of living spaces in the whole city, and particularly in the

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- Abandoned cars on street  
682-5713
- Air pollution  
726-3976
- Animal control and regulation  
682-3645
- Building permits  
682-5505
- Building safety complaints  
682-5495
- City Council, city manager, mayor  
682-5010
- Code violations  
682-5819
- Community mediation services  
344-5366
- Composting questions, workshops  
682-5542
- Dead animals  
682-4800
- Environmental spill  
682-4800
- Fences - location, regulation, specs  
682-5505

Turn to **TASK FORCE**, page 18A

Turn to **WHO TO CALL**, page 18A

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