

ers, schools, fire stations and other infrastructure and services to serve the resulting urban sprawl. Taxpayers are forced to either pay more to cover the costs of sprawl or suffer reduced city services and infrastructure as limited city resources are diverted from the central city to serve growth on the edge, Bettman says. "The reason sprawl is bad is it's extremely expensive."

That expense and opposition to the ugliness, traffic congestion, pollution, environmental damage and loss of livability and farm and forest land that sprawl creates has made expanding the growth boundary unpopular in Eugene. A comprehensive 1996 Growth Management Study found overwhelming opposition to sprawl and citizens in favor of a "Recycle Eugene" scenario that focused growth within the UGB. In response to public opinion, the council adopted a set of official city growth management policies. Policy 1 states: "Support the existing Eugene urban growth boundary by taking actions to increase density and use existing vacant land and under-used land within the boundary more efficiently."

## OBSCENE PROFITS

While sprawl is expensive for taxpayers, it's highly profitable for developers, Bettman says. "You can make a lot of money if you can externalize the costs of infrastructure on to taxpayers," she says. "There are land speculators out there that will profit obscenely depending on where

the UGB is."

One such speculator is John Musumeci, the land dealer who made millions off moving PeaceHealth from downtown Eugene to the northern edge of Springfield. Musumeci recently acquired more than 1,000 acres of forest land just outside the UGB in the LCC basin and has recently been advocating on local TV and radio for an expansion of the growth boundary that would allow his land to be developed.

Musumeci played a key role in founding and funding the Gang of 9 that ran months of \$1,000-a-day cartoons in *The Register-Guard* attacking anti-sprawl city councilors two years ago.

Roberts has allied with Musumeci's Gang in the past praising the anonymous attacks in a *R-G* opinion piece and in a letter posted on the Gang's web site. "From the beginning, I have appreciated the job you are doing," Roberts wrote in the letter.

Bettman says Roberts and the partnership are funded mostly through local government money and shouldn't be involved in political lobbying. "I have some very serious concerns about the role of the Metro Partnership," Bettman says. "I believe this is advocating policy."

The cities of Eugene and Springfield give the partnership \$50,000 a year each and the county contributes \$170,000. At the council meeting, Roberts said that the partnership expects about \$100,000 in private donations next year but has received less

than that amount this year.

Bettman says city staff didn't respond to her request for a legal opinion on the legality of the city contributing to a group that uses the money to turn around and lobby the city on legislative matters. "I was very disappointed."

Kelly, who sits on the Metro Partnership board, says it's legitimate for the group to argue for an expanded UGB. "I have no problem with them telling the local governments that, hey, you don't have enough industrial land."

On its 2002 non-profit tax return, the partnership states that it is not involved in lobbying or influencing public opinion on legislative matters.

Bettman says lobbying for more land to serve homebuilders and commercial development also goes beyond the partnership's supposed mission of promoting local industrial job creation and retention.

## BROWNFIELDS

Before the city opens up more land to development, it should make sure land already within the UGB is being used, according to Kelly.

Bettman agrees, saying "There's a lot of alternatives to consider before we consider opening up the UGB and bringing in 2,500 acres."

"There is a significant amount of under-utilized industrial land," Kelly says. He says the city could use urban renewal to

consolidate parcels or cleanup old industrial sites so they can be redeveloped. Kelly faults the Chamber studies for not fully considering redevelopment opportunities within the existing UGB.

The Chamber studies argue that redevelopment can't provide much more land because land buyers view the sites as undesirable in location, appearance and cost to clean up.

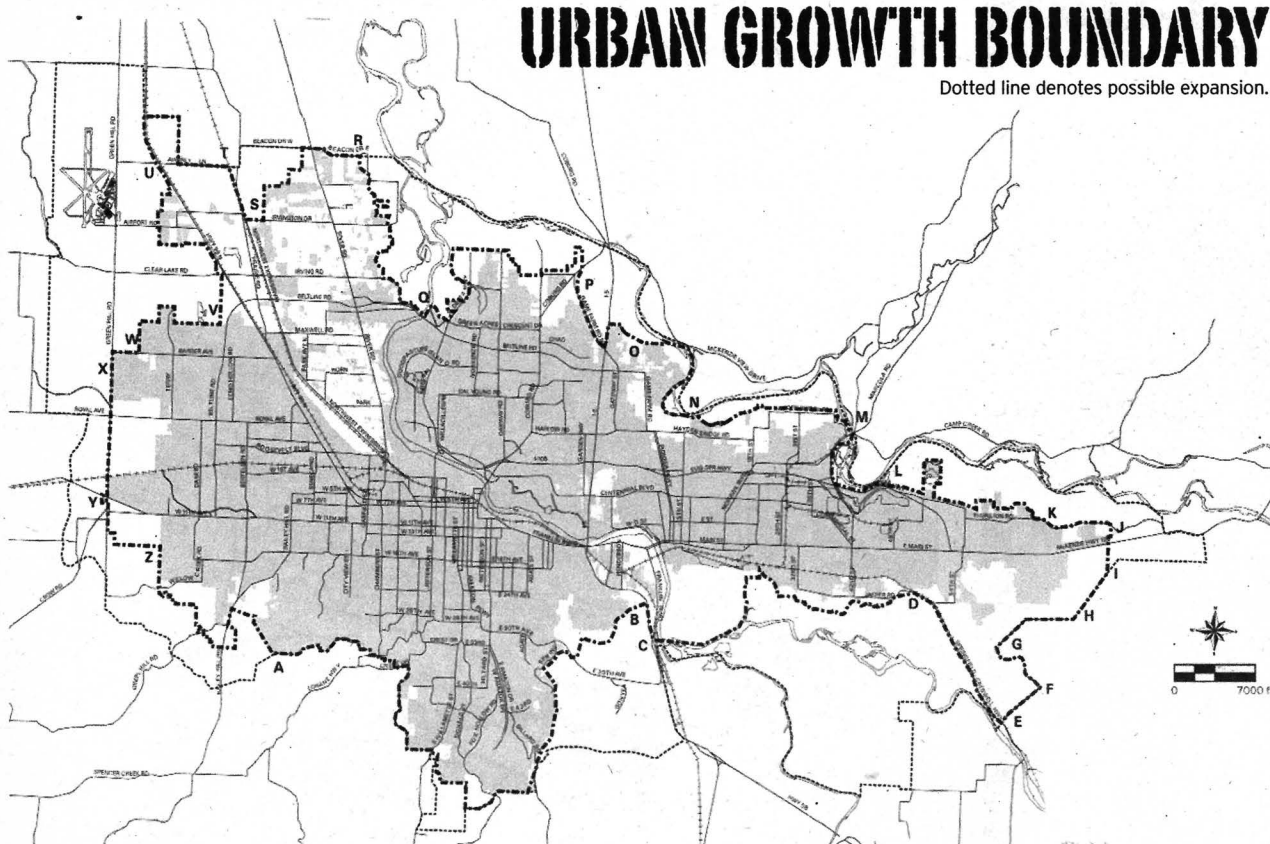
Councilor Scott Meisner also said at the meeting that he is interested in such brown-field redevelopment. He said it was unfortunate that the council recently voted to give Hynix millions of dollars more in tax breaks rather than using the money to fund clean-ups of old industrial sites for new industry.

Meisner said that while the council is requiring higher density commercial and residential development, it should also require industry to build more densely with less surface parking. "Are we squandering the resource?" Meisner asked. "I'm not interested in doing a [land] inventory in isolation."

Another alternative approach would be to prevent the ongoing rezoning of industrial land to commercial and residential uses.

"It's inappropriate use of industrial land that is the issue not unavailability," Segel says. "We're seeing a whole slew of conversions throughout the metropolitan area."

Meisner also says the city has to be careful with rezoning industrial land. "I don't



## URBAN GROWTH BOUNDARY

Dotted line denotes possible expansion.

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