

## URBAN RENEWAL TO DIVERT \$40 MILLION

Just a week after the failure of Measure 30 threw state school funding into fiscal meltdown, the Eugene City Council is proceeding forward with a plan to divert an estimated \$40 million from state school funding and local government services.

The council held a hearing Feb. 9 on its push to add 25 acres to the Riverfront Urban Renewal District and continue it for 20 years.

The Riverfront district would cost state school funding \$22 million in property taxes over the next two decades, according to city estimates. The city would lose \$15 million in funding for police, fire, library and other core services over the period. Lane County would take a \$3 million hit. Property taxes to pay for local levies and bonds will also increase about 1 percent to make up for revenue lost to urban renewal.

A big chunk of the \$40 million will likely go to build a highway along the railway tracks to pump more cars through the river front area. Critics have said the highway will cut off the city and new courthouse district from the river and spoil a potential natural area. The city also plans to use a big chunk of the money for a huge new police station, which voters have twice defeated at the polls.

"The timing can hardly be worse," testified Ray Wolfe in opposition to the tax diversion. Wolfe said the city had already spent \$30 million in diverted urban renewal money downtown with "questionable benefits" and built a road to nowhere in the UO's Riverfront Research Park.

Wolfe said the city shouldn't divert money out of funding for fire protection and other essential services into urban renewal. "Is there really nothing in the general budget that deserves a higher priority? That's what your saying."

Cynthia Kokis said she's concerned with the impact on school funding and the environmental impact of developing the river area. She said urban renewal didn't work for downtown. "There's something terribly wrong."

Kevin Matthews, president of Friends of Eugene, called the riverfront urban renewal

proposal "corrosive of an atmosphere of public trust." Matthews pointed out the proposed highway was defeated by voters as part of the failed Ferry Street Bridge freeway plan and is "a really ill-advised transportation project."

Matthews says the plan calls the riverfront area "blighted" but it's really a natural "gem" for the community.

Bryn Anderson, a UO student on the campus planning committee, testified against the "wide environmental impacts" proposed development along the riverfront will have.

UO professor Al Urquhart said the city should delete the UO's planned Riverfront Research Park of big office buildings along the river from the district. Urquhart pointed to "gross differences" between the research park's projected benefits and its reality. "The Riverfront Research Park has been a failure and should not be included."

Drix Rixmann testified that Eugene should save the natural riverfront as part of the "magic" that makes Eugene an attractive place to live. "We have this beautiful river and now we're talking about taking it and giving a chunk of it to private business so someone can have an office with a view of it."

Representatives from the Chamber of Commerce and Downtown Eugene Inc. testified in favor of urban renewal as a way for the city to accomplish its development vision for the riverfront area.

But Councilor Bettman questioned the diversion of tax money. "We can't fund schools, we can't fund human services and we can't fund recreation."

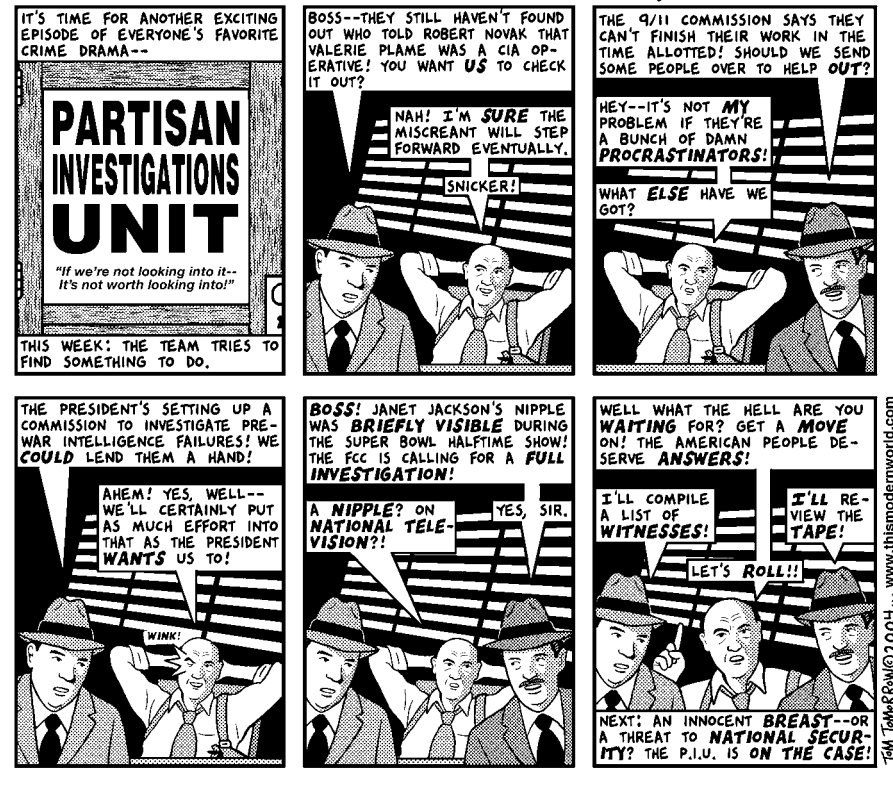
So far, at least five councilors have expressed support for the urban renewal tax diversion which is scheduled for a final vote Feb. 23. — Alan Pittman

### NO UO ARENA

As EW was going to press Wednesday, UO President Dave Frohnmayer announced he has put plans for the controversial new \$180 million basketball arena on indefinite hold. Frohnmayer cited problems with arena's "scope, complexity and financing," but said he remains "committed to our common goal of creating a premier facility." The decision was made after consultation with the projects' donors. No information was available regarding whether a major donor had pulled out.

## THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



### OLCV SCORECARDS SPOTLIGHT VOTING

Two environmental scorecards released this week by the Lane County Chapter of the Oregon League of Conservation Voters (OLCV), document the voting records of Lane County Commissioners and Eugene city councilors during the past two years. While the County Commission showed improvement, the City Council showed slippage.

The Eugene council received a failing grade, averaging 41 percent on 10 key votes. The commission averaged 60 percent on 11 key votes, up from a poor 39 percent in the prior scorecard. The scorecards assign a rating to each decision-maker on votes that affect whether our region remains a beautiful and healthy place to life.

"The scorecard separates true stewards of our environment from those who just talk that way," says Kim Leval, spokesperson for the Lane County Chapter.

A majority of Eugene's councilors voted nearly every time against environmental safeguards, putting special interests before the public interest on contested issues such as sprawl, water quality, zoning, toxics reporting and the West Eugene Parkway. Scott Meisner and Nancy Nathanson scored 10 percent (both slipping from better ratings two years ago). George Poling, Gary Papé and Jennifer Soloman all scored worst-possible 0 percent ratings.

Bonny Bettman, Betty Taylor and David Kelly received recognition for their 100 percent pro-environment voting records. The three were consistently out-voted. There were only three times when other councilors joined with them, but in each case Mayor Torrey broke the tie, ensuring the anti-environment position passed, according to the report.

"The developer-friendly majority on the City Council seems intent on turning Eugene into Southern California," says Lane County OLCV Steering Committee member Tim Sutton. "Their misguided planning decisions will lead to increased sprawl."

In the county scorecard, the average was 60 percent. Pete Sorenson and Tom Lininger earned perfect 100 percent scores. Bill Dwyer earned a 63 percent. Bobby Green

was rated 36 percent, an improvement over his 14 percent score in 2001. Anna Morrison once again received a worst-possible 0 percent.

For more complete information on the scorecards and how the ratings were determined, visit [www.olcv.org](http://www.olcv.org) or call (503) 224-4011. — TJJ

### EUGENE PHOTOGRAPHER BACK FROM NICARAGUA

Eugene photographer Paul Dix documented the Contra War in Nicaragua during the 1980s. His return there last year provided him with pictures that he will present in a slide show and talk at 7:30 pm Wednesday, Feb. 18, at Harris Hall, 8th and Oak. Donations will be accepted.

With the help of his Eugene partner, peace activist Pam Fitzpatrick, Dix managed to locate and once again photograph some of the people who became part of his photo album at the height of the war.

The event, titled, "Living with the Consequences of U.S. Policy," is part of a national tour of the Nicaragua Photo/Testimony Project.

The program is co-sponsored by CISCAP and the Eugene Friends Meeting. For more information, call 342-3647.

### BETTY TAYLOR FILES FOR COUNCIL RE-RUN

Eugene City Councilor Betty Taylor, representing Ward 2, has filed for re-election. Ward 2 is in south and southeast Eugene, bordered by Chambers on the west and 28th and 30th avenues on the north.

Taylor says she advocates for environmental protection in the Eugene area, including acquisition of stream corridors and protection of trees. She supported the resolution in opposition to provisions of the USA PATRIOT Act that restrict civil liberties. She supported the ordinance authorizing the Domestic Registry for unmarried partners, and says she's an advocate for "living wages, open and accessible government, citizen involvement, a performance auditor and an equitable source of funding for road maintenance."

She opposes the downtown ordinance that prohibits gatherings of more than 25 people without a permit, and "any tax breaks or other

## Happening people BY PAUL NEEVEL

### MARY ENOS

"I started sewing when I was a kid," says Mary Enos, owner of 27th Street Fabrics. "In those days that's what you did - everybody had a sewing machine." A graduate of North Eugene High, Enos had a brief career in accounting



before she married into the family that had founded the Eugene Vacuum and Sewing Center in 1948. When her mother-in-law looked to retire, Enos was recruited to take over the fabric department. "I've been here 30 years," she notes. "When I came in, I decided to expand and offer sewing classes." 27th Street Fabrics (renamed when it moved across Willamette Street in '86) currently has classes every day of the week, sewing clubs, occasional guest speakers and benefit events. "Sewing has changed - clothing is so cheap it doesn't pay to sew your own," Enos remarks. "Now it's recreation - also a social thing." Quilting, purses and home decoration are popular class offerings. "All day long the phone rings with questions," says part-time employee and sewing instructor Viki Neville. "It's a wonderful place for people to show off projects and get free advice."