

**62 HOURS OF PAUSE**

Sixty-two hours. A wearisome span, when one considers the difficulty of staying awake so long. More than 3,700 minutes. Now consider pausing for a moment of silence, a minute in traditional length, one for each fallen American soldier, a traditional honor, a gesture of respect. Not much to ask, given the sacrifice of each young man and woman, given how many minutes they've given up of their future to the cause of this war of folly.

Sixty-two hours. More than 3,700 consecutive minutes of silence needed to commemorate the American dead. And how many more hours were we to commemorate the Iraqi dead? Ten thousand, perhaps more. So many lives so terribly wasted, so many more to follow. Bring 'em home, and keep 'em well.

*Todd Huffman  
Eugene*

**JUST SAY NO**

Hurray hurray, let's put the plan to a vote. My vote is NO! Decidedly. Emphatically. No. Thank you, no. My notion of hell is being trapped at the standardized Americanized rubber-stamped storefront mall. Any layout that repeats the same dying mentality of consumption for the sake of consumption needs to be rejected. If this is the best plan devised and offered, then we are clearly locked inside the box of business-as-usual-aren't-we-glad-now-we're-all-the-sameness. No. For my tax dollars, invest in Oregon small business start-up loans as opposed to tax giveaways to corporate entities that now have all the privilege, zero responsibility and even less integrity.

Who invented this corporate welfare anyway?

And no to the developers who represent these factions and come to the downtown area only to create more empty holes, perforating the fabric of a viable downtown center. With my tax money I wish to help independents get started, expand and evolve to remain robust, community-based and accountable. Make grants available. Pool resources. Use my tax money to support the Kiva, the Bijou, Smith Family and J. Michael's and Books Without Borders, Anatolia, Down to Earth, etc. Put my money to work with organic gardens, microbreweries, bakeries, cafés, art, theater, dance, park blocks, bike paths or neighborhoods.

These are the sights and the sites in a healthy, thriving, harmonious community. This is the diversity we need to encourage and to invest in. If this present nonsense is the best offer in the hopper, then we need to open the floor for new and more and better ideas and widen our visions beyond this corporate anal mindset. You know we can

do better. Vision is not lacking; voices are.

Send all of your ideas to Mayor Kitty Piercy and the Eugene City Council members at the Eugene City Hall, 777 Pearl Street, Eugene 97401. You know we can do better.

*Sarah Ruth  
Eugene*

**JUSTIFIABLE MASSACRE**

I object to the deceptions in your Viewpoint "Never Again" (8/2), which unfairly condemned the U.S. for atomic

attacks on Japan during WWII. The bombings of these cities were morally justifiable acts when one views them in proper context instead of through the flawed historically revisionist prism used. Facts such as the key headquarters of Japan's 2nd Army being in Hiroshima, and the vital Mitsubishi war factories located in Nagasaki, were conveniently omitted.

Twentieth century imperial Japan was the most racist and homicidal military dominated government in recent world his-

tory. Japan murdered more than three million innocent civilians during their war with China, which started years before Hitler attacked Poland. This campaign included 5,000 bombing raids of defenseless cities. In the infamous six week Rape of Nanking, more than 200,000 civilians were butchered in an inhumane bloodbath. See [www.princeton.edu/~nanking](http://www.princeton.edu/~nanking)

In his surrender radio address, Emperor Hirohito referred directly to the atomic bombs as being his key reason for ordering

**viewpoint** BY MARK L. GILLEM

**Library Park**

A chance to add livability and density to downtown

Imagine walking out of the Eugene library to a vibrant public park across the street. Couples are dining in sidewalk cafes. Seniors are enjoying a game of chess on public seats around the park's lawns. Visitors are buying local produce along a market alley. Contractors are building mixed-use residential buildings facing the park. Parents are planning birthday parties while they sit comfortably under large shade trees, and their kids are playing tag in a grand fountain where water enters the ground rather than a pool so there is no possibility of danger.

This half-block, one-acre park could quickly replace the empty pit left by the Sears demolition, which the city owns, and the adjacent parking lot, which the city has an option to buy. This major public amenity would complement our great library. Unfortunately, the city's consultants for the West Broadway redevelopment project and city staffers responsible for planning our downtown are not fans of an urban park. So how do we get there from here? We need to dispel four myths of downtown parks.

**1) Downtown parks are unsafe.** This argument flows from the Eugene experience with the Park Blocks. But these are not real parks. They are cramped urban plazas with little useable greenery and no adjacent residential development that can provide eyes on the park at all times. Downtown parks work if designed and framed appropriately. We can learn from places like Ashland, Portland and even Beaverton, which has a new civic park next to its library. In Washington state, Seattle, Tacoma, Olympia and Vancouver all have significant downtown parks. These cities, with ample open space at the edges of their downtowns, have learned that great downtowns also need density and open space in the center. Unlike Eugene, these cities are not afraid of downtown parks — they know from experience that public parks draw private investments.

**2) If we take land out for parks, we cannot get the desired densities.** This is a zero-sum argument. Based on the development's design, the proposed site (less the half-block Library Park) could accommodate up to 150,000 sq. ft. of ground floor commercial space and 350-400 units on floors 2-5. If key historic buildings remain, the numbers



would drop a bit. However, if we select a parcel or two that can be taller, then we can easily achieve the desired densities while preserving our history.

**3) The citizens do not want downtown parks.** We know that people already living downtown do want real parks. In 2006, residents

attending a meeting of the Downtown Neighborhood Association unanimously endorsed the idea of considering parks downtown. This argument also fails to recognize the internal conflicts in the city's Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) plan. Since the "City Central" district has Skinner Butte and Alton Baker, it apparently does not need more parks. But the plan identifies these areas as "metropolitan parks," not as "neighborhood parks," and the PROS authors correctly say we need both. Downtown has zero neighborhood parks. The PROS plan calls for 1.7 acres of neighborhood parks per 1,000 residents, so with up to 600 residents in the West Broadway development, the city's own guidelines would call for a one-acre neighborhood park. Presumably, these guidelines reflect public sentiment.

**4) We cannot afford a downtown park.** We have two primary options: 1) The city can use its redevelopment funds to acquire the parking lot and build the park; or 2) The developers can build the park as part of the project's required open space. Per the current Eugene Code, the developers must provide approximately 1.4 acres of open space for 400 homes. Will this open space be privatized, or will some of it be public, open to all citizens of Eugene? This is a major opportunity to ensure that most of the required open space be a public park rather than private, internal courtyards. If the city builds the park, we could even minimize the project's open space requirement, which would allow the developers to build more units. This is a win-win subsidy.

If the city wants this project to succeed, the voting public will want to see its funds used for more than parking garages and subsidies to private developers. If the city uses some of its resources for a public park that benefits all of us, then we may look more favorably on the controversial proposal to spend \$40 million of public funds on downtown development.

*Mark L. Gillem, Ph.D., AIA, AICP, is an assistant professor at UO in the departments of Architecture and Landscape Architecture. See a related graphic in Alan Pittman's news story this week on downtown development.*

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16-year-old Nolan Chase machined, welded and assembled his own recumbent bike at CAT.

photo by dillon turner

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