

Filling the Blanks

City measure is a positive step forward

Why am I supporting Measure 20-134, the urban renewal district amendment? Because it supports my vision of Eugene as a beautiful, green, safe and welcoming city. Measure 20-134 helps us protect our wetlands and watersheds. It furthers our growth management goals. It helps protect the urban growth boundary and enhances sustainable approaches to economic development.



In short, by promoting compact urban development Measure 20-134 helps Eugene avoid the urban sprawl that has ruined so many American cities.

Reasonable people can disagree about this ballot measure. But if we look closely, I think we all want pretty much the same thing. With Measure 20-134, a modest and targeted public investment can help us build a great downtown. Here's how.

• **Building downtown promotes sustainability.** Getting people to live, work and play downtown is at the heart of our planning goals. If we create a healthy urban core, we prevent sprawl and reduce our reliance on fossil fuels. It is our shared responsibility to be good stewards of our land and to preserve the livability of this area for future generations.

Downtown Eugene is a special place. Eugene deserves a unique, vibrant downtown. A mixed-use neighborhood that all of us can enjoy. Downtown businesses need people and activity from morning to evening. This will require a wide range of new housing, and more businesses including restaurants, retail and entertainment. And a public park!

The past 20 years tell us this will not happen without bold public leadership. Measure 20-134 helps us achieve the critical mass of people and investment we need for downtown to succeed.

• **Building downtown creates a healthy economy.** The builders we've chosen to work with, Beam and KWG, have successful track records helping to create dynamic urban neighborhoods. They've restored historic buildings in Portland and built attractive and affordable mixed-use apartment and condo buildings in Portland and other cities. Measure 20-134 would allow the city to invest up to \$40 million downtown over the next two decades – an investment that could leverage more than \$160 million in new private investment.

As a city, we can put our money into infrastructure and making housing downtown affordable – and we can have a say in the look and feel of downtown at the same time.

Think of wide sidewalks and outdoor cafes, visually appealing architecture – both old and new, green building practices, public open space and art, a pedestrian and transit oriented district that more efficiently uses existing parking resources. With Measure 20-134 we gain a level of public control over downtown development we would never get without our investment.

How could a thriving economy downtown be anything but good news for our local businesses, our residents and – YES! – our tax supported schools and services?

• **Building downtown supports education goals.** Urban renewal funding does not raise taxes. Tax revenues from the downtown development itself pay off the bonds. This common funding mechanism is used in cities across the country.

In Eugene, urban renewal dollars helped build the Public Library and Hult Center for the Performing Arts – resources of immense cultural and educational value.

All my life, I have worked for the well being of children and families. My husband and I focused our careers on education. I would never support a source of funding that I believed shifted support away from essential services or schools.

The fact is that spending for education is determined by the state of Oregon, and includes a large contribution from state income taxes. A strong downtown economy builds both our income tax and property tax base.

Right now we use *less than two cents* of each Eugene property tax dollar for investments in downtown. Measure 20-134 allows us to continue to use those two cents to make smart investments in the future of our city.

• **Building downtown supports local business.** When I lived downtown this past summer, I enjoyed patronizing the Broadway Market, Kiva, Perugino, Letterhead, Passionflower and other businesses. But there are a lot of empty storefronts in between.

The key to making downtown healthy again is to fill in the blank spots and bring lots of new housing downtown. A lively mix of local, regional and national businesses has been a key to success in cities like Portland and Salem. Think of Eugene's bustling downtown in the 1950s-1970s: We had Penny's and Burch's Shoe Store, Sears and Seymour's Café, Newberrys and Quackenbushes.

Measure 20-134 will give us the tools we need to make this happen. The time for a bold vision, and for public leadership, is now.

Please join me in voting for Measure 20-134. Please join me in helping to ensure Eugene's future as the sustainable, beautiful and livable city we all want it to be.

Kitty Piercy was elected mayor of Eugene in 2004. She is a former teacher, state representative and director of public affairs for Planned Parenthood.

nearly 15 years. If that isn't bad enough, the BLM is gunning for no green tree retention (i.e. no tree left standing) on these very clearcuts.

- A 50 percent reduction in stream buffer areas on all streams. These buffer areas serve as corridors for spotted owl movement across the fragmented landscape and maintain stream health for spawning salmon populations.

- A 25 percent reduction in stands managed as late-successional, structurally complex forests, areas known to be critical habitat for the federally endangered spotted owl and marbled murrelet.

- A halt to the survey and manage approach for the marbled murrelet. Numerous studies estimate the decline of the murrelet population to be 3 to 6 percent *per year*. The BLM's answer: Decrease murrelet habitat on public lands consistently over the next 50 years.

The BLM says these changes are necessary to provide funding to local counties. But this proposal would only provide Lane County with 4 percent of its annual budget needs.

Public comment for the WOPR ends on Nov. 9. If you want your voice heard, now is the time.

Kiana Neal
Eugene

UNIVERSAL CORRUPTION

Every citizen who pays taxes and all the soldiers who follow orders are accomplices to vast and various crimes against humanity. Are all of them either criminals or slaves?

Bernard Nickerson
Eugene

ECONOMICS OF GREED

In response to Chris Williamson's letter ("Progressive Fantasy," 9/20), I am using my brain, sir, and have been using it for a long time in an effort to prevent myself from ignorantly supporting unethical business. I congratulate you on deciding to use yours.

You've come to your senses and realized that yes, businesses right here in our very own U.S. have been getting away with the use of slave labor. But then you go on to say

that we need to "help these people stay in their country of origin by helping to rid the corruption that exists in these primarily Latin American countries." That is exactly what the market economy is supposed to do. But what is supposed to happen and what actually happens are two different things. "Trickle-down" economics turns out to actually be "greed" economics.

For decades, corporations have been using corrupt leaders as a means to increase profits. Corrupt governments profit. Corporations profit. And the people of these foreign countries? Well, to put it very lightly, they get the short end of the stick, as usual.

We need to think with our hearts as well as our brains. Stop fantasizing that corporations that have products made in foreign countries are just trying to help their economics, and start realizing that if businesses here can get away with using slave labor then it must be a whole lot easier elsewhere. The corporations realized that long ago.

Several years ago I decided that I could no longer knowingly contribute to unethical businesses by buying their products.

Let's start using our brains indeed, but let's continue using them as well!

Tracy Lambrecht
Eugene

LEAGUE BACKS 49

The League of Women Voters of Lane County supports Ballot Measure 49, legislation that will modify the unexpected consequences of Measure 37, the initiative that voters approved in 2004. Promoters of Measure 37 said it would give elderly grandparents the ability to build a home on their property for their children.

However, most of the more than 7,500 Measure 37 claims are not for single-family homes for grandchildren but for massive developments.

That's why the League urges voters to approve Measure 49 on Nov. 6, so Measure 37 can be modified before construction on large developments begins. Once concrete is poured, the land will never be the same again.

It is true that Measure 37 allows state and local governments to deny waivers for claims by compensating claimants. But that provi-

WHO YOU GONNA BLAME?

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