

# Opportunity Siting News

June 2011



Welcome to the first newsletter for Opportunity Siting, Eugene's community process for promoting denser urban housing that is sensitively located and designed to enhance our community and neighborhoods.

## **Opportunity Siting Beginnings**

Opportunity Siting (OS) was initiated several years ago by the City Council along with Infill Compatibility Standards (ICS) to plan for where and how infill housing is developed. ICS is intended to address concerns about the negative impacts of some infill projects within our neighborhoods. OS is specifically intended to integrate denser housing into our city in ways that are compatible with existing neighborhoods and that build our sense of community. OS is further intended to identify incentives and methods to promote development on those sites that is compatible with existing neighborhoods.

## **Relationship to Envision Eugene**

The goals of OS have been incorporated into Envision Eugene, the community process to create a vision for how Eugene will grow in the next twenty years. One of the important goals within the Envision Eugene Draft Proposal is to incorporate the 6000 to 9000 new multiple-family homes, such as apartments, condos and row houses, expected in Eugene during the next two decades inside the existing urban growth boundary. Opportunity Siting has been emphasized within the Envision Eugene proposal as a valuable tool to help meet that goal. Visit the Envision Eugene website for more information or to sign up for the Envision Eugene newsletter: [www.envisioneugene.org](http://www.envisioneugene.org).

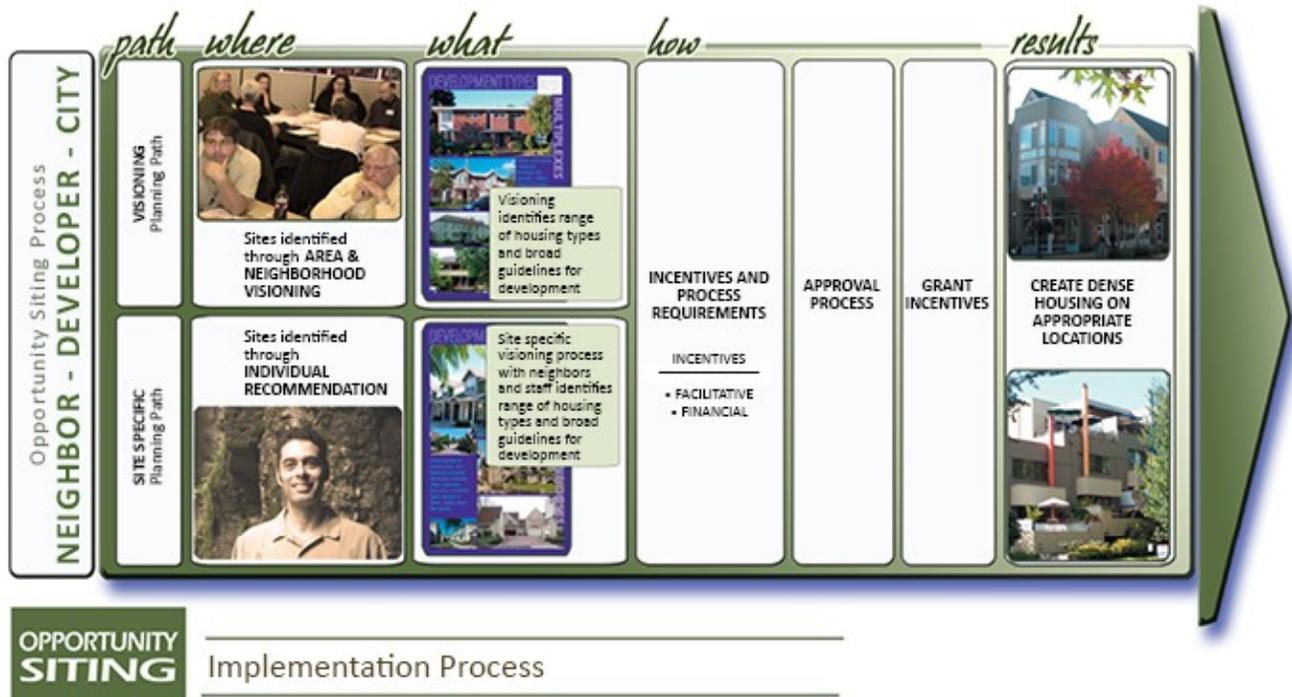
## **Background and Progress on ICS and OS**

ICS: During 2008 and 2009, the ICS Task Team recommended a number of compatibility standards for new development. Several of these have been adopted into the land use code and additional code amendments to address high priority recommendations are currently underway. During 2010, community members involved in ICS were instrumental in getting ICS recommendations included as a high priority in the Envision Eugene Draft Proposal (see the Neighborhood Livability Pillar).

OS: In 2008 and 2009, the OS Task Team, an interdisciplinary, collaborative group established to guide development of the program, created recommendations and an OS Toolkit that meets multiple goals.

- Involving neighbors and neighborhood groups in the process of finding appropriate sites for dense housing and identifying important design principles for development on those sites.
- Address the need for incentives such as flexibility, support and financial assistance, to encourage developers to create the desired housing types.

- Coordinate with long term planning and urban design goals. (These are now articulated as part of the community vision in the Envision Eugene Draft Proposal.)



### The OS Task Team Recommendations

OS tries to balance the goals of neighborhood livability and promoting growth within our urban growth boundary. To achieve this balance, the OS process needs to work for everyone: developers, neighbors, and the city. The [draft OS Toolkit](#) proposed by the OS Task Team includes two paths toward these goals:

#### **Site Specific Path**

The site specific path provides an avenue for a developer or community member to come forward with a location specific recommendation for an opportunity site. Components of the site specific path include:

- A community process and City Council decision to determine where the site specific path applies
- Flexible tools to allow neighbors and developers to work out the conceptual design on a particular site
- Financial and/or facilitative incentives to ensure development that is compatible with Envision Eugene and the neighborhood livability pillar

The flexible adjustment review, recently initiated by the City Council (see May 25 [webcast](#)) is a recommendation of the OS Task Team and supports the Site Specific OS Path. This review process is intended to provide flexibility needed for developers to respond to neighbor input on desired design features for increased compatibility. It would apply to dense residential development in certain locations to be determined. A public process over the coming months will focus on refining the adjustment review code language to meet the program's objectives as well as determining how sites become eligible for the Site Specific tools. Another major consideration is to find a way for developers and neighbors to work together to define desired outcomes *before* the project is designed. This path

will need to move forward in an inclusive and deliberate way to be sure it is responsive to the needs of the community.

### **Visioning Path**

The visioning path provides a more comprehensive approach to identifying opportunity sites within a given area. The visioning path relies heavily on public input and is being tested in the OS Pilot in [South Willamette](#). Components of the visioning path include:

- Visioning process, to envision the future of a larger area and to identify the best places for urban housing.
- Tools to implement design, such as form based code, design guidelines or design review.
- Financial and/or facilitative incentives to ensure development that is compatible with Envision Eugene and the neighborhood livability pillar

The visioning path is more comprehensive and includes a broader set of tools and incentives. Incentives are needed to support OS sites and are being considered through the larger Envision Eugene process.

### **South Willamette Pilot**

Lots of exciting ideas are emerging from the pilot study of OS Visioning in South Willamette. A growing group of interested people are participating. **Please let me know if you would like to add your name to the South Willamette OS pilot list!** You will notice that South Willamette is not only serving as a pilot OS study but is also becoming a good place to study how other ideas in Envision Eugene work for implementing compact urban development along corridors.

### **Next Steps**

Staff will present an update on Opportunity Siting to the Planning Commission on **June 27th**. Meeting materials will be posted on the [Planning Commission](#) website prior to the meeting. Future newsletters will go into more detail about the program and feature recent events and articles of interest. If you have specific questions, please send them along so that we can provide answers or research for a list of “frequently asked questions”.

**Your email or written comments** and questions on Opportunity Siting are welcome at any time. Send comments to: [patricia.thomas@ci.eugene.or.us](mailto:patricia.thomas@ci.eugene.or.us); or mail to Patricia Thomas, c/o Eugene Planning Division, 99 West 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Eugene, OR 97401.

We hope you will keep in touch as Opportunity Siting moves forward! For more information see the OS website at: <http://www.eugene-or.gov/oppsting>

*Patricia Thomas*

Opportunity Siting Project Manager, and  
South Willamette Pilot Project Manager  
City of Eugene Planning Division  
(541) 682-5561 [patricia.thomas@ci.eugene.or.us](mailto:patricia.thomas@ci.eugene.or.us)

*Terri Harding*

Envision Eugene Public Involvement Manager, and  
ICS and OS Program Manager  
City of Eugene Planning Division  
(541) 682-5635 [terri.l.harding@ci.eugene.or.us](mailto:terri.l.harding@ci.eugene.or.us)