

Memorandum

To: Peter Gilkey, UO Senate President

From: Richard Linton, Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies

Subject: Riverfront Research Park Planning

The UO Senate is being asked to support a Student Senate resolution, sponsored by Senator Stark-MacMillan, that declares opposition to the planned development of the first 4.3-acre increment north of the railroad tracks (the Oregon Research Institute site). In advance of this meeting we want to share the following information on the extension and planned projects, and hope that this communication will provide important reassurances related to the evolving vision for future RRP development and campus involvement in planning processes.

Research Mission and the Riverfront Research Park

The UO's research mission includes stimulating innovation and entrepreneurship, and the university has become increasingly successful in translating new discoveries into applications of direct societal and economic benefit. A key component of the innovation agenda is sustaining an affiliated research park to house research centers and associated facilities for the development of R&D enterprises in the private sector.

Impressively, the RRP has a growing list of successful public and private enterprises that are playing a significant and expanding role in the community's incubation and growth of new business ventures. To date, the RRP has been home to 72 companies, including 22 start-ups created by faculty, students or based on UO research. The 30 current RRP tenants have approximately 430 employees and \$25 million in annual payroll, which combined makes it one of the area's largest employers. These ventures also provide extensive internship and employment opportunities for UO students and graduates supporting the knowledge economy.

RRP tenants have diverse research interests closely paralleling UO strengths in behavioral science, biotechnology, disability policy, education, early reading preparation, healthcare, medical devices, nanoscience and nanotechnology, neuroscience and neuroinformatics, and optimization technology. There are many collaborations among private companies and UO departments and research centers, including the NeuroInformatics Center, Center for Second Language Studies, Center for Educational Policy Research, Institute of Molecular Biology, Materials Science Institute, Business, and Computer and Information Sciences.

The RRP houses UO spin-off companies --

- generated from the *Technology Entrepreneurship Program* (TEP) that offers students experience in evaluating, structuring, and financing the launch of new enterprises and creating spin-offs, such as Floragenex (Nathan Lillegard and Eric Johnson);
- affiliated with Oregon's signature research centers, such as *ONAMI/nanoscience* that connect university research with the high-tech industry and are spawning start-ups, such as Dune Sciences (Jim Hutchison and John Miller); and

- benefiting from translational research grants and early stage investments from the *University Venture Development Fund*, intended to produce a growing pipeline of innovations, such as MitoSciences (Rod Capaldi and Mike Marusich), Floragenex and Dune Sciences.

Additional RRP start-ups include companies such as SeQuential Biofuels, VizMe, Electrical Geodesics, Cerebral Data Systems, Imagination International, Kaibrige, Life Technologies, On-Time Systems, ParaTools, Marker Gene Technologies, and StateLogic, among others.

The RRP currently is the subject of community interest because the UO seeks a three-year CUP extension based on the current master plan, while at the same time the first building located between the railroad tracks and river is planned.

3-Year CUP Extension

The UO submitted, and Eugene Planning Department has approved, a three-year extension request of the Research Park's CUP. Opponents have appealed the extension and the issue will go to a hearing official, with a public hearing scheduled on January 20, 2010.

The UO's application for an extension is consistent with the criteria governing time extensions and also with the intent of the Conditional Use Agreement entered into between the City of Eugene and the University of Oregon that provides the following as to a time schedule: "The construction will commence by October 10, 1992, and total construction, including landscaping, shall be totally completed on or before October 10, 2012."

During this time the UO will endeavor to complete two projects under the terms of the existing CUP as a substantial investment of time, resources, and commitments have gone into these projects, including:

- 1) The Trammell Crow Company (TCC) building on the Pole Yard site housing the Oregon Research Institute (ORI) and the Educational Policy Improvement Center (EPIC), a UO spin-off. The Ground Lease on this 4.32-acre site has been executed by the State Board of Higher Education. The \$17 million, 79,800 SF LEED Silver/Gold building has been designed at a cost of over \$500,000, and the building is 100% pre-leased.
- 2) A multi-tenant research office, lab and tech incubator building at 1700 Millrace Drive, located south of the railroad tracks, has been in the planning and schematic design stage for over a year. The building, housing both UO and private sector companies, will enhance the RRP's mission of helping grow innovative, vibrant companies in fields such as neuroscience, biotechnology, behavioral science, reading and educational policy, nanoscience and medical devices.

Pole Yard Site

The RRP's westernmost parcel, the Pole Yard site, was a former sand and gravel extraction operation, then after UO acquisition was leased to EWEB for storage of utility poles, transformers and similar equipment. While the site suffered environmental degradation due

to industrial use, it has been remediated and cleaned-up under the UO's stewardship. Also, there has been no public access to the property for over 70 years and it currently is bounded by a barbed-wire chain-link fence and broken asphalt bike path, and surrounded with homeless camps and a transient population.

The ORI/EPIC Building

ORI is an independent behavioral research center doing research on public health and human wellbeing. Its research includes studies on the prevention of cardiovascular disease, depression, drug abuse, addiction, and cigarette smoking. ORI is recognized throughout the world for its contributions to understanding the factors that threaten health and wellbeing and developing effective prevention and treatment interventions.

A UO spin-off from the Center for Educational Policy Research, EPIC's mission is to improve educational policy and practices that will increase student success, particularly with students historically underserved by public schools. EPIC conducts a range of policy-related research studies and is distinguished by its pioneering use of state-of-the-art, criterion-based, standards-referenced methods of course and document analysis.

The planning and design for ORI/EPIC's \$17-million environmentally sustainable, LEED-certified Silver/Gold building will be a major enhancement to the riverfront area. The project will provide direct benefits to the community in opening access, providing an enhanced riverfront, and increased public safety. The project's sustainable development will:

- treat stormwater in bioswales
- widen the South Bank Bike Trail to 14 feet
- provide bike and pedestrian lighting and safety railings
- remove invasive blackberries
- provide natural riparian landscaping, and
- improve the pedestrian and bike path connections to EWEB, the UO, and downtown via the bike paths and 8th/Hilyard crossing.

This project will provide the long-desired physical connection between downtown, EWEB and the riverfront by extending 8th Avenue over the railroad tracks and into the site, with wide sidewalks and a rebuilt bike path. Also, the approximate 300 employees, plus clients and visitors, in the area will boost public safety, in addition to providing a needed stimulus to the downtown area, EWEB's future mixed-use development, and contribute to the area's revitalization.

Alder Street Bike Connection

An improved bike connection between this site and the Alder Street/bike corridor has been publicly discussed as a desirable element of this plan. While recognizing Alder Street is an important bike route to south Eugene, a physical connection across Franklin Blvd. and the railroad tracks at this location is highly improbable.

A connection between Alder Street and the Pole Yard would require crossing six lanes of busy Franklin Blvd. traffic, along an unsignalized curvature in the highway, plus construction of a railroad underpass or overpass. Since the railroad track is near-grade level, it would

require a significant bridge structure to meet the engineering and accessibility requirements to cross either over or under the tracks. Based on previous experience, it is likely the Union Pacific Railroad would require that a shoofly be built (an alternate set of railroad tracks) to carry the train traffic load while work under/over the existing line is underway. No serious engineering study has looked into the feasibility and/or cost of such a connection. Importantly, the existing Hilyard/Broadway intersection is located one block to the east; it is signalized, has designated crosswalks, and newly built widened sidewalks on the north side.

Resolution Comments

Based on the Bill for Resolution that you forwarded on January 6, 2010, we offer the following to correct its factual basis; if further changes are made, please forward the most recent version.

- 1.2 In 1989, the Hearings Official granted the UO a 20-year conditional use permit. The City of Eugene and UO entered a Conditional Use Agreement in April 1992, stating development must be completed on or before October 10, 2012.

An October 10, 2009 date does not appear in any related land use document.

- 1.3 The UO entered into a ground lease with TC Eugene, a Delaware LLC Company and a single purpose entity of the Trammell Crow Company (TCC).

Note correct spelling.

- 1.5 *The Land Transfer Conditions, developed through a recommendation of the Campus Planning Committee to the UO President and approved by the State Board of Higher Education, created the Riverfront Design Advisory Committee, with faculty and community members appointed by the President as advisory on RRP development. This committee met, reviewed, and approved the plans at the Schematic Design and Design Development phases of development. The proper review process was followed.*

Future Planning

In response to interests in the master planning process, future development, and more direct student involvement, we propose the following:

- Two student representatives, recommended by the ASUO President, will be invited to serve on the Riverfront Design Advisory Committee (DAC), the designated planning body that develops and reviews RRP plans.
- Under an extension of the current CUP, the UO plans to complete two current projects under development (TCC building and 1700 Millrace site) as described above. Once these projects are underway and before any further development is proposed, the UO will proactively engage the campus community in a comprehensive planning process. In coordination with the Riverfront DAC, the UO will consider updates to the RRP master plan, develop and review individual project plans, and submit a new Willamette Greenway CUP application with the associated public hearing processes and related reviews.

- The UO will promote additional opportunities for strategic facilities development, including public-private partnerships supporting the UO's academic plan focused on educational and research priorities. Future RRP development will be incorporated into UO's broader facilities priorities, consider prospects for sustainable economic development catalyzed by UO research, and complement other community development opportunities (e.g. the EWEB master plan and Eugene downtown re-development.)

In summary, we appreciate this opportunity to provide information and clarify issues regarding the RRP, including our plans to provide re-examination of the master plan for this area. Please contact my office or Diane Wiley, Riverfront Research Park director, if we can provide additional information or assistance. We look forward to further steps to assure the RRP's support of regional economic development, while enhancing the connection to community and university interests in a dynamic riverfront that is responsive to the "triple bottom line" of sustainable development.