

YOUR

LA PINE CHAMBER CONNECTION

**PRESENTED BY:
WISE BUYS ADS & MORE**

"We are the hub of the business community, promoting commerce and tourism making La Pine a vibrant community to work, live and play!"

At a special presentation at City Hall Wednesday afternoon, representatives from all over La Pine came to hear Elaine Howard, Urban Development Consultant, describe exactly what La Pine would need to commit to in order to begin their own Urban Development Project. Ms. Howard has been working in the field for many years and she came to La Pine on invitation from the Council so that community partners could hear first-hand about what Urban Renewal can offer a small town like ours. After defining what Urban Renewal means - a program that creates a funding mechanism to remove blight and generate vitality in an Urban Renewal (UR) district, Howard went on to explain the history and overall rules of the Program. It started in Washington when the Federal Housing Authority created the original program in 1949. By 1951, Oregon authorized its use with ORS457. It first was used in Oregon Cities in 1957.

Urban Renewal is currently used throughout Oregon and provides the financing tool to implement City Plans. Ms. Howard showed us a map of Oregon and explained the dots that covered many of the cities throughout the state. She then discussed what Blight is in terms of the program. Blight - for the purposes of the UR program is a district that is underdeveloped, or with tracts of property that is underutilized, or areas with many of its buildings that are in poor condition and finally where there is inadequate infrastructure to support the area that has been drawn up to be the UR District.

The UR District size is determined by law and some specific limitations. We need to have a population under 50K in the district. The entire UR project can only be worth 25% of the assessed value of the property inside the boundaries. It cannot be larger than 25% of the total acreage of the City. Then Ms. Howard explained a few more complicated aspects of the process in terms of how the plan could be amended and how the taxing districts, like the Fire District, the City, the Parks and Recreation District, the Library, 9-1-1 and others like schools, etc. would be frozen in place until a certain percentage of the UR Plan was paid off. Since UR is no longer tied to a specific time line, like the old days, it is now tied to the financing aspect and can last for five to thirty years as an average. Every Plan has a Maximum Indebtedness (MI) that is equal to the total amount of dollars you can spend in the UR boundary during the approved period of years you plan for. (i.e. 25)

Does this raise your taxes? It does not change taxes for any individual, but your tax bill will ultimately reflect any increased assessed value being apportioned to the Urban Renewal District. What that is comprised of is the 3% annual increase in assessment which is capped by law. Out of that 3% in increased assessment, your money and the taxing district monies will go to pay back the plan. You will not pay a single dime more than you would have paid - it just is divided differently.

During the following weeks and months, there will be a number of public hearings with public notice in writing through utility bills or in the paper to all citizens of the district. The City Council will adopt the Plan, hire a consultant like Ms. Howard (There will be RFPs out to find and hire a consultant to help take the City through the process with an average cost of \$25K that will be paid by the City - note: it has been put into the budget for this and next year). An advisory city committee formed of independent thinking city leaders and business people will come together to advise the City Council to make decisions on what an Urban Renewal District would look like in our town. The consultant will work with the City, the advisory board and the agencies/attorneys and businesses involved in the Plan. Lines will be drawn around a suitable district that incorporates space for development and includes a core area that needs vitality.

Ms. Howard suggested that we begin somewhere to show that we are starting the idea of making our town more beautiful and vital. She suggested that we begin with the buildings located at the Chamber, the Quilt store and the Red Rooster and move to the new Chamber building (Old Twigs) and create a stopping place for Hwy. 97 travelers that will entice them to stop and see what will be there for them in the future.



Sponsored by:

LA PINE
OREGON
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & VISITOR CENTER



WISE BUYS
ADS & MORE



KITC FM
106.5
Gilchrist & La Pine

Visit The Chamber of Commerce at www.lapine.org
or call 541.536.9771.

To learn more about radio sponsorship,
email the sales department at sales@kitcfm.com.