1. What is Envision Eugene?
2. The Way Things Used to Go
3. A Different Path – to Best Outcomes
4. Lessons for Community Engagement
Oregon’s Planning System

1973
- every city must have an **Urban Growth Boundary** and a **Comprehensive Plan**
- address 19 statewide planning goals.
State Mandate
Accommodate projected 20 year growth of .8 % per year (from 179,000 to 213,000 people)

Local Opportunity
Discover a 20-30 year community vision
The Way Things Used to Go

Business/Development Interests

Environmental/Neighborhood Interests

Planners and Policy Makers
The Way Things Used to Go

Costly, lengthy legal battles,
where somebody always lost.
Who you gonna sprawl?

Can Eugene bust the growth monster?

A huge monster threatens to destroy Eugene.

Urban sprawl can smash livability ....

But Eugene citizens can bust the banshee and prevent the gates of a sprawling hell from opening here, and they don’t even need an unlicensed nuclear accelerator from the Ghost Busters movie. They can use Oregon’s nationally acclaimed gift to city planning: the urban growth boundary.
A Different Path
A Different Path
A diverse group tries to fashion a vision of Eugene's future.

Kevin Matthews, president of Friends of Eugene, and Laura Potter, director of government affairs for the Home Builders Association of Lane County, are among the 60 people on a committee that will help influence the city's plan for growth over the next 20 years.

Kevin Matthews and Laura Potter don't often agree. Be wary of their apparent unity over the city's future. Matthews and Potter belong to a 60-person committee formed by City Manager Jon Ruiz to help answer key questions about how Eugene should grow — a contentious and charged topic.

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This is one of the most important conversations that we will have this year and for the next year or two," Ruiz said. "We really are talking about the future of Eugene for the next 20 years."
Growth: Meetings help members understand other viewpoints

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Ruiz appointed the committee to provide opinions as he and city planners grapple with possibly expanding the growth boundary. Ruiz picked members for their interest in land use and their diverse views. They include slow-growth advocates, neighborhood leaders, construction contractors, real estate brokers and business owners. Mayor Kitty Piercy, two city councilors, two Lane County commissioners, Eugene School District Superintendent George Russell and school board member and former Mayor Jim Torrey belong, too.

In typical Eugene style, the committee — called the Community Resource Group — has talked for many hours since it formed in June.

But rather than debate the merits of various land use scenarios, members were required to get personal, share their thoughts and feelings on growth and development, and about each other, sometimes in uncomfortably candid ways.

The goal was to build trust, especially with those they have disagreed with in the past.

“Stereotypes were exploded,” Matthews said. “First, by talking to each other and going around a circle and expressing our thoughts and feelings, and becoming real people to each other, rather than being two-dimensional.”

Some of the members are skeptical about the touchy-feely sessions, suspecting that the 30 hours spread over four days were a waste of time. But…

were given the all-clear to dive into the details of land use.

In its first four meetings, the group engaged in relationship-building exercises led by Ruiz’s favorite consultant, Bob Chadwick of Terrebonne.

Chadwick, a conflict resolution specialist, and his assistant, Diane Seehawer, have led several sessions among city employees and residents in Eugene since Ruiz became city manager in early 2008.

Chadwick has a $58,600 contract to work on Envision Eugene. In the initial meetings with the 60-member committee, Chadwick asked participants to share their views in hopes of eventually reaching consensus on growth.

Potter, of the homebuilders group, said the committee members had “pointed discussions that are not supposed to leave the room.”

The interactions are almost like group therapy, she said. “We call it mental Olympics for lobbyists,” she said, laughing.

Some exchanges became heated, participants said.

Committee member and Eugene commercial real estate broker John Brown said the interactions changed his views about other members.

Previously, he thought that some of them were unreasonable people opposed to growth.

After getting to know them better, he said, he realized he was “totally unfair in my perception of who I thought they were and what they stood for.”

Yet Brown had become impatient with the therapylike sessions and the time required…

Participants of Envision Eugene gather in small work groups at the Hilton Eugene in May to talk about the ways they hope to see the city handle growth over the next 20 years.

COMMUNITY RESOURCE GROUP

These people were asked by Eugene City Manager Jon Ruiz to serve on a committee studying the city’s growth:

BEST OUTCOMES

• Improve access employment, housing, services, transportation, and education
• Make Eugene more livable for everyone
THE 7 PILLARS OF ENVISION EUGENE

- Economic opportunities
- Housing affordability
- Climate and energy
- Compact development and transportation
- Neighborhood livability
- Natural resources
- Flexible implementation
Technical Verifiers

- Small group of local expert volunteers reviewed assumptions and brought the community along.
The Way Things Go Now

Business/Development Interests

Environmental/Neighborhood Interests

Planners and Policy Makers
ENGAGEMENT TOOLS

• Listening Interviews
• Open Houses
• Neighborhood Meetings
• Stakeholder presentations
• Public Hearings
• Youth Art Contest
ENGAGEMENT TOOLS

- www.EnvisionEugene.org
- Surveys
- Videos
- Facebook Page
- E-mail Newsletters
- On-line Open House
ENGAGEMENT TOOLS

- Community Resource Group
- Technical Resource Group
- Boards and Commissions
- Council Work Sessions
- Informal Meetings
LESSONS

1. Invest the time it takes to build trust and get where you want to go.
LESSONS

2. Focus on Best Outcomes to keep the dialogue positive. Celebrate success!
3. Don’t waste energy getting “back on track.” Focus on where you want to go.
LESSONS

4. Support from Mayor, Council, and City Manager CRITICAL to project success.