

With over three decades of protests, five lawsuits, 2 UO Senate resolutions, an ASUO resolution, a Student Senate Resolution, petitions, and a campus-wide vote, the UO's riverfront property is clearly of great importance to the campus community.

The UO's Riverfront Development Plans: A Long History of Student, Faculty, and Community Opposition

Opposition to development on the University of Oregon's riverfront spans more than three decades. Beginning in the **mid-1980s**, as the University unveiled plans to build a research park along the riverfront, students and faculty began protesting, spoke at public meetings, and submitted written comments in opposition to the draft Riverfront Research Park Master Plan. Nevertheless, the University moved forward with plans to develop the riverfront property--which included multi-story office buildings and parking garages within a stone's throw of the river.

After many years of controversy Professor Alvin Urquhart appealed the issuance of the Condition Use Permit (CUP) in **1989** all the way to the Oregon Supreme Court on the basis of violating principles of the **Willamette Greenway Act**. Also in 1989, the Students of the University of Oregon passed the **Campus Greenway Initiative** to reserve the riverfront for open space and public uses during the spring Senate general election.

In **1997** some **200 students rallied** at the EMU and the Urban Farm opposing construction of an automobile underpass at the northern terminus of Agate Street, which was intended to open the riverfront to further development. In 1998, after years of contention and student opposition, a review of the Riverfront Research Park was initiated by President Frohnmayer. The review committee received approximately 100 emails and letters from university faculty, students, and Eugene community members and groups. The content of these letters indicate that **public opposition** to riverfront development was approximately **50:1** at this time.

In **1999**, following the issuance of the report, which stated that the riverfront sector must be protected from development until all lands south of the railroad tracks were occupied, the **University Senate** – the official governing body of the University of Oregon – passed a resolution opposing all development on the riverfront, north of the railroad tracks.

In October **2009**, the University applied to the City of Eugene for a 3-year extension to the 20-year Conditional Use Permit to develop the riverfront. The extension was granted, but then appealed by **ConnectingEugene** on the grounds that the University could not fulfill the conditions of the permit – such as completion of the Research Park within the 20-year timeline established by the original permit. The appeal also charged that surrounding conditions had changed significantly since the issuance of the permit in 1989. The appeal files contained **over 600 public comments** in opposition, while only 11 were in favor of the extension.

In **2009**, the **ASUO Student Senate** unanimously supported a motion to oppose development on the Riverfront under the current Master Plan, and a similar resolution was passed in January 2010 in the **University Senate**. During faculty meetings of the **Architecture and Landscape Architecture departments** in winter term of 2010, each of these groups voted unanimously to oppose the proposed first development on the riverfront.

In April **2010**, both the **Graduate Teaching Fellows Federation (GTFF)** and the **Graduate students in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology (GrEBES)** voted unanimously in opposition to development on the riverfront under the current Master Plan.

On April 15, **2010**, the **faculty of the School of Architecture and Allied Arts** voted unanimously to support a resolution opposing riverfront development under the current plan.

In May **2010**, faculty members of the **Center for Ecology and Evolutionary Biology** signed a letter to UO President Lariviere and other stakeholders stating their opposition to development North of the tracks without an updated and community-inclusive master plan.

In **2010** over **1100 signatures** from students and community members were collected on various petitions opposing development on the Willamette riverfront under the current Master Plan.

Resolutions and Statements:

UNIVERSITY SENATE

Senate Resolution US98/99-4 – 13 Jan 1999

RESOLVED that the University Senate hereby urges President Frohnmayer to exclude the University-owned lands in the River View and Gateway Sectors from any future commercial development and to designate these lands for open space, recreational fields and natural areas.

Passed: 20 in favor, 10 opposed

Senate Resolution US09/10-11 – 13 Jan 2010

RESOLVED: (1) the University Senate declares opposition to the planned development of the first 4.3-acre increment of the Riverfront Research Park North of the railroad tracks on the South bank of the Willamette River until the University undergoes a student and faculty inclusive, open process for revising the RRP Master Plan; and (2) that the Senate President be directed to write and send a letter to the University President and the City of Eugene expressing the Senate's opposition to the planned development North of the railroad tracks along the South bank of the Willamette River.

Passed: 29 in favor, 8 opposed

SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE AND ALLIED ARTS

School-wide Faculty Meeting – Spring Term 2010

RESOLVED: The standards of best practice in planning and design have profoundly changed in the last 20 years, due in large part to the environmental challenges that face us. In light of these changes, the faculty of the School of Architecture and Allied Arts urge that development north of the railroad tracks in the University of Oregon's Riverfront Research Park be halted until the now obsolete, twenty-year old master plan and permits for this area are replaced with new thinking that better represents present community and ecological values.

Passed: Unanimous

DEPARTMENTS OF ARCHITECTURE AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

Department Faculty Meetings – Winter Term 2010

Statements of opposition to proposed first development

(Text of these resolutions is available from the departments)

Passed: Unanimous support from 100% of regular faculty in each department

ASUO STUDENT SENATE

ASUO Resolution – 19 Nov 2009

RESOLVED: The ASUO Student Senate declares strong opposition to the renewal of the conditional use permit extension for the planned development of the first 4.2-acre increment of the Riverfront Research Park north of the railroad tracks on the south bank of the Willamette River until the University undergoes a student inclusive, open process for revising the RRP Master Plan; and that, that the ASUO Student Senate encourages the University Senate to voice their solidarity with students on the issue and pass a similar resolution.

Passed: Unanimous

GRADUATE STUDENTS

Graduate Teaching Fellows Federation (GTFF) of the University of Oregon – 2 April, 2010

RESOLVED: The Graduate Teaching Fellows Federation of the University of Oregon declares opposition to development within the Riverfront Research Park north of the railroad tracks until the University undergoes a student and faculty inclusive, open process for revising the Riverfront Research Park Master Plan...

Passed: Unanimous

GrEBES (Graduate Evolutionary Biology and Ecology Students) Resolution 2010-01 –Mar 31, 2010

RESOLVED: (1) The ASUO-recognized group of graduate students in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology (GrEBES) declare opposition to development within the Riverfront Research Park north of the railroad tracks until (a) the University undergoes a student and faculty inclusive, open process for revising the Riverfront Research Park Master Plan and (b) takes into account modern scientifically-sound ecological principles as they apply to riparian habitat, water quality, and wildlife corridor in riverfront development..."

Passed: Unanimous

LiveMove (Transportation and Livability and UO Sustainable Cities Initiative student group) – Nov. 19, 2009 "...We

encourage the University to develop a new master plan that is ecologically and socially responsible, governed by current development laws and best practices, and that protects our previous riverfront...."

Approved: Unanimous

CAMPUS-WIDE

Campus Greenway Initiative, Ballot Measure 90

1989 ASUO General Election – In response to the development of the Riverfront Research Park Plan

"It shall be the official policy of the ASUO to encourage the University of Oregon to protect and preserve its riverfront open space as 'campus greenway'. The ASUO President shall write to the President of the University of Oregon and to the Eugene City Council expressing this student position and shall appoint a liaison to meet with the planners."

Passed: 1452 in favor, 394 opposed

GREATER EUGENE COMMUNITY

Whiteaker Community Council – Letter to UO administration April 30, 2010

"... We at the Whiteaker Community Council support a transparent and participatory planning process to update the 1989 Master Plan before development occurs north of the railroad tracks, and we oppose development of the Willamette Greenway."

Approved: Unanimous – WCC Board