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# Ideas to circulate about waterfront | Thoughts from the public are sought about preliminary designs

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## Riverfront planning

By [Susan Palmer](#), The Register-Guard, Nov 10, 2009

Don't get too hung-up on the details. Look at the big picture.

That's the message to the public from the architects at Rowell Brokaw, the consultants helping the Eugene Water & Electric Board shape a vision for waterfront development in downtown Eugene.

They'll have artist renderings of three preliminary design options that will describe what open space could look like when the utility sells a portion of its 27 acres along the Willamette River for development. The renderings were released Monday in advance of today's public session.

Don't like the shape of the buildings? Don't worry about it, said Rowell Brokaw project director Kaarin Knudson.

"It's not about the specifics of the buildings, it's about the impressions of the place. We want to generate a discussion about the river," she said.

The buildings, the parks, the sidewalks and the plazas in the three images are just broad concepts, ways of getting people talking about what they want in the intriguing nexus of wild river, public waterfront and private development.

Do you prefer a heavily wooded river bank with some limited public access right up to the water? Or do you favor greater openness along the river, with ample seating and lawns to accommodate people who want to lounge and observe the watery currents?

But development there won't be simple. The city's downtown plan sets criteria for redevelopment of EWEB's land, requiring open space and a mix of uses both public and private. Under a memorandum of understanding with the city, a nine-member volunteer group has been working on the project with guidance from Rowell Brokaw.

After the public participation and the volunteer team winnows down the design possibilities to a single proposal, both the utility board and the Eugene City Council will have to sign off on it.

Sale of the property will help the utility pay for a new operations and maintenance center in west Eugene.

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**WATERFRONT BRAINSTORM**, EWEB presents development ideas

Where: 500 E. Fourth Ave., North Building, When: 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., Register: at [www.eugeneriverfront.com](http://www.eugeneriverfront.com)

### Related Links

- [The Watershed: On the waterfront](#) Architects release ideas for developing EWEB's waterfront