



Jefferson Westside Neighbors (JWN) is the city-chartered neighborhood for the area roughly between W. 7th and 18th Avenues and between Chambers Street and Lawrence/Willamette Streets.

<http://jwneugene.org/>

May 2, 2023

Re; support for LEC athletic facility

Legislators,

As the independently elected Chair of Jefferson Westside Neighbors, a chartered neighborhood association in Eugene in which Lane Events Center resides, I want to express my enthusiastic support for continued state funding for the proposed Outdoor Athletic facility anchored by the Eugene Emeralds.

Lane Events Center and Eugene Emeralds management is working closely with Jefferson Westside Neighbors in crafting a development plan that meets the needs and expectations of the neighborhood. While this work is ongoing and support subject to addressing any significant concerns, our experience so far indicates these concerns can be addressed. The Lane County Board of Commissioners, particularly Commissioner Trieger, have stepped up by dedicating local tax revenue and we now ask for the legislature to do their part. The Eugene Emeralds have demonstrated their eagerness to work with the neighborhood by contributing money and volunteer hours to our local parks and exploring the possible creation of a historic district. Moreover, the Eugene Emeralds have provided critical support to the community ranging from the Boys and Girls Club, Holiday Farm Fire victims, LBGTQI groups, and our growing Hispanic community.

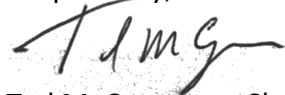
Revitalizing Lane Events Center and the creation of a landmark athletics facility is crucial for the economic development of Eugene's city center as well as enhancing a community cultural resource for Oregonians. Minor League Baseball is an accessible and affordable family activity that gets people out of their homes and interacting with a diverse cross-section of their neighbors, neighbors that might not normally meet. It is a uniquely American experience with benefits that exceed tax revenue or ticket and concession sales. In these divisive times, we need common ground to come together, to celebrate the collective endeavor of our society, and baseball provides that venue.

The Eugene City Council has been hard at work to revitalize our downtown, build our tax base, and encourage local businesses and entrepreneurs that create good jobs. An arc of development ranging from 5th Street Market, a newly acquired river facing city hall, and our under-construction River Front Neighborhood can link via the downtown to a revitalized Lane Events Center via the beautiful, walkable, rideable, tree lined, and historic Jefferson Westside neighborhood. With the largest inventory of middle housing, a majority non-student renter population, and second densest neighborhood in Eugene, we are creating a model for an economically vibrant and climate friendly Oregon city.

A short walk west from Lane Events Center is a shovel ready 80-unit affordable housing project with an early learning center, proposed by neighbors, designed by Homes for Good, and approved by the city and county. This complements the existing Keystone Apartments Permanent Supportive Housing complex that sits next to the proposed outdoor athletic facility. Having the Emeralds play ball at Lane Events Center creates entertainment for low-income families and brings them into the fold of the larger community.

Eugene, like many Oregon cities, has struggled to reinvent itself in the wake of the collapse of the timber industry. But we have a vision of the future and what we need to achieve it. A revitalized Lane Events Center and outdoor athletic facility is key to that future. People have lost faith in the ability of government to be bold and deliver on big community enhancing projects like our internationally renowned Hult Center for the Performing Art. Help us restore that faith and build a future Eugene we all want to live in.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T M G', written over a light grey circular stamp.

Ted M. Coopman, Chair
Jefferson Westside Neighbors