What is Urban Renewal and why is it showing up on my tax bill?

Urban Renewal is one of the most effective tools that a City can use to address underdeveloped areas within the city limits. It can help areas that are blighted; those defined as old or with deteriorated buildings, streets and utilities in poor condition, including a complete lack of streets and utilities all together. After a special task force was developed in 2015 and with community input, the City Council adopted the Urban Renewal District in 2016.

Once adopted, the taxing districts, such as Public Safety, Grants Pass Schools and Rogue Community College continue to get the same amount of tax allocation based on existing assessed value. However, with their tax base “frozen”, all new assessed value above the frozen tax base will now be directed to Urban Renewal. This is how Urban Renewal pays for improvements.

When you get your tax bill, you will continue to see the allocations for each of the taxing districts, and below that, there is a new line for Urban Renewal; this is the amount of increase that occurs from new buildings and growth within the District. It is not a new tax and taxes have not increased over all. The same amount of taxes will be allocated differently with a portion going to Urban Renewal.

The community gets the benefits that the new District is achieving. Blight will be removed, new infrastructure will be built and it will bring new and better jobs and opportunities. The schools and Public Safety will get the benefit of all the improvements and once the Urban Renewal sunsets, will receive the benefits of increased assessed valuation from that point forward.

We live in a beautiful area and we are constantly looking for ways to improve the quality of life for our citizens. Urban Renewal is just one of the ways we are achieving that goal. For more information, please check out the City’s website at www.grantspassoregon.gov/1132/Urban-Renewal for frequently asked questions and a complete list of the projects that the City will be embarking on with the assistance of Urban Renewal and other public and private partners.
**Personal emergency preparedness is the keystone for any emergency program.** If you are not ready you will be one of the people needing help, not one of the people helping others. Plan ahead by having sufficient resources for at least 72-hours. Follow these three steps: 1) be informed, 2) make a plan, 3) get prepared.

The City of Grants Pass is also following these three steps to better serve its citizens in the event of an emergency. Some of the things the City has done to prepare if there is an emergency include: Presenting disaster mitigation preparedness presentations, developing hillside development standards, doing wild-land/urban interface risk assessment and prevention programs to reduce fire risks, enforcing flood hazard zones, adopting a natural hazards mitigation plan, preparing emergency water resources and adopting an emergency operations plan. The City has prepared plans to get streets cleared so emergency responders and utility providers can get where they need to go. Public Safety employees train, plan, prepare and practice so the City will be in a better position to help everyone in the City.

Everyone can make a difference. There is no better time to get started than now. Want to learn more? The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) can give you a great start. Check them out at [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov).

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**Holiday Crime Prevention Tips**

These suggestions can help protect yourself and your property during the holidays.

- Never give out your Social Security, credit card or bank account numbers.
- Be aware of others nearby when entering your personal identification number at an automated teller.
- Get a credit report annually to check for errors.
- Shred charge receipts, bank statements, credit offers and expired credit cards.

**SCAM WARNING**

If you are solicited to donate money to other causes, take these precautions to verify the validity of the request.

- Get a contact number for the business or entity that is requesting the donation. Call back at a later time to verify that they are indeed asking for donations, how and where the funds will be used and if they have a charitable registration number. Request the information be sent to you in writing.

- If the donation is an out of the area business or entity, verify with the Attorney General’s Office or Secretary of State’s office.

- Do not send cash in the mail or give it in person. Write a check and in the check notes write the description of the donation.

If you have further questions or concerns, contact our Crime Prevention Bureau with the Department of Public Safety at 541-450-6245.
Your water pipes and spigots need to be protected. Without precautions, your water pipes could freeze and burst, creating an expensive mess. Here are some handy tips to avoid frozen pipes during sub-freezing temperatures.

CUSTOMER VALVE – Knowing how to shut off the water can come in handy to limit damage if a pipe inside your home does freeze and burst. If you don’t have a customer shut-off valve and would like to have one installed, the City’s Water Distribution Division will gladly assist by shutting off your water during normal working hours to enable you or your plumber to install the valve.

INSULATION – Pipe insulation can be purchased from most hardware stores. Simply measure the insulation, cut to length, and install on the pipes, especially those located in uninsulated areas of your home or business or those that are exposed to the weather such as hose bibs.

BACKFLOW PREVENTION – Backflow prevention assemblies, which are installed above ground, such as reduced pressure assemblies and pressure reducing valves, should be properly protected. These are best protected with insulated boxes. Contact your landscaper or property maintenance to properly protect and/or drain your irrigation system to alleviate the chance that you will have a break that you may not discover until the system is reactivated the following season.

PLUMBING FIXTURES – If any plumbing fixtures are located adjacent to an exterior wall and inside a cabinet, such as a kitchen or bathroom sink, open the cabinet doors to help keep the pipes from freezing.

CAULKING – Use caulk or insulation to seal cold-air leaks throughout your home or business.

STREAM OF WATER – If the temperatures are forecasted to remain very cold for several days, run a very thin stream of water from faucets and/or fixtures susceptible to freezing because water that is running will not readily freeze. Keep in mind, the customer will be required to pay for water used to prevent the pipes from freezing in this manner, however this cost is minimal.

If a pipe does burst, turn off the water supply at your customer valve as soon as possible to limit the damage. Contact a plumber to make the necessary repairs. If you have a question, call the Public Works Division at 541-450-6110 during business hours.

Remember: whether indoors or out, the water service line from the meter box to the structure, including all the plumbing within the customers property is the responsibility of the property owner. A few minutes spent weatherizing and protecting your plumbing system can save you a lot of hassle and money!

Enjoy Downtown Grants Pass

Grants Pass is a wonderful place to spend the holidays because we know how to get in the Christmas spirit. A walk downtown will show you just how much we love this time of year. From the lights to the nutcrackers to the decorated storefronts, our beautiful town radiates charm. The Magical Murals line the sidewalks with festive scenes and music. The Holiday Plaza at 5th & G streets is aglow with our magnificent Christmas tree. It is truly a magical experience being downtown. It is also the perfect spot to do your holiday shopping. Not only will you support our amazing local businesses, but you will also earn chances to win cash and prizes during Shop Dine & Win! When you shop or dine at participating merchants through December 22, you will receive scratch-off tickets that give you a chance to be an instant winner of a gift card or to enter a drawing for one of five $200 prizes or the grand prize of $1,000. Enjoy the festive downtown scene while crossing items off your Christmas list! For more information, call us at 541-450-6180 or visit TravelGrantsPass.com.
The Grants Pass and Josephine County Bikeways & Walkways Committee has one opening to fill a term that will expire on June 30, 2018. The purpose of this committee is to implement the "Non-Motorized" Chapter of the Master Transportation Plan, seek input from the community, coordinate and disseminate information for public education about biking and walking routes and rules, and serve as a resource and advisory group regarding bike and pedestrian trails for the City and County. Applications for this position must be received by 5:00 pm on Monday, December 18, 2017.

There is one position on the Historical Buildings and Sites Commission. This commission reviews proposed alterations to any Historic District or designated structure, promotes community historic preservation, advises other interested agencies on matters related to historic preservation, identifies areas of archaeological significance and buildings of historic or architectural significance. Applicants must be at least 18 years of age and be a resident of the City of Grants Pass. This position will be filled by an owner of property located within a Conservation District, or the owner of a Historic Landmark as identified by Section 13.412 of the Development Code. This is a two-year appointment. Application must be received by 5:00 pm on Monday, January 8, 2018.

There are three openings for the Budget Committee. The purpose of the Budget Committee is to review the Recommended Budget and approve a Budget for Council's consideration. Applications must be received by January 8, 2018 and interviews scheduled for January 16, 2018.

You may obtain applications for these positions at the City Administration Office, 101 N.W. A Street, or online at www.grantspassoregon.gov/committee-application. If you have any questions, please contact the administration department at 541-450-6000.

City Councilors are interested in your opinion. They would like you to join them at one of their sessions of Coffee Talk. Up to two City Councilors are available every Friday morning to answer questions or address concerns. Visit them at Rogue Roasters, 610 SW 6th Street, from 7:45 to 9:00 am.

Mayor Darin Fowler 541-450-6000 djfowler@grantspassoregon.gov Ward 1
Councillor Tyler Flaming 541-450-6000 tfflaming@grantspassoregon.gov
Councillor Roy Lindsay 541-291-0346 rlindsay@grantspassoregon.gov Ward 2
Councillor Valerie Lovelace 541-479-0952 vlovelace@grantspassoregon.gov
Councillor Rick Riker 541-479-7333 rriker@grantspassoregon.gov Ward 3
Councillor President Dennis Roler 541-479-4272 droler@grantspassoregon.gov
Councillor Jason Sharp 541-951-2282 jsharp@grantspassoregon.gov Ward 4
Councillor Barry Eames 541-218-1403 beames@grantspassoregon.gov
Councillor Jason Anderson 541-659-5957 janderson@grantspassoregon.gov

City Council Meetings
1st & 3rd Wednesdays at 6 pm
City Council Workshops
Mondays at 11:45 am
Holidays will alter schedule
City Council Chambers, 101 NW A Street

Meetings are televised on Charter Cable Channel 183 and posted on our website at www.grantspassoregon.gov.

Listen live to City Councilors and staff discussing local issues on KAJO (1270 AM) the 1st and 2nd Tuesdays each month at 9:30 am

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