

River Road-Santa Clara Neighborhood Plan Frequently Asked Questions

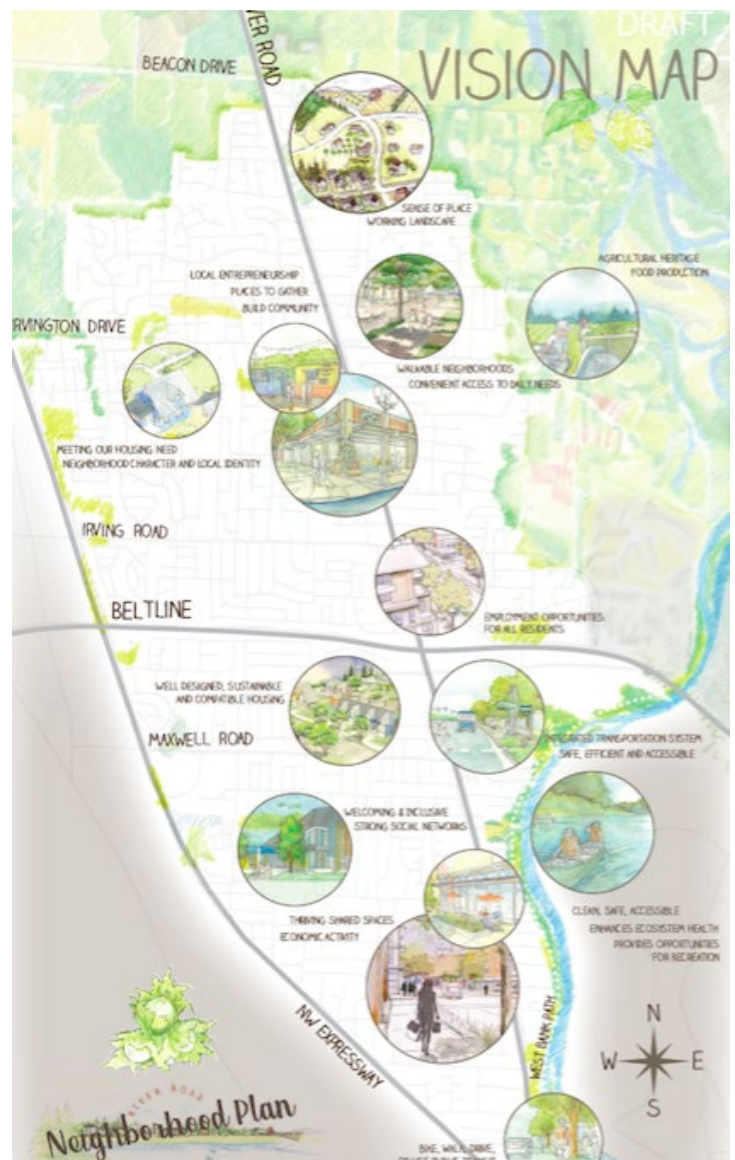
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What is the River Road-Santa Clara Neighborhood Plan?

The [River Road-Santa Clara Neighborhood Plan](#) captures the community vision for growth and development in a manner that respects the area's unique characteristics and opportunities. This plan will guide decision-making in River Road and Santa Clara for decades to come and focuses on the topic areas of **Economic Development, Transportation, Parks and Natural Resources, Land Use, and Community**. To reflect the community values, aspirations and priorities expressed during outreach, each topic area includes:

- **Vision statements** which are aspirational descriptions of the community's best outcome for how the neighborhood will look, feel and function 20 years and more into the future.
- **Goals** that translate the vision, describing hopes for the future on a particular idea.
- **Policies** that will be formally adopted by the City and County to provide a consistent course of action and move the community toward manifesting its goals.
- **Actions** which are possible strategies identified by the community, captured in the Action Plan, to implement the adopted policies over time. These will require ongoing advocacy and coordination between various partners.

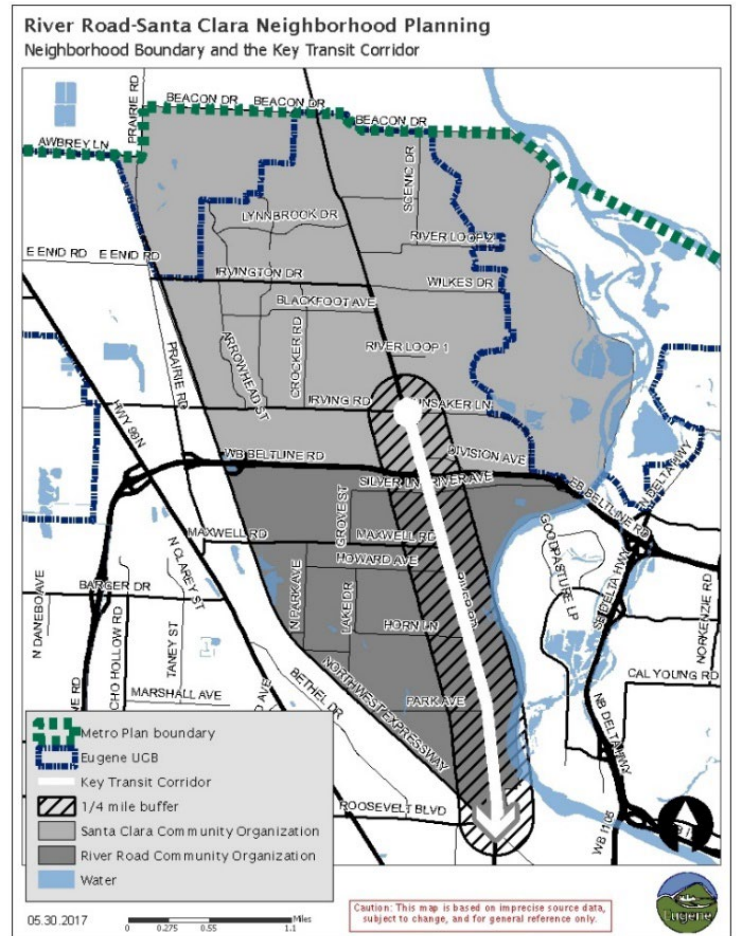


Why are we developing a neighborhood plan for the River Road and Santa Clara neighborhoods?

Since 1987, land use and development in the River Road and Santa Clara neighborhoods have been governed by the River Road-Santa Clara Urban Facilities Plan. After 35 years, the plan is ready to be updated to reflect current community visions, building upon years of work by grassroots community organizing and planning for their future. Additionally, River Road has been designated as a key corridor for focused long-term transit and land use development at state, regional, and local levels. City government plays an important role in helping community members design and plan for the future through neighborhood planning. This requires balancing neighborhood-level concerns and aspirations with City-wide goals and policies.

What will the Neighborhood Plan do?

As a formally adopted land use plan, the Neighborhood Plan will provide policy direction for City and County decision-makers as they consider future legislative actions. Some plan policies will guide City and County staff in formulating proposed changes to local land use codes and other regulatory documents, developing other work programs and long-range planning projects, and preparing budgets, funding strategies, and capital improvement programs. Other plan policies include aspirational calls for collaboration as well as continued advocacy and sweat equity from the River Road and Santa Clara Community Organizations and other community partners. The Neighborhood Plan considers the unique characteristics of these neighborhoods in the context of Envision Eugene, the community vision for future growth in Eugene's urban growth boundary (UGB) in a way that protects and enhances quality of life and reflects shared community values.



Where will the Neighborhood Plan apply?

The Neighborhood Plan will apply within the boundaries of the River Road Community Organization and Santa Clara Community Organization, and includes properties located inside the Eugene city limits, properties located outside the Eugene city limits, and properties located outside Eugene's UGB. The portion of River Road from Northwest Expressway up to the Santa Clara transit station at Hunsaker Lane was identified as a key transit corridor in the [Envision Eugene](#) Community Vision. The map shows the Neighborhood Plan boundary, the River Road key transit corridor, and the buffer area located within 1/4 mile of the corridor, which was the focus of the River Road Corridor Study.

Why is River Road a key transit corridor? How does this relate to Envision Eugene?

Key transit corridors, or key corridors, are streets that have, or are planned to have, frequent transit service (approximately every 15 minutes or less) and nearby amenities such as parks, commercial attractions or employment centers, and higher density housing that enable shorter trips and less reliance on the automobile. Promoting compact urban development and efficient transportation options is a shared community value and one of the Envision Eugene pillars. By redeveloping existing land and creating more well designed compact neighborhoods in the downtown, along key corridors and around core commercial areas, the need to expand Eugene's UGB can be reduced, thus farm and forest land can be conserved and the community as a whole can be more resilient. The goal is to transform the

downtown, key corridors and core commercial areas into mixed-use walkable neighborhoods that are connected by transit, walking, and biking infrastructure to improve access to employment, shops, parks and entertainment for people who live and work in these areas.

How does the Neighborhood Plan relate to MovingAhead?

MovingAhead is a partnership between the City of Eugene, Lane Transit District, and other regional partners that has explored what transportation investments are needed in key transit corridors, including River Road. In early 2022, local decision-makers approved the proposed MovingAhead recommendations, which includes a recommendation for EmX (bus rapid transit) on River Road. The next steps in that process involve refining designs for the project (which will include more community engagement), seeking funding, and completing environmental review processes.

Moving Ahead and the Neighborhood Plan are separate initiatives linked by the community's vision for improved active transportation options such as walking, bicycling, and transit. The Neighborhood Plan and the proposed land use code and zone changes will establish the land use framework for transit-oriented development, guiding future growth and redevelopment for properties along the River Road corridor. We will need continued coordination between land use and transportation planning along the corridor.

To stay involved and up-to-date on next steps in the MovingAhead process, visit <https://www.movingahead.org/>

What is the Action Plan? How will it be implemented?

The Action Plan is critical to the long-term success of the River Road-Santa Clara Neighborhood Plan. The purpose of the Action Plan is to capture and catalogue community identified actions that are possible strategies to implement the policies of the River Road-Santa Clara Neighborhood Plan. The Action Plan helps direct efforts to move closer to the community's vision for its future. The [Action Plan](#) will guide implementation of the Neighborhood Plan incrementally over the long-term and will require continued coordination between the City, County, River Road and Santa Clara communities, and other community partners, as well as advocacy for additional resources. The Action Plan includes general budget, feasibility, and timeframe estimates to help inform continued advocacy for resources and City, County and other community partners' work plans and capital project development.

While some items in the Action Plan may be implemented after Neighborhood Plan adoption, certain land use code and zone changes are proposed to be adopted concurrently with the Neighborhood Plan, such as the River Road-Santa Clara Special Area Zone. Actions fall into one or more of the following project types:

- A. **Land Use Code Amendments or Zone Changes:** Require City or County staff resources and are typically implemented through a legislative process with community input and adoption by local decision-makers.
- B. **Public Programs or Projects:** Require City or County staff resources and funds from budget processes, capital improvement programs, bond measures or grant funding opportunities.
- C. **Community Partnerships:** Requires community volunteers or partnerships between the community, City, County, or other partners.

What is the River Road Corridor Study? How does it connect to the Neighborhood Plan?

One desired outcome of the Neighborhood Plan is to improve the River Road corridor. The Neighborhood Plan vision supports active mixed-use neighborhood centers along the River Road corridor and a transportation system that is safe, accessible, affordable, environmentally responsible, and transitions to zero carbon. The [River Road Corridor Study](#) includes an in-depth analysis of the River Road corridor, from Northwest Expressway to Hunsaker Lane, funded by a Federal Transit Administration grant awarded to Lane Transit District and the City of Eugene. The Study included stakeholder interviews, public workshops, economic and demographic research, and conceptual design work. This work helped inform the [Draft River Road-Santa Clara Special Area Zone](#) and the [Draft Proposed Zoning Map](#) to support implementation of the community vision along the corridor.

What is the River Road-Santa Clara Special Area Zone? Where will it apply?

To support implementation of the community vision along the corridor, the proposed [River Road-Santa Clara Special Area Zone](#) focuses on neighborhood centers, key commercial areas near future transportation improvements, along the River Road corridor, and includes commercial zoned areas and key large church properties beyond the corridor to support potential future redevelopment. The [Draft Proposed Zoning Map](#) shows where the proposed zoning will apply and where current zoning will remain. The proposed zoning will only apply to properties currently within the city limits or as property owners choose to annex. The purpose of the Special Area Zone is to:

- Implement related land use code and zoning actions from the River Road-Santa Clara Neighborhood Plan and Action Plan
- Support the Envision Eugene Community Vision to encourage mixed-use areas near key transit corridors, such as the River Road corridor
- Support coordinated land use and transportation planning by focusing on neighborhood centers near future transportation improvements along the River Road corridor
- Promote walkable neighborhood centers and an active streetscape by encouraging a mix of commercial and residential uses and regulating form with pedestrian-friendly design standards (e.g. lowers allowed C-2 Community Commercial building height, establishes maximum building length, increases front yard setback, requires parking at rear or on side of building)

What changes might affect the River Road and Santa Clara neighborhoods outside of the Special Area Zone?

While the land use code and zone changes that are proposed to be adopted concurrently with the Neighborhood Plan focus on specific areas, both the Neighborhood Plan and Action Plan will apply to the entirety of the River Road and Santa Clara neighborhoods. The Neighborhood Plan will provide the adopted policy direction to guide future City and County decision-making while the Action Plan will guide implementation of the community vision. The Neighborhood Plan and Action Plan contain policies and actions related to transportation improvements, parks projects, natural resources protection, community volunteer projects, and a range of other topics that are important to and will impact all of River Road and Santa Clara. Implementation will occur over time with continued coordination between the City, County, River Road and Santa Clara communities, and other community partners. The Action

Plan in particular is meant to be iterative to reflect changes over time as work is completed and new community priorities are identified.

How does House Bill 2001 impact River Road and Santa Clara?

House Bill (HB) 2001 is a law passed by the Oregon Legislature in 2019 to increase housing choice and supply. The law requires large cities, including Eugene, to amend their land use regulations to allow more middle housing types like duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, cottage clusters, and townhouses in residential areas where single-family homes are allowed, by June 30, 2022. The City's Middle Housing Code Amendments project will implement HB 2001.

All residentially zoned areas within the city limits that currently allow single-family homes will be affected. In River Road and Santa Clara, this includes the R-1 Low Density Residential and R-2 Medium Density Residential zones that are currently within the city limits. Land that is outside of the city limits (not annexed) is not affected by HB 2001 but will be as property owners choose to annex.

The implications of HB 2001 were incorporated into the neighborhood planning process and as the Special Area Zone was developed. For more information, visit the [project website at eugene-or.gov/4244/Middle-Housing](https://www.eugene-or.gov/4244/Middle-Housing).

How quickly might changes start to happen?

Most properties with proposed zone changes are currently developed and redevelopment will likely be gradual. See this [map of where current development is happening](#) and where remaining vacant land exists in Eugene's UGB. The proposed zoning can allow and encourage certain land uses and remove development barriers in the land use code, but the timing and pace of development will be based on market demand, construction industry capacity, construction costs, land values, infrastructure, property owner interest and several other factors. Expanding available development incentives could be considered by decision makers in the future to help improve the feasibility of development.

In addition, the River Road and Santa Clara neighborhoods are a patchwork of City (incorporated) and County (unincorporated) properties. Annexation (sometimes called "incorporation") is the legal process by which unincorporated properties become part of a city and can be developed with urban levels of development. The [Draft Proposed Zoning Map](#) shows proposed zone changes for both incorporated and unincorporated properties, however proposed changes will only apply to properties within the City limits and to unincorporated areas as property owners choose to annex. Annexation is voluntary and must be initiated by the property owner, under current City of Eugene policy (additional state statutes apply).

How do the proposed zone changes impact your property?

For properties that will be subject to the proposed new zoning (see 'What is the River Road-Santa Clara Special Area Zone? Where will it apply?' above) the standards that implement the proposed new zoning will apply to new development or redevelopment only. Existing uses or structures will not be affected. The proposed changes will not require a change in use or changes to current structures. If an existing

use or structure does not meet the proposed zoning regulations, then it would be considered a legal non-conforming use. For more information, see [Legal Non-Conforming Use Situations](#).

Proposed adaptive reuse standards may permit the reuse of existing buildings by allowing for alterations, expansions or changes for retail sales, services and office uses. (In these instances, the adaptive reuse standards would apply instead of the standards that implement the proposed new zoning.)

There is no effect on the taxable value as a result of solely changing the zoning of a property. For private property, the taxable value is equal to the property's 'assessed value,' which is, by law, lower than the market value of the property. Unless the property redevelops or changes use, Oregon state law limits the increase in a property's assessed value to 3% per year, and it cannot exceed the property's real market value. It is normal for the market value of a property to fluctuate year-to-year and this does not trigger a recalculation of the Assessed Value. If the use of a property changes to be consistent with the new zoning, then the assessed value would be recalculated. If a property is annexed into the City limits, the tax rate applied to the taxable value will increase, and the overall tax burden will increase accordingly.

[Will the Neighborhood Plan impact annexation?](#)

No. The River Road and Santa Clara Community Organizations, as well as City and County planning staff, have agreed that annexation is best addressed after the neighborhood plan is complete. This agreement is captured in the [project charter](#).

See the [Annexation FAQ](#) to learn more about when annexations take place and what decisions trigger annexation.

[How will the Neighborhood Plan impact traffic? What transportation improvements are planned?](#)

Traffic is a concern that frequently arises in discussions surrounding the Neighborhood Plan. Improving safety and efficiency for people who walk, bike, drive and use transit is a community priority and involves many partners at the city, county, and state level. The Neighborhood Plan addresses traffic and transportation by envisioning the development of new bicycle and pedestrian routes and connections, improving Beltline, and increasing transit service to the River Road and Santa Clara neighborhoods (also see 'How does this Neighborhood Plan relate to MovingAhead?'). This is consistent with Eugene's 2035 Transportation System Plan, which has a goal to triple the percentage of trips made on foot, by bike and transit in the next twenty years. The City of Eugene also passed the Climate Recovery Ordinance, which includes community wide goals that aim to reduce carbon emissions by the year 2030 by reducing fossil fuel dependence by 50% compared to 2010 usage.

Want to learn about ongoing transportation projects in River Road-Santa Clara, and how they relate to the Neighborhood Plan? [Check out this factsheet of transportation projects!](#) Also see the [Existing](#) and [Future](#) transportation maps to see City, County, and private streets and infrastructure.

How will the Climate Friendly and Equitable Communities Rulemaking impact parking requirements?

The [Climate Friendly and Equitable Communities Rulemaking](#) is in response to an executive order issued by Governor Kate Brown, directing state agencies to take actions to reduce and regulate greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate the impacts of climate change. On May 19, the Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC) adopted temporary rules to update Oregon's transportation and land use planning rules and intends to adopt permanent rules in July 2022.

Part of the rules require Eugene to adopt land use code changes to eliminate all minimum off-street parking requirements, or adopt land use code changes to eliminate parking requirements for certain uses and in certain locations (such as along transit corridors) and adopt changes to parking programs, policies and pricing to increase on-street parking management. (Reduction in off-street parking requirements does not prohibit on-site parking from being built.) The rules require Eugene to adopt parking maximums for certain locations. The rules also require Eugene to require the installation of electrical capacity and conduit for electric vehicle charging infrastructure in new multi-family residential and mixed-use developments for a certain percentage of parking spaces. Once the permanent rules are adopted, City staff will work to understand how the newly required work intersects with existing work and Envision Eugene growth management strategies.

What parks are planned in River Road-Santa Clara?

Parks and Natural Resources is one of the five Topic Areas that the Neighborhood Plan and Action Plan focuses on. Access to parks was a community value heard repeatedly during neighborhood outreach and many neighbors provided valuable input on ways to expand or improve recreation opportunities. A common question was about the future of undeveloped park land, specifically land that the City of Eugene has purchased in recent years. Planned park development is laid out in the City's Parks and Recreation System Plan which lays out the vision and guiding principles of the 30-year strategic plan and provides a clear path forward with a 10-year implementation plan. The plan includes a [Planning District Summary for River Road-Santa Clara](#) that provides detailed information on specific proposed parks projects. Want to learn about ongoing parks projects in River Road-Santa Clara?

- View [Parks and Recreation Bond Projects](#) in River Road and Santa Clara.
- Get involved in active projects such as the [Santa Clara Community Park](#) and the [East Santa Clara Waterway](#).
- Volunteer for [Lane County Parks Projects](#) at Hileman Park and Whitely Landing.

Who maintains the riverfront? How can I submit a maintenance request or report illegal activity?

Most of the River Road portion of the riverfront, south of Beltline, is part of the West Bank park, stretching from Maurie Jacobs Park to the Owosso Bike Bridge. This park land is managed by the [City's Parks and Open Space Division](#) meaning City park rules apply. For concerns about illegal activity in this area, [contact the City's Park Watch program](#). The Park Watch website provides statistics on incidents within parks, such as illegal camping and incidents requiring a police response. For maintenance requests on City park land, contact the City's Public Works Maintenance department.

The Santa Clara portion of the riverfront is outside Eugene’s UGB. A key long-range vision of acquiring additional land along the Willamette River, north of Beltline, is contingent in large part on land acquisition from sand and gravel companies (See the [Willamette River Open Space Vision and Action Plan](#)). North-south connectivity along the edge of the UGB can be explored in the meantime.

What current regulations guide development along the Willamette River? What about other local waterways and natural resources?

The riverfront in River Road and Santa Clara is an important community asset. It is part of the larger Willamette River Greenway that runs from Eugene to Portland, which was established by Oregon Statewide Planning Goal 15 to protect, conserve, enhance, and maintain the natural, scenic, historical, agricultural, economic, and recreational qualities of lands along the Willamette River, while still allowing for development. The Willamette River Greenway is a corridor of water and land in which development is planned and built with recognition of the unique qualities of the Willamette River. Cities and counties adopted local greenway plans, along with criteria for new development, new uses, and the increase of uses along the river. The River Road portion of the Willamette River Greenway is within Eugene’s UGB and subject to the Eugene Code while the Santa Clara portion is outside the UGB and subject to the Lane Code.

In addition, the City of Eugene and Lane County have both adopted a Water Resources Conservation Overlay Zone which implements waterway setback regulations associated with Oregon Statewide Planning Goal 5 to protect significant natural resources. These regulations apply to the Willamette River, as well as other waterways in the River Road-Santa Clara neighborhoods. The City of Eugene has also implemented the Water Quality Overlay Zone which applies waterway setback regulations associated with Statewide Planning Goal 6 to protect water quality. These regulations apply to certain waterways with significant natural resource or water quality functions and values. To view how both of these overlay zones apply to River Road-Santa Clara, view [Eugene’s Zoning Map](#).

For more information about waterways and natural resources in River Road-Santa Clara, check out the [Parks and Natural Resources Map](#) and [Stormwater handout](#).

What changes are being proposed in the Citywide Willamette River Greenway Code Amendments?

The proposed Willamette River Greenway Code Amendments are intended to provide a clear and objective set of approval criteria and standards for the review and approval of proposed housing development within the Willamette River Greenway. The proposed amendments will not change the adopted Willamette Greenway boundary. The draft amendments propose:

- A clear and objective set of approval criteria available for proposed housing within the Willamette Greenway.
- Potential changes to the City’s existing Willamette Greenway permit procedures and criteria to use a Type II land use application process for housing within the Willamette Greenway.
- A map showing a setback from the Willamette River applicable to proposed housing uses.
- A Design Plan, as required by Statewide Planning Goal 15.

To learn more, check out the [Willamette Greenway FAQ](#) or visit <https://www.eugene-or.gov/764/Land-Use-Code-Amendments>.

What's different about the proposed Willamette River Greenway Overlay in the draft River Road-Santa Clara Special Area Zone?

The proposed zoning and land use code changes that are part of the River Road-Santa Clara Special Area Zone include a Willamette River Greenway Overlay which uses development standards and a blend of open spaces, landscape, and development standards to provide a buffer between the Greenway and development, to protect wildlife and habitat, and enhance public access and connections to the river. This overlay would apply to properties proposed to be part of the River Road- Santa Clara Special Area Zone that fall within the previously adopted boundaries of the Willamette River Greenway. See the [Draft Proposed Zoning Map](#).

The key differences to note between standards included in the proposed overlay compared to the in-progress citywide Willamette River Greenway Code Amendments, include:

- Applies to all development (not just housing)
- Limits building height with proposed zoning
- Increased setback (50' instead of 40') for building façade maximum length
- Increased public access requirement (300' instead of 500')

Do River Road and Santa Clara residents have access to a library?

City residents (with proof of residence) can get a Eugene library card at no cost by visiting any City of Eugene public library location. The closest library for many residents is the Bethel Branch Library. County residents are also able to get a card to Eugene public libraries but must pay a fee. As of July 2021, the fee is \$11/month per household. Residents and non-residents pay approximately the same amount, one through taxes and the other through the non-resident fee. Both City and County residents can attend events and classes at the Eugene public libraries, regardless of whether they hold a library card. For more information, visit the [City of Eugene Library website](#). Additionally, both City and County residents are welcome to check out books at the [River Road-Santa Clara Volunteer Library](#).

One of the Neighborhood Plan policies captures the community's desire to have library and cultural services in the River Road and Santa Clara neighborhoods.