

EUGENE CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY



Action: County Vehicle Registration Fee

Meeting Date: November 24, 2014
Department: Public Works
www.eugene-or.gov

Agenda Item Number: 6
Staff Contact: Kurt Corey
Contact Telephone Number: 541-682-5258

ISSUE STATEMENT

This action item is an opportunity for the council to express support for a proposal by Lane County to place a county vehicle registration fee on the May 2015 ballot.

BACKGROUND

On November 10, 2014, the council received an update on Eugene's transportation funding, including a number of transportation-related revenue options, some of which have been implemented over the years and others that have not. In the latter category is a 2007 recommendation of the Council Subcommittee on Transportation Funding Solutions for "...consideration of both a countywide motor vehicle registration/vehicle emissions fee and a motor vehicle fuel tax as potential revenue sources for addressing the comprehensive road funding needs in Lane County."

On September 30, 2014, the Lane County Board of Commissioners received a recommendation from the Lane County Roads Advisory Committee that Lane County consider implementing a countywide vehicle registration fee. In subsequent discussions, the board on November 4, 2014, instructed county staff to draft an ordinance for the board's consideration, to develop options for citizen oversight on the spending of the funds, to coordinate with the 12 cities in Lane County to garner their ideas and support, and to prepare a voter's pamphlet for the proposed fee. On November 4, and again on November 12, 2014, the board signaled its interest in limiting the county vehicle registration fee to \$35 per year for passenger vehicles, trailers and light trucks (\$20 for motorcycles) and placing the proposal on the ballot in May 2015.

Based on state-set distribution requirements and preliminary estimates of the annual amount of revenue generated by a county vehicle registration fee of \$35 per year, Eugene would receive approximately \$2.4 million per year. The money "...shall be used exclusively for the construction, reconstruction, improvement, repair, maintenance, operation and use of public highways, roads, streets and roadside rest areas in this state," in accordance with Article IX, Section 3a, of the Oregon Constitution. Likely uses for the funding in Eugene would be to maintain transportation service levels (operations and maintenance) and address the chronic backlog in deferred capital maintenance on the system.

Based on a study done by Survey Research Institute for Lane County, a county vehicle registration fee would be supported by a majority of registered voters if certain conditions are met: the fee does not exceed \$35 per year, there is a clear understanding that the money will be used to increase safety by maintaining roads and bridges, and that there will be independent citizen oversight of how the money is spent.

RELATED CITY POLICIES

The council's goal for fair, stable and adequate financial resources calls for "a government whose ongoing financial resources are based on a fair and equitable system of revenues and are adequate to maintain and deliver municipal services," including "new or expanded revenue sources."

COUNCIL OPTIONS

The council can choose to support placing a county vehicle registration fee on the May 2015 ballot and encourage the Mayor to send a letter of support to the Lane County Board of Commissioners.

The council can choose to take no position on the proposed county vehicle registration fee.

The council can take a position against sending the proposed county vehicle registration fee to the voters in May 2015.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION

The City Manager recommends that the council express support for placing a countywide vehicle registration fee on the May 2015 ballot and encourage Mayor Piercy to write a letter of support to the Lane County Board of Commissioners.

SUGGESTED MOTION

I move that the Eugene City Council express support for placing a countywide vehicle registration fee on the May 2015 ballot. I further move that we encourage Mayor Piercy to write a letter of support to the Lane County Board of Commissioners.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Staff Contact: Kurt Corey
Telephone: 5411-682-5258
Staff E-Mail: kurt.a.corey@ci.eugene.or.us