

## MINUTES

Eugene City Council  
McNutt Room--City Hall

April 18, 1996  
5:30 p.m.

**COUNCILORS PRESENT:** Tim Laue (after 6:45 p.m.), Laurie Swanson Gribkov, Shawn Boles, Kevin Hornbuckle (after 6:05 p.m.), Barbara Keller, Nancy Nathanson, Pat Farr.

Council Vice President Swanson Gribkov called the meeting to order. The council was joined by Planning Commission members Scott Meisner, Art Farley, Adelle McMillan, Ellen Wojahn, and Robert Conrad.

Prior to the scheduled presentation, Mr. Boles asked the council if it was prepared to direct the Planning Commission to proceed with the Cost of Services Study. Ms. Keller and Ms. Nathanson indicated that they were unprepared to act. Mr. Farr and Ms. Swanson Gribkov indicated support for the proposal. Mr. Boles said that he would request council action on April 22, 1996.

### I. GROWTH MANAGEMENT PRESENTATION

John Baldwin of the University of Oregon provided the presentation, entitled "Paradigms of Progress." He discussed economic and physical growth in a world of finite resources.

Mr. Baldwin said that redefining what "progress" is can take one in a direction entirely different from where one may be going now. Progress as measured by conventional means can be defined as economic growth or materialism, particularly in the United States. Mr. Baldwin said that people need to change that paradigm. Short-term economic growth means getting bigger. Development means getting better, and does not necessarily mean growth.

Mr. Baldwin said that growth in infancy is a good thing; in an adult, growth means obesity or cancer. He said that an adult did not need to grow anymore to get better, and the same was true of communities: bigger is better, but huge becomes unwieldy. While people in Eugene say that the city will not grow to Los Angeles proportions, what would stop growth in Eugene? Environmental constraints? Government policy?

Mr. Baldwin spoke of the "Brontosaurus principle," saying that the dinosaur was so large that it was unable to react quickly to stimulus. He reiterated that bigger was better, but huge becomes unwieldy. Constant growth at maturity created many environmental and social problems for cities. He asked the councilors and commissioners to consider what they considered to be the optimum size for Eugene.

Mr. Baldwin reviewed some of the basic tenants of a video tape produced by A. A. Bartlett of the University of Colorado. He said that small growth rates yield enormous numbers given time. He noted the impact of exponential growth rates on natural resources such as oil. He believed that evidence indicated that the world would be out of fuel between 2030 and 2040, and domestic sources exhausted approximately ten years earlier. Mr. Baldwin anticipated massive changes in the world's industrial society.

Mr. Baldwin said that Eugene's official growth rate of about 1.6 percent annually meant that the population would double in 44 years. Other growth figures published by *The Register-Guard* indicated that the City must plan for as much infrastructure as was currently in place by 2030 with reduced resources. In addition, Mr. Baldwin said, the city's urban growth boundary was growing at a less rapid rate than its population was growing, while the average number of people per household had fallen from 2.9 in 1960 to 2.3 in 1990.

Mr. Hornbuckle arrived at the meeting.

Mr. Baldwin posed the following questions: How can a community get better without getting bigger? How big do we want the metropolitan area to be, and how can we legally, efficiently, and equitably manage growth? What should we be monitoring to assess Eugene's health, and how can we measure the community's health over time?

Mr. Baldwin noted the high levels of consumption in North America and said that each individual required ten to twelve acres to maintain the current standard of living. If everyone on Earth consumed at the same rate, it would take four planet Earths to provide that standard of living for all inhabitants. Mr. Baldwin suggested that North Americans must become more efficient in their use of materials, or the Earth will experience greater inequities between different parts of the world. He said that at present, industrial economies continue to grow in a finite world. Mr. Baldwin said that 42 percent of the biological productivity of the world was being consumed by the human race, and the percentage was increasing slightly each year. Such growth led to the decline of natural systems and social systems, and poverty increased because population growth had outpaced economic growth.

Mr. Baldwin suggested that inequities between countries made the definition of economic growth as progress questionable. He displayed a graph that illustrated the growing income gap in the United States and said that the middle class was being lost. Mr. Baldwin said that measuring progress in terms of dollars missed other important, less quantifiable community values, and did not take the relationships between different systems—such as between the economic and natural systems—into account. He said that it was unwise to rely on one system to measure progress.

Mr. Baldwin said that when one way to address the issues he had raised was through sustainable development. He said that the concept of conservation and development as not incompatible was an Oregon idea developed by an organization called OCCDC in the late 1960s. The concept was institutionalized by the formation of the Land Conservation and Development Commission and the Department of Land Conservation and Development. Mr. Baldwin said that the concept had been picked up by individuals, organizations, and governments all over the world. He quoted the words of an Indian author, who stated that

*"The shift to sustainable development is primarily an ethical shift. It is not a technological fix, nor a matter of financial investment. It is a shift in values such that nature is valued in itself, and for its life-support functions, not merely for how it can be converted into resources and commodities to feed the engine of economic growth."*

Mr. Baldwin said that one begins to measure the different systems in the world, a different picture begins to emerge of what the world is really like. He said that people have a sense of a future at risk, with greater worries about economic instability and threats to the world's natural systems. Mr. Baldwin said the Redefining Progress Project in San Francisco had included measurements of the many systems of a community, and began assessing whether progress was being made in metropolitan areas of the country. Some of the systems that were measured included the growth development product; crime; volunteerism; income distribution; resource depletion; pollution; environmental damage; leisure; life span of consumer durables; and dependence on foreign resources. The result was the Genuine Progress Index. Mr. Baldwin said that the index indicated that the middle class in the United States was losing ground.

Mr. Baldwin discussed areas where sustainable development planning was occurring. He cited as examples the Eugene Progress Board, the Suislaw Institute of Watershed Arts and Sciences, Sustainable Seattle, and Canada's Green Plan. Mr. Baldwin circulated information about those efforts, and noted their different origins in both government and private organizations.

Mr. Baldwin discussed Agenda 21, a sustainable development plan that was created by delegates at the UNCED meeting in Rio de Janeiro. He said that if one-quarter of the funds now spent on national security were redirected to a new definition of national security as human security, Agenda 21 could be implemented on a worldwide basis. Mr. Baldwin said that it was time to rethink the way in which national security was defined by taking a less linear approach.

Ms. Nathanson left the meeting at 6:36 p.m. Ms. Keller left the meeting at 6:39 p.m.

Mr. Baldwin concluded his presentation by quoting Margaret Mead: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens change the world." He recommended the book *A Positive Guide to the Future* by Carol Christianson, and offered a quote from the book: "When it comes to the future, there are three types of people. There are those that let it happen, there are those that make it happen, and there are those who sit around and wonder, what happened?" Mr. Baldwin encouraged the council and commission to "make it happen."

Mr. Farley asked how the community could know when it reached a mature size. Mr. Baldwin suggested that studies of the country's most liveable cities indicated an optimum community size of 200,000 to 250,000. He noted, however, that those studies could be biased toward economic growth, and suggested that the answer to Mr. Farley's question also depended upon the community in question.

Mr. Boles left the meeting at 6:41 p.m.

Mr. Hornbuckle asked if capitalism could be reformed so that sustainable development could be achieved. Mr. Baldwin said yes, although it would take much reform. He said that the United States

should tax consumption rather than income. He suggested that the accumulation of capital was not in itself bad, but the demands of high-income consumers on resources should be taxed heavily. He added that people must be provided with incentives to do the right thing. Mr. Baldwin called for heavy taxes upon pollution that could be used to pay for the costs of the agencies that regulate pollution.

Mr. Laue arrived at the meeting at 6:45 p.m.

Mr. Baldwin displayed a Sustainable Development Tool Kit produced by the Global Tomorrow Coalition. Mr. Laue suggested that a copy of the tool kit be secured and placed in the council library.

Responding to Mr. Baldwin's question about how big Eugene should be, Mr. Farr said that he placed the question in context with the question of how big he wanted nearby small cities such as Junction City or Harrisburg to be. He said that however big Eugene gets, he would be satisfied as long as those small cities could be maintained. Mr. Baldwin observed that where growth management had been instituted, cities have changed the physical pattern of growth and channeled it into new directions. He suggested that the community may wish to consider a regional, cooperative approach to growth controls, and cited Minneapolis as a model.

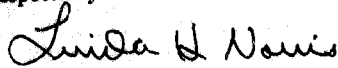
Mr. Laue stated that Eugene will continue to get bigger. He pointed out that the community's geographic growth patterns looked much the same as they had 50 years ago, in spite of planning. He said that those patterns could be attributed to the city's geographical constraints. Mr. Laue said that the community should be careful not to violate the geographic boundaries established by the Willamette and McKenzie rivers and the surrounding hills. He said that the community could only grow to the extent growth could be balanced with the environment, including the cultural, natural, physical, and community environment. Mr. Laue rejected the premise that development could be channeled to other areas in the Willamette Valley. He said that Oregon had a regional growth management system in the form of Senate Bill 100 to control growth levels in the valley. He did not think that the community could grow sustainably at a rate above two percent to three percent.

Ms. Swanson Gribkov thanked Mr. Baldwin for his presentation.

The meeting adjourned at 6:52 p.m.

(Recorded by Kimberly Young)  
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Respectfully submitted,



Linda H. Norris  
City Manager pro tem