

## MINUTES

### Eugene City Council Virtual Work Session Eugene, Oregon 97401

April 27, 2020  
5:30 p.m.

**Councilors Present:** Emily Semple, Betty Taylor, Alan Zelenka, Jennifer Yeh, Mike Clark, Greg Evans, Claire Syrett, Chris Pryor

Mayor Vinis opened the April 27, 2020, work session of the Eugene City Council.

#### 1. **WORK SESSION: COVID-19 Update – Financial Outlook**

City Manager Pro Tem Sarah Medary and Finance Director Twylla Miller gave an update on the economic impacts of the COVID-19 event on the City, including immediate impacts to resources and services, and a range of possible outcomes in the long term.

##### Discussion:

- Councilor Clark – thanked staff for their report and asked a series of follow-up questions regarding the lower property tax collection rates anticipated for the next few years. He reported that seven percent of homeowners are in mortgage forbearance, suggested this may be a bigger problem than many are preparing for, and urged caution.
- Councilor Zelenka –inquired if this will be a “V” shape curve in regard to economic modeling for this recession; asked if the airport and parking revenues are enterprise funds with reserves.

**MOTION:** Councilor Semple, seconded by Councilor Yeh, moved to support the City Manager Pro Tem in extending the City’s Emergency Declaration by an additional two weeks.

##### Discussion:

- Councilor Clark – asked the City Manager Pro Tem to discuss her reasons why she is putting this motion forward.

**VOTE: PASSED 7:1**, Councilor Clark opposed.

#### 2. **ACTION: Adoption of Eugene-Springfield 2020 Consolidated Plan for Affordable Housing and Community Development**

Grants Manager Stephanie Jennings presented the Eugene-Springfield 2020 Consolidated Plan for Affordable Housing and Community Development, reviewing its scope and purpose, needs, proposed goals and strategies, and the final steps for completion and submittal.

##### Discussion:

- Councilor Zelenka – asked clarifying questions about program funds, noting the amount of money available for affordable housing and community development is not much, considering area incomes have grown 14 percent while rents have gone up 47 percent in roughly the same period of time. He stated the issue is getting incomes up and creating more affordable housing so rents go down; asked staff to provide further explanation of microbusiness trainees and jobs creation; asked if there has been any movement in getting programs and resources for homeless transition-age youth 18-24; asked if the data included in the plan regarding counts of individuals with substance abuse and serious mental illness were double-counted.

- Councilor Syrett – thanked staff for the report, and stated she supports the strategies outlined in the Consolidated Plan and appreciates the work of those who provided input. She asked if rental assistance funds will only assist 20 households in a five-year period; expressed concern about the message it sends to the community. She stated she would like to let the community know that Council has a commitment to further explore how additional assistance can be provided beyond the 20 households.
- Councilor Pryor – thanked everyone who worked on this process; shared it was thoughtful, deliberate and flexible when the COVID-19 situation arose, and adaptations were made. He advised not to look at HOME and CDBG funds as the magic bucket from which we will solve the housing situation; flexibility and other sources are needed. He stated this is a well-crafted joint plan between the cities of Eugene and Springfield and reflects the values of both communities. He stated it is difficult to talk about affordable housing without talking about workforce and income, and Council should, at some point talk, about Eugene’s role in helping with income and workforce development. He advised not to look at this Consolidated Plan as the solution to affordable housing, though it is good and should be approved; it points out there are other conversations that need to take place.
- Councilor Clark – said Council could do a great deal to help with regard to median incomes and the amount people are paid; Eugene’s market is more expensive than many and artificially so, due in part to Council decisions that resulted in lack of available land, the Construction Excise Tax (CET), SDC rates, and all the things that add to the expense of housing. He asked staff to summarize how much money this will be over the course of five years or each year; asked staff to explain the metrics or measurement for determining if the \$2 million per year succeeded.
- Mayor Vinis – said she would like to highlight one aspect of the Consolidated Plan, the Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice, which breaks out the challenges people are facing in accessing housing; it highlights discrimination issues, lending and sale discrimination, landlord education, and critical pieces and recommendations. She stated she would like to keep this document and its points foremost for Council, as people are struggling even more now than when this document was developed; the barriers are even more profound for certain parts of the community.

**MOTION AND VOTE:** Councilor Semple, seconded by Councilor Yeh, moved to adopt Resolution No. 5294, A Resolution Approving the Eugene-Springfield 2020 Consolidated Plan. **PASSED 8:0**

**3. ACTION: Adoption of Eugene-Springfield 2020 One-Year Action Plan for Affordable Housing and Community Development**

Grants Manager Stephanie Jennings gave a brief presentation of the Eugene-Springfield 2020 One-Year Action Plan for Affordable Housing and Community Development.

Discussion:

- Councilor Taylor – asked if rehabilitation is only for subsidized housing or if it can be used for housing that one can’t afford to maintain.

**MOTION AND VOTE:** Councilor Semple, seconded by Councilor Yeh, moved to approve the Eugene-Springfield 2020 One-Year Action Plan summary for use of Federal CDBG and HOME funds provided in Attachment B. **PASSED 8:0**

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Beth Forrest*

Beth Forrest  
City Recorder

*(Recorded by Jessica Gebb)*

Link to the webcast of this City Council meeting [here](#).