

## MINUTES

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

April 19, 2021  
5:30 p.m.

**Councilors Present:** Alan Zelenka, Emily Semple, Jennifer Yeh, Matt Keating, Randy Groves, Claire Syrett, Greg Evans

Councilors Absent: Mike Clark

Mayor Vinis opened the April 19, 2021, work session of the Eugene City Council.

#### 1. **WORK SESSION: Vision, Values, Goals and Process**

City Manager Sarah Medary presented the topic and provided background information.

##### Council Discussion:

- Councilor Groves - commented on the last sentence “serve and include all who live here” and proposed to add reference to those who come here for other things and do not live here.
- Councilor Keating - suggested adding “all who live, work and play here” to be more inclusive; supported finding opportunity to state that we don’t just connect but that Council takes action.
- Mayor Vinis - supported adding “connect and respond”
- Councilor Semple - supported “take action” and would like this to be a goal; said she likes the strength of the words and would like to add the word “play.”
- Councilor Zelenka - noted that this is a consensus document and not all Councilors are present.
- Councilor Keating - suggested making the goal statement into two sentences.
- Councilor Groves - asked if the word “accountable” is clear to everyone.
- Councilor Evans - agreed that the word accountable is not clear and Council needs to make it more precise.
- Mayor Vinis - suggested leaving the verbiage as sustainable development and explain what is meant by accountable; stated the bullets should have parallel construction and start with a verb.
- Councilor Semple - suggested using the word “create” as the first word.
- Councilor Keating - discussed what entities Council is accountable to.
- Councilor Groves - said that the word “accountable” needs to be clear to the average person who reads the statement; suggested including a separate bullet point for accountability to better explain.
- Councilor Evans - agreed that “accountable” should be accurately explained and not open to interpretation; supported being clear about what is meant by the words.
- Councilor Zelenka - asked what is meant by the accountability of being sustainable.
- Mayor Vinis - commented on what it means for Council to commit to something and supported adding a bullet point to explain that council will evaluate the work to be done and is committing, measuring, evaluating and reassessing as it works to achieve this goal.
- Councilor Keating - suggested writing the goal in a more positive tone with an eye for investment in future generations, noting that the current iteration isn’t working for him.
- Councilor Yeh - shared her agreement with using a more positive voice and to show that Council is being conscious of problems that could be faced in the future.
- Councilor Semple - suggested adding the word “supporting.”
- Councilor Syrett - gave some examples of clearer wording.
- Councilor Groves - suggested replacing the word “ensure” with “promotes.”

- Mayor Vinis - gave some examples of visionary language to consider.
- Councilor Groves – said he was looking for more aspirational language.
- Councilor Semple – expressed concern that aspirational language may be too ambiguous and said the council owes it to community to be proactive and clear.
- Councilor Keating - stated that Council is just as accountable to current citizens as future Eugene residents, noting that decisions made today need to reflect the goal that future generations can thrive; asked for clarification of community safety goals; commented that the wording in the “hate and bias” section needs more clarification.
- Councilor Syrett – suggested adding “increase response” to make it clear.
- Councilor Groves - commented that natural and human-caused disasters are connected to community safety and should be more than police and disaster.
- Councilor Syrett - shared that the Lane Area Commission on Transportation has been doing a vision and outcomes process in terms of being safe and secure while using public transportation; these concepts are being incorporated and suggested adding a bullet that speaks to accessing the transportation system with safety and security.
- Councilor Groves - suggested adding language to the subheading.
- Councilor Keating – suggested reducing redundancy of using the word “increase” and provided some examples.
- Councilor Yeh- asked for a note to made that the safety section is a good place to add reference to Vision Zero goals.
- Councilor Zelenka – agreed that Vision Zero goals around transportation are a big part of public safety and that fits in this section.
- Councilor Syrett – suggested referring to “transportation system” rather than “transit.”
- Councilor Zelenka- commented that Vision Zero’s transportation goal is to have a safe transportation system.
- Councilor Keating - agreed with colleagues about recognizing Vision Zero; suggested combining a few of the bullet points on policing into one.
- Councilor Semple - asked if the Climate Recovery ordinance should be called out in this section.
- Councilor Groves - asked about and supported the greater sense of safety downtown that Councilor Syrett raised.
- Councilor Semple - commented that downtown doesn’t need the emphasis on safety because downtown has been quiet; shared downtown safety is important.
- Councilor Keating - commented the description of safe community should be broadened to include animals, pets, places, and systems.
- Councilor Yeh - asked to add the word “culture” to read “arts, outdoors and culture” in the previous slide.
- Councilor Syrett - supported the addition of the word culture and creating more unity in the community through the vision and values section; shared some language to capture the council’s commitment to take action and get things done.
- Councilor Keating - shared more language examples; agreed the statement should express that Council acts.
- Councilor Syrett - commented that the goal of wording is to make the point that we are all Eugene.
- Councilor Keating - supported Councilor Syrett’s suggestions and advocated leading with the “We are all Eugene” in the vision and values section.
- Councilor Syrett - asked if intergovernmental relations should be added to be inclusive of tribal governments, the County, and others.
- Councilor Yeh- commented that what she thinks something means may be different from what a community member might think, so the language needs to be clear.
- Mayor Vinis - shared that tribal relations work is new and could stand as a separate bullet point.
- Councilor Evans - asked to carve out time in the council’s schedule for mini updates from different committees, such as quarterly reports throughout the year and the year end report.

- Councilor Zelenka - said he asked several years ago to schedule 15-minute quarterly reports on committee work but never got traction; encouraged Councilors to share updates on their committees.
- Councilor Keating - shared appreciation for raising this issue but felt quarterly might be a bit too much; gave an example of a committee that addresses Council twice a year; suggested adding wording to commit to a minimum of two per year.
- Councilor Groves- shared that he would like to hear more from the committees; expressed support for finding a way to have more time and interaction with committees.
- Councilor Syrett – supported striking a balance for committees coming before Council; agreed with a minimum of twice a year and suggested adding language that would provide for additional time for specific recommendations by a committee.
- Councilor Semple - commented the needs might be different based on the commission; shared idea to add agenda items after the public forum.
- Councilor Zelenka - shared his original idea was not to add extra work for staff but to help build relationships with committees and provide an opportunity for a quick update from the committee chairs and vice chairs on what they are working on; suggested reducing public forum to one hour and use the time to hear from commissions.
- Councilor Evans - suggested a compromise of having a work plan meeting. two times a year and an optional meeting time.
- Councilor Semple – said she was open to all of these ideas except cutting public forum.
- Councilor Syrett - commented that she would not want to hear from committees after public forum and feels that the public hearing night is a good fit; suggested making any changes based on the specific committee needs.

## 2. WORK SESSION: American Rescue Plan Act

City Manager Sarah Medary presented this topic and background information.

### Council Discussion:

- Councilor Zelenka - commented that this issue relates to the Budget Committee and suggested having the Budget Committee weigh in on this after the budget process.
- Councilor Groves - asked if there has been any discussion on state level about challenges cities are facing with their unhoused populations; said he feels that Eugene should be getting some outside help to mitigate the impact on the other parts of the community and homelessness is the biggest issue.
- Councilor Syrett - agreed with her colleagues and supported using some ARPA money to build the affordable housing fund; noted that a global pandemic is the reason for the funds coming to Eugene and this is the first time that Council has had the problem of how to spend money.
- Councilor Keating – encouraged being prudent and taking the time to be clear and intentional about long-term sustainability of projects to be funded.
- Councilor Zelenka - asked how the Budget Committee will be informed about this conversation during the budget process.

The meeting adjourned at 7:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Beth Forrest*

Beth Forrest  
City Recorder

*(Recorded by Niyah Ross)*

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