

MINUTES

Eugene City Council Virtual Work Session Eugene, Oregon 97401

October 27, 2021
12:00 p.m.

Councilors Present: Emily Semple, Matt Keating, Alan Zelenka, Jennifer Yeh, Mike Clark, Claire Syrett, Randy Groves

Councilors Absent: Greg Evans

Mayor Vinis opened the October 27, 2021, work session of the Eugene City Council in virtual format.

1. **WORK SESSION – Waste Management at Large Events**

Waste Prevention and Green Building Analyst Deveron Musgrave presented information about the ways with which the City's supports sustainable events.

Council Discussion:

- Mayor Vinis – thanked staff for the presentation and said it is interesting to learn how the City addresses the impacts of waste at large events.
- Councilor Zelenka – asked about the City's intentions or plans to pursue a zero waste agenda; inquired about the possibility of establishing a dish and utensil library, noting that some neighborhood associations already have a stock of reusable service ware that they make available.
- Councilor Semple – reminded Council that this work session was requested on the Sustainability Commission's behalf to consider their recommendations for proposed legislation to establish waste management requirements, including 1) event will strive for and demonstrate a minimum of 50% waste diversion, 2) event will sell no bottled water, will provide multiple water fountains or water filling stations and attendees and participants are advised to bring empty water bottles or to buy a reusable container at the event, 3) event will utilize bulk container dispensers for condiments, 4) event will eliminate all single-use plastic cups, and to-go containers, to be replaced by recycled-content paper containers or through use of recyclable durables; asked Council to weigh in on what the next steps should be in advance of 2022 events.
- Councilor Keating – asked questions about the City's fleet of water stations and whether they are also available for smaller, non-profit events; asked about the potential for using the stations at emergency respite sites; noted the challenges with establishing meaningful waste management policies and protocols in the COVID environment and asked about plans for post-pandemic events; asked for information about the practice of sorting through trash at large events to separate recyclable and reusable materials
- Mayor Vinis – said she was interested in learning more about the travel emissions calculator and specifics around the impacts of air travel; inquired about the impacts of producing fabric or reusable bags compared with the impacts of single-use bags; asked about the University of Oregon's and the IAAF's role in partnering on responsible waste reduction and management for large sporting events.
- Councilor Semple – asked the Council what message she should take back to the Sustainability Commission, noting their commitment to the Climate Action Plan's goals.

- Council Groves – supported the commission’s goals as laudable but encouraged Council to wait to see what the post-pandemic environment is like before considering new regulations.
- Councilor Syrett – agreed that new regulations should wait until public health advice has evolved following the pandemic; appreciated the Sustainability Commission’s recommendations and supported a future work session on this topic.
- Councilor Yeh – supported a future follow-up work session to receive more information about the feasibility of the Sustainability Commission’s recommendations and to discuss ways to support smaller, local events with waste management resources.
- Councilor Keating – voiced concern about the use of plastics and the amount of plastic that is not currently recyclable; asked questions about how plastic recycling is handled locally; supported better educational outreach about what the City and individuals can do to manage waste.
- Councilor Clark – recounted the past practice of shipping recyclable plastics to China, which no longer exists as an option; pointed out that it takes financial resources to encourage recycling and implement recycling systems and suggested a competition to engage entrepreneurs to innovate ways to reuse waste materials.
- Councilor Zelenka – agreed that the issue can be approached as an economic development strategy that will require some upfront investment; supported investigating the idea of a dish library; agreed that the new, post-pandemic normal may prohibit or limit some ideas.
- Councilor Groves – shared information about the County’s master recycler program.
- City Manager Medary – said that staff has been very successful in their work through strong partnerships and collaborative efforts; suggested that staff review the list of Sustainability Commission recommendations and identify where impacts can feasibly be made and bring that information back to Council.
- Councilor Vinis – noted that consideration may also be given to carbon offsets that would benefit recycling efforts.

2. WORK SESSION: Right-of-Way Resolutions on Federal Aid Projects

Acting-in-Capacity City Engineer Jenifer Willer presented information about the City’s proposal for handling right-of-way resolutions for Council action.

- Councilor Clark – expressed concern that the City would be ceding its home rule authority with this action and requested certainty that the City isn’t putting itself into a subjugated position; suggested adding language to the proposed motion that would protect property owners and stakeholders by specifying that only projects with advanced agreements could be placed on the Consent Calendar; encouraged mitigation of any potential consequences at both ends of the project.
- Councilor Zelenka – noted that 90 percent of projects will be non-controversial and suggested adding the language “. . . unless ROW is complex, controversial, or Council has indicated they want further discussion.”
- Councilor Keating – supported the motion revisions; expressed concern about relying on staff to determine whether a project is controversial; asked questions about the average number of projects per year and what the impacts would be if Council did not take action.
- Councilor Zelenka – noted that Council also has responsibility to identify potentially controversial projects and use the already established system to ensure that concerns are being addressed.
- Councilor Clark – agreed that there are measures in place to ensure that issues are addressed and encouraged staff to always err on the side of caution when determining where on an agenda a particular resolution should be placed.

MOTION: Councilor Zelenka, seconded by Councilor Syrett, moved to direct the City Manager to place future federal aid project-of-way resolutions on Consent Calendar 2, unless ROW is complex, controversial, or Council has indicated they want further discussion. Those will be placed on the regular agenda as an action item.

- Councilor Clark - clarified that if there is not a pre-existing agreement, the project will automatically be scheduled as a regular action item.
- Councilor Keating – asked clarifying questions about the language needed to ensure Council’s intent is clear.

VOTE: Passed 7:0

Mayor Vinis adjourned the meeting at 1:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Beth Forrest
City Recorder

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