

MINUTES

Eugene City Council Work Session Eugene, Oregon 97401

October 23, 2023
5:30 p.m.

Councilors Present: Emily Semple, Matt Keating, Alan Zelenka, Jennifer Yeh, Mike Clark, Greg Evans, Lyndsie Leech, and Randy Groves

Councilor Groves opened the October 23, 2023, work session of the Eugene City Council in a hybrid format at 101 W 10th Avenue, Eugene OR 97401.

MOTION: Councilor Evans, seconded by Councilor Keating, moved to make an amendment to the agenda to flip the order of the work session and begin with the work session neighborhood planning.

VOTE: PASSED 8:0

1. **WORK SESSION: Neighborhood Planning**

City Manager Medary introduced Alissa Hansen, Planning Director, and Fabio Andrade, Equity & Community Engagement Program Manager.

Councilor Discussion:

- Councilor Evans – asked for the scope of work for River Road and Santa Clara given current resource restraints; asked if staff is planning to narrow the scope.
- Councilor Zelenka – noted the difficulty of creating comprehensive neighborhood land use plans; noted a nimble, solutions-oriented process is more useful; stated neighborhood problems are often unique and not solvable with land use changes; stated his appreciation for this new, holistic approach to neighborhood planning.
- Councilor Leech – asked how staff will engage with local businesses during the planning process; noted businesses along River Road may be affected by proposed code changes; asked about the strategies for plan implementation; asked how land use changes will be addressed if they arise during the community engagement process.
- Councilor Yeh – noted her appreciation for the refined planning process; stated she is looking forward to the process coming to her neighborhood.
- Councilor Groves – asked staff what the plan is missing; asked staff if anything will be lost; noted the importance of a robust community discussion; noted the importance of including local businesses in the planning discussion; stated he is looking forward to learning more.
- Councilor Semple – noted the previous planning process has been strenuous and controversial; noted she is looking forward to seeing how this new neighborhood planning process evolves.
- Councilor Evans – noted his appreciation for the increased interdepartmental cooperation during the planning process; noted the Bethel area is in a unique situation as they have

their own school district; noted the smoothness of the Echo Hollow Pool revitalization process; stated Bethel area has significantly improved their schools through bond measures; asked how staff will work with stakeholders in Bethel School District.

- Councilor Zelenka – stated he expects the revised planning process will result in more robust engagement from neighbors and businesses because it will be shorter and more focused to the needs of individual neighborhoods; noted he does not expect to lose anything during this process because it is unlikely that the City will complete a classic neighborhood requirement plan focused on land use again; stated the focus on tailored solutions will be more effective; stated there is more to neighborhood planning than land use.

2. WORK SESSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: Approval of the Project List with \$5 Million for Walking Projects, \$3 Million for Bicycling Projects, \$3 Million for Safety Projects, and \$2 Million for Street Trees as Part of the 2025-2029 Street Repair Bond Measure

City Manager Medary introduced Reed Dunbar, Senior Transportation Planner, and Rob Inerfeld, Transportation Planning Manager, who provided an update on the project list for the 2025-2029 Street Repair Bond Measure.

Councilor Discussion:

- Councilor Zelenka – noted the amounts allocated to biking, pedestrian, and transit projects have increased from five percent to about 30 percent over the years; noted his appreciation that the project list incorporates Climate Action Plan 2.0 as well as pavement, walking, biking safety, and tree projects; stated the City’s success with public bond approval comes down to a few factors including a specific project list, an audit to ensure the plan was followed, and an even distribution of benefits; noted concern that the project list is geographically inequitable; stated an inequitable distribution of projects may discourage people from voting in favor of future bonds; noted Wards 1, 2, and 3 had the highest amount of “yes” votes for the last bond; stated that Wards 1, 2, and 3 are receiving less than two-thirds of the overall benefits of Ward 8; noted that despite his concerns, he will vote to approve the project list.
- Councilor Keating – asked for future presentations to include voter turnout information by ward or area; noted the 2022 road bond included oversight from the Citizen’s Advisory Committee; stated he is looking forward to seeing the advisory committee’s newest report; noted his ward has the highest amount of projects, but one of the lowest budgets; asked how resources are being used differently in Ward 2; noted the bike lane through Fox Hollow via Hilyard is dangerous.
- Councilor Yeh – stated it is inappropriate to base resource allocation decisions on voting rates; noted that various factors influence a person’s decision to vote.
- Councilor Leech – stated projects are distributed throughout the city; noted the citizens of Eugene do not solely reside within their own ward; noted her excitement about the Grant Street connector project; noted her appreciation for the equity approach taken by staff.
- Councilor Semple – stated her appreciation for the inclusion of specific projects in Ward 1; stated more bike paths and more people on bikes benefits everyone; asked if there is data about how much property tax comes from each ward; noted projects should not be distributed by property tax paid.

- Councilor Groves – noted other distribution metrics include center line miles, lane miles, and sidewalk miles; noted the bond also includes an additional 45 million dollars distributed throughout the city; stated he trusts staff to evaluate and prioritize projects appropriately; noted the criteria used to determine which roads should be repaired are complex.
- Councilor Clark – asked for the amount of deferred maintenance; stated the City had initiated the first road bond because of the extensive deferred maintenance of the City’s roads; believes the initial road bond was executed wisely, and roads are now in better condition; noted concerns that an increased percentage of the bond is being spent on alternate transportation which was not the original intention.
- Councilor Zelenka – stated his original point was about the politics of getting a “yes” vote; believes the current plan may risk future “yes” votes.
- Councilor Keating – noted the voter pamphlet entry for the 2022 road bond stated the previous bond funded 230 miles of road repairs, and that the entry did not break those miles down by ward; stated we live in a community and believes that there is community benefit to the current plan; stated he is more concerned about the breakdown of walking, biking, safety, and street tree projects; noted that more money is budgeted for biking, safety, and walking than street tree projects; noted the proposal includes a review by an independent auditor and a citizen street repairs review panel; asked if the street tree budget can be increased using the unprogrammed funds budget; asked about the significance of color-coding on the street tree map.
- Councilor Groves – asked how to interpret the street tree heat island map.

MOTION: Councilor Keating, seconded by Councilor Semple, moved to approve the document titled "Proposed Walking, Biking, and Safety Project List: All Wards" that is included in Attachment A to this AIS and the document titled "Street Trees Projects -- Process for Prioritizing transportation Bond Funds" set forth in Attachment B to this AIS.

VOTE: PASSED 7:1 (opposed by Councilor Clark).

The meeting was adjourned at 6:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Katie LaSala
City Recorder

(Recorded by Cherish Bradshaw)

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