

MINUTES

Eugene City Council Work Session Eugene, Oregon 97401

April 17, 2024
12:00 p.m.

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

Mayor Vinis opened the April 17, 2024, work session of the Eugene City Council in a virtual format.

1. **WORK SESSION: Transportation SDC Project List Update**

City Manager, Sarah Medary, introduced Transportation Planning Manager, Rob Inerfeld, who provided an update on the implementation of the Transportation System Development Charges (SDC) Project Plan and an overview of projects that could be added to the plan.

Councilor Discussion:

- Councilor Clark – spoke in favor of the plan, specifically the bridge in the North Delta/River Road corridor that provides a safer alternative to the Beltline.
- Councilor Groves – noted he supports plans that include pedestrian bicycle safety; noted community frustration with road tax dollars being diverted towards pedestrian and bike projects when roads still need repair; noted support of the project but wants to acknowledge community feedback.
- Councilor Semple – stated support for the projects outlined, specifically funding bike and pedestrian options.
- Councilor Yeh – stated support for the projects outlined in the presentation; stated that she has also heard community frustration with road tax dollars being diverted to pedestrian and bike projects; noted that she has also heard support from the bikers and pedestrians; noted road conditions are not ideal and there are safety issues for those walking, biking, or using wheelchairs; noted the need to acknowledge all sides.
- Mayor Vinis – noted the Pavement Report identified over 60 percent of roads are in good or very good shape; noted many road improvements come with bike and pedestrian infrastructure.
- Councilor Clark – noted the bridge north of the Beltline will enhance capacity on the Beltline; asked if the new population will place a demand on existing facilities; asked if there is a statutory requirement to show capacity enhancement with the use of SDC funds; asked if the only answer to enhance roadway capacity is alternative means; clarified eligibility determines how much capacity increase is needed; asked if the City’s internal rating of the facility impacts funds allocated for SDCs.

Councilor Zelena entered the meeting at 12:19 p.m. for Item 2.

2. WORK SESSION: An Ordinance Concerning Parking and Amending Sections 5.225, 5.265, 5.335, 5.990, and 5.995 of the Eugene Code, 1971.

City Manager, Sarah Medary, introduced Curbside & Admin Services Director, Jeff Petry, who provided an overview of the Chapter 5 code amendments.

Councilor Discussion:

- Councilor Clark – stated vehicle camping will create conflicts in the community, specifically recreational vehicles (RVs) parked in neighborhoods and business districts; noted increased fines and enforcement options are not favored by all; asked if there are other options to fix the problem; wants any proposed changes to have a clear impact on street camping; believes the City’s is not responsible for finding people sleeping accommodations; stated the City should regulate RV street camping.
- Councilor Leech – noted her opposition to the ordinance; stated intent to propose two motions: the first would delete sections related to persistent violators, and the second would bring back the conversation of persistent violators to Council for further discussion; believes increased fines and enforcements are not the best solution and is interested in more effective options; noted concern with the code changes having a long-term detrimental impact; would want assurances that the code changes will not negatively impact those who don’t understand how the code works.
- Councilor Semple – thinks a motion to divide is needed; asked if the \$2 maximum is endless; noted the increased fines to \$500 could be devastating for some; noted more concern with bad behavior than with camping from 10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.; noted problems with the City’s ability to enforce current rules; asked what percentage of citations are paid versus what percentage are paid when the fine doubles; asked if the 72 hours before something is enforced can be reduced; noted the 24 hours to move in residential areas can greatly impact residents who cannot park there.
- Councilor Groves – noted most problems are with repeat, chronic offenders; noted community frustration with the lack of choice in how public space is being utilized in front of residences and businesses; noted the majority of the unhoused population in vehicles have found a way to comply with code, while a small group choose not to modify their behaviors; stated preference to take action now and modify later, rather than do nothing and let the problem continue.
- Councilor Yeh – asked if the judges can review each case individually and lower fines when relevant; noted concern with the proposed changes for repeat parking violations; noted living in a vehicle is not ideal, but it does give safety to the unhoused; expressed hesitation to approve anything that takes away someone’s security; indicated increasing the City’s ability to impound vehicles doesn’t align with the City’s long-term solution; noted interest in another discussion on the topic.

- Councilor Keating – noted fees have not been adjusted since the 1980s; noted 48 percent of those with fines cannot pay their monthly bills; noted concern with fines becoming an incremental burden for the economically disadvantaged; stated the majority of persistent violators are affluent community members; asked how much a fine is for parking in front of a fire hydrant; noted concern with increasing other parking violations to \$500 when there is only a \$25 fine for parking that could significantly impact public safety; asked if there is a way to adjust parking in front of a fire hydrant.
- Councilor Zelenka – noted judges can take equity and judicial restraint when considering fines; stated the solution for repeat violators cannot be taking away their homes; noted 90 percent of fines and impoundments go unpaid; thinks high fines and impounding vehicles are not going to solve the problem; noted a need to find a solution for repeat violators; supports Councilor Leech’s proposed motions.
- Councilor Semple – asked if Judge Gill thinks fines are effective and if he would give someone a \$500 fine; asked what percentage of fines are paid; indicated the biggest problem with vehicle camping is garbage; asked if those who cannot afford the fine can be part of a road crew or pick up litter; asked how fines and punishments will be enforced; noted interest in the interactions between the police, parking staff, and perpetrators.
- Councilor Leech – noted those living in income qualifying housing may be spending more on parking than rent; asked what processes can be implemented to provide orders to fix issues with a resource referral before citations occur; noted mental health challenges, substance abuse, or self-medication impact people; indicated the problem is the behavior around vehicle camping; noted desire to create a process that could be helpful for the City in the long-term.
- Councilor Keating – noted interest in the 40 chronic offenders in oversized RVs; noted parking an RV in front or across from house, hotel, or apartment complex between 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. can be fined and asked what the fine is; asked if Council would be able to specify the weight, size, or address of the RV camping pieces if Councilor Leech’s motion is adopted; asked about banning RV campers from parking within City limits or RVs of a certain size or weight at any given time.
- Councilor Zelenka – noted Council could have a conversation on RV camping; noted doubling fines will not have an impact besides making someone homeless; thinks it’s wrong to focus on solutions that do not work; noted there may be other creative ideas to solve the issues at hand and thinks Council should have the conversation proposed in Councilor Leech’s motion.
- Councilor Clark – stated interest in other solutions; thinks the City cannot allow people to camp on the streets in vehicles; noted residents feel unsafe when RVs camp in front of their homes; noted both bad behavior and the presence of people sleeping in front of someone’s home is concerning.
- Councilor Groves – noted the problem includes behavior, garbage, human waste, and the physical parking of large vehicles in front of homes and businesses; noted Council asked staff to return with solutions; noted he is against separating the code amendments and thinks it needs to be an up or down vote so the public knows how Council voted.

- Councilor Yeh – noted that people do feel unsafe and that the City does not want garbage in front of people’s homes or bad behavior; believes Council needs to have more conversations on alternative solutions.
- Mayor Vinis – outlined the two possible motions Councilor Leech may put forward; asked for a process clarification about the difference between the two motions.
- Councilor Semple – asked if Council could approve everything in the work session and come back for another work session for more strategies; noted she is willing to see if the increased fines with Judge Gill’s interpretation will work.

MOTION: Councilor Keating, seconded by Councilor Groves moved to adopt an Ordinance amending sections 5.225, 5.265, 5.335, 5.990, and 5.995 of the Eugene Code, 1971 as set forth in Attachment A to this AIS.

MOTION TO AMEND: Councilor Leech, seconded by Councilor Zelenka moved to amend the proposed ordinance to: (1) delete section 1 in its entirety; (2) delete section 2 in its entirety; and (3) delete subsection (6) of Eugene Code 5.990 from section 4.

VOTE: 3:5 FAILED (Opposed by Councilors Semple, Keating, Clark, Evans, and Groves)

VOTE ON ORIGINAL MOTION: 5:3 PASSED (Opposed by Councilors Leech, Yeh, and Zelenka)

MOTION: Councilor Leech, seconded by Councilor Keating moved to direct the City Manager to schedule a work session on: (1) further discussion of the proposed persistent parking violator code amendments; and (2) a proposal to a program that provides resources in addition to, or in lieu of, parking citations to individuals living in their vehicles, including but not limited to vehicle repair.

VOTE: 8:0 PASSED

Mayor Vinis adjourned the meeting at 1:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Katie LaSala
City Recorder

(Recorded by Natalie Venhuda)

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