

MINUTES

Eugene City Council Work Session Eugene, Oregon 97401

September 11, 2024
12:00 p.m.

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

Councilors Absent: Greg Evans

Mayor Vinis opened the September 11, 2024, Eugene City Council Work Session in a virtual format.

Councilor Discussion:

- Mayor Vinis – noted 9/11 is a somber anniversary in which Council acknowledges the lives lost and sacrificed in response to the 2001 World Trade Center attack; noted it is important to remember the sacrifices as first responders continue to protect Eugene and communities across the nation.
- Councilor Groves – noted almost 3,000 lives were lost on 9/11, including 343 firefighters, 60 police officers, 8 emergency and medical services (EMS) workers, 2,343 service members in Operation Enduring Freedom, and 125 at the Pentagon; noted he was the Deputy Chief in charge of operations when 9/11 occurred, and without knowing how far the attack would reach, the City worked to provide security for the community; acknowledged the loss of those who sacrificed their lives and the lessons learned; thanked emergency services workers and military personnel.

1. WORK SESSION: Climate Friendly Areas

City Manager, Sarah Medary, introduced Principal Planner, Terri Harding, and Senior Planner, Leah Rausch, who provided an update on the Climate-Friendly Areas selection and a supporting redevelopment analysis.

Councilor Discussion:

- Councilor Groves – noted desire to see the transportation corridors redeveloped; asked if the transportation corridors extend beyond properties that are contiguous to the corridor; noted interest in 6th Avenue, 7th Avenue, and the Highway 99 Corridor; noted the City has experienced a variety of challenges including behavior problems at the corridors to its community; noted Climate Friendly Areas (CFAs) give the City the chance to alter entrance points and corridors to the City while providing more housing.
- Councilor Zelenka – stated the three options presented need to be refined; noted concern with South Willamette including CFAs due to resistance towards planning and change in the area; asked staff to define what the South Willamette

area is confined to and what changes are envisioned for the C2 zoning in the area; noted interest in 6th Avenue, 7th Avenue, and West 11th Avenue.

- Councilor Semple – noted appreciation for addressing the need for parks, open spaces, plazas, and public amenities; thinks tracking the need for connections to the outdoors as the City densifies is important; asked staff to clarify the density minimums and who they apply to; asked if density minimums only apply to new construction; asked why retail decreases the feasibility for CFAs; noted she is in favor of option two but thinks South Willamette could be set aside; noted concerns with option three; thinks it is important to focus efforts on the most successful opportunities.
- Mayor Vinis – asked for clarification on the timeline for the CFAs; noted the City is already invested in option one; noted once approved in 2026, the City will have eight years to demonstrate progress on Council’s option choice; interested in choosing the option were the City can make progress it can afford; noted Highway 99’s higher category placement may unlock additional State and Federal funds for improving state roads; noted more funds would enable the City to invest in better crossings and safer streets; asked if it would be beneficial for the City to be expansive in its designations as it might unlock other Federal funding options.

2. WORK SESSION: Wildfire and Medical Services Update

City Manager, Sarah Medary, introduced Deputy Chief, Chris Heppel, who discussed the current Wildfire status in the region and how ESF has been part of the efforts.

Councilor Discussion:

- Councilor Keating – noted the recent fire season is six times what the community normally endures with only 50 homes and zero lives being lost; expressed gratitude to Eugene-Springfield Fire (ESF) and State first responders; asked how the 988 Mobile Crisis Unit (MCU) model differs from or is similar to Crisis Assistance Helping Out On The Streets (CAHOOTS); asked if it would be more efficient for CAHOOTS and the MCU to be under the same funding stream; noted CAHOOTS has a 20 percent net retention rate; asked what goals are in place to improve the retention rate.
- Councilor Zelenka – noted desire to find the best department for CAHOOTS to reside with; noted the high number of acres burning this year is a direct result of climate change; asked what the process is for determining what the right response is for an incident; asked if FireMed has investigated marketing its services to insurance companies.
- Councilor Groves – noted it would bankrupt the system if insurance companies got to pass on the cost; noted FireMed is optional so it could not fund an ambulance system; asked how the fire department is doing with the changes; noted appreciation for ESF; noted change is inevitable at work but how it’s embraced makes the difference.
- Mayor Vinis – noted dispatch is the critical link in ensuring that calls go the right way; noted the current fire season is alarming.

Mayor Vinis adjourned the meeting at 1:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Katie LaSala
City Recorder

(Recorded by Natalie Venhuda)

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