

MINUTES
Eugene City Council
Work Session
Eugene, Oregon 97401

June 25, 2025
12:00 p.m.

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

Mayor Knudson opened the June 25, 2025, Eugene City Council Work Session in a virtual format.

1. WORK SESSION: Definition of Residential Character

City Manager, Sarah Medary, introduced Planning Director, Alissa Hunter, who presented the definition of residential character.

Councilor Discussion:

- Councilor Groves - noted community concerns that House Bill 2001 (HB 2001) and Climate Friendly and Equitable Communities (CFEC) contribute to neighborhood quality erosion; asked staff how to follow the law while still dealing with these problems; stated concern over the removal of off-street parking requirements; asked staff for a clear, simple explanation to share with community members about neighborhood quality issue; noted the conflict between the loss of off-street parking and narrower streets that limit on-street parking; noted the conflict between Council goals and State mandates; stated a need for clear, understandable talking points for the public.
- Councilor Kashinsky - stated qualities that make neighborhood unique are subjective; stated policies could hinder new housing development by using unclear or confusing rules about neighborhood fit; does not support expanding this definition across the entire city; supports removing, not adding, barriers to creating new housing.
- Councilor Clark - stated mandates are challenging but unlikely to change soon; asked staff how adding this definition to more neighborhood refinement plans would impact the Planning Commission's work or recommendations; asked if this definition would help protect neighborhoods from incompatible development; stated the definition seems objective and likely to cause disagreements.
- Councilor Zelenka - noted that traffic, delivery trucks, pedestrian noise, and littering as well as urban design and infill development impact neighborhood quality; noted some people believe HB 2001 lowers neighborhood quality; stated most of Council dislikes the broad approach of HB 2001 and would prefer a targeted approach; asked staff what the impact of this definition would be on housing production; asked

if this definition conflicts with HB 2001 goals; asked what changes would result from applying this definition; noted the City cannot institute a law that contradicts HB 2001; asked if this definition could be used to oppose a fourplex being built next door; asked if the broader adoption of this definition would mainly affect new regulations or new housing types.

- Councilor Yeh - previously voted against this and is not in support now; stated this is an outdated term that was previously used to exclude people from certain neighborhoods; does not believe greater use of the term aligns with current community goals; opposes expanding or retaining the term in land use code; noted a preference for using clear, targeted strategies for community planning.

2. WORK SESSION: Sidewalk Program Update

City Manager, Sarah Medary, introduced Principal Civil Engineer, Katie Marwitz, and Senior Transportation Planner, Jody Trendler, who presented an update on the sidewalk program.

Councilor Discussion:

- Councilor Clark - supports pilot programs that lower the cost of sidewalk work as road work is done in an area; noted many wards have major gaps in sidewalk routes; asked staff if there is a State law or City policy that required sidewalks on streets where they do not currently exist; asked if sidewalk gaps are an Americans with Disability Act issue; noted concern that annexing more county roads will increase the City's financial burden to complete sidewalk networks; asked if Public Works has estimated the cost to complete the sidewalk network on unimproved or future annexations of roads; asked if homeowners can choose to not build a sidewalk in front of their home; stated constituents have asked if the City can require a sidewalk to be built if the home was built before sidewalk requirements existed.
- Councilor Zelenka - stated sidewalk construction and maintenance should not be subsidized through taxes; recognized the challenge of maintaining over 700 miles of sidewalks; stated the City cannot afford to take full responsibility for all repairs and property owners must cover some costs; stated support for investing in sidewalk infrastructure when it supports Safe Routes to School and climate goals; noted support for grinding and repair pilot programs, income-based assistance, cost-sharing for tree-related damage, and "point of sale" policy that would require sidewalk repairs when a home is sold; suggested sidewalk funding be considered in broader in city budget stabilization efforts.
- Councilor Keating- asked staff to provide information on why more communities are not using the point-of-sale method for sidewalk repairs; noted an interest for creative funding ideas for sidewalk improvements; suggested Airbnb fees or a round-up option on local taxes; noted concern for accessibility of online tools for requesting sidewalk repairs; stated the current request-for-service model may not be an equitable method; stated concern that more privileged residents may have more time and the access to request service; asked if there is a heat map of service

requests; asked staff to follow up with more information about a map of service requests; acknowledged the need for more sidewalk repair and upkeep; suggested a shared financial responsibility between the City and homeowners; encouraged staff to look into a more equitable approach for requesting service.

- Councilor Groves - supports adding this topic to the upcoming budget stabilization discussions; stated the current model of homeowner responsibility is not working well; would support a point-of-sale of title transfer model to collect funds for sidewalk repairs; suggested creating a fund for repairs upfront that can be repaid when the property is sold; noted damaged sidewalks cause safety and accessibility issues; stated concern for low-income homeowners who cannot afford sidewalk repairs; stated an equitable and comprehensive approach to sidewalk maintenance is needed; noted there are many areas in ward eight that have unimproved streets without sidewalks that create safety risks.
- Councilor Kashinsky - stated the importance of sidewalk access for mobility and transportation options; asked staff if the pilot program that bundles sidewalk repairs with street work offers low-income assistance for property owners; asked if there is a resource for those who cannot afford repairs; asked if the resources available have an age requirement for eligibility; believes that age-based payment modifications are unfair; stated that the ability to pay, not age, should be the focus for assistance; noted that sidewalks impact the entire neighborhood; asked staff to provide clarification on the discrepancy between the number of sidewalk investigations and the number of notices sent to property owners; asked staff to confirm that if an investigation found a defect, a notice would be issued to the homeowner.
- Mayor Knudson - noted every trip begins and ends with walking; asked staff if there has been coordination with transit planning partners regarding sidewalk improvements.

Mayor Knudson adjourned the meeting at 1:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Katie LaSala
City Recorder

(Recorded by Sara McKinney)

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