

ROUGHLY EDITED TRANSCRIPT

CITY OF EUGENE
CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
NOVEMBER 19, 2025
12:00 P.M.

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>> MAYOR KNUDSON: Thank you, good afternoon, welcome to the November 19th, 2025 City Council Work Session. Thank you for joining us in this hybrid meeting format. For work sessions like this one there is no opportunity for public comment. Those wishing to access the meeting can access the website, the broadcast on Comcast Channel 21 or calling into one of the phone numbers listed for the meeting on the public webcasts and meetings materials web page. Thank you for joining us today. I now call the November 19th, 2025 work session of the council to board and I'll turn it over to the City Manager to introduce our first topic today, a work session on the sustainability commission's annual report and 2026 work plan. Danielle, you are still muted.

>> Should I begin or wait?

>> MAYOR KNUDSON: I'll just be checking.

>> Mayor, we can try to see if we're, where Sarah is and maybe resend her another invite to the meeting, just in case it's lost in her email.

>> MAYOR KNUDSON: Thank you.

>> Mayor, I think she's wrapping up a meeting as is the other City Manager. I think we're good to start.

>> MAYOR KNUDSON: That sounds great. Assistant City Manager if you're comfortable with us handing it off to staff, City Manager Madeira was ready to land it over to Danielle. If you're ready to take it away, we're ready.

>> I will be okay to do that.

>> MAYOR KNUDSON: Thank you.

>> Let me share my screen. Okay. Thank you, Mayor and good afternoon, City Council. My name is Danielle, I'm a climate policy analyst for the city. Part of my duties being a staff liaison for the Sustainability Commission. With me is Alexi Miller, the Vice Chair of the Sustainability Commission. In our presentation I will be providing a little bit of context of how the Sustainability Commission fits into the larger body of work led by the city. Alexi will share highlights from the Commission's work in FY '25, including the topics they engaged with, committees formed and the information that was sent to Council as well as prepared for the public, then he'll go over the work plan and proposed committees for the upcoming year. The Commission is looking for action from City Council to approve their FY '26 work plan and committees.

As a reminder I went are presented to City Council last month a high-level overview of the city's climate work. At that work session, I shared our progress to implement CAP 2.0, which is 67% implemented as well as how we measure our impact using a variety of metrics and key indicators. You can explore more on this by visiting the QR Code to view our story map that was created, a new climate dashboard and other tools. At that work session I also shared some of the bigger challenges that this work currently faces and opportunities for continuing to move the work forward. One specific opportunity that I will be coming back to Council with soon is our work on a home energy disclosure policy. So we are currently doing engagement and research and this policy is meant to increase transparency will energy-related information as well as provide information and guidance to folks who might want to upgrade their homes. So I will be returning to Council early next year with the results of our engagements and next steps. Today we're here to talk about the Sustainability Commission one component of the city's broader climate work.

As a volunteer advisory group appointed by City Council their role is to provide guidance and feedback on sustainability-related issues. They have provided ongoing engagement and are helping to shape responsive policies that reflect the community's values and needs. Before I turn it over to Alexi, I want to recognize and thank the current members of the Sustainability Commission and share gratitude that they are volunteering their time to serve in this role. I'd like to offer a quick reminder there's one open commission seed from Ward 3, filling commissions seats is an opportunity to invite ongoing community member engagement on sustainability topics as well as to increase the diversity and interests of the Commission. I will turn it over to the Vice Chair of the Sustainability Commission, Alexi.

>> Good afternoon, Mayor and City Councilors. Thank you for having me today. I'll share the key accomplishments listed in our FY '25 annual report, Appendix A in your packet and then go to this coming year. Overall theme for the last year was continuing to align Sustainability Commission work with the different focus areas of CAP 2. 0, transportation, buildings waste and resilience. So we had the opportunity to learn from speakers and ask questions and many cases provide feedback on projects, policies and development. This is the highlights of the entire year. For transportation topics we suggested changes in improvements to future protected bikeways, changes to the

transit system and on the building side we learned about some of the existing tools that the city uses to promote compact development. We also learned about public health standards projects and I'll get into some outcomes there as well.

On the waste side, Lane County proposed the CleanLane Resource Recovery Facility and questions were asked. Projects related to the resilience, reviewed the urban forestry action plan and street tree projects, the 2022 street bond required of us statutorily, something we do every year and provided input on triple bottom line analysis focused on evaluating turf options for sports fields at Golden Gardens Park and finally we're focused on community engagement across all areas and others and we provided feedback on new communications tools aimed at illustrating CAP2. 0's progress and impact and Danielle listed those a moment ago. Really neat dashboards, data stories.

So we formed three committees last year, where a lot of the day-to-day work gets done within the Sustainability Commission. The climate-friendly Landscapes Committee was developed in response to repeated community outreach and concerns about artificial turf and gas-powered leaf blowers. We did a bunch of learning on that and came back and researched some policy options that exist in other jurisdictions around those areas, we produced a memo that is included in attachment C, two memos, one on each topic. We had the Clean and Reliable Backup Energy Committee developed also in response to community outreach and concerns around power outages and grid reliability. We researched technology force backup energy for homes and businesses that don't rely on fossil fuels which could be used during power outages, and as often we created a handout for the public about those different technology systems and then we also researched some policy options and provided a memo to you, The Councilors the internal and external outreach and outcomes included in attachment C as well.

Our third committee is the education And Outreach Committee or this was, developed an outreach strategy to better understand diverse community perspectives and better educate the public about the programs here in Eugene and more resources for more sustainable living. We want to make sure that people actually engage with us and kind of pay attention and make it fun, so we put together a Spin the Wheel game when we go to a table at events, that could be neighborhood potlucks or other events, get people's feedback, hear about their priorities, chat with them, educate as well as gather information. In total, we attended four community events and engaged with about 85 community members and summarized that engagement in Attachment B. Big takeaway from these, a lot of the work accomplished in those committees is increasing the public's understanding of the City's climate and sustainability work and helping staff and Council better understand the community's priorities and concerns on sustainability issues. We want to be that liaison in between people at large and you folks. Another thing we're able to provide small grants to help support activities that are consistent with our mission.

These help the commission widen its sphere of impact and Eugene by extension. Community partners are invited to apply for up to \$1,000 in funding for events or

projects that relate to sustainability and have some kind of public outreach or focus to them. Last year, for example, we awarded \$1,000 to a university group called OASIS, a group of architecture and environmental study students and designed and built this informative public exhibit they put on display at multiple different community events around town to gather information on sustainability topics in Eugene, cool 3-D thing they put together. That was last year. This year we pivot to looking forward the FY '26 Work Plan is Attachment D in your packet, D as in dog.

Three main goals this year. First, stay aligned with CAP 2.0, understanding what actions and projects city and our community partners are currently moving forward and we want to be identifying opportunities for us on the sustainability Commission to help advance that work. Second, we're staying focused on current city priority areas and also we want to be raising city Council's awareness about emerging sustainability topics. There may be topics that come up throughout the year and initiatives under way in other municipalities in Oregon and beyond and we're in a position to do some deeper dives on what those issues might be, gather some information and flagstaff for staff or City Council as opportunities to consider. Finally, we want to continue engaging with the community. We think it's important to help serve as an ear of Council in the community on sustainability-related issues and so to serve this will be actively engaging community members and chatting with folks and gathering information to understand community perspectives.

So we had a retreat to put together our FY '26 Work Plan to kick that off. Danielle kindly helped identify a list and other staff helped identify a list of a whole lot of projects happening by the city and across the community that reeled to CAP 2.0 and/or sustainability more broadly and at the retreat narrowed it down to the topics you see here. We've organized them according to different areas of focus in the CAP 2.0, that's why it's organized like you saw in FY '25 to help make sure we're well aligned with that framework. Let me run through a couple key areas. For transportation we'll be providing feedback on the Franklin Boulevard transformation and reviewing proposed solutions to address sidewalk repair and funding challenges attended there.

On the building side the proposed home energy score disclosure policy, comparing that to some other jurisdictions as well and learning about local applications of geothermal energy also. On the waste side, we are learning about the details and the significance of the new recycling Modernization Act, statewide act that has gone into effect about local work happening related to refrigerants. I heard from Bring in our last meeting, they are things in air conditioners, heat pumps, et cetera. For resilience, street tree projects funded by the '22 bond and reviewing the now completed triple bottom line analysis of turf options at Golden Gardens Park.

Last year we provided input and now we get to read it over and evaluate and finally, of course, community engagement, planning to engage some specific stakeholder groups more deeply. We want to chat with youth to understand their perspectives on climate action and sustainability as well as business stakeholders specifically. So two focus areas for engagement. As is often the case, the work gets done at the committee level,

one step below the full Commission and so we're proposing to stand up another three committees this year. In Appendix E there's a written one-pager for each of these. First, Education and Outreach we got positive feedback from Council last year about our engagement.

We want to make sure we build on that work, share resources that folks can use to live and work more sustainably and better understand community perspectives on sustainability topics, again, goes both ways. We're standing up, we propose to stand up a Sustainable Buildings Committee to explore material and design features that can lower carbon impacts of buildings and examine existing policies in other jurisdictions to advance sustainable building practices and outcomes. We're hoping this research will be timely as the city is continuing to explore strategies to drive more housing production and more compact development. And then our third committee say triple Bottom Line Learning Group, basically learning about the Triple Bottom Line tool and developing ways to enhance the Sustainability Commission's use of the tool when reviewing projects, Golden Gardens or something else. This is a quick overview of where we've been and where we're going. We'd like to turn it back over to City Council, welcome your questions and feedback on anything presented and as Danielle mentioned, in the end, seeking approval of our FY '26 Work Plan and our proposed committees. Thank you.

>> MAYOR KNUDSON: Thank you, Alexi and Danielle. I will now open the floor for Council discussion and see Councilor Kashinsky in the queue.

>> KASHINSKY: I don't have a ton of questions because I got the opportunity to participate in many of these discussions and look forward to participating in the discussions we'll have over the next year. I just wanted to say thank you to both of you, thank you to the Committee. The work that you all are putting into this and the thoughtfulness with which you approach it is greatly appreciated so thank you.

>> You're welcome. Thank you, too.

>> MAYOR KNUDSON: Any other comments, other Councilors who would like to speak to this annual work plan?

>> ZELENKA: Thanks for the work plan. I think your work plan topics are the right ones. The one thing that I've been interested in, though, is I know the Sustainability Commission addressed this before but local offsets that we buy, we buy offsets to fulfill our commitment to the Climate Recovery Ordinance and we've been trying to get as local as possible. I'm wondering if that's something we could add to the work plan in terms of looking at more local offsets than what we have seen in the past.

>> Thank you, Councilor Zelenka that's a great question. Staff continue to purchase offsets to achieve our net zero through the climate recovery ordinance and several years ago, the Commission did stand up a committee to list out their priorities for how we make those decisions around which offsets to purchase and you know, currently

staff do try as best as possible to balance prioritizing local, as local offsets as possible while also within the budget that we have to purchase those carbon offsets and so as staff, I'm not totally certain what role the Commission would have beyond the values and goals that they've already sort of listed out in their committee work a few years ago.

>> ZELENKA: What's missing from that -- I applaud the efforts you've done so far but what is miss something a plan to develop the local offsets that we could use.

>> Um-hum.

>> ZELENKA: And we don't have any -- there's lots of things that are occurring that could be actually turned into projects that could be, that we could end up purchasing that would be local economic development projects for businesses that switch their fleets over to EVs or do other kinds of things to lower their fossil fuel use and emissions. So developing a plan to develop local offset projects is really what's needed in the next step. So I was hoping you could do that. On the Sustainable Buildings Committee, I hope you're all aware, besides the Home Energy Score which we desperately should be doing, we're way behind the 8 ball in terms of cities in the state that have already adopted this long before us, but the next thing coming down the pike for buildings is especially in the commercial sector is the building performance standards that the legislature passed last, in 2023, and that starts to, early adopter incentives are in place for people to make their existing buildings, getting them up to average energy use, so that would be a good thing as an economic development tool to be able to have our local businesses take advantage of those incentives while they last because they're not unlimited. So that's going to come out very soon, and then finally on the Triple Bottom Line, there's been overly, you're all aware of the massive amount of history we've had with Triple Bottom Line and that's part of the TBL tool that was developed and all the history that we had in trying to apply that to it to the work that we do. It's kind of gone a little bit out of vogue, but hopefully we can bring that back as an important part of our decision-making tool and what are the impacts on the Triple Bottom Line.

>> MAYOR KNUDSON: Councilor Clark?

>> CLARK: Thank you, Mayor. I want to second Councilor Zelenka strong suggestion, motion, whatever it ends up being there that as someone who has been really unhappy at us purchasing carbon offsets out-of-market for the history of that program, I view that as us just taking local taxpayer money and sending it out of the market so we can feel good, and we should be developing and should have a program to develop local offset opportunities so that that money stays within our community. The days of us sending money out of the community so we can feel good need to be over.

>> I just want to, apologies, interject. There are local conversations happening, you know, with and our partners about developing local offset projects. I think so far, there hasn't been a specific project that has emerged from those conversations. I mean,

these are expensive things to stand up, but there are local conversations happening about, to explore those opportunities.

>> CLARK: It's good that the conversations are happening. The days of us sending money out of the market so we feel good, though, really need to be over, in my opinion. So I hope that develops very quickly by the time we hit a new budget season. Lastly, I've been asked a number of times by constituents, and I don't have an answer for this, so maybe you can with the work that you're doing. The third leg of the Triple Bottom Line analysis is essentially the cost efficiency of an action and/or the cost of an action. I wonder if we have such an analysis on our climate work in total as a community. Do we have any kind of information that says all of the money that the City has spent in the last X number of years has alleviated X number of tons of carbon entering the atmosphere, but here's the cost overall for doing so. Do we have an analysis of that nature?

>> Thanks for that question. I mean, that's a hard question for me to answer, because I think a lot of the -- like a lot of the money that has been spent to advance our climate goals is also in service to other initiatives that the City is moving forward. I mean, our climate work is very interwoven across the whole city with our housing work, with our infrastructure projects, with our, you know, long-range planning efforts, and so it's challenging to tease out exactly how much, you know, to tease that dollar amount out. I think -- and I've heard you ask this question, a similar question in the past, how much would it cost to reach our climate goals, like is there a dollar amount for that, and again, I think that's a challenging question to answer because like as we meet those climate goals it's interwoven with a lot of the other work that's happening across the City.

>> CLARK: Isn't that the nature of the Triple Bottom Line tool itself, understanding the cost efficiency and effectiveness of any particular action?

>> The Triple Bottom Line, it's an attempt to understand the impact of projects and policies as they are developed. So across three different categories, what are going to be the social environment, what are going to be the environmental impacts and what are going to be the economic impacts of any type of decision or policy once it gets implemented. And the goal of the tool is to really be aware of possible unintended impacts as you are making those policy decisions.

>> CLARK: We don't have metrics essentially on costing for the effort itself overall. Would you say that's accurate?

>> My understanding of the TBL tool, it's not really meant to budget out and cost out -- the purpose of it is really to understand like the various impacts that this policy could have, so yes, cost to do that is one of those, but we don't have, I mean I can't give you a number right now about the exact cost it's going to take to implement, you know, or achieve our climate goals.

>> CLARK: Okay, thank you.

>> Just briefly if I may, one thing I'll note, Danielle said at the beginning we're 67% implemented on CAP 2.0. That includes strategies or action steps that have completed as well as those that have been started and are in progress, and so while they may have a cost, in some cases you pay up front and you get the benefits for years to come, and so the answer might be a little bit nuanced in terms of how much have we spent and how many tons have we avoided, emissions from our CAP 2.0 strategies because some of them are in progress or, you know, like a bikeway, say, that you build the bikeway and presumably reduced car trips sort of accrue over time. So these things can be estimated, but it's a little hard to say, here's where we're exactly at right now.

>> CLARK: Sure, I appreciate the difficulties certainly, but I hope you understand there's a lot of constituents of mine who ask the question in a difficult budget time when we had shortages and have to contemplate increases, these particular expenditures need to have, in my opinion, better metrics around them so that we can explain to the general public and to our constituents why we're spending this money. I'm trying to better explain that with metrics that make sense with folks based on the kind of questions I'm getting. So it's just information I'm looking, can we do that, please. But I understand. Thank you very much.

>> MAYOR KNUDSON: Councilor Groves?

>> GROVES: Thank you, Mayor and thank you, Alexi and Danielle for the presentation and thank you to all the Sustainability Commission for the, that you're doing in this area. I, too, want to lend my voice. I agree with what Councilors Zelenka and Clark were discussing trying to find more local opportunities and I do have a couple of questions. The first is are we working with our local utilities at all or talking with them at least on weatherization? That's one of the low-hanging fruits that's out there, to me. We not only need to be reducing energy consumption of all types, we need to think about capacity of data centers which are gobbling up a lot of our cheap Bonneville power.

>> Thanks for that question, Councilor Groves. Today we're here to talk about the Sustainability Commission's work and in that work plan, there isn't directly any projects addressing, you know, utility projects, but staff and staff at all levels of the organization continue to meet with our utility partners about those challenges.

>> GROVES: I'd just like to see a little more focus on that, because you know, we bring this up year after year and it's always somebody else that's doing it, and I would just like to see a little more effort put into that, if we can, and then another question I have, has there been any outreach to some of our young members in the community? The Chamber has a group of young professionals and I think they are really in touch with the issues the Sustainability Commission is working on. It might be valuable to kind of bring them into the discussion. They can help educate us and we can help educate them to have a more efficient and effective community.

>> Agreed. And that is one of the key focus areas for our outreach, so we'll make sure to flag that as a key channel as we engage.

>> GROVES: That's great, because they're in business already and you know, the Chamber has a really active group that are very interested in being involved in our community, both professionally and civically. So I think that that would be a really good relationship to have.

>> Yes, I'll just mention -- thank you, I appreciate that. Noted. And regarding your first question about working with local utilities and reducing energy usage, we worked on that last year, actually the last couple of years and also this year we've got that Sustainable Buildings Committee, that's within the focus area for that committee. One example of how we do that generally speaking, our work occurs within the three committees but sometimes other things pop up. One example in the past, the University of Oregon was considering what to do with their central plant, whether to continue with natural gas boilers, to move to electric boilers or lower-temperature hot water instead of steam distribution system served by heat pumps of various flavors. We actually submitted some information to Council about that. We read up on it, digested some information, the UO central plant is the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in the city so it's a relevant topic there. That's an example of how we see kind of things that are going on and try to provide information to Council and staff about those topics. That wasn't exactly in our work plan but it was quite current because the Trustees had a vote coming up and we were able to research that, get some information over. That has to be managed between the IGR related to the IGR, has to be done right but that's an example of kind of how we work sometimes where these topics pop up and saying that is within the agreement. Let's talk about this and get some information to staff and Council.

>> GROVES: Thank you, and then finally, just to make sure I'm clear what I'm talking about, I think it's great to involve youth but the young professionals I'm talking about, these are adults actually in the working world and you know, they're seeing things every day and I think that would be a really good group, if we're trying to change the way we look at our world and the way we look at our community, I think when we can get on that front end of people in their careers, it's just going to be a great relationship as we go down the road. Again I'm looking at this more of a long-term work. So thank you for considering that.

>> Thank you.

>> GROVES: Thank you, Mayor.

>> MAYOR KNUDSON: Councilor Zelenka?

>> ZELENKA: I think Councilor Yeh hasn't had a first round.

>> MAYOR KNUDSON: Yes you just popped into the position. Go ahead.

>> YEH: No big deal. Thanks, Alan. First of all, I really like the way that the work plan is done now the different categories you've been doing for the last couple times. I think it's great. I'm glad you stuck with it. It makes a lot of sense. I'm wondering, I just am curious about under buildings number 4, the local geothermal energy, are you planning to do a pamphlet again or is this kind of, what are the options and sharing it out? I wasn't quite clear what the goal was.

>> Yes, this was more of a learning opportunity for the Commission and potentially the broader community about how is geothermal currently being used in our community. So the goal with that topic was to invite partners out in the community who are working with ground source heat pumps and other types of systems to just understand how it's being used currently. So I don't think the goal was to create anything outward-facing but potentially if Council is interested, there could be an opportunity there.

>> YEH: Yes, it sounds really interesting. I'm curious to see how people are using it already in our community. So that was very interesting. And this is just a thought I had when folks were talking about the offsets and you know, how hard it is. Like many, I assume, I also don't know how -- I don't know the process to make, you know, create an offset project, you know, so it might be helpful, I don't know how hard this would be to just send us an email about like what is, you know, what does it take to create that, just so we're aware of like what, you know, how difficult this may be or not. Because I feel it's hard to talk about things when you really don't know what you're talking about. But I wouldn't want to take up a bunch of time today.

>> Yes, just a quick note, on the first topic, I agree with Danielle, that's basically a learning excursion and there's a lot of action nationally about geothermal energy, new tech company coming up, doing some interesting stuff, costs evolving. It's a little bit of a learning and research project, what's happening here, what's happening elsewhere that's relevant and want to compile that knowledge a little bit. Hopefully it helps inform Danielle and others. The local offset, it's agreed that it's a worthy thing. We get presentations from experts like I mentioned last meeting Bring talking about refrigerants. We can say are you doing projects, we can figure out what it would take to get some local offsets put together and bring that onto the radar of those local community partners and other institutions that are engaging with us so that at least we're planting that seed. I don't want to necessarily put a big piece into the work plan right now because I haven't thought it through, but the idea is planted for sure and I like that idea so I appreciate that.

>> YEH: Thanks, Alexi.

>> MAYOR KNUDSON: Councilor Zelenka?

>> ZELENKA: Thanks. I wanted to correct two misconceptions I put out there. One is that offsets are not feel-good projects. In order for us to buy one, they must meet the

but-for test, meaning they actually reduce greenhouse gas emissions and but for our purchase, they would not have happened. So we're enabling those to occur. So they're not feel-good projects. They're actually reductions in energy efficiency. The analogy when E. Webb pays you to do weatherization in your house, they're paying you to do that action so you use less energy so they don't have to buy it. That's an offset, just in a different format. The other one is that if you look at the enormous body of work that has been done over the years, climate action plans, most of the actions that get proposed and a lot of the actions in our CAP 2.0 actually reduce costs and end up creating a net benefit as opposed to a net cost both the user and society. So of course you have to do the homework to be able to understand that, but most of the actions you could take are on the far left side of the curve are going to create net benefits, not have net costs. That's been studied over and over again. So it's not true that climate change actions are costly. They're actually net benefits. Finally, one of the things that I was thinking about on the local offsets is that what we really need to do is put out an RFP and design something that actually solicits local businesses and local non-profits to take action. We don't need to pay for the entire project. We need to create the tipping point for them to go from, yes -- from no to yes, because we give them the incentive. You can do it by providing a dollar per metric ton limit or offer and then people can choose to do that, local non-profits or businesses can choose to take actions that they wouldn't otherwise take that would lower greenhouse gas emissions. And then finally, on the TBL, the reason TBL is important is because decisions are not and should not be made solely on economic criteria. So they need -- and we often do and your everyday decisions that you make in your household and at the city level that we make, they take in the impacts on society and equity and also onto the environment. So those things are often left out so they're just creating a level playing field with all the decision-making factors that should be taken into consideration designing something.

>> MAYOR KNUDSON: Thank you, Council, for that discussion, and to staff for the presentation today. We appreciate this update and look into the future. I'm now going to turn to the Council Vice President to put a motion forward.

>> LEECH: Thank you, Mayor. I just want to say thank you to all of the Commissioners and staff for all of the work and for the presentation. I always look forward to this one. So appreciate you. And with that, move to approve the FY '26 Sustainability Commission Work Plan.

>> ZELENKA: Second.

>> MAYOR KNUDSON: Any further discussion from Council? Seeing none, I'll take a vote for this motion, all in favor, please raise your hand. One, two, three, four, five, six, seven. All opposed zero and the motion passes with a vote of 7-0. Thank you so much. And Council President, our second motion for today?

>> LEECH: Yes, move to approve establishment of the following committees, Education and Outreach Committee, Sustainable Buildings Committee, Triple Bottom Line Group.

>> ZELENKA: Second.

>> MAYOR KNUDSON: Thank you. Any further discussion from Council? Seeing none, I'll take a vote for the motion. All in favor, please raise your hand. One, two, three, four, five, six. All opposed? One, and the motion passes with a vote of 6-1. Councilor Keating?

>> KEATING: Who is the one for identification?

>> MAYOR KNUDSON: Councilor Clark. Thank you, Councilors and thank you to our Sustainability Commission and to staff. That concludes our first agenda item today. I will now turn to our second agenda item, proposed Charter amendments including department head residency requirements and language updates. City Manager?

>> Thank you, Mayor. This is an opportunity for the Council to discuss and potentially take action on two resolutions that would refer two measures to the May 2026 election regarding amendments to the Charter. It's a combination of Council discussion over the last -- Council discussions and work sessions over the past 18 months. One of them, one of the resolutions actually refers to department head residency, which is under the City Manager's authority, so it is the only one where I've made a recommendation. With that I'll turn it over to Jason Dedrick.

>> Good afternoon, my name is Jason Dedrick, Policy Analyst in the City Manager's office. I want to provide you with a brief presentation today to get you kind of grounded back in your work around these amendments. I'll share my screen and get that going. Is that looking good?

>> MAYOR KNUDSON: It does, yes.

>> Great, thank you. Alright, so quick overview of this presentation, again, this will be a very brief presentation, just to kind of get you back up to speed on things. I'll quickly review your most recent discussions on this topic, also briefly review the two Charter amendments that you can potentially take action on today. And your discussion to staff regarding either or both of those resolutions. So as a quick reminder, the Council Charter there's local authority to draft and amend the Charter, there is no regular process for reviewing the Charter, however, amendments occurred periodically over the years. Those amendments can happen in a couple of ways.

One are Council-initiated amendments which occur by referral. That is the process that you're engaged in today. Citizen-initiated amendments can also happen by petition and in both cases, any amendments are placed on the ballot for Eugene voters to decide. So quick recap of your most recent discussion on this topic, which was in September,

you discussed the four "priority now" amendments that you have moved forward out of a list of additional amendments. So you discussed those four based on research staff had brought you. You directed staff to prepare resolutions for the May 2026 election for two of those amendments, one related to language review and one related to the department head residency. You voted not to pursue amendments on the other two topics but did direct staff to provide additional research on those at a later date. Those were Mayor and Council compensation and the Council vacancy/interim appointment process.

So the first of the amendments for your consideration today was regarding language review and your motion specifically directed staff to look at amendments related to antiquated language, as staff reviewed the Charter, we were looking for some common antiquated terms, policeman, fireman, chairman. We did not find any of those, so the only revisions are for gender-specific pronouns and so those revisions are included as Attachment A and essentially those revisions removed 12 instances of gender-specific pronouns and replaces them with more specific language around individual in question, whether it be a Councilor, Mayor, City Manager, et cetera. That is the first resolution for your review and possible approval today. The second relates to the department head residency amendment. This is in Attachment B. Your direction was to remove the language that specifies the department heads need to reside in Eugene during their tenure in that role. Removal of the language retains the residency for the City Manager.

So your next steps, if you approve one or both of these resolutions today would formally refer them as Measures to the May 19th, 2026 general election and if you approve one or both of those resolutions today, and there was time, you could also move forward on appointing Councilors to the Voters Pamphlet Committee that could also happen today as well. And I did promise a brief presentation and that was it. So I'll turn it back over to you, Mayor.

>> MAYOR KNUDSON: Thank you, Jason, for that presentation. I'll now turn to Council Vice President to put the motion forward.

>> LEECH: Mayor, there are two motions. I'm going to put forward the first for discussion. Move to adopt a resolution calling a City election May 19th, 2026 for the purpose of referring to the legal electors of the City of Eugene removing gender-specific pro nouns from the Eugene Charter as set forth in Attachment A to this AIS.

>> ZELENKA: Second.

>> MAYOR KNUDSON: Any further discussion from Council? Seeing none, I'll take a vote for this motion. All in favor, please raise your hand. One, two, three, four, five, six, seven. Thank you, Councilor Keating. I think your hand was off screen for a moment. Zero opposed, that motion passes with a vote of 7-0. Councilor Keating, that's a vote in affirmative. You're frozen but I can see, thank you. For the residency requirements and

department heads Charter amendment I'll now turn to the Council Vice President to put a motion forward.

>> LEECH: Move to adopt a resolution calling a city election on May 19th, 2026 for the purpose of referring to the legal electors of the City of Eugene, a measure amending Subsection 16. 3 of the Eugene Charter concerning the City residency requirement of department heads as set forth in Attachment B to this AIS.

>> MAYOR KNUDSON: Any further discussion from Council?

>> ZELENKA: Second.

>> MAYOR KNUDSON: Thank you, Alan, for that second. And the reversal of my question. I will now take a vote for this motion. And all in favor, please raise your hands. One, two, three, four, five, six, and all opposed? One. And the motion passes with a vote of 6-1. Thank you, Council. Moving on to last couple of questions, the voter pamphlet proponent committee. Council President, Vice President if you'd put this motion forward.

>> LEECH: Do I have volunteers for committee members? Do I just choose who I would like to see then?

>> Typically you wait for volunteers. The first one is for the removing of the gender-specific pronouns. So you'll have a committee for each one. You don't have to have three. It doesn't have to be three. You do need to have at least one. Typically we have two or three members on that committee.

>> MAYOR KNUDSON: Thank you, City Attorney.

>> LEECH: Okay. Any volunteers for the gender-specific pronouns?

>> MAYOR KNUDSON: I see Councilor Keating with your hand raised, thank you, Councilor Keating.

>> YEH: I'll do one of them. I don't care which one.

>> MAYOR KNUDSON: Doing the math quickly, there's six positions. Councilor Keating and Councilor Yeh, thank you for volunteering. Our two Councilor thresholds. Any other Councilors like to be a part of this proponent committee?

>> LEECH: I would put myself in that committee as well.

>> MAYOR KNUDSON: Thank you, Councilor Leech.

>> LEECH: Move to approve Councilor Keating, Councilor Yeh and Leech from the gender affirming pronouns from Charter.

>> ZELENKA: Second.

>> MAYOR KNUDSON: Any further discussion from Council? Councilor Clark?

>> CLARK: Am I correct in my assumption that the content of this isn't advocacy, it's explanatory, City Attorney?

>> It's a proponent committee so they are stating the reasons why they would want it adopted. It's one of the reasons why, when you all work within these committees and come up with your proponent statement, no one from staff, including myself, was involved in that, because it becomes an election matter, and you all as elected officials can certainly advocate for things but we cannot. So it is entirely done by the committee and it is a proponent, so it is an advocacy.

>> CLARK: Thank you.

>> MAYOR KNUDSON: Seeing no further questions or discussion from Council, I'll take a vote for this motion. All in favor? One, two, three, four, five, six, seven. Thank you, Council. And zero opposed and the motion passes with a vote of 7-0. Council Vice President, now for the residency requirement, would you please put a motion forward and similar question, Council, now that three of your colleagues stepped forward to serve on the first voter proponents pamphlet committee, could there be three other Councilors willing to serve on the residency requirement for department heads committee? Councilor Kashinsky, thank you. Councilor Groves, thank you. Reached our threshold of two. Very appreciated.

>> LEECH: Move to appoint Councilors Kashinsky and Groves for the proponent committee for the measure amending Subsection 16. 3 of the Eugene Charter concerning the city residency requirement of department heads.

>> ZELENKA: Second.

>> MAYOR KNUDSON: Thank you, any further discussion from Council? I'll now take a vote for this motion. All in favor? One, two, three, four, five, six, seven. Thank you, Council, and zero opposed. And the motion passes with a vote of 7-0. Thank you, Council, for that work today, and putting forward this information for our community's consideration. I had communicated to you all I wanted to close out our meeting today just by expressing a few thoughts about something that I think is important and that we have a little bit of time for discussion, if Council desires, if you would like.

I spend a lot of time out in our community and think a lot about the commitment that you all make to service, and also as you can imagine in our community spend a lot of time talking with people about the importance of the accessibility of affordable health care. In September, Council gave direction to return at a later date as was just discussed by staff to discuss a conversation, I think quite broadly about Council

compensation, the many different components. What I wanted to share with you all today is that I would certainly and strongly support Council direction to essentially decouple a conversation about access to affordable health insurance benefits and bring that information back to Council sooner than the larger discussion of compensation.

I offer this to you all and have been reflecting on this because throughout our community, in any given week and certainly every day with our more than 1500 employees, we speak to the importance of accessible and affordable health care, and since our last Charter review, more than or about 20 years ago, you're certainly aware of the fact that the accessibility and affordability of health care has changed significantly in our community, and I think that this, looking out into our future is an unfortunate barrier to public service for people who might be responsible for setting policy direction for our entire city, directing our executive staff with the decisions that this body makes every day and week, and I certainly feel strongly that your work is, while it has been compared to volunteerism and for a stipend, a little over \$850 a month, I would not compare your work to volunteerism in terms of the breadth of the work, and I also would not want someone in the future who might consider public service to find the absence of access to affordable health care to be the reason why they could not serve, and we talk about that in a lot of different ways in our community. So I just wanted to share with you all that I would support prioritizing a conversation about access to affordable health insurance benefits and decoupling that from the future conversation that you have already planned related to compensation and just wanted to express to you that I know your work is important and I want for us to respect and care for that work into the future. So those are my thoughts today and I'd shared with you all I had planned to make them because they are related to a conversation about Charter review and Charter amendments into the future. Councilor Clark and then Councilor Leech.

>> CLARK: Thank you, Mayor, a question about your thoughts here. It's my understanding, you're talking about the benefit of health care insurance coverage to Councilors in your comments. Did I understand you correctly?

>> MAYOR KNUDSON: Yes, that's the framing of my presentation to you all.

>> CLARK: Got you. My understanding is currently Councilors are at liberty to purchase the city's health care insurance. Am I correct?

>> That is correct. The Charter provides that you are eligible to purchase the City of Eugene's health insurance.

>> CLARK: Mayor, could you clarify what you mean by access?

>> MAYOR KNUDSON: Essentially that the cost of purchasing that health insurance, if my math is correct, is within about \$100 of your total stipend, so one might say that you would be able to afford access to health insurance with that stipend, but that would

be almost the entirety of the stipend. And I do think that that is a barrier, given the amount of time that you all dedicate and the importance of the conversations happening at this body, and I would not describe that as a particularly affordable access to health care, certainly not in comparison to our organization at large, and the prioritization of health and care for people serving. Councilor Leech?

>> CLARK: Sorry, Mayor, I had a little trouble with the microphone button there, I apologize. I just wanted to say I agree with what you said in terms of it's difficult to afford that. But I would look forward to a broader policy discussion about that. I was looking for clarification. You're talking about the City paying for the benefits of Council Members having health care coverage, yes?

>> MAYOR KNUDSON: I think that would be the discussion that would come back to Council and what I am encouraging you all to do is decouple the conversation about health insurance access from a broader conversation about Council compensation which quickly moves into a discussion of pay and stipend and as I look at our organization and the work that you all do, certainly no one is stepping into public service has any expectation of financial compensation being the motivation for that work, but I feel strongly that the absence of access to affordable health care for those who need it is a barrier to service at a time when there are many barriers to service and for those who do not need access or already have access through a separate plan or retirement, you know, then it's a non-issue, but looking across the breadth of our community, I would not want the absence of access to affordable health care to be the reason why someone in the future would not choose to serve. Councilor Leech?

>> LEECH: Thank you so much, Mayor, for bringing this topic up. I am solidly within the demographic that would benefit, you know, really from this addition for the City paying for Councilor's health care coverage, and I want to kind of speak to my demographic of younger people, young professionals, parents, people, you know, that may have to choose whether to seek employment that would be able to give them the ability to afford health coverage or give them that full-time ability to access paid health care coverage, and this position really is big, and we put a lot of work into it. Myself, I did take myself out of other employment that would allow me to purchase or have health care coverage. And I work for a non-profit, right, that what I am able to afford is very, very minimal, and the costs are going up all the time, right. Mine just went up like 20% this year. So I'm interested in pursuing a conversation about what that looks like and I think it's a good idea to pull that apart from compensation. Because I'm not asking, you know, I don't think any of us are really saying we want to get a big raise. It's more what are the daily choices that I have to make to be able to continue doing this work. And for me, that has come up, and to my mind of like okay, I cannot do any more work than I'm doing right now, right? I am completely stretched, and so what does that look like for me moving forward and the choices that I make for myself and my children, and what does that look like for a huge portion of our community that we might want to actively, you know, recruit into doing more public service. So I think it makes a lot of sense to have that conversation sooner than later.

>> MAYOR KNUDSON: And Councilor Keating, I had had in the queue but I think we might have just lost him from our meeting. Councilor Yeh?

>> YEH: Thanks, Mayor. So I'm incredibly fortunate to have access to health care, so it would not necessarily help me, but I recognize that what we have talked in the past about the many barriers, like the Mayor said, to someone choosing to be a City Councilor and I am very interested in finding ways that we can eliminate those barriers as we go forward. I think as folks in this position, it should be one of our responsibilities to make the path easier for those who come behind us, because we are the ones who know where the barriers lie and how difficult it is to do this job. So I would be more than happy to have that discussion and I think decoupling it from the stipend conversation makes sense and is fine. They are different issues, but so do we need a motion to do that or is this something we can just ask to do? I'm not sure what the process would be.

>> Right now you have an adopted motion that was to return to Council at a later date with a discussion about compensation. Up until this point, the discussions about compensation have always included both benefits, which would be in medical insurance and other benefits as well as stipend, salary, those types of things. If, in fact, you want to decouple those conversations so that you're not having them -- you're having them separately I think a motion would be appropriate. Right now the direction from Council, the majority of Council is to have a discussion about compensation, and the compensation includes both.

>> YEH: So my understanding is the Mayor is thinking about decoupling these because we could get to the health insurance discussion sooner rather than waiting for this larger discussion. She's shaking her head, so should that be part of the motion that we want it to come sooner?

>> I just wanted to get clarity. So it wouldn't be soon enough to be on the May ballot. So it would still be later.

>> YEH: Right.

>> Okay. I was just trying to clarify that, because that's what I wasn't understanding. Thanks.

>> MAYOR KNUDSON: Yes and I'll just offer that I think staff in our September meeting was very clear about working decision-making in that late September meeting to support staff having the time to have materials completed by the early mid-February deadline for the May ballot, and that we have some work that's moving forward and resolutions moving forward to those ends. My intention was just to simplify this first question and also I hope have a conversation about addressing a real challenge and conflict from my view in our way of operating and a barrier to service that is really high and becomes higher each year. Councilor Keating and then councilor Clark.

>> KEATING: Mayor, I just want to underscore my deep appreciation and enthusiasm for the decoupling conversation and so thank you and I really hope I don't get disconnected before a vote because I would, I'm chomping at the bit to jump through my phone and raise my hand in the affirmative. It's the right thing to do. It breaks down the barriers as articulated and I think it's far less politically dicey than even the compensation conversation. So it's appreciated. I'm fully supportive.

>> MAYOR KNUDSON: Councilor Clark and then, sorry, Councilor Zelenka and then councilor Clark, and City Manager I see your hand up as well.

>> ZELENKA: Yes, I'm fortunate to have good health benefits as well. So it wouldn't benefit me, but just to clarify, this would do two things. One, decouple it from the monthly stipend, but it would also bring it back for investigation by staff so we'd have a floor discussion, like what's the cost, does it apply just to the Councilors or their whole family, all those different variables, so that would be a part of the full discussion that we'd have. But it wouldn't be on this May's ballot because it would be too late.

>> That's correct.

>> ZELENKA: Thanks.

>> MAYOR KNUDSON: Councilor Clark and then City Manager.

>> CLARK: Thank you, Mayor. My question is for City Attorney. The City's covering of Council benefits for health would still require a Charter vote, is that correct?

>> That is correct.

>> CLARK: Thank you.

>> So yes, it would be a discussion and then another ultimate decision of whether you would want it referred or not, yes.

>> MAYOR KNUDSON: City Manager?

>> Thank you, Mayor. I'm trying not to be difficult, but I am remembering when I stepped into this role, there were a number of things that I was like, what are we supposed to do with this? I'm trying to understand, so generally when we've talked about Council compensation, it has included a number of things to include your stipend. So when we've talked about like what should Council's compensation be, that's where the health and insurance piece came up. So are you saying that you don't want us to talk about health insurance at all as it relates to compensation, so it needs to be like, for example it's an entirely different work session that on different day so they're not crossing back over. You're going to end up talking about both of them at some point. I'm trying to understand how staff will navigate this, what it means in terms of timing.

>> MAYOR KNUDSON: In terms of timing and certainly we could work through this, councilor Kashinsky. I just saw your hand go up and down. My thought is just that, to decouple this conversation to be sure there is a discussion, a robust discussion in-person about this aspect of the work and the significant barrier that it presents, and looking at the tables of the information that have been presented to Council and reviewing discussion, this has been discussed as a part of compensation certainly, and has been a component to that and materials shared, but I also think there has been, is new work and certainly new context to this conversation, and my hope would be that, while I think Council is very clear even in spoken comments, the discussion of compensation related to stipend is not a priority, that this conversation about basic access to affordable health care could be really important, and so moving it into a priority position related to that larger conversation is just what I was wanting to share my support for. To decouple that conversation and to bring it forward sooner, knowing that our Council agenda and looking into 2026 is going to be scheduled just as 2025 has been. Thank you, Council, for this discussion and the opportunity to share that perspective. I will ask if there is a desire to do something that is in alignment with this discussion among Council for you all to bring that forward, and I hope also the clarity to the City Manager's questions about the prioritization and the operation, that that could be very workable and I think flexible to our needs in the future. Councilor Leech?

>> LEECH: Yes, I think if there was a possibility of having the work be able to be done before the May election, I think I would be more interested in a motion right now. I think as it is, I think we can just, I can ask for that to, when we come back with that information to have that be, you know, more built out and make sure that the benefits piece is clearly outlined. Otherwise, we're already coming back and have given direction to come back with this conversation, but just to make sure that we know that that's a priority area that we're interested in making sure is robust in that conversation.

>> MAYOR KNUDSON: Thank you. Council, with that, we've reached the end of our agenda and discussion today. Appreciate you and all of your work. Thank you, staff, for presentations today, and this concludes our November 19th agenda. Thank you all.