

MINUTES

Eugene City Council Workshop Eugene, Oregon 97401

June 30, 2026
1:00 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 30, 2026, workshop of the Eugene City Council in hybrid in-person and virtual format at 500 E. 4th Avenue, North Building, Eugene, OR 97401.

1. Workshop: Long Range Financial Planning

City Manager Jenny Haruyama introduced Nancy Hetrick and Jennifer Teal of Raftelis to lead the workshop focusing on developing a service framework, budget principles and strategic plan refinement.

Council Discussion:

- Councilor Groves – noted he has served as a City Councilor for five and a half years; noted he had worked for the fire department for 36 years, including service as the fire chief; stated he is optimistic about the day's work and hopes to discuss strategies for prioritization.
- Councilor Yeh – noted she has served as a City Councilor since 2017; stated she is optimistic about the process; stated hope that the group comes to a shared understanding.
- Councilor Leech – stated she is optimistic and looking forward to approaching this process from a higher level.
- Mayor Knudson – noted she has served as Mayor for about a year and a half; noted she is hopeful and excited about the process.
- Councilor Kashinsky – noted she has served as a Councilor for about a year and half; stated she is looking forward to the process and hearing different perspectives.
- Councilor Evans – stated he is optimistic; noted he is looking forward to having a deeper conversation about long-term issues.
- Councilor Zelenka – noted he has served on the City Council for 19 and a half years; stated his disappointment that the nominated candidate for Ward 3, Jennifer Smith, was not allowed to participate in the workshop.
- Councilor Keating – noted he serves as the Council liaison to Lane Regional Air Protection Agency (LRAPA) and the Human Services Commission; stated he is optimistic about coming out of the workshop with shared commitments to community safety, housing, and other priorities; noted he has received positive feedback from the community about the fireworks ban.
- Councilor Clark – noted he has served almost 20 years as a City Councilor; stated hope that the Council finds a way to effectively move forward within their financial constraints.

- Councilor Groves – noted the Council is at its best when it is getting things done and when they have a shared understanding of the problem.
- Councilor Keating – stated the Council is at its best when they communicate and collaborate early in the process.
- Councilor Yeh – stated the Council is at its best when they are willing to disagree and be honest with each other.
- Councilor Clark – stated the Council is at its best when they are willing to work together to troubleshoot a problem while not becoming stuck on differences of opinion.
- Councilor Leech – stated the Council works best when they have a shared vision and can rely on City staff.
- Councilor Kashinsky – stated the Council works best when they focus on doing what is best for the community.
- Mayor Knudson – stated the Council works best when they are collegial and oriented towards partnership, collaboration, and problem-solving; noted the importance of working towards a shared goal.
- Councilor Keating – noted the importance of the role of oversight; stated he gravitates towards the role of customer service representative; stated he hopes one day the City will be able to afford additional City Council support staff.
- Councilor Groves – stated he feels comfortable in all the roles a City Councilor must fulfill; stated the importance of community building in the current political climate.
- Councilor Leech – stated it is not possible to fulfill every role all the time; noted the need for a more strategic and equitable approach to Council appearances in the community.
- Councilor Groves – noted the City’s executive staff spend time in all those roles.
- Councilor Zelenka – noted the similarities between balancing family, career, and Council work with the need to balance different roles as a Councilor; noted decision-making is perceived as the traditional role; stated a Councilor must work to create the best policy for the community, even if they do not like a particular program.
- Councilor Evans – stated he focuses on the customer service representative role; noted the community requires customer service from the Council.
- Councilor Keating – noted an additional role Council can take on is that of microphone, where they amplify the actions of other layers of government.
- Mayor Knudson – asked if the numbered list of budget principles represented a ranking.
- Councilor Clark – asked how to reconcile the principle of long-term perspectives with the biennial budget system; stated the Council has been short-term in their budget thinking; noted the current budget is unsustainable in the long-term.
- Councilor Kashinsky – noted one-time funds are sometimes used for pilot programs; noted when the pilot program is successful, but there are not funds available to continue the program, it can feel like a service cut; asked how to balance creative solutions to community problems with the mantra of one-time money for one-time expenses.
- Mayor Knudson – noted when a pilot created with one-time funds is successful, it may be worthwhile to evaluate it against other programs, while considering its

efficiency and effectiveness; noted the workshop will allow Council to discuss big-picture concepts like assessing effectiveness and efficiency.

- Councilor Zelenka – stated pilots are used when they are unsure about the efficacy of a program; if the pilot is successful, it may be necessary to trade-off with another program, since the budget is zero-sum.
- Councilor Kashinsky – noted discussions of pilot programs often come back through the budget process; suggested having a separate, proactive discussion of pilot programs apart from the budget process.
- Councilor Leech – stated the value of preventative work while noting the value can be difficult to measure; noted interest in a budget focus on preventative work.
- Councilor Keating – stated one-time funds are often used for emergency issues; asked if essential services in the principle one section referred to services required by statute; asked if the “strengthen and diversify revenue sources” principle would include seeking revenue-generating components in new projects.
- Councilor Zelenka – noted it can be difficult to connect the budget to strategic goals given that the City provides over 40 services and not all are attached to long-term goals.
- Councilor Yeh – noted employees are one of the City’s biggest assets; asked how employee experience is reflected in the budget principles.
- Councilor Zelenka – suggested principle number seven be revised to balancing short-term decision-making with long-term perspectives.
- Councilor Kashinsky – stated it would be useful to explore how the City’s expenditures may overlap with those of other governmental jurisdictions to avoid unnecessarily duplicating services.
- Councilor Evans – noted there are property tax restrictions at the state level limiting City revenue growth; asked how to expand our revenue base while balancing the needs of constituents.
- Councilor Keating – suggested a revision to principle number four to reframe it to the positive; noted the idea of core and essential services is subjective.
- Mayor Knudson – stated every budget conversation should begin with a shared understanding of requirements and essential services; noted the importance of connecting the budget to strategic goals; noted the financial stewardship responsibility of the Council; suggested reorganizing the budget principles to better communicate the values of the organization.
- Councilor Zelenka – clarified the service framework is a categorization tool, not a hierarchy.
- Councilor Groves – stated the framework is simple and well-defined; stated he likes the definitions of essential and core services.
- Councilor Kashinsky – noted the grouping makes sense; stated service levels and risks will be important decisions within the categories; asked if payroll would fall under essential services; asked if there would eventually be a list of services; asked what will happen to services that do not fall under core, essential, or priority aligned categories.
- Councilor Groves – asked if payroll and budget would be considered required services.

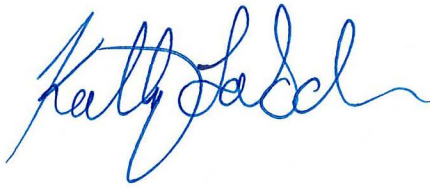
- Councilor Zelenka – noted few City services fall into the required category; asked how to deal with services, like the budget process, which fall into all four categories; noted the Police Auditor is a charter requirement.
- Councilor Clark – asked how to characterize self-imposed mandates.
- Councilor Keating – noted the importance of questioning whether a service is necessary for the city to effectively function.
- Councilor Clark – asked about services that may not be core or essential, but if removed would require a more expensive service be provided elsewhere; asked how to avoid circular arguments about services.
- Councilor Kashinsky – asked if the information about services, once sorted into categories, will include information about the risks and tradeoffs of discontinuing a service.
- Councilor Zelenka – noted while a service can be categorized, that does not determine how much is spent to provide it; noted the budget is zero sum.
- Councilor Evans – asked about strategic investments; asked how to factor the long-term impacts of investments, noting the value of preventative maintenance; noted changing technology will necessitate future equipment upgrades.
- Mayor Knudson – stated the importance of making strategic planning work transparent to the City’s partners due to the large, multijurisdictional nature of the challenges; noted the importance of situating the City’s categorization framework and budget principles to be positioned to be more responsive to evolving community needs.
- Councilor Groves – asked if there is a plan to educate the eight civilian members of the Budget Committee about the updated budget principles and service framework.
- Councilor Yeh – asked about the level of detail that will be provided in the breakdown of services; noted the categories are not hierarchical.
- Councilor Kashinsky – noted sorting the services into categories serves to guide the questions asked about the services.
- Councilor Keating – noted required services do not necessarily have fiscal amounts set by statute; stated the importance of communicating the value of an investment.
- Councilor Zelenka – noted some community members disagree about the value of different services, like the library; stated he has never seen a wholesale change of the budget in his 30 years of experience.
- Mayor Knudson – noted the framework and budget principles are designed to allow individuals with differing opinions to still come to the same or similar conclusions.
- Councilor Leech – asked if the budget on the City website will be restructured to reflect these changes.
- Councilor Keating – spoke about the value of transparency; noted the website used to have a budget simulation tool available for the public.
- Councilor Zelenka – noted environmental stewardship seems to be missing from the list.
- Councilor Keating – noted there is a difference between the library and cultural services; stated the importance of animal services.
- Councilor Kashinsky – noted the examples provided with the potential areas of interest are not a comprehensive list.

- Councilor Clark – stated interest in starting with broad categories and narrowing down from there.
- Councilor Keating – stated interest in protecting renters’ rights as a priority.
- Councilor Kashinsky – stated the listed buckets capture most of what she sees as priorities.
- Mayor Knudson – noted she is unsure about the phrase “financial sustainability”; noted the City is doing interesting and important work in the areas of housing, homelessness, and economic development; stated she would expect parks and recreation as well as climate work to be more strongly represented.
- Councilor Keating – noted the importance of ensuring workers’ rights and a living wage, supporting the local workforce; noted the importance of addressing privacy, artificial intelligence, and other data concerns.
- Councilor Groves – noted the goal today is to stay high level and avoid getting too granular; noted the importance of environmental protection.
- Councilor Yeh – asked if the public safety category should be public health and safety.
- Councilor Kashinsky – noted agreement about including the concept of health into the conversation.
- Councilor Evans – noted his disagreement about including health, because the County and not the City is the local provider for health and human services; noted the importance of improving the relationship with other agency partners.
- Councilor Leech – noted while the County may be the agency tasked with managing public health, the City is unavoidably involved in managing public health in situations like a mental health crisis where emergency services are called; noted the community is asking for robust alternative response and peer navigation services.
- Councilor Zelenka – stated public safety should be its own category; stated he is unsure about the thriving community category; noted healthy community may be a better category, including things like environmental stewardship and human services.
- Councilor Groves – noted while emergency responders do respond to health and medical calls, claiming health as a mission for the City will result in public confusion and unfunded expectations; noted the County is also the local housing authority.
- Councilor Kashinsky – stated the conversation is not just about goals and categories, but the underlying values in delivering these services; noted services sometimes cost more because of the City’s commitment to certain values, like its commitment to community engagement.
- Councilor Clark – stated the underlying problem is the Council does not have a clear, unified vision about the roles of the City; noted the City is doing more than it can afford to and is taking on the roles of other jurisdictions.
- Councilor Keating – noted agreement about keeping the public safety category broad; stated the thriving community category is the livability category; noted it could include a wellness component.
- Mayor Knudson – noted she is feeling reflective after the work today.
- Councilor Kashinsky – noted she is looking forward to tomorrow.
- Councilor Zelenka – stated this was a good start.

- Councilor Keating – noted his appreciation for the consultants and his colleagues.
- Councilor Groves – stated he is feeling apprehensive about the prioritization process.
- Councilor Clark – noted he was initially optimistic and is now feeling more concerned; stated he is looking forward to tomorrow.
- Councilor Yeh – noted she felt the day had been worthwhile; noted there had been a lot of agreement at the table and that she believes in the team.
- Councilor Leech – noted her appreciation for the process and the deep conversations; noted she is optimistic.
- Councilor Evans – noted it has been a good process, and he is looking forward to tomorrow.

Mayor Knudson adjourned the meeting at 4:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Katie LaSala
City Recorder

(Recorded by Cherish Bradshaw)

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