



Eugene City Council

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EUGENE CITY COUNCIL AGENDA

October 9, 2023

5:30 p.m. CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION

City Council Wednesday work sessions will be held in hybrid format using virtual and in-person meeting technology. Information about online or other options for access and participation will be available at <https://www.eugene-or.gov/3360/Webcasts-and-Meeting-Materials>

Meeting of October 9, 2023; Her Honor Mayor Lucy Vinis Presiding

Councilors

Randy Groves, President
Lyndsie Leech
Jennifer Yeh
Mike Clark

Matt Keating, Vice President
Emily Semple
Alan Zelenka
Greg Evans

5:30 p.m. CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION

1. WORK SESSION: Community Safety System and Payroll Tax Update

The Eugene City Council welcomes your interest in these agenda items. This meeting location is wheelchair-accessible. For the hearing impaired, an interpreter can be provided with 48 hours' notice prior to the meeting. Spanish-language interpretation will also be provided with 48 hours' notice. To arrange for these services, contact the receptionist at 541-682-5010. City Council meetings are telecast live on Metro Television, Comcast channel 21, and rebroadcast later in the week.

El consejo de la Ciudad de Eugene agradece su interés en estos asuntos de la agenda. El lugar de la reunión tiene acceso para sillas de ruedas. Se puede proveer a un intérprete para las personas con discapacidad auditiva si avisa con 48 horas de anticipación. También se puede proveer interpretación para español si avisa con 48 horas de anticipación. Para reservar estos servicios llame al 541-682-5010. Las reuniones del consejo de la ciudad se transmiten en vivo por Metro Television, Canal 21 de Comcast y son retransmitidas durante la semana.

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EUGENE CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY



Work Session: Community Safety System and Payroll Tax Update

Meeting Date: October 9, 2023
Department: Central Services Department
www.eugene-or.gov

Agenda Item Number: 1
Staff Contact: Jeremy Cleversey
Contact Telephone Number: 541-682-5368

ISSUE STATEMENT

The purpose of this work session is to provide a status update on the Community Safety System, Payroll Tax revenue update, and discuss the implementation of Alternative Response Study recommendations.

BACKGROUND

Since 2015, the City has engaged in a concerted effort to assess what services are needed across the Community Safety System. The Community Safety System includes police, fire, municipal court, youth programs and prevention. A primary goal within this system is aligning response with community need. This has led to innovative practices and increased access to services.

In the fall of 2021, staff provided four updates related to community needs, system-wide challenges and investments, and Community Safety Payroll Tax revenues to City Council and Budget Committee.

At the September 13, 2021, work session, staff provided a Community Safety Initiative (CSI) engagement process update. The CSI engagement sessions invited a broad cross section of Black Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC) community members to learn about the development of the CSI and to listen to their perspectives on how the intended outcomes align with public safety priorities within their communities. Themes included high levels of agreement across groups on priority needs related to homelessness, police response, support for increased capacity for mental health and addiction services, for alternative responses as well as youth prevention programs and diversion from the criminal justice system.

Staff returned to City Council on October 11, 2021. At the work session staff provided a mix of services that utilized the Community Safety Payroll Tax funds to improve the Community Safety System in response to the Community Engagement feedback. Many of the planned system enhancements were alternative responses. Included in the presentation was an update on the plan to identify and evaluate safety system impacts. Budget Committee discussions had identified a need to assess the system for service overlap, to consider providing service in an equitable manner and to identify service gaps. Council approved funding to complete the Alternative Response Study in December 2021, one year after payroll tax collections had begun.

In the spring of 2022, the City hired a consultant to complete an Alternative Response Study. City Council received three updates with overall findings and thirteen recommendations presented on January 18, 2023. The City took action on the three critical priority areas of the study by expanding on the alternative response coordination position to create three separate positions.

Positions created for the three prioritized areas include a Downtown Incident Commander to coordinate downtown safety and cleanliness, a Fire and Emergency Medical Services Alternative Response Planning Chief to coordinate the calls for service response system and the Public Space Incident Commander to coordinate unsanctioned camping impacts and strategically address chronic problems. Funding for the positions were included in the 2023-2025 biennium.

Youth Services

The Youth Prevention component of the Community Safety Payroll Tax initiative is for the first time fully staffed with its four full time positions. The Youth Inclusion program, in its third year, continues to support the success of youth experiencing cognitive and physical disabilities or diagnosis such as Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), anxiety, and the autism spectrum in traditional recreation programs. Resolve, the youth restorative justice program, also continues to provide prevention services and skill building to youth with first time misdemeanor offenses referred from Lane County Juvenile Justice. The Community Partner – Small Grant Program, in its second year, provided supportive funding to 17 local non-profit organizations working with marginalized youth. Vibe, a youth empowerment program, is in its second year at Petersen Barn Community Center providing drop-in Friday night programming for teens, ages 12-18. Programs in their first year of development included Pathways to Employment and Counselor in Training programs that focus on job skill building and development for older teens preparing for future employment.

Police

Community Service Officers (CSOs): The Community Safety Payroll Tax funds 15 CSOs and four supervisors. CSOs respond to more than 30 percent of the department's case load focusing on property crimes, traffic crashes and hazards, and assisting patrol. In July 2023 EPD launched its next generation of online reporting system, My PD Connect. Community members are able to schedule a virtual meeting or phone call with a CSO as well as upload photos and videos for reports. This new system will reduce call hold times and free up time for 911 call takers and officers, allowing them to focus on other calls and field duties. Since the launch, more than 1,500 people have utilized this system.

Downtown Response & Coordination: The coordinated service response launched in April 2023. Funding was approved for the 2023-2025 biennium budget and includes a new Downtown Incident Command position that was created to address issues around safety and cleanliness in the Downtown Eugene area. The Downtown Incident Commander is responsible for overseeing the Downtown strategic measures in coordination with Downtown Safety Team, other City of Eugene Departments, local businesses, and partners.

The new *Co-Responder Model* was developed in partnership with Lane County Behavioral Health. The department received funding in the 2023-2025 biennium to hire a Qualified Mental Health Professional (QMHP) to work in collaboration with EPD's Downtown Team and Community Court to address mental health service needs. The program launch is planned for the fall of 2023.

Additionally, a grant has been submitted to the Bureau of Justice Assistance and, if successful, the City would be able to expand hours of co-responder availability.

Eugene Springfield Fire

At the recommendation of consultants, the 2023-2025 Budget creates a dedicated Alternative Response Planning Chief position (1.0 FTE), added to Eugene Springfield Fire (ESF) and Emergency Medical Services (EMS), to serve as a liaison and resource for all alternative response operations. This includes monitoring the Calls for Service Response System and service coordination for mental health crisis response. This role will reduce duplicated efforts, identify potential cost efficiencies, and provide education and communication to the community. Hiring for this role is expected to be completed by Fall 2023. This process also moves oversight and management of the mobile crisis response contract (Crisis Assistance Helping Out on The Streets [CAHOOTS]) from the Eugene Police Department to the Eugene Springfield Fire Department.

The Community Safety Payroll Tax (CSPT) has invested in new positions in ESF to enhance services provided to the community. The Continuous Quality Improvement Program Coordinator processes feedback from crews on a wide variety of call types and supports the development of improvement plans; this includes changes to resource deployment and response packages. Among other successes, this work has improved witnessed cardiac arrest survival rates. Another position supported by CSI funding is the Life Safety Inspector working within the Fire Marshal's Office. The creation of this position has allowed for a significant increase in fire safety inspections. To date, there have been 61.8 percent more inspections this year compared to total inspections in 2022. It is projected that there will be a 100 percent increase in inspections from 2022 to 2023.

To help with budget reduction strategies in the biennium, Eugene Springfield Fire redirected CSI funds, originally earmarked to add a Community Response Unit to the Department, to help fund an Engine Company that was identified as part of a budget reduction for the department. This funding strategy allowed ESF to maintain its prior level of fire service capabilities with no reduction.

Additionally, ESF has received Community Safety Payroll Tax investments for three ambulances and stabilization funds for an engine company. The new ambulances support long-term goals for a system redesign in delivery of EMS.

Unhoused Services

Eugene's approach to homelessness is balanced across increasing services and support that help move people out of unsheltered homelessness and toward long-term stability, and addressing safety and sanitation impacts from thousands of people still living unsheltered, many in public spaces. Massive efforts for increasing shelter and housing are still badly needed but are an undertaking beyond the capacity of the City's funding and budget. Staff are intent on better connecting City and community programs and refining operations. The Community Safety Payroll Tax supports a small portion of the City's unhoused efforts but is currently the only stable source of funding. It contributes to the Rest Stop Program, the Car Camping Program, the Dusk to Dawn drop-in shelter, additional hours for the Lindholm Center Homeless Support, as well as contributing to 15th Night Youth Homelessness. Learn more at [Housing and Human Services Programs](#).

Municipal Court

Community Safety Payroll Tax dollars have stabilized services for a system that has historically been stressed and allowed for expansion of specialized programs such as the Community Court and Mental Health Court programs. These programs or court sessions are designed to address the unique needs and challenges of the Eugene community, each having some component of robust case management, engagement with service providers and attempts at offramps from the criminal justice system. The Municipal Court opened the Community Court Provider Room in 2023, creating a single location where community members have access to the following service providers: Community Supported Shelters, Emergence, Fuse, Goodwill, Ideal Options, Lane County Behavioral Health, Looking Glass, Restored Connection Peer Support, Melinda Hernandez (SSI), Veteran's Administration, White Bird Clinic, Willamette Family Treatment Services, the Eugene Mission, and Hourglass.

Community Safety Payroll Tax Update

The annual financial reviews by both the [Citizen Advisory Board](#) and the [External Auditor](#) are available online. The reports show that the City has been in alignment with eligible cost as described in City Council Ordinance (No. 20616) section 3.728.

Community Safety Payroll Tax revenue collections are steadily growing with FY23 revenue reaching \$21.8 million. Currently, a total of 6,146 Employers submit tax on behalf of the business and collect and remit tax from employees. An additional 2,249 community members are contributing through Self-employed active accounts.

Revenue collection, staffing challenges, and supply chain delays have created underspending in the early years of the Community Safety Payroll Tax. Underspending has allowed for critical one-time investments in response to community needs.

Community Safety Investments

The adopted 2023-2025 biennial budget approved on June 26, 2023, included seven investments and refinements funded by the Community Safety Payroll Tax.

Community Safety Fund (Fund 136)
<i>Resolve Program</i> - A restorative justice program that allows youth who have committed non-violent crimes an opportunity to repair harm.
<i>Unhoused Services</i> - Neighborhood Service Officers Limited Duration (1x Funding)
<i>Trauma Intervention Program</i> - This Lane County-led project is a nationwide program in which local volunteers respond to traumatic incidents and provide immediate emotional and practical support to families, friends, witnesses and victims.
<i>Payroll Tax Admin Specialist</i>
<i>Restoration of funding for Fire Engine Company 8</i>
<i>Downtown Co-Responder Program</i> - Downtown coordinated service response with Lane County Behavioral Health.
<i>Library Programming and materials</i> - This support prevention and youth-related services. (1x Funding)

Evaluating the Impact of Services

Beginning in spring 2021, staff initiated a three-phase project consulting with Dialogues in Action to develop outcome metrics for each of the five Community Safety System service areas: Police, Fire and Emergency Medical Services, Municipal Court and City Prosecutors Office, Homeless Services, and Youth Prevention. Staff implemented an outcome-based metrics approach and developed tools to allow for collecting impacts and feedback from community members receiving services. The first two phases were completed in 2021 and 2022 establishing a framework and baseline to develop a comprehensive assessment composed of both qualitative and quantitative impacts as we began to implement services.

With an established framework and baseline, phase 3 launched in July 2023. The plan is to increase the scale of the evaluation year over year to capture new system enhancements and the impacts made to those utilizing services as they come online. The goal is to strengthen capacity and responsiveness in relationship to investments of Community Safety Payroll Tax funds while identifying impacts the system investments are making for better communication to the community. As services are implemented and staff develop more experience with the framework, the city will be able to broaden the reach of the assessment.

Community Safety Payroll Tax Communications

We continue to keep the community informed about investments made with Payroll Tax funds. More than 500 people have signed up to receive the newsletter with updates having been released monthly since November 2022. Updates on the Community Safety Payroll Tax are posted on the [Payroll Tax Funded Programs](#) page on the City of Eugene website. Staff are continuing to pursue additional communications options to better inform the public regarding the impacts of the Community Safety Payroll Tax to the community.

RELATED CITY POLICIES

The Community Safety System and the enhancements made through the Community Safety Payroll Tax are investments that directly contribute to the Increased Sense of Safety that Council identified as a strategic goal in the 2023-2026 City of Eugene Strategic Plan.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION

[May 8, 2019, Work Session](#)

Staff presented a revised recommendation for a payroll tax incorporating several new provisions including limits on the use of the funds, and equity considerations for minimum wage employees.

Move to direct the City Manager to prepare an ordinance with a payroll tax rate of 00.0040 on employees and 0.0020 on employers. (Motion passed 6:1)

Move to direct and the City Manager to schedule a public hearing for May 28, 2019. (Motion passed 7:0)

June 10, 2019, Work Session

Council discussed the community safety plan and revisions made to the proposed ordinance regarding the payroll tax.

Council made several amendments and then adopted an Ordinance to Fund Community Safety Services with a Payroll Tax, and Adding New Sections to the Eugene Code, 1971.

(Motion passed 6:2)

Council also adopted a Resolution Calling a City Election on November 5, 2019, for the Purpose of Referring to the Legal Electors of the City of Eugene a Charter Amendment that Caps the Rate and Limits the Use of the City's Payroll Tax. (Motion passed 6:2)

July 20, 2020, Work Session

Staff provided a review of public safety funding including a timeline of accomplishments, 21st Century Policing, Community Safety Initiative, calls for service, crime statistics, expense overviews, community safety FY21 budget, and homeless services funding.

Moved to direct the City Manager to convene workshops with organizations representing communities of color to specify changes or additions to the Community Safety Initiative that would be respond to the needs of their communities and to return to Council in September with a report on which organizations have or will be included with process and timeline.

(Motion passed 7:1)

May 10, 2021, Work Session

After completing all engagement sessions, staff compiled all information collected through the focus group meetings, workshops and survey and presented a report to City Council.

September 13, 2021, Work Session

Council was provided an overview on Community Safety Initiative progress, next steps, engagement processes, police calls-for-service metrics and the payroll tax collection.

October 11, 2021, Work Session

Staff reviewed Community Safety Initiative outcomes and service investments to achieve established outcomes. How the Community Safety Payroll Tax funds critical community services including police, fire and emergency medical services, municipal court and prosecution services, prevention, and homeless services. While the funding is limited to these services by ordinance, there is flexibility in how funds are distributed among these services to achieve desired community outcomes. Staff requested input regarding areas of focus and proposed strategies for FY22.

October 20, 2021, Budget Committee Meeting

Council received a Community Safety Payroll Tax update related to supplemental budget funding.

October 27, 2021, Budget Committee Meeting

An overview of the Community Safety Initiative Community Engagement Sessions was provided.

[May 18, 2022, Budget Committee Meeting](#)

Staff provided a Community Safety Payroll Tax update on implemented strategies including those added in the FY23 Proposed Budget.

COUNCIL OPTIONS

This item is informational only.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION

This item is informational only.

ATTACHMENTS

None.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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