Eugene Mayor's Office
Lucy Vinis

February 21, 2020

Representative Paul Holvey, Chair
House Committee on Rules
900 Court Se. NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Eugene Support for HB 4001 and -7 amendments.

Chair Holvey and Members of the Committee:

The City of Eugene supports HB4001 and the -7 amendments which would provide financial, technical, and land use siting support to cities to address the homelessness crisis impacting our state. I want to personally thank Speaker Kotek for her leadership on this topic and willingness to robustly engage impacted local governments in the development of this legislation.

As you well know, Eugene and Lane County have been partnering for the past 18 months to implement the findings from the Shelter Feasibility and Homelessness System Assessment, specifically a 75-bed low barrier shelter with attached Navigation Center. Our combined agencies recently hired a Joint Housing and Shelter Strategist with the intention to lead the further implementation of our local strategies. Attached at the end of this letter are two summary documents of the work our agencies are engaging in to build an emergency shelter and to improve the homelessness service system in our region.

We are very excited about the work that has gone into developing HB 4001 and the impact it will have on our local community. Specifically, the -7 amendments will:

1. Provide local communities the tools to expedite siting for emergency shelter. This 'super siting' authority will speed up the process tremendously to appropriately site shelter in Eugene.
2. Provides direct state funding allocation to Lane County for site acquisition, development, construction, and operations of an emergency shelter and navigation center in Eugene.
3. Provides additional grant funding for the entire state to propose local approaches to addressing homelessness.

In regard to the land use authority for the siting of shelters in Section 3, the City is supportive of this policy, with the recognition that the authority is repealed on July 1, 2021. We understand that the level of emergency to serve our homeless population requires the state, counties, and cities to adopt a flexible approach, for a limited time, to get shelter in place before next winter.

Of note, Eugene and Lane County have estimated a budget for the 75-bed emergency shelter and one year of operations to be $8.25M. Section 10 of the bill requires that local governments that receive funding under the bill, must have an emergency shelter operational by Nov 30, 2020 or be required to repay the total allocated funds. For Eugene to be 100% certain of meeting that requirement, we ask that the legislature consider allocating in Section 12 the full amount of $8.25M.

Additionally, we very much appreciate Speaker Kotek's interest to convene a workgroup in the interim to study the *Martin v Boise* ruling from the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals. The interpretation of this highly complex ruling has tremendous impacts for local governments and the state in the effort to adopt statutory language. The City of Eugene stands ready to proactively engage and support this effort during the interim and requests an appointment to the committee.

In closing, I want to extend my deepest appreciation to Speaker Kotek, the House Committee on Human Services and Housing Chair Keny-Guyer and co-chairs, and this Committee on Rules for your leadership and commitment to bringing real resources and energy into this critical topic.

Thank you for your service to our State and I urge you to support HB 4001 with the -7 amendments.

Sincerely,

Lucy Vinis, Mayor

Low Barrier Shelter & Navigation Center

IMPLEMENTING A PLAN TO REDUCE HOMELESSNESS IN EUGENE & LANE COUNTY

Homelessness directly impacts the people experiencing it and the communities that are working to positively address the challenge. The City of Eugene and Lane County governments are working collectively to create systematic change and reduce homelessness through programmatic interventions and increased investment in shelter and housing.

HOMELESS SYSTEM AND SHELTER FEASIBILITY

In March 2018, Lane County and City of Eugene contracted with the Technical Assistance Collaborative (TAC) to conduct a Public Shelter Feasibility Study and Homeless Service System analysis. The TAC's work provided information about our system-wide needs and gaps as well as recommendations about actions and investments that will fill those gaps and make our system more effective at providing pathways out of homelessness. The Lane County Board of Commissioners and Eugene City Council each endorsed the TAC Report and recommendations and agreed to support implementation in May of 2018.

FINDINGS

Lane County's current shelter capacity for single adults is limited, and can be difficult to access. Individuals with some of the most significant vulnerabilities and challenges – criminal histories, behavioral health issues, etc. – are often unable to access existing year-round emergency shelter.

Expanding shelter beds is critical to impacting homelessness in the county.

TAC RECOMMENDATION

Establish 75 bed, low-barrier shelter. The number of beds was determined after a comprehensive review of current capacity and growth analysis. This shelter will serve as both a "next step" for current crisis response and play a key role in the overall continuum of services. In addition, the navigation center will provide a vital connection to additional services and housing.

Technical Assistance Collaborative Recommendations

Low Barrier Shelter & Navigation Center

IMPLEMENTING A PLAN TO REDUCE HOMELESSNESS IN EUGENE & LANE COUNTY

OUTCOMES

Space for 75 individuals at a time for immediate shelter and navigation to additional housing services

Based on our FUSE (Frequent User Service Engagement) data, we know that connection to these vital services reduces impacts on emergency departments, jails, law enforcement and other services

- 35% reduction in Medicaid health care costs
- 58% reduction in arrests after engagement and 62% reduction in jail bookings

PROGRESS TO DATE

The City and County are partnering to meet the need for a low barrier, emergency shelter.

An intergovernmental siting team is evaluating sites and conducting stakeholder focus groups with community members and people with lived experience to inform the location and programing

In the interim, over the last year the City and County partnered to increase capacity of the Dawn to Dawn shelter which will serve over 250 people per night through April. This program provides temporary shelter and storage for people who are typically camping illegally throughout the community.

TIMING

KEY MILESTONE	COMPLETED BY
Site selection for shelter and navigation center	Winter 2020
Land use and construction requirements	Spring 2020
Service provider selection	Winter/Spring 2020
Resource identification	On-going in 2020
Expected construction or renovation	Fall 2020
Opening	Fall 2020

Want to know more? Contact us — let's talk ▸▸▸

Alex Cuyler, Lane County Intergovernmental Relations Manager: 541-514-7522, alex.cuyler@lanecountyor.gov

Ethan Nelson, City of Eugene Intergovernmental Relations Manager: 541-543-1095 enelson@eugene-or.gov

Homelessness Action Update: Lane County & Eugene

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IMPLEMENTATION UPDATES

The City and County are working to addressing homelessness throughout our communities with to goal of working with our partners to make homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring.

LOW BARRIER, 75-BED EMERGENCY SHELTER

The shelter will provide 75 low barrier beds and a navigation center that connects people to additional services and housing.

The City and County siting team has formed and is evaluating possible sites for the shelter.

In the interim, the City and County partnered to increase capacity of the Dawn to Dawn shelter which will serve over 250 people per night through April.

The Dusk to Dawn program is operated by St. Vincent de Paul (SVDP) and funded by the City and County to provide people experiencing homelessness with a place to safely sleep and keep their belongings at night.

Technical Assistance Collaborative Recommendations

Homelessness Action Update: Lane County & Eugene

IMPLEMENTING A PLAN TO REDUCE HOMELESSNESS IN EUGENE & LANE COUNTY

PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

City and County are partners in supporting 51 new units of permanent supportive housing as part of the MLK Commons project which breaks ground on Nov 14. This housing will be available to some of the hardest to serve – those who experience chronic homelessness.

MOBILE STREET OUTREACH TEAM

City staff have actively engaged people with lived experience and community partners to inform program services and structure. The service is slated to launch in Spring 2020.

PILOT LANDLORD ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

Lane County and City of Eugene staff are meeting with Homes for Good to explore a process for use of one-time funding to create a pilot incentive program for landlords who will make their properties available to people experiencing homelessness.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES MANAGER

The City and County are working with a professional recruitment firm to search nationally and find thebest possible candidate for our community. This position will lead the process of building more supportive housing and opening the low barrier shelter and navigation center.

EUGENE SERVICE STATION HOURS STABILIZATION

After learning that a funding shortfall would lead to reduced hours at the Eugene Service Center, the City and County began been working with SVDP to address that gap. The agencies have agreed to jointly fund $91,000 to ensure that the site can remain open during its current business hours serving those in need.

OVERALL SYSTEM OF SERVICES AND HOUSING

Move On Strategies – beginning in September 2019, this partnership with Homes for Good helps people stabilize and transition into longer term housing.

Coordinated Entry - allows service agencies to provide efficient, effective services that match the need of people experiencing homelessness.

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