



## Message From Your City Manager

Friday, May 29, 2020

Happy Friday, Eugene!

As we ease into June, I'm keeping my fingers crossed that all of us can start reconnecting with the people and activities that we love. Summers in the Willamette Valley are so beautiful and soul filling and I know we all need a dose of that. I've tried to spend a little more time outside this week to soak it in as much as possible.

It seems impossible that we've been in a stay home/save lives mode since late March. My office has become my phone and laptop, house, yard and really any place I go. I'm reminded of a selfie I took in 2018 on top of Skinner Butte and posted on Instagram titled "I am City Hall." It was part of a national #CityHallSelfie campaign by one of my favorite organizations, [Engaging Local Government Leaders](#). I had no idea how true that photo would be in 2020. I'm grateful for every City employee that has transformed their kitchen, living room and garden into public service offices. And I know it's not just City employees, it's all of you too. Thank you for keeping Eugene as open and functioning as possible during this time.

When the City Council discussed the City Manager process back in November, they unanimously agreed to keep me in this role as pro tem through the work of the budget committee. I'm happy to share that the Budget Committee's work wrapped up this week and they unanimously recommended the budget with a few additions to provide additional support to the Lane County Human Services Commission and to add back a sidewalk crew if revenues improve. Their thoughtful work in this environment with less time and less human connection is a good example of our community members leading from wherever they are to make our City better. City Council will take final action on the budget June 22. Additionally, they'll discuss the City Manager process on June 15.

### A few additional highlights of the week:

We've created some new outdoor café options we're calling "streateries" so you can now have your favorite food or beverage in a parking space. I know this has been on your bucket list. The City created the pilot program last week with the goal of increasing capacity at local restaurants while accommodating safe physical distancing. The outdoor café seating areas (either on the sidewalk or in an on-street parking space) are commonly referred to as "streateries" and the City created this program to add additional options to the public and support local business. While we've always had a permit process for the right-of-way, we've worked to make this easier and at no cost to businesses. You can contact our new Business Help Team at [bizhelp@eugene-or.gov](mailto:bizhelp@eugene-or.gov) about this permit or other ways we can help you through this difficult time.

On Wednesday, we gave an [overview of some of our transition strategies](#) to the City Council. We touched on topics like the streateries, but spent most of our time talking about how we will begin shifting from emergency response to long-term recovery and some of the challenging transitions between. As I said in the meeting, it's going to take creativity + courage to move forward, not back. We shared that we are engaging our temporary shelter site residents in rapid resolution strategies to help move people to more stable situations and actively seeking new locations for micro navigation sites. As you know, our three designated temporary shelter sites are located at community centers which will need that space as we progress into summer activities. Again, our goal is to bounce forward, not back.

On May 26, the City Council [unanimously passed a resolution](#) opposing all forms of anti-Asian sentiment as related to COVID-19 and declaring May as Asian and Pacific Islander American Heritage Month. The resolution denounces anti-Asian bigotry, and all hateful speech, violent action and the spread of misinformation related to COVID-19 that casts blame, promotes racism or discrimination or harms the people of Asian descent, immigrant, or other communities. It also gives assurance that our COVID-19 response and recovery efforts are reflective of our triple-bottom-line values by evaluating our current and future efforts through an equity lens. Importantly, it encourages people to report all incidents of bias, regardless of how minor, online at [www.eugene-or.gov/report-hate](http://www.eugene-or.gov/report-hate) or by calling the Office of Human Rights and Neighborhood Involvement at 541-682-5177.

Late yesterday, the State issued its Phase 2 application guidelines and I anticipate the County will apply to be in the first group that could enter Phase 2 as early as June 5. The State is still working through the final rules, but it appears groups of 100 will be allowed as long as there is appropriate physical distancing. As we enter Phase 2 and more of us are returning to our routines, it will be extra important to keep up on our handwashing, distancing, etc. We're still in a pandemic.

Thank you for continuing to read these Friday letters and for engaging with me about your concerns. Dolly Parton released her [new song](#) yesterday which is a great Friday tune, though I'd encourage us all to not wait until life is good again and instead, open our hearts right now.

In community spirit,

Sarah Medary  
City Manager Pro Tem

#### Previous Letters

- [Community Letter from May 22, 2020](#)
- [Community Letter from May 15, 2020](#)
- [Community Letter from May 8, 2020](#)
- [Community Letter from May 1, 2020](#)
- [Community Letter from April 24, 2020](#)
- [Community Letter from April 17, 2020](#)
- [Community Letter from April 10, 2020](#)
- [Community Letter from April 3, 2020](#)
- [Community Letter from March 27, 2020](#)
- [Community Letter from March 20, 2020](#)
- [Community Letter from March 13, 2020](#)
- [Community Letter from March 7, 2020](#)