

Mayor Bennett and councilors,

Thank you for allowing me to add my comments to this very important work day for all of you. My name is Caroline O'Brien. I am attending the meeting today to ask you to look at the current situation of climate change. A majority of Americans recognize the rapid and escalating heating of our Earth's atmosphere as the main crisis we face today. Greenhouse gas emissions are adding carbon into our atmosphere at an ever alarming rate. We know that cities are responsible for 70% of the current levels of carbon emissions. Having said that, the good part of this fact also means that cities have the best opportunity to slow the amount of carbon emitted into the air resulting in stopping climate change.

Here are some points I want to highlight:

1. Lowering our carbon footprint creates local jobs. Fighting climate change means saving energy which equates to installation jobs for windows, insulation, solar panels and several kinds of weatherization upgrades. These types of jobs can't be outsourced. They pay middle class wages and add value to small local businesses.
2. Lower energy costs means more money stays in the community.
3. People that bike, walk and take public transit tend to shop locally. Again, local businesses benefit.
4. Being green attracts green enterprises. When Salem joins other Oregon cities with our own CAP, then Salem and Oregon become more of a magnet for green oriented business. If we don't seize this opportunity, then they will pass us by and California benefits.

A good example is Hillsboro who adopted a climate action plan in 2008. A 2013 city report lists several clean energy companies that employ a large portion of its population. The city's top employer is Intel but the next few listed are all from the clean energy sector. Hillsboro attracts citizens with higher education and provides a healthy livable environment and this equates to better conditions for all who live there.

Santa Fe New Mexico has a population of 82,000. The mayor saw that mitigating climate change with a properly designed greenhouse policy was a natural pathway to reducing poverty and inequality by creating opportunities for employment for people of varying levels of education.

5. Benefits to our city would be that our environment will be cleaner, our citizens would achieve a higher level of health and our community will be more cohesive. There is no better way to improve the livability of a community then to experience it at a walking pace and get to know your neighbors. Everyone benefits. Livability also equates to a healthier population.

I am a practicing nurse and my career has been spent teaching patients how to improve their health. I see climate change as a direct factor in future health problems. I hope that you all will take my words today as deep support for all of you as you endeavor to create an agenda that supports the health of our population and it's future.

Thank you,
Caroline O'Brien RN, BSN, MSN

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5/6/17

Mayor Bennett, Council members

My name is April Brenden-Locke. My husband and I have lived in Ward 7 for a year and a half. I would like to discuss the recommendations of the Affordable Housing, Social Services, and Homelessness Council Work Group.

I work on the Capitol Mall. Over the winter, I had nearly daily contacts with people who are chronically homeless as I entered my office building. One freezing winter morning, a man in a wheelchair greeted me as I went in. Later, as I headed out of the building, I noticed that he seemed unconscious. As I took out my phone to call the police, a state police officer approached and roused him. She knew his name and specific addiction. This man desperately needs the permanent supportive housing the work group discussed in the April 14 work session.

I fully support the work group recommended goal to "Implement a 'housing first' strategy to create permanent supportive housing." I also agree with the approach laid out in the recommendations that seeks to increase the availability of federal funding for local social services. I was taken aback to learn that Lane County receives \$2,200 per year per homeless client in federal funding, while Marion County receives only \$730 per year per homeless client, according to Jimmy Johns of the ARCHES program. I urge the city to consider investing in helping local agencies meet federal guidelines in order to increase our share of federal funding. However, I urge the council to do this in a way that addresses the real obstacles to local agencies, rather than simply creating shallow mandates.

One example of this is the work group's recommendation to "Require all City funded agencies to use Service Point as part of the HUD required coordinated Entry data collection point of entry system." Service Point is a software that allows all agencies in an area to track contacts with clients. As an IT project manager, I see first-hand how challenging it can be to bring in new software to an organization, including negotiating a suitable license agreement, securing funding for the licenses, training employees on the software, and changing the culture and processes for employees. This may simply be too much for agencies with limited resources. I urge the work group to find out why these agencies have not yet implemented the software rather than first mandating its use. Would there would be a return on investment if the city were to help key local agencies with the cost of software, implementation, and training?

Finally, I hope that the final draft of the recommended goals will include measurable, data driven targets. The current goals are steps in the right direction, but they are not measurable, and it will be difficult to determine whether a goal has been achieved.

Thank you for considering my input.

April Brenden-Locke