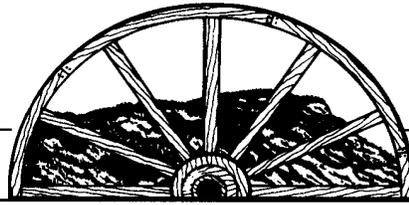

CITY OF



LA GRANDE

THE HUB OF NORTHEASTERN OREGON

OFFICE of the MAYOR and CITY COUNCIL P.O. BOX 670 LA GRANDE, OREGON 97850

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To the Citizens of La Grande:

At its July 1st meeting, the La Grande City Council voted to approve four Legislative Priorities to be forwarded to the League of Oregon Cities (LOC). Every two years, LOC asks all city governments in Oregon to rank a collection of potential legislative issues and return their top four. This year there were 26 legislative issues; a full listing of the 2021 priorities can be viewed here: https://www.orcities.org/application/files/6415/9130/4269/2021-Legislative_Priority_Ballot_Info.pdf. LOC gathers and compiles the issue rankings, and uses the resulting list to focus its advocacy efforts.

This year, the La Grande City Council forwarded these four issues: COVID-19 Economic Recovery Investments, Expedited Siting for Shelter and Affordable Housing, Mental Health Service Delivery, and Property Tax Reform, in order of high to low. Three of these four (Mental Health Service Delivery, COVID-19 Economic Recovery Investments, and Property Tax Reform) appear in the top four submitted by the 99 other Oregon Cities that responded. It should be noted that Property Tax Reform has been among the top issues selected by Oregon cities since at least 2012.

LOC has asked for input on legislative priorities for years. When the priorities are received, Councilors are asked to review the narratives, select their top four, return their selections to the City Manager, and finally vote on the four issues ranked highest by the Council. Although originally scheduled for the Consent Agenda (which allows for passage of routine items without discussion), this year the Council removed the priorities from the Consent Agenda and held a review of the issues before undertaking a vote. This action is in stark contrast to some claims that the matter was passed without discussion through the Consent Agenda.

Because of the City Council's ranking of these legislative priorities, it has been intimated that the Council attempted to "gut" Measures 5 and 50 (property tax restrictions) without public discussion. Any reforms to these property tax Measures can only come at the state level and would require a vote by the citizens of the State of Oregon to be approved. Any claims to the contrary are simply untrue and reveal a significant misunderstanding of the process.

We, as City Councilors, are privileged to serve the community, and every one of us recognizes the importance of communicating with constituents to understand what issues are important. Many times, this communication is informal through one on one conversations. Other times, there is a need to formally solicit input to gain a more complete picture. The Council is open to receiving citizen input on any issue. Interested parties may do so by calling the City Manager's office or by emailing Councilors through the city website. We appreciate your thoughts!

The La Grande City Council