

Council,

Thank you for your efforts during this crisis and I am sure much is taking place administratively under the Declaration of Emergency, however, it is discouraging to see a Council Agenda devoid of action to respond to the gravity of the current situation. It feels like we are on a rudderless ship in the middle of the ocean that is about to be hit by a typhoon and the leadership is twiddling their thumbs. If for nothing more than the morale of the citizenry, crises need action and demonstrations of effort from leadership.

Firstly, the city is faced with a certain revenue shortfalls that demand difficult choices and swift action. In 2007, early budget adjustments were not a pleasure to enact but they avoided dire consequences. It is shocking to see nothing on the agenda to even begin taking action toward these inevitabilities, prayers for federal bailouts aren't adequate.

Secondly, these hot dry spring days are a prescient reminder of fire season. Emergency preparedness should be top on the agenda with updated planning in place for the event of evacuations, etc. I am glad to see the city working with the federal government to address the homeless needs through hotel vouchers but more needs to be done to get these people into immediate housing. Campers in the vicinity of the city represent a huge liability of compounded incidents with Covid-19 already a reality, everyone needs to be housed quickly.

Thirdly, the long-term health of our local businesses needs to be addressed. For years landlords have profited immensely off of these small businesses, raising rents at every opportunity, it is their turn to share in the losses. The city could at the least facilitate discussion of rent relief for downtown businesses if not enact a full rent moratorium. I am sure there are efforts the city can make to protect the asset of our small businesses through this crisis. Why is nothing on the agenda?

We need leadership during this crisis and demonstrated efforts to address these realities.

Respectfully,  
Eric Navickas

My name is Marion Moore. I live in Ashland. I urge the council to do everything in their power to help reach the CEAP guidelines for reduced greenhouse gas emissions. And I specifically request that any people who are being considered for the position of City Administrator or Director of Public Works, have knowledge and experience in dealing with climate change and the issues around it.

In the many years of discussion of remodeling City Hall, I've never heard or seen anything that goes to the question of, "What is the best use of the space in City Hall and how can this best be achieved?"

When I asked a member of the committee Mayor Stromberg appointed several years ago to review City Hall options if this had been discussed, the response was the committee was told use of City Hall was off limits for consideration.

It appears from the materials that are included in your package for tonight's meeting that use of the building will not change if this remodel, now estimated to cost in excess of \$7.4 million, goes ahead. Much of the first floor would continue to be occupied by utility billing clerks, accountants and others in the finance operation, while top administrators and our part-time mayor would have offices on the second floor.

Wouldn't it be more convenient for customers as well as staff for the utility billing operation and the finance office to be relocated into empty rental space in other commercial districts, such as along Ashland street? Parking certainly would be easier.

This would free up City Hall space for the downtown police substation and offices and meeting spaces for our elected officials and top staff.

Most importantly the city should be able to save some money, maybe even substantial sums with the plumbing and electrical updates and new windows costing more like the \$325,000 estimate of three years ago than the millions in the latest estimates.

I encourage you to take the necessary time to consider or reconsider the best use of this historic building. These uncertain times for the city's finances give you that opportunity. Major work on City Hall can wait.

David Runkel