

## 'They seem to be angry,' Piercy said of the R-G. 'I take their input, but they don't decide elections.'

After defeating Torrey's divisive effort to unseat her, Piercy says she wants to pull the city back together.

"I'm going to look to the future," she said. "I'm not going to look to see who supported me and didn't support me."

"We have much more in common than we have that separates us," Piercy said. "I'm looking forward to working with the entire community for the next four years."

Piercy says her re-election shows people support her pursuit of green jobs. "We can be for a strong economy and be for our people and protect our natural resources all at the same time," she said. "People live in Eugene because they care deeply about its natural resources and its livability."

For economic development, Piercy said the city should focus on how to "protect and support our local businesses."

Piercy said Eugene offers fertile ground

for new green jobs to sprout. Local people are working on projects for using methane and algae for fuel and on new electric cars, she said. "We have a lot of really innovative, entrepreneurial people."

She said she's also interested in recruiting a solar panel company to use the recently closed Hynix plant.

Piercy admits the city has a limited ability to create jobs. "We don't have a lot of money we can use for an economic stimulus," she said.

Congress and the state Legislature are considering new highway stimulus bills, but they have sparked concerns that they could increase global warming and foreign oil dependence by promoting sprawl and driving. "That's a legitimate concern," Piercy said.

She said she hopes the stimulus focuses on repairing existing roads and boosting alternative transportation rather than building new highways. She noted that in an *EW* interview last week, local Congressman Peter DeFazio, "talked a lot about decisions being made with an eye to climate change and finite resources."

Piercy said she hopes federal money can be used to pay a big chunk of the cost of a multi-modal boulevard concept the West Eugene Collaborative is considering. The boulevard could combine bus rapid transit, bike lanes, sidewalks and pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use development to address traffic problems on West 11th Ave.

Piercy said she hopes the collaborative will also discuss calls to limit big box development in the area. "I think it's about time they tackled that one."

Going door to door in her campaign, Piercy gained a better understanding of how people are struggling in the economic downturn. "There are a lot of people in financial stress," she said. "I met people out on the doorstep — a 45-year-old woman taking in roommates to be able to pay for her home."

A homeless committee Piercy convened ended last year without a proposal for increasing funding to address the problem. "I think they thought it wouldn't fly," she

said. But Piercy said it may be time to reconsider a funding measure to help the homeless. "People's economic plight has changed radically."

The city itself also faces a deficit. Piercy said she still supports the decision to put library funding in the general fund rather than having the library depend on increasingly difficult to pass serial levies.

Given the overwhelming local vote for Barack Obama in the presidential election, his proposal to raise revenue with a tax increase on the rich appears popular in Eugene.

If Eugene passed a similar local income tax increase only on the rich, the city could raise about \$5 million a year, according to an earlier city study.

Piercy said the council hasn't talked about such a progressive tax reform here, but she added, "I'm open to the discussion."

The city should also consider an independent performance auditor to make sure it's operating efficiently, according to Piercy. The position could cost money but save more in reducing waste. "It's worth looking into," she said.

The city of Eugene spends about \$3 million a year for legal services from a private law firm. Critics have said hiring an in-house attorney could save money and reduce conflicts of interest.

"I'd certainly be willing to talk about it," Piercy said of the attorney change.

Some have called for increased spending on police. Piercy said the city has work to do to address car break-ins, metal theft and meth. However, "I know our overall crime rate was lower than the majority of the country," she said.

Piercy said the city should leave plans for a new City Hall building on the shelf. "There was not the public support," she said. The city should use its \$30 million facility reserve to repair the existing City Hall, she said.

A year ago, conservatives said two failed city measures showed voters did not trust the council. With the passage of the road funding and police auditor measures

this election, "the public is showing its support," Piercy said.

Piercy pointed to the two-thirds vote for the police auditor. "The public was very clear, again, about their support for the auditor and the civilian review board."

Piercy said the public also broadly supports efforts to revitalize downtown with proposals to fill the two pits. "It's a very shared point of view."

Piercy shares her election victory with another progressive, Rob Handy. If election results hold up, Handy will win a narrow victory over County Commissioner Bobby Green to swing the balance of county government.

Piercy said she's looking forward to collaborating with the new county government on progressive land use and transportation planning. "I would look for Rob [Handy] to be a good partner."

Handy defeated many of the same big developer and gravel pit campaign spending as Piercy.

Piercy says the huge amount spent on her re-election fight "is way too much for a city of Eugene mayor race."

Before Torrey, Eugene's mayor races often cost less than \$50,000, a tenth what Torrey spent.

Piercy said she'd like to examine Portland's public financing system to see if it could work in Eugene. She said she wonders if the Portland system could withstand the challenges of a hard-fought race like in Eugene and the problems surrounding independent expenditures.

Obama's victory was "a riveting moment in the history of this country," Piercy said. She said the past eight years of Bush had left her "aghast" at the war, "financial chaos" and loss of constitutional rights and the nation's respect in the world. "Now maybe we're getting back to having the kind of country, the kind of leadership, we can be proud of."

Unlike Obama, Piercy could run again and serve more than eight years as mayor. Piercy said she hasn't thought that far ahead. "I'm very focused on the next four years." **EW**

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— KITTY PIERCY

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