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MEMORANDUM

Community Development

To: Mayor Jackola and City Council
From: Kelly Hart, Community Development Director
Subject: Community Development Department City Manager Report Updates

Date: March 2025

Planning:

- Annual Planning Commission recruitments: The annual Planning Commission recruitment is now open. One commissioner, Marcellus Angellford, has indicated that they will be unable to continue serving on the commission. As such, at the end of his term, there will be one open seat on the Commission.
- The regular March Planning Commission was canceled due to a lack of public hearings. A final joint City Council-Planning Commission work session was held on March 26th to discuss the code updates associated with the Housing Production Strategy.
- In March, no applications were approved administratively.
- There are currently six land use applications under review:
 - A-25-01 for right-of-way annexations for portions of Crowfoot Road, Stoltz Hill Road, Wassom Street, and Kees Street (hearings tentatively scheduled in April for the Planning Commission and May for City Council)
 - AR-25-01 for improvements to Cheadle Lake Park (public notice issued on March 18, 2025, notice of decision to be issued at close of comment period)
 - AR-25-02 for the development of a triplex on Hiatt Street and VAR-25-02 for a class III variance for the reduction in setback and property size required for the development of a triplex for a property on Hiatt Street (applications scheduled for public hearing before the planning commission at the April meeting)
 - AR-25-03 and VAR-25-03 for a four-unit apartment complex with a requested class II variance for the rear setback for the property at 310 Elmore Street (public notice issued on March 18, 2025, notice of decision to be issued at close of comment period)
- City Legislative Efforts: On March 10, 2025, Mayor Jackola, City Manager Whitlatch, and Community Development Director Hart met with State Senator Hayden in Salem. The meeting was an introductory session and a comprehensive discussion of Lebanon's needs, including the upcoming wastewater treatment plant project, the USACE drawdown, and the state government's regulatory system for cities. It was a positive meeting, with an invitation for the City to provide testimony from a City perspective on any of Senator Hayden's bills if needed.

Staff has continued to track several bills that could have a significant impact on the city's functions and future growth and development. City Manager Ron Whitlatch provided verbal testimony in support of HB 3031, the governor's housing infrastructure bill, and verbal testimony in support of HB

2968, a state SDC subsidy bill. The city has also taken time to provide written testimony in opposition to SB 6, a bill that would significantly impact processing times for building permits, and SB 916, which would allow striking union workers to receive unemployment benefits, affecting the city's budget. A written testimony in support of HB 3556, the expansion of TLT funding to "tourism impacted services," was also provided.

Staff continue to prepare for Water Week in Washington, DC. A total of eight meetings have been scheduled in addition to the National Water Policy event and the Water Policy Conference. New one-pagers have been developed on topics for the wastewater treatment plant, the USACE drawdown and its impacts, and transportation infrastructure needs.

- Strategic Planning Update: Twelve tasks are currently in progress, three have been completed, and 36 tasks have yet to be initiated in the 5-year strategic plan. The staff has implemented an online project management tool to maintain uniform reporting and progress updates and will utilize the analytics from the project management platform to provide a mid-year update to the Council in the summer.
- Housing Production Strategy Implementation: the final round of code amendments were presented to the Project Advisory Committee on March 25th and a Joint City Council/Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for March 26th. Final comments are being incorporated into the document. Public hearings will be scheduled for May and June before the Planning Commission and City Council.
- Solar Project: The consultants staff has met with are currently reviewing our materials, communicating with Pacific Power, and evaluating granting opportunities. Federal policy decisions have affected grant funding opportunities, which may delay or modify the project. Staff is monitoring the opportunities and continuing to move forward with the project as planned and will identify alternatives as necessary. No new updates in March.
- Grant Administration:
 - Awarded applications: Safe Streets 4 All grant. This is another federally funded grant. Although this grant has been awarded, the OCWCOG awaits the grant agreement.
 - Grant Research: Wastewater Treatment Plant capital grants, solar grants, emergency operations, senior center programming/site improvement grants, parks master plan update grants, and housing infrastructure grants.
 - Grant Administration: OCWCOG is administering the EPA grant funding the environmental assessment work currently underway for the Champion Mill site and the upcoming reuse planning process. Phase II report drafting is underway. Report to be submitted to DEQ for review to determine final gap analysis and phased review of site for summer testing.
 - Community Development Director Hart is participating in a Local Infrastructure Hub Grant Writing Bootcamp for Developing Clean Energy & Clean Transportation Projects and Combined Railroad Crossing Elimination and Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements program. The National League of Cities provides this multi-session program for free. Program is wrapping up in April.
- Lebanon Community School District Facilities Advisory Committee: The Community Development Director continues participating in the LCSD Facilities Advisory Committee.
- Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan: The City continues to participate in developing the Linn County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan. A final plan draft has been circulated for review and approved

internally by City staff. Depending on county scheduling, the adoption process is likely scheduled for early summer. The city is still awaiting county adopting to move forward with adoption of the plan.

Building:

- The city processed 30 permits in February. The total fees received were \$14,164.96, and the construction valuation was \$616,439.37.
- By comparison, in February 2024, 48 permits were processed. The total fees received were \$32,326.27, and the construction valuation was \$1,191,013.00.
- A current list of the more significant construction sites include:
 - Riverside Banks Subdivision and Duplexes (Williams Street)
 - 8-lot subdivision – Cascade Estates (Seven Oaks Lane/Cascade Drive)
 - 19-lot subdivision (Walker & Wassom)
 - Blackrock Apartments – 12 units (2nd Street and Airport Road)
 - Airport Road Apartments – 60 units (Airport Road and Russell Drive)
 - Gas Station and Convenience Store (911 W Airport)
 - Lane Manufacturing – Industrial Building (Montessa Way)

Economic Development:

- Strategic Plan Initiative 3.15: Business visitation program—The Community Development Director, City Manager, Mayor Jackola, and Councilor McClain from Ward 2 visited Lowe’s Distribution Center for the March Business Visitation program. The meeting included a discussion of workforce needs, community partnerships, and challenges with translation services for a larger Spanish-speaking population. A tour of the facility was also provided. As a follow-up to the meeting, resources were provided with connections to the Willamette Workforce Partnership and their Y-CAN program. Additionally, Colonia Paz facilitated a connection with Evolve Workforce to help provide cultural workforce connections and potential translation services.
- Downtown Building Restoration Program: The new program application was released in early January with a deadline of February 6, 2025. Five applications were received. A selection committee will review the applications, and grants will be awarded based on the criteria established in the program guidelines and the committee rankings. All grant agreements have been distributed to the awardees.
- Rural Economic Alliance (REAL): REAL met in March to discuss a draft job description for an intern and a consultant proposal to assist the group in implementing the marketing plan and furthering the strategic plan. The group authorized the hiring of the consultant. It modified the job description title for the intern to focus more on marketing and media in the hope of attracting more interest.
- Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS) Update: The Community Development Director is participating in the regional five-year CEDS update. This strategy document and plan ensures the region and city are eligible for state and federal grants to help accomplish economic development goals.
- Strategic Plan Initiative 3.11: Respond to Business Oregon recruitments based on site availability—the Business Oregon Prospector site is reviewed weekly, and targeted emails from Business Oregon Industrial Lands Specialists are examined to determine whether a recruitment package should be submitted for the competitive bid. Two recruitment packages were submitted in March based on the city’s available site inventory.