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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: July, 2024

### **Planning:**

- The July Planning Commission meeting was canceled due to a lack of agenda items, and the August Planning Commission meeting will also be canceled.
- In June, one project was approved administratively:
  - VAR-24-07 for a Class I Variance to approve a fence height increase in the setback areas for a property on Steelhead Ct.
- There is currently one land use application under review:
  - AR-24-05 for the development of a one-story, 28-unit apartment complex for the property at 377 Vaughan Lane (application is under completeness review)
- Benton County Regional Housing Meeting: Interim City Manager Whitlatch and Director Hart met with two Benton County Planning Commissioners to discuss their proposal to develop a regional housing coalition to address barriers to housing development and promote housing production in the region. A stated goal is to obtain regional funding to support infrastructure development. Additional meetings are to be scheduled in the future, and the benefit of Lebanon's participation in the coalition is still being evaluated.
- City Legislative Efforts: Bi-weekly meetings continue to be held with Sean Tate to discuss strategy. The following are the major legislative initiatives:
  - On July 16, the Mayor participated as an observer in a roundtable discussion and testified before the Oregon Legislature Joint Committee on Transportation to advocate for state funding for street maintenance and local infrastructure improvement projects.
  - Continue to advocate for direct funding for the wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) capacity improvement project. On July 23, a follow-up meeting with Congresswoman Chavez-DeRemer's office was held, during which additional discussions were had on funding opportunities for the WWTP and solar capital funding.
  - Evaluation of the League of Oregon Cities Legislative Platform to align priorities.
  - The Governor's Office requested feedback from housing partners on Governor Kotek's Housing and Homelessness Initiative Housing Infrastructure proposal for the next legislative cycle. City staff reviewed the proposal and developed comments in consultation with Sean Tate, which were submitted for consideration.

- The Governor’s Office has also requested feedback from housing partners on their Housing Production Framework for the next legislative cycle. City staff reviewed the proposal and developed comments in consultation with Sean Tate, which were submitted for consideration.
- Strategic Planning Update: SSW Consultant led the strategic plan workshop on July 22, 2024, which the council and staff attended. The Consultants will compile the information gathered during the workshop and continue employee engagement over the next few weeks/months while developing the draft strategic plan.
- Housing Production Strategy Implementation: On July 16, 2024, the first Project Advisory Committee meeting was held to discuss the scope of potential development code changes and obtain initial feedback on possible code standards for certain housing types. The consultants will present the materials from the PAC meeting and their recommendations to a joint Planning Commission/City Council meeting on August 14, 2024.
- Solar Project: Staff and consultants from OSU visited the Wastewater and Water Treatment Plants and the Water Intake Pump to evaluate site viability for solar field projects and/or agro-voltaic projects. Based on the consultant’s recommendations, staff will schedule a meeting to assess plant electricity usage to determine net meter designs, community solar concepts, and possible next steps.
- Grant Administration (Oregon Cascade West Council of Governments):
  - Submitted applications: Safe Streets 4 All grant
  - Grant Research: Wastewater Treatment Plant capital grants, solar grants, CDBG eligibility for waterline replacement, senior center programming/staffing
  - 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.
- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program: All City documentation has been completed. The sub-consultants are reviewing documentation with BizOregon to verify compliance and begin the fund drawdown. The City is also considering a second CDBG opportunity to fund aging waterline infrastructure and laterals for low-income households.
- Continuum of Care (CoC) and Multi-Agency Coordination (MAC) to address homelessness: The Point-in-Time (PIT) count for homeless individuals was released this month. The PIT count is completed annually over a weekend in January and is intended to be a count of the homeless population across the nation. Although the count methodology is problematic and the count should not be considered entirely accurate, it is the source used by the federal and state governments for funding calculations and helps to identify a broad scope of the population. Lebanon’s 2024 population count is 65. In contrast, the 2023 PIT count identified 52 individuals, marking a 20% increase.

- Rules Advisory Committee on Housing: DLCD has developed draft rules for the committee to review. Director Hart will review them and partner with other RAC members and the League of Oregon Cities to develop comprehensive comments and suggestions for rule amendments.
- 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. Staff is reviewing the community profile section for accuracy and updating data. A community survey will also be posted to the City's website and social media pages to obtain feedback on the community's perceptions of natural hazards in the area.

**Building:**

- The city processed 67 permits in June. The total fees received were \$46,089.29, and the construction valuation was \$3,350,773.54.
- By comparison, in June 2023, 43 permits were processed. The total fees received were \$8,524.50, and the construction valuation was \$454,037.00.
- A current list of the larger 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)
  - 26-lot subdivision – Franklin Grove Estates (Franklin and Russell Drive)
  - 450 Weldwood Drive – Self Storage (Weldwood and Cascade Drive)
  - Blackrock Apartments – 12 units (2<sup>nd</sup> Street and Airport Road)
  - Airport Road Apartments – 60 units (Airport Road and Russell Drive)

**Economic Development:**

- Business visitation program: In July, Mayor Jackola, Councilor Workman, Interim City Manager Whitlatch, and Director Hart visited Ward 2 businesses. Below is a summary of the visits:
  - JC BBQ: Met with the business owner who educated the city on the intricacies of running a small restaurant business, provided statistics about the restaurant industry in Lebanon and insights into why recent restaurant closures occurred, and discussed the stresses of the current financial situation on the restaurant industry. The City offered advertising resources for the Willamette Food Trail to increase advertising and assistance through the SBDC to help obtain the disaster relief funds associated with the snowstorm this winter. Staff will also work closely with the Chamber of Commerce and the LDA to identify potential programs or resources to help elevate and support our small business community in light of increased corporate organizations operating in town.
- Downtown Building Restoration Program: Three projects were awarded grants this cycle for the total grant allocation of \$50,000: Papa's Building Façade Restoration (804 Main Street - \$25,000),

Wells Fargo Building Façade Restoration (809 Main Street - \$20,000), Kuhn Signage Additions and Painting (668 Main Street - \$5,000). Projects are underway.

- Rural Economic Alliance (REAL): The REAL group met in June and welcomed Pacific Power to present their community resource and outreach program to the member cities. The presentation included information about their state mandates on energy efficiency, how they achieve their goals, programs to assist low-income households, and opportunities for local governments to participate in Pacific Power’s outreach framework.