



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, October 08, 2024

CALL TO ORDER - The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Lane at 4:08 pm.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present:	Brandon Smith, Dennis Hoffman, Dee Dee Jackson
Commissioners Absent:	Ron Lane and Tiffany Schulps
Councilmembers:	None
Staff:	City Manager Pete Carr and City Clerk Jennifer Schmitke

ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS - None

CONSENT CALENDAR

A. Approval of Economic Development Commission Minutes from September 10, 2024

ACTION: Commissioner Hoffman moved, seconded by Commissioner Jackson to approve consent calendar as presented. Motion carried by a voice vote, 3-0.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION OR ACTION

A. Hotel Development Investment Update

City Manager Pete Carr presented the EDC's hotel development incentive idea to the City Council on September 3, where it received general support. The Council directed City Staff to work with the EDC on refining the proposal. At the September 8th EDC meeting, members evaluated hotel demand, incentive options, and practices in neighboring cities, with Carr agreeing to gather further insights from regional city managers.

Mr. Carr's discussion with regional city managers on development incentives revealed that:

- No cities currently offer incentives for commercial projects; a few offer incentives for affordable housing but must reimburse the Development Impact Fee (DIF) Fund to maintain legal compliance.

- Cities generally require developers to demonstrate investment interest before considering accommodations.
- Fee waivers are limited by recent laws, with waivers potentially triggering prevailing wage requirements.
- Fee deferrals are preferred, as they provide developer support without impacting the General Fund or DIF.

Mr. Carr indicated that fee deferrals are the preferred incentive as they offer developers protection from specific restrictions. He also suggested that the Commission be prepared to provide guidance on incentives when development opportunities arise.

Commissioners engaged in a discussion about past impact fee deferrals, thresholds, and the importance of being proactive with potential standby clauses for incentives related to future development opportunities. Mr. Carr shared examples from other towns, highlighting strategies such as reducing water and sewer connection fees or waiving development impact fees altogether.

B. Caltrans Freeway Signage Regulations

Mr. Carr explained that this item was introduced in response to a request for additional signage on the freeway to enhance the visibility of the bee-themed installations and to inform travelers that they are entering Orland. Caltrans oversees freeway signage, including size, location, and type, with variations based on freeway land acquisition specifics. The recent "Clean California" bee-themed sculptures at the I-5/32 interchange allow art only, without text. Any new welcome sign or unique artwork by Orland would need City funding and a Caltrans permit.

The State offers cities two signage options for community visibility:

1. Community Identification: Graphics, artwork, or text mounted on transportation features (e.g., overpasses).
2. Gateway Monuments: Freestanding structures with text and images.

Mr. Carr shared that the City Council has allocated \$30,000 from ARPA funds to design a welcome sign at Orland's eastern boundary, based on an EDC recommendation from past years and he noted the possibility of requesting that the Council redirect these funds for signage along I-5.

The Commission deliberated on this matter and agreed that signage on I-5 would be more advantageous; however, they also expressed the desire to still have signage at the eastern entrance of Orland on SR 32.

Orland resident Terrie Barr shared her views on the I-5 signage and the east entrance signage on SR 32. She suggested consulting the Arts Commission for their recommendations regarding the freeway signage.

Mr. Carr mentioned that he could obtain pricing for a sign similar to the Bright Future, Proud History sign to be installed on the east side of town. The Commission expressed their interest in reviewing the proposed cost and working with the Arts Commission on the sign design.

C. City Policy on Murals

Mr. Carr announced that Laurie LaGrone was present at the meeting as the Community Outreach liaison for the Arts Commission. He highlighted Orland's strong commitment to public art, which is evident through several initiatives.

Mr. Carr noted that in 2017, the City Council amended the Municipal Code to require an Administrative Use Permit (AUP) for murals on private property while preserving the Arts Commission's advisory role. Recently, there has been growing interest in launching a mural program on prominent building exteriors, and the Arts Commission is prepared to support the development of this initiative. Mr. Carr briefly went over Arts Commission Preparation and Preservation guidelines and shared an example of notices to owners of commercial properties.

Vice Chairperson Smith inquired whether murals could be incorporated into the façade improvement programs. Mr. Carr responded that the program includes signage and painting, and he consistently brings any questions or concerns about applicants to the EDC for their input.

Commissioner Hoffman expressed his worries about regulations, codes, and definitions concerning murals, noting his concerns about the potential for graffiti to emerge around town.

Commissioner Jackson suggested identifying interested owners of properties where the artwork could be both cohesive and distinct, ensuring that the designs are relevant to the community. Mr. Carr shared that the Arts Commission picked a theme for Orland which is "Northern Sacramento Valley".

Commissioners noted that the EDC is discussing murals because they believe these artworks can attract visitors to the town, encouraging them to take pictures and explore the community's shops and dining establishments.

Mr. Carr indicated that \$30,000 had been set aside from ARPA funds for façade improvement, with \$6,000 remaining. He mentioned that once these funds are exhausted, the City may revert to the \$1,500 limit unless the Council considers leaving the amount at \$3000. He suggested that City staff could update the business license letter to inform business owners about the available assistance for encouraging murals, with Vice Chairperson Smith requesting that this be highlighted as a separate line item in the letter.

Ms. LaGrone clarified the differences between signs and murals. Vice Chairperson Smith proposed that the Arts Commission assist with the wording on the flyer, to which Mr. Carr agreed, noting that the Commission could help City staff create a flyer for review before it is distributed to local businesses. However, Commissioner Hoffman expressed concerns about promoting murals through the façade improvement program.

Orland resident Joanie Woods shared her opinion on murals and suggested that the City partner with property owners that are in visible location from SR 32 to offer a collaboration for a mural or to do something regarding queen bee theme.

Mr. Carr shared he would work with City staff to work on the language on the flyers that would help explain and promote the mural idea.

Ms. Barr asked questions and shared her concerns regarding the façade improvement program and spoke about the limitations regarding signage in the Orland municipal code (OMC).

D. Sales Tax Quarterly Results

Mr. Carr reviewed that statewide sales tax revenue is declining, but Orland's sales tax, the city's primary General Fund source, has grown significantly over the past decade despite recent trends. Orland is particularly reliant on the transportation sector for sales tax revenue.

Mr. Carr shared that the City used HdL, a municipal tax consultant, to help provide detailed quarterly sales tax reports to help the City manage revenue projections. The second quarter showed a slight increase in Orland's sales tax revenue, potentially reversing a two-quarter decline, with local revenues influenced by broader economic conditions.

Commissioners asked questions about sales tax and property taxes.

E. Update on Vacant Buildings

Mr. Carr reported that the only update on vacant buildings is that the Royal Hotel is now an active code enforcement case and has begun incurring daily fines.

F. Business and Economic Development - None

G. Chamber Report

Chamber President/Commissioner Jackson shared a few upcoming events including:

- Bless your Heart Mercantile will be closing the end of October;
- Old Bags has closed;
- Pickin' Chicks has closed;
- Farmers Market has ended for the year, stated the date and time may change and shared they had a hard time finding produce vendors;
- Gather and Graze will be October 19th;
- Trick or Trails will be at Black Butte Lake October 19th;
- Treat Street will be October 26th;
- Day of the Dead will be at the Fairgrounds November 1st;
- Trunk or Treat at the Fairgrounds date unknown;
- Orland Craft Fair is the weekend after Thanksgiving;
- Cowboy Christmas will be on the first Friday in December 6th;
- Christmas parade will be December 15th;
- Avenue of lights will be the week after the parade;
- There will be two positions open next year for community member interested in joining the Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors.
- Has been working with a local videographer on a promotional video of Orland, it will take many months to complete.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Vice Chairperson Smith:

- Nothing to report.

Commissioner Jackson:

- Shared her business Collective Habits/Studio Milan will be moving into the old Bless your Heart Mercantile building on 4th Street.

Commissioner Hoffman:

- Shared the Santa Claus Program is available this year.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Hotel Incentives
- Art Murals around town
- Freeway Signage – Advertising Orland

ADJOURN – 6:05 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Schmitke, Commission Secretary

Brandon Smith, Vice Chairperson