



**Banks Economic Development Commission  
May 4, 2016  
MEETING MINUTES**

**CALL TO ORDER** Economic Development Commission Chair Rachel Nelson called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

**ROLL CALL**

Present were: Marsha Kirk, Rich Weitzel, Planning Commissioner Rachel Nelson, Councilor Michael Nelson, Planning Commissioner Rodney Jacobs, Councilor Mark Walsh, Mark Ward, Jeff Leo, and John Morgan.

Absent: Michael Samson, Carolyn McCormick w/Washington County Visitors Association, Doug Hixson, and Mayor Pete Edison

Staff present: City Manager Jolynn Becker.

**APPEARANCE OF INTERESTED CITIZENS** – None

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Rodney Jacobs made a motion to approve the minutes from the April 6, 2016 meeting. Marsha Kirk seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

**BUSINESS AGENDA**

**Economic Vision/Aspirations/Goals:** Rachel gave an overview of the process so far. There have been 8 reports reviewed so far that span 1999 through 2015 and are in the process of compiling them. Background information such as values, comparative advantages of Banks, mission statement and vision statement have all been discussed and reviewed.

The Economic Development Commission has completed review of the following initiatives:

- Initiative #1 – Main Street Revitalization
- Initiative #2 – Industry and Commerce Development

Initiatives to be discussed at tonight's meeting include:

- Initiative #6 – Bicycle Amenities & Infrastructure
- Initiative #7 – Parking
- Initiative #3 – (if time allows)

Future initiatives to be discussed include:

- Initiative #4 – Community Park (from 1999 Report)
- Initiative #5 – Community Center (from 1999 Report)

Rachel asked the group if they wanted to bump initiatives 4 & 5 up on the list, or move them down to a lower priority. Everyone agreed to move them down the list.

**Banks Economic Development Commission Initial Strategy for Pursuing Economic Development:**

Initiative #6 – Bicycle Amenities & Infrastructure – Rachel gave an overview of the initiative.

- BBP #2 – Main Street Bicycle Lanes (High Priority) - Install bicycle lanes on Main Street between Banks High School and Sunset Avenue per City standards and conduct a pilot project to install bicycle lanes between Sunset Avenue and NW Banks Road.
  - Marsha Kirk feels the biggest problem is going to be the large farm equipment and trucks that come through town, and the fact that the road narrows. Rodney Jacobs asked if the area of the high school was narrower than the rest of Main Street. Michael Nelson stated he thought the pilot

program would remove on street parking while the bicycle lane pilot program was being conducted. There was general discussion regarding this initiative.

- BPP #6 – Parking Management Study (High Priority) – Conduct a Parking Management Study for the Banks-Vernonia Trailhead.
  - Rachel Nelson stated this could probably be dovetailed with initiative #7.
- BBP #7 – UGB Expansion Area Overcrossing (High Priority) – Conduct access to UGB expansion area feasibility studies to identify the preferred location for a pedestrian/bicycle overcrossing of the railroad.
  - Rachel Nelson said she knows studies have been done for vehicles, but perhaps one for pedestrians and bicyclists should also be conducted. Jolynn Becker stated that the UGB expansion is going to be more of an east to west connection, in the area of the school district. Rodney Jacobs stated he felt this is a low priority at this time.
- BBP #8 – Railroad Trail (High Priority) – Develop a trail connecting the Banks Trailhead and Highway 6 on the Westside of the railroad, using the guidance in the City's Public Works Design Standards.
  - Rachel Nelson stated this is where a bicycle/pedestrian trail would run alongside of the railroad tracks. Jolynn Becker said this would go down the west side of the railroad tracks from Banks Road to Highway 6. Rachel feels this is a low priority for economic development. Jolynn Becker stated if the railroad tracks come up for sale, this could be a higher priority. The railroad track land could be used for parking and bicycle/pedestrian traffic. There was general discussion on how the location of the bicycle/pedestrian trails would affect businesses on Main Street.
- BBP# 9 – Westside Multi-use Connection (High Priority) – Install bicycle and pedestrian facilities on the west side of Banks per the Council Creek Regional Trail Master Plan along the planned westside circulator roadway (WCR) connecting NW Banks Road with planned trails to the south using the guidance in the City's Public Works Design Standards.
  - There was general discussion regarding the Council Creek Trail. Jolynn Becker stated that the Council Creek Trail goes along Highway 47. The west side is currently in the UGB, and once it is brought into the city limits, the trail could connect to the west side of Banks.
- BBP #12 – NW Oak Way Bicycle Lanes (High Priority) – Extend bicycle lanes on NW Oak Way between the intersection of Main Street and existing bicycle lanes, using the guidance in the City's Public Works Design Standards.
  - There was discussion about Oak Way Bicycle Lanes. It was decided that this was more of a public works/engineering issue, and not an economic development issue.
- BBP #17 – Bicycle Parking Along Main Street (Medium Priority) – Review opportunities to install bicycle parking along the Main Street corridor, particularly in the commercial areas and destinations. PMR #4 also recommends adding bike parking.
  - Rachel Nelson stated this would be for installing bicycle parking along Main Street. Rachel feels this item should be moved to the Main Street Project, and goes along with benches, lighting, garbage receptacles, etc. Jolynn Becker stated she thinks this has more to do with identifying actual parking stalls for bicycles on the street. Marsha Kirk thought it would be a good idea to incorporate this item into the designs for Main Street. Rachel Nelson suggested leaving this item on the list, but also cross referencing it in the Main Street Project.
- BBP #18 Pedestrian/Bicycle Access between Wilkes Street and Schools (Medium Priority) – Provide north/south pedestrian/bicycle access between Wilkes Street and the schools to the south.
  - Rachel Nelson stated this doesn't seem to be economic relationship. Rich Weitzel said this would not exactly be economic development, but more of a way to connect old town to the schools.
- BBP #19 – School Bicycle Parking (Medium Priority) – Install bicycle parking at Banks Elementary and High Schools. The parking should be located in a convenient, accessible location and designed according to best practices.
  - Rachel Nelson stated this would not be economic development. Rodney Jacobs pointed out that there is already bicycle parking at the schools. Rachel said she believes the point of this study was that the current bicycle parking is inadequate.
- BBP #20 – Site Distance & Lighting on NW Oak Way (Medium Priority) – Review sight distance and lighting on NW Oak Way at the post office entrance and address deficiencies.
  - Rachel Nelson stated she believes this is also not an economic development issue.
- BBP #23 – NW Banks Road Multimodal Improvement (Low Priority) – Reconstruct NW Banks Road between Main Street and US 26 with bicycle lanes and sidewalks or a multi-use path, using the guidance in the City's Public Works Design Standards.
  - Rachel Nelson stated this item dovetails with an area that was identified in the Main Street Revitalization Plan, and has also come up in the east/west cross over. Rodney Jacobs asked if there was a connection of the bicycle lanes to Highway 6, where would they go. Marsha Kirk

stated there are signs at Harrison Road that ODOT put up to direct bicyclists on where to go. There was general discussion on this item.

- BBP #24 – NW Banks Road and NW Aerts Road Warning Signage (Suggested for removal from Economic Development plan as this item pertains more to public safety).
  - This item removed
- BBP #28 – Arbor Village Sight Improvements (Suggested for removal from Economic Development plan as this item pertains more to public safety).
  - This item removed
- BBP #29 – Trail to Highway 6 (Low Priority) – Extend the existing private trail from the west side<sup>3</sup> of Arbor Village from Oak to Highway 6, using the guidance in the City's Public Works Design Standards.
  - This item does not relate to economic development
- BBP #30 – Separated Trail on Main Street South of Town (Low Priority) – Install a separated trail along Main Street, south of downtown, to the OR 6 undercrossing, using the guidance in the City's Public Works Design Standards.
  - Jolynn Becker stated this was a continuation of the Council Creek Regional Trail. Rachel Nelson said this is a nice trail for around the city. Rich Weitzel stated that this type of trail is something that attracts homeowners. Marsha Kirk asked if ODOT would give the city right-of-way.
- BBP #31 – Highway 6 Multi-use Path (Low Priority) – Install a separated multi-use path parallel to Highway 6 between NW Main Street and railroad, using the guidance in the City's Public Works Design Standards.
  - Rodney Jacobs would like to see this stay on the list as a low priority.

#### Initiative #7 – Parking

- PMR #2 – Establish a Downtown Parking Work Group – Schedule work group meetings routinely to advocate, shepherd, track and communicate plan. Establish a draft parking brand.
  - Rachel Nelson referred to the parking study that was conducted in 2015. The City's parking infrastructure is not the best, and from an economic standpoint.
- Public Off – Street Parking – Develop parking on the vacant land north of Commerce Street. Providing this facility (50+ spaces) would allow employees to park away from storefront (Also see BPP #25: Resurface Commerce Street for additional public parking recommendations).
  - Rachel Nelson stated that Denise Holmes found a study that was conducted in 2001, that contains plans for developing parking over by the Depot, and a trail over to the existing trailhead area. Rachel passed the study around for everyone to look at.
- PMR #3 – Make on-street parking more users friendly.
  - There are recommendations on how to do that in the study.
- PMR #5 – Initiate a data collection effort to better assess performance of the downtown parking supply.
  - There are recommendations on how to do that in the study.
- PMR #6 – Improve the appearance and quality of surface parking downtown to enhance the city's "front door"
  - There are recommendations on how to do that in the study. Rachel Nelson asked the group if this is something that they feel is a high priority. Jolynn Becker stated that the parking document needs to be addressed all at the same time, versus individual tasks. Rachel Nelson said that if a parking group was developed, they would be taking on this document. Marsha Kirk asked if this group was to be established through the Chamber of Commerce. Jolynn Becker said it was to be created by businesses or citizens. Marsha said that some of the things she read indicated that this group was to be started by the Chamber of Commerce. Rachel Nelson said that this parking group should definitely communicate with the Chamber of Commerce, and keep them apprised of the progress. There was general discussion regarding current parking, and the formation of the parking group.

The remaining items on Initiative #7 were not discussed, as they will be addressed by the parking group.

- PMR #7 – Identify and establish a "model" public lot. Set the standard for parking lot design and presentation.
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- PMR #8 – Create a distinct public parking areas to distribute users through the downtown.
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- PMR #9 – Negotiate shared use and/or lease agreements with owners of private lots.
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- PMR #11 – Establish a business – to – business outreach effort.

Initiative #3 – This item tabled until the next meeting.

At this point Rachel Nelson decided this was a good Segway into the strategy discussion with John Morgan.

John Morgan stated that he had a few strategic thoughts after his discussions with Rachel Nelson and Jolynn Becker, as well as the discussions at this evening's meeting.

1. Ideas are great, but turning them into reality is a different thing, because of all the resources that need to come into play.
2. The discussion this evening was more tactical than strategic.

These thoughts need to be framed up into a strategic document that will become a living document that is reviewed and updated regularly, and approved and adopted by City Council. It is one that would drive a lot of what happens at City Hall in regards to the budget process, and give direction to City staff, and the expectations of Planning Commission, Economic Development Commission, and City Council. This is the type of foundation that becomes a communication tool. One voice, one story, one set of ambitions, one vision, and a means of implementation to share with other organizations. It is a way to encourage private capital. John said this can't really be moved without the comments, concerns and interest of the citizens. There needs to be buy in from the citizenry.

Rachel Nelson said she would like to know what ideas the EDC would suggest as a "kick starter" idea for the group. Rachel told the group about the Portland Incubator Experiment, and what they do. Marsha Kirk said that she had mentioned to Pete Edison a few months ago, was the property on the west side of town is owned by Bob Bobowsky. METRO is working on the Killin Wetlands area, and expanding parking, and making a venue for rentals. Marsha's thought was that if the City could get a portion of the Bobowsky property (with the white farmhouse, which was the historic Wilkes house), use the Wilkes house as a historic visitors/community center, and make a large parking area that will hold bigger vehicles such as horse trailers, and perhaps talk with ODOT about a crosswalk across Highway 47 with a flashing light to get over to the Banks Vernonia Trail parking lot. Rich Weitzel asked if the Wilkes house was inside or outside city limits. Jolynn Becker stated it is outside city limits. Rodney Jacobs likes the idea, but is concerned about the timeline.

Rachel Nelson said she would like to see the old cannery building by the trailhead (which is currently the dance school), be purchased by someone like McMenemy's. It would be the perfect location for a restaurant & venue for live music. Rich Weitzel asked if that property was inside the city limits. Jolynn Becker said that it is outside the city limits, and the property owner would have to go through the annexation process. Marsha Kirk had an idea for the property next to City Hall, that the house be used as a commercial kitchen, the building in the front could be the restaurant, and the yard could be outside seating. Rich suggested having Bob Bobowsky attend a meeting, so that ideas can be discussed with him. Rich also stated that if we are going to be the trailhead for the Salmonberry Trail, we need to address and figure out the parking. Rodney Jacobs said he agreed, and he felt the Chamber of Commerce should be involved.

John Morgan spoke about some strategies that other cities have used. Jolynn Becker said that one of the items identified in the parking study, was to mark parking stalls on Main Street. Rodney asked Jolynn cost wise, what could be addressed tomorrow. Jolynn said painting parking stalls on Main Street could be done, as well as curbs. Jeff Leo stated that the perfect example is the school district. 15 vehicles could easily park in front of the school district if the spaces were marked, but the way that people park only 6-7 vehicles can park there. Rodney Jacobs also mentioned the condition of the fire hydrants around town. Jolynn said that is one of the projects for this summer is to repaint the fire hydrants. John Morgan asked if the City has a newsletter. Jolynn stated that the City and the WCSO put out a quarterly newsletter that is mailed with the water billings. John suggested finding ways to champion this to the citizens, by using a newsletter, or other way to get people to notice changes are happening. Jolynn said the city also has a Facebook page that this type of information is posted on. Marsha Kirk asked John Morgan if communication within a community is economic development. Marsha stated the community has received Ford Family Funding for this, but it can never seem to get off the ground. Rachel Nelson suggested putting up a website for promoting Banks in general, and giving businesses a spot to give updates. Rodney Jacobs asked if it could be a link off of the City of Banks website. Rodney Jacobs mentioned the Banks Community Bulletin Board on Facebook. There was general discussion regarding ways to get information out to our community. There was general discussion regarding sprucing up Main Street. John Morgan is going to take the information from this discussion, and come to the next meeting with a rough framework for the strategic plan.

Rachel Nelson let the group know that there are funds available from the Ford Family Foundation to help with funding economic development. John Morgan said that Nancy Straw with the FFF would like to meet with a delegation of community leaders to discuss the vision for Banks.

**Round Table:**

Marsha Kirk: No Comments

Rich Weitzel: The Economic Development Commission was discussed at the last Chamber of Commerce meeting. He said the overall feeling was that Banks is not business friendly, and if they had to do it all over again, they would not have established their business in Banks. He said parking was a big complaint, as well as personal property tax that are paid to Washington County.

Rachel Nelson: No Comments

Michael Nelson: No Comments

Rodney Jacobs: No Comments

Mark Walsh: No Comments

Mark Ward: No Comments

Jeff Leo: No Comments

John Morgan: No Comments

Michael Sampson: Absent

Carolyn McCormick: Absent

Doug Hixson: Absent

Pete Edison: Absent

Jolynn Becker: No Comments

**ADJOURN** The meeting adjourned at 9:12 PM. Next Regular Meeting will be held on June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 at 7:00 pm.

Submitted by:

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Angie Lanter – City Recorder