



**Banks Economic Development Commission  
September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2019  
Meeting Minutes**

---

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Economic Development Commission (EDC) was called to order by Chair Will Moore at 6:30 pm.

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Chair Will Moore, Vice Chair Kim Post, Clint Jackson, Margaret Holland, and Mayor Pete Edison (arrived after Roll Call)

Absent: Rich Weitzel, Carolyn McCormick, Mark Ward, Jeff Leo, Katie Erickson, and Marsha Kirk

Staff Present: Stacy Goldstein, City Planner; Jolynn Becker, City Manager

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

1. Approval of minutes from the August 7<sup>th</sup>, 2019 meeting  
Commissioner Clint Jackson made a motion to approve the minutes from the August 7<sup>th</sup>, 2019 meeting, Vice Chair Kim Post seconded; motion passed unanimously.

**PRESENTATIONS - None**

**BUSINESS AGENDA**

2. **Banks Renewal Program – Overview of Draft Program Plans**

The Commission discussed the four components of the Banks Renewal Program presented in the packet: Promotion, Design, Economic Vitality, and Organization. Key discussion items and changes made were as follows:

Promotion

The EDC approved Promotion previously, but reviewed the verbiage of the Promotion component and confirmed no changes were needed.

Design

Discussion regarded details on specific visuals, streets, and properties; the rewrites by Chair Moore intended to clarify objectives and specify activities; and the intent and purpose of the Design component with key comments as follows:

- The plan did not provide a visual picture, which seemed necessary. Staff cautioned against using language that conflicted with the Banks Vision 2037 Plan, which also included design considerations already vetted by the public and that would be implemented through Code

requirements. Staff would return with a synopsis of the design elements in the Vision 2037 Plan, which provided the blueprint that the EDC would “decorate”.

- The relationship between the Design component of the Renewal Program and the Vision 2037 Plan was discussed. The Vision Plan included an extensive list of projects and how to fund them and so forth, but the visual look of the town had never really been identified in any detail.
  - The Commission was to elaborate on the projects in the Vision 2037 Plan as well as establish an identity for the town to provide an anchor, some meaning or direction, for the Façade Program.
- The Commission supported the activities and objectives of the Design component, which aligned with the Vision 2037 Plan. The design elements would improve the look when driving through the town and included smaller projects that could be accomplished short term.
- The Commission discussed Branding and Identity, and the difficulty of settling on one theme for Banks, which was also heavily discussed in the Branding meeting. Banks was near farmland, forestry, and tourism with the bike trail and such. People did not want Banks to be identified as a bike hub; they wanted to keep Banks’ identity pretty generic.
- The following Identity phrases were discussed with key comments as noted:
  - “Farm, Forest, and Freestyle” Farming is obvious, but freestyle provides for a bit of creative license. People could incorporate these into their business fronts; they did not all have to be Victorian or farm style. Freestyle is part of what Banks is and it would allow for quirky little businesses with all sorts of fun stuff.
  - ‘Farming, logging/forestry, Banks Trail, racing’ Farming and logging were going away and would not support the town much longer. Banks needed support industries, not just loggers, but commodity traders and their offices.
    - One reason outsiders came to town was because of the racetrack. One reason for the Renewal Program was to bring people to Banks and get more people involved.
  - “A prosperous rural, natural resource-based community found in farming, logging, outdoor activities, and the people and activities that support them. The general look of a rural 1890 to 1950 design era, and/or modern versions of the same thing.” This was pretty all-encompassing and represented the era when Banks was prosperous, and which most people relate to; it created a picture.
    - Residential and retail buildings would have wood and/or brick appearance-like materials, pitched roofs, false fronts acceptable with some minimum percentage of glass and some maximum percentage of metal.
    - Staff suggested the language be incorporated into the Façade Improvement Program.
    - Forest Grove’s standards were too specific and did not provide a range of options within its standards.
- People should be given creative license to design their buildings and be allowed to use what they have in their design all within set parameters. Building a modern building would be fine, but it had to be a quality structure. Providing business owners creative license would keep designs interesting so no place would look the same.
- Much on the list involved City decisions: garbage cans, benches, lighting, bump outs, etc. The City could contribute more to what those things looked like than anyone’s individual building on Main Street.
- Fundamentally as an economic development committee, the EDC’s primary function was communication, which involved crafting a credible and effective message. One way to do that was to create images, create purpose and things that peak a person’s emotional component. All of the data and information was great, but how could the Committee boil it down to communicate anything effectively?
  - Visuals help give an idea of what the City is trying to achieve, along with a simple statement of simple words. The EDC needed something to communicate the look or vision of Main Street with others.
  - Staff would ask the consultant to create a display showing a couple different styles of commercial and mixed-use buildings based on the Vision Plan and incorporate the written descriptions discussed. The visuals would reflect the Committee’s direction and could be shown to business owners.

- Mayor Edison noted Council wanted the EDC to lead the City's participation in the Oregon Main Street Program, which had a lot of money available. The program was driven by projects and by creating a vibrant volunteer network and etc., which required leadership. However, a message was needed to help with leadership.
- The statement, "A prosperous rural, natural resource-based community found in farming, logging, outdoor activities, and the people and industries that support them" captured the look that the City was striving for based on the work that had already been done.

#### Economic Vitality

- While no activity correlated with "identify new ways to recruit new businesses", tasks in the Roadmap addressed identifying/attracting new businesses. The direction at this point was to concentrate on the current businesses in town; therefore, the objectives and activities should focus more on keeping existing businesses vital versus bringing in new.
  - Staff would pull from the Roadmap's task list to add more activities regarding new businesses.
  - More objectives were needed regarding existing businesses. New businesses require growth and the city was not seeing a lot of growth right now.
- Building the city's economic base was important. Thriving businesses and a growing economy would attract new businesses.
- The following changes were recommended under Objectives:
  - Amend Object 1 to state, "Establish **Enhance** relationships **with to support** existing/new businesses."
  - Delete Objective 2 "Identify ways to recruit new businesses".
  - Perhaps enhancing broadband infrastructure should be an objective.
  - Other Activities could be added at any time.

#### Organization

- Discussion included the current communication methods the City used for businesses and the community and the importance of communicating through a variety of platforms to reach the most people with key comments and changes as follows:
- There were no changes to the Objectives.
- Under Activities:
  - Replace Activities 1 and 2 delete with "**Maintain and update contact database for communication with community members and businesses.**"
  - Add "**Identify ways to leverage the City website as a more effective communication tool**", which related to the objective of establishing communication channels.
    - The City spent money to create the City's website, which was fairly new, and staff put a lot of work into it, but feedback had been somewhat negative that it was not working well as well it could and it needed to work right.
    - Staff requested feedback on ways to improve the website.
- Develop print materials. As part of enhancing relationships with business owners, create flyers with ideas on how the City can help. So that could be part of the print material.

### 3. Discussion Regarding Distinct Identity using the Banks Vision Plan 2037

The Commission briefly discussed developing a mission and purpose statement for the EDC, or the Façade Program, in general, and considered language proposed by Chair Moore.

Commissioner Clint Jackson made a motion to adopt the following mission and purpose statement for the EDC, "To enhance the economic vitality, the aesthetic pleasure, and the community pride in our town." Vice Chair Post seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Staff confirmed the consultant would be contacted about providing visual components to complement the EDC's mission and purpose statement.

#### 4. **Catalyst Project – Banks Entrance Sign**

Discussion regarded the low profile of the existing sign and the need for a taller, more prominent, welcome sign and an overview of examples provided of other communities' signs that included features telling something about that community. Ideas for the new sign included augmenting the existing sign with features like trees or an arch suggesting half of a race track and having identical signs for both entrances into town.

Staff noted this project would be outside the Façade Program and could be used to get the word out about the EDC and about doing improvements to enhance and beautify the city. The City would see if the Banks Chamber wanted to be involved with upgrading the Entrance Sign project since the Chamber had originally placed the existing sign. Staff had started the discussion with ODOT to see about moving the landslide sign, farther east of the Highway 6 exit.

The Commission and Staff discussed potential funding sources, partnering with the Chamber, and developing a concept plan. Staff offered to contact Rich Weitzel about facilitating a partnership with the Chamber and to start working on a concept plan. Next steps would be to get cost estimates and pursue funding. Staff would report to the Commission about their discussion with Mr. Weitzel and begin creating steps for improving the sign.

#### 5. **Discussion on the Drafted Banks Façade Improvement Program**

Chair Moore provided a handout that consolidated the façade examples provided previously with those included for Banks to show fundamental concepts and eligible improvements.

Key comments regarding the Façade Program and responses to Staff's questions were as follows:

- Staff confirmed Rich Weitzel's idea about a mural would be addressed once the Façade Program was established.
- Reading about what did not work in other cities was very helpful, especially on how confusing it was to figure out how much each party should pay, so one city used a straight 50/50 match.
  - Maintenance and new construction projects had been excluded because of other cities' experiences.
- Funding. Staff proposed different funding levels, for example, Level 1 for small projects and Levels 2 and 3 for larger projects as more money became available from the Urban Renewal Agency. Currently, the City had about \$28,000 for the Program and the EDC could request more funds from Council in November.
  - Three funding categories were suggested \$0–2,000, \$2000-\$5000, and \$5000-\$10,000.
  - Promoting larger programs would provide a greater impact for the city. While \$750 would cover a window display, it would not provide a lot of leverage for the City's vision.
  - The program should not cover 100% of a project; it was a hand up, not a hand out.
    - Having a simple 50/50 match across all categories was suggested; perhaps a slightly higher grant percentage would motivate people to get started.
    - With a 50/50 match, there was no need for multiple funding levels, just the \$0-\$10,000 category.
  - Large grants require that the project be something that enhances the economic development of the city or business. Last year, the Main Street Program granted \$2 million to participating cities. The Program funding cycle occurred every two years.
  - The City should identify the project categories for which grant funding would be used that paid up to 50%.
  - Criteria for receiving the City's grant funding needed to be determined.
  - The EDC could focus the City's grant funding on projects that did not meet the Main Street Program's grant criteria, so they were not giving money to people who could get funding elsewhere.
    - Information was shared about the façade improvement for Valley Arts in Forest Grove.

- Staff would find out whether main street projects had to be in place in order to apply for the Main Street Program grant funding, as well as what criteria might exclude some projects.
- Setting the grant award on a biennial schedule would make it more competitive.

The Committee consented to have a \$0-\$10,000 category 1:1 grant match. Staff would refined the verbiage to clarify that only a certain amount of money was available each year and that the grant was a 1:1 match up to a \$5,000 grant cap.

- Definition of Façade. Discussion regarded changing storefront windows to façade, which would be a more comprehensive definition to include more details, such as windows, trim, doors, gutters, downspouts, etc.; anything on the front wall.
  - Roofs provided an architectural detail impacting the front look. Changes involving the roof, like a false front, would be supported, but not maintenance or new construction projects.
  - If a request involved replacing siding, for example, design changes to improve the façade must be included.
  - Projects would require cooperation between EDC and the applicant.
  - Detailed review criteria were needed avoid legal issues when approving projects.
  - Design standards were needed to ensure the desired design to match the identity.
  - Discussion regarded having applicant use the City's consultant or one of their own, and concerns about grant money being consumed by consultant's fees. How could the City incent and still maintain control?
- Eligibility. Staff asked if it made sense and how parking lot beautification or enhancements should be addressed.
  - Having Staff craft a first draft regarding eligibility of design criteria for the EDC to review and discuss was suggested.
  - The Committee should be cautious about funding items that might not last very long, such as potted plants versus a tree planted in the ground. Longevity could be addressed by a scoring or score card system.
    - Starting with façade improvements, and then include landscaping in future rounds was suggested. Having too big and broad of projects right now might be unmanageable.
  - While \$10,000 would not being significant enough for major projects, it would be enough to completely change the look of a building, such as repainting and replacing a window.
  - Given the finite amount of money, having a first come, first served process was suggested.
  - Applicants must adhere to design standards/criteria, once defined, in order to be considered for the grant.
    - A consultant may not be required if the applicant could still meet the standards.
    - Perhaps a designer rather than an architect should be used as smaller projects were more cosmetic than structural.
    - No more than 8% of a project's cost should be spent on consulting fees.
    - Any consultant fees would be part of the grand total.
  - Similar to an RFP process, the EDC could develop questions or guidelines for applicants to address, which would then be scored and the grant awarded based on the portfolio or presentation provided.
    - Applicants would need a plan that was consistent with the EDC's program guidelines. Having only four applicants would not necessarily mean all four would receive grant money; applications must be consistent with program guidelines.
  - Staff would research what other cities do for scoring and timing, such as having application deadlines or a rolling process
- Key Façade Priorities. Staff asked if there was any merit or purpose to developing a key list of façade priorities or guidelines for applicants based on the Vision 2037 Plan requiring the buildings to meet certain criteria.

- The criteria list could not be developed until the EDC determined how to communicate the desired look or aesthetic to others.

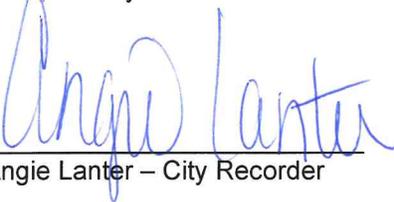
Discussion and additional feedback continued as follows:

- An easier process might be to create a brochure highlighting the desired designs and hold a meeting for anyone interested in a 1:1 match. No application process would be needed if only a few people were interested.
- The Façade Program document needed updated first, and then the City could communicate with business using a flyer with before and after pictures to show the design elements desired and explain the program and availability of funds, as well as the EDC's purpose and goals. Business owners could be invited to contact the City or attend a meeting on established date.
- The goal was to have some consistency so the EDC was on the same page. The scoring would tie back to the visual examples and questions like: Does it enhance economic vitality? Does it enhance aesthetic pleasure? Does it enhance pride?
  - The visual examples and score card would give the EDC a reference to tie into during review, establish consistency as questions arise, and facilitate the desired outcome.
  - There could be five questions, each worth 20 points, and Committee members could evaluate each project according to how the application addressed the questions. Those with the highest score would be awarded grant funding.
- Being a small community, having objective criteria was important and would also address legal issues.
- The City could hold a meeting to announce the roll out of the program and invite all interested parties. No one would be excluded if they did not attend meeting, but it would attract attention and give the City credibility for taking action. The Facade Program and objectives would be explained.
  - The City would still work one-on-one with applicants during the process.
- Michelle Reese's presentation revealed new perceptions about paint, such as using three colors and colors that were uncomfortable.

**ROUND TABLE – None**

**ADJOURN** – The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m. Next Regular Meeting would be held on Wednesday, October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2019 at 6:30 pm.

Submitted by:



Angie Lanter – City Recorder