

WASCO COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2016  
9:30 am  
MCEDD Office  
5515 East 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, The Dalles

**ATTENDANCE**

COMMISSION MEMBERS: Joan Silver, Kathy Ursprung, Nan Wimmers, Stan Kelsay (teleconference), Daniel Hunter, Mary Kramer, Terry Moore, Frank Kay and Gary Grossman

GUESTS: Scott Hege

EDC STAFF: Carrie Pipinich and Sherry Bohn

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Joan Silver called the meeting to order at 9:00 am. There was a quorum present. A round the room of introductions took place.

**MINUTES OF JANUARY 14, 2016**

Gary Grossman moved to approve the January 14, 2016 Wasco County Economic Development Commission minutes as presented. Daniel Hunter seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

**COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT PROJECT LIST:**

Carrie outlined the remaining process to finalize project ranking and to identify the EDC's strategies for 2016. She also discussed information received after the project ranking process began from the Columbia Gorge Airport. She requested the commission consider adding them as an addendum of projects not ranked.

*Discussion: Frank Key stated that he found it interesting that the water projects rose to the top. Kathy Ursprung stated that in her opinion the Food Co-Op was not ready to be ranked so highly given where they are in their fundraising process. Frank Kay noted he supported the Co-Op project but that he wasn't sure it would have a broad economic impact.. Kathy stated that she would like to see the elevator project ranked higher. Joan Silver asked for additional information on the Chenowith storm drain project's readiness and Daniel noted it would likely not move this year. Frank noted that the South Wasco Library project would be able to use the 2015 ranking to support it's fundraising and they could clear a spot in the top 10 for additional projects if it was helpful. The group discussed the Civic's progress in putting together a strong funding campaign and the opportunities for that project to move forward as a result.*

*Terry Moore expressed the need to review projects with an economic development focus vs community development and services because the EDC's mission is really about economic development. The group discussed the importance of community development projects as well but agreed that the focus in our rankings should be on economic development projects. Nan Wimmers expressed the challenges with getting enough information on projects to rank them accurately, and balancing good community development projects with economic development projects.*

Mary Kramer stated that the Dufur restroom project might be a good candidate for a technical assistance projects. Terry Moore asked Mary Kramer about the readiness vs funding questions and EDC support. Mary noted that they were ready to move on the project but just needed funding. Joan Silver discussed readiness to proceed and the need for strong local support for the project in determining rankings. Kathy stated that she looked at whether or not a project has “match” when ranking to help guide her community support measure.

Kathy also asked about the city’s discussion of the UGB expansion. Daniel Hunter stated that the UGB expansion issues are political vs economic. Gary Grossman talked about the opportunity to use the EDC’s ranking as a political message/pressure if it was ranked highly. The group agreed that they wanted to highlight the UGB expansion but did not want it ranked as the top project because of the long process to move that project forward.

The group asked Daniel about the improvement projects in Downtown The Dalles. Daniel Hunter noted that Urban Renewal funding was tight, and that even with a sale of the Granada Block there would likely not be enough money to proceed with the Downtown Parking and Downtown Streetscape Improvements projects as the funds currently stand. Gary Grossman stated the Downtown Parking project will become clearer after looking at the RFPs.

Frank Kay asked about the City of Mosier’s strategic plan and how important having that plan was. Terry noted that he is working with the City to implement their Transportation Growth Management Grant to support developing a TSP and that they were exploring opportunities to roll a broader planning process into that effort that would include much of the City’s needed strategic planning.

Joan reviewed the proposed rankings with the revisions requested during conversation. The group agreed to rank the top 10 projects, and acknowledge the rest. Terry Moore requested that a narrative be added as to why and how the rankings were done to provide along with the final rankings so that it was clear how the EDC arrived at their proposed rankings.

**Draft 2016 Wasco County Community Enhancement Project Rankings**

	<b><u>Project title</u></b>	<b><u>Proponent</u></b>
1.	City of Mosier Well #5	City of Mosier
2.	Wamic Water System Upgrade	Wamic Water & Sanitary Authority
3.	Dufur Water System Assessment	City of Dufur
4.	Dog River Pipeline Upgrade	City of The Dalles
5.	The Dalles UGB Expansion	City of The Dalles
6.	Hospital Expansion Project	Mid-Columbia Medical Center
7.	Mosier Hub (Gorge Hub Trail System)	City of Mosier
8.	Civic Auditorium Theatre Restoration	Civic Auditorium
9.	Chenoweth Area Storm Sewer	City of The Dalles
10.	Uplifting Elevator Project	Mid-Columbia Senior Center

**Additional Projects Not Ranked:**

South Wasco County Library and Civic Center	City of Maupin
Community Harvest Food Co-op Grocery Development	Community Harvest Food Co-Op
West 6th Street Widening/Traffic Signals	City of The Dalles
Youth Empowerment Shelter	Youth Empowerment Shelter
Dufur City Park-West-End Restroom Replacement	Dufur Parks & Rec. District
City of Mosier Strategic Plan	City of Mosier
The Dalles UGB Expansion	City of The Dalles
Dufur City Park-Fitness Trail	Dufur Parks & Rec. District
Mill Creek Greenway	City of The Dalles
Fire/Burglar Alarm System Repair and Upgrade	Discovery Center
Downtown Parking (Note: Contingent on Granada Block Development)	City of The Dalles
Lewis and Clark Rock Fort Improvements	City of The Dalles
Downtown Streetscape Improvements, Phase III (Note: Contingent on Granada Block Development)	City of The Dalles
The Dalles-Wasco County Community Curation	City of The Dalles
New Terminal/FBO Building	Columbia Gorge Regional Airport
Construction of Aircraft De-Icing Area:	Columbia Gorge Regional Airport

**Motion** to recommend to the Wasco County Board of Commissioners for adoption the 2016 Wasco County Community Enhancement Project Rankings as outlined above was made by Frank Kay. Kathy Ursprung seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously

Carrie stated that staff would present the EDC's Community Enhancement Project List to the Wasco County Board of Commissioners for their adoption on February 17. Carrie stated that the project list will be provided to MCEDD for inclusion in the Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. She stated that the MCEDD Board will prioritize regional projects at its March 17 Board meeting.

Carried reported that in addition to gathering information and providing rankings for projects that support economic development in Wasco County, this process is intended to inform the EDC's annual strategy and work plan. She stated that 2015's work was focused through a committee structure as well as additional projects that staff took on outside of that structure as needs and requests for assistance arose. She asked for feedback from the EDC about the structure of these committees and if they should continue to work in their focus areas. However, there are also other opportunities and current needs that should be considered before a decision is made.

*Discussion: Terry Moore stated that he thought that the process in Mosier is working well and that it has provided a good framework for his engagement in their planning processes. Gary*

*Grossman stated that he and Terry would probably want to stay engaged and continue to work with Mosier. Frank Kay expressed the need to continue with a Broadband focused committee. Mary noted she felt the Dufur work should continue, and Carrie asked her if adding the Dufur Parks project might be a good addition to that group's work. Mary agreed that it would be good to explore that. Carrie noted she wanted to continue to work with Wamic through their current planning grant and help them identify resources to support investment in the system.*

*Joan Silver asked Wasco County Commissioner Scott Hege to discuss the County Strategic Planning process currently taking place. Scott explained the history, the process and who was participating. He also noted that this effort is happening in addition to the activity around updating the County Comprehensive Plan and stated that it was not a public meeting.*

*Carrie requested the current committees to get together between now and the next meeting to develop a work plan for their 2016 activities for discussion at the next meeting. Kathy Ursprung stated that she thought that the current committees was missing the workforce issue and needed to address that strategically as doing it well could give the area a competitive advantage. Carrie suggested the Open for Business committee meet and discuss that issue as there were a lot of moving parts to that process with the Workforce Investment Board planning currently occurring.*

### **POSITION 8 VACANCY:**

Carrie Pipinich reported that EDC Commissioner Greg Johnson is no longer able to serve with the EDC due to changes in his schedule. This position is an at-large position, but has historically represented orchardists or other fruit growers. She requested that the committee members distribute the position description and interest form to their networks.

*The group discussed individuals to reach out to related to the open position and noted they would provide Carrie contact information or follow up with their contacts.*

The goal is to review potential candidates at our March 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting.

### **STAFF REPORT**

Carrie Pipinich presented the WCEDC staff report highlighting the following:

- NorCor property – Carrie reported that she has been working with Wasco County Commissioner Scott Hege and the NORCOR Property Development Work Group appointed through Regional Solutions to explore and recommend actions around the additional industrial land NORCOR currently owns next to their facility. Carrie noted that the group's recommendations will be going to NORCOR's board later in February.
- MCMC – Carrie reported that she and chair, Joan Silver, had met with MCMC staff and that they want to work with EDC on economic opportunities.

### **COMMISSIONER REPORTS:**

Daniel Hunter – Daniel reported that the City received a grant from DLCD to conduct a buildable lands study and housing inventory. The study is designed to tell what housing is available now, the current housing market in order to give a better understanding of housing needs moving forward. The study will use the density level needed to build more housing and population forecasts. He also

reported that the new city website will include economic development information designed to provide more information and direct the public to the appropriate locations for the services they need.

Gary Grossman – Gary reported that next Friday Mayor Lawrence, Dan Spatz, and he are presenting three projects to the Oregon state legislature for a request for using state economic development funds.

Frank Kay – Frank reported that the library project is moving forward. He stated that they are putting together a matching fund donation process and that grant requests are going out to large funders. Frank reported that this year will be a major year for the conversation on how to fund city hall. He stated that the city has the funds but using them would deplete the city's reserves so they are looking at additional financing strategies.

Terry Moore – Terry reported that Mosier City Administrator, Kathy Fitzpatrick, keeps Mosier moving along. He also reported that the Transportation System Plan process is moving along as discussed previously. Terry also noted that the Mosier fire district is exploring siting and building a co-location for the fire district and the city on the former UP property that is only allowed to be used for civic purposes. They received a grant from the State to do some preliminary design work, and are working to get that funding dispersed and move that piece forward.

Nan Wimmers - Nan reported that housing continues to be a huge issue for new businesses, and that the housing market locally is very tight.

Scott Hege – Scott expressed his appreciation for the time, effort and energy of EDC. He noted he is happy to see projects moving around the County.

Mary Kramer – Mary reported that Dufur has a new fire hall, new owners at The Balch and the hardware store is fully stocked.

Kathy Ursprung – Kathy reported that the Google project is moving forward and that they are starting Phase II sooner than anticipated. She noted that next week the port is submitting regional permits. Kathy reported that the port is looking at ways to be more involved with the workforce issues as they have been conducting interviews with Port businesses and this is the issue that comes up most often. She also noted that all of the transformers are on location and repairs to the Riverfront Trail will begin.

Joan Silver – Joan reported that she and Carrie had met with MCMC to discuss their expansion project. She noted that in the past MCMC have not been included on the CEP list but that they are a significant economic development driver in the community. Joan reported that the School Facilities Task Force reported to the school board. She also noted that the Wasco County Sheriff department was actively assisting in Harney County. Joan reported that the South County Parks and Recreation was beginning to form.

Meeting Adjourn at 11:35am.

Next meeting March 3<sup>rd</sup> in Wamic

*Submitted by Sherry Bohn, EDC Staff*