

**MEETING MINUTES OF
THE CITY OF ELOY
DOWNTOWN ADVISORY COMMISSION
Regular Meeting
Wednesday, June 19, 2019
3:00 PM
ELOY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Ralph Varela called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Members Present:

- Ralph Varela
- Mark Benner
- Dick Myers
- Allen J. Crawford
- Betty Peterson

Members Absent:

- Ex-Officio Joel G. Belloc, Mayor
(excused)
- Isabel Morales (excused)

Staff/Others Present:

- Jon Vlaming, Community Development Director
- Belinda Lopez, Planner
- Jeff Fairman, Economic Development Specialist
- J.W. Tidwell, City Council member

III. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

There were no members of the public in attendance.

IV. MOTION TO APPROVE THE MAY 1, 2019 MEETING MINUTES OF THE DOWNTOWN ADVISORY COMMISSION.

Chairperson Ralph Varela asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes of the Downtown Advisory Commission. Vice-Chairperson Benner made a motion to approve the May 1, 2019 meeting minutes as presented. Commissioner Crawford seconded the motion. The motion was approved with a vote 5-0.

V. OLD BUSINESS: POSSIBLE DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING.

A. REVIEW THE LEGISLATIVE DRAFT OF THE REVISED MAIN STREET/FRONTIER STREET FAÇADE GRANT PROGRAM APPLICATION.

– Mr. Vlaming explained that based on the active discussion at the last meeting (to revise the Main Street/Frontier Street Façade Grant Program application) the Commission had in front of them a clean copy with the text that remained the same and with new text that reflected their comments based on their direction/input received from the previous meeting. The primary areas of the changes were mainly focused on the financial barriers for the applicant to take advantage of the grant program-basically not having the available capital to submit an application.

Commissioner Morales suggested that the application be revised with ideas to ease the timing and amount of the applicant’s financial contribution and look into a more conducive financial draw schedule.

The Commission agreed that Staff could work to incorporate the suggested amendments and email the updates to the Commission for review before scheduling the next meeting.

B. PROVIDE UPDATE ON THE COUNCIL WORKSESSION TO DISCUSS THE MAIN STREET FAÇADE RENOVATION PROGRAM.

– Mr. Vlaming gave an update on the Main Street Façade Renovation Program and added that the City retained Core Construction, who is teamed with Architekton, and serves as the Architect who received some direction to refine and review the cost estimates for the Main Street Façade Renovation and is also working on the Public Safety Facility.

VI. NEW BUSINESS: POSSIBLE DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING:

A. REVIEW THE PRELIMINARY OPTIONS OF RETAINING/REMOVING THE DUSTBOWL THEATRE.

– Chairperson Varela opened up the item for discussion. Vice-Chairperson Benner commented that this agenda item had been brought in front of the Downtown Advisory Commission and Mr. Vlaming had worked on getting the information to provide to the Commission at a previous meeting. He continued that this item was never formalized to take to the Eloy City Council for their recommendation. The Commissioners and Staff reviewed the preliminary options and revised the Alternatives to the order that is shown below.

Alternative A: Keep the Dust Bowl as is	
Positives	Negatives
No cost to retain the building in its existing condition	The building will continue to deteriorate with the existing roof penetrations
It allows the building to remain in place for the right opportunity in the future	No stabilization will exacerbate deterioration, making future rehabilitation more expensive
A portion of the Public will be pleased that the building has been retained	The blighting influences will not be reduced
	A portion of the Public will not be pleased that the building has been retained

Alternative B: Include Dust Bowl reuse analysis as part of upcoming Downtown Master Plan	
Positives	Negatives
Can be added to scope early for planning effort cost considerations.	Will leave questions unanswered while plan is being considered, completed and approved
Recommendations would include costs considerations, list of potential uses and provide a community vision for any long-term revitalization effort if recommended	No immediate stabilization will exacerbate deterioration, making future rehabilitation more expensive
Allows for robust community conversation and input	The blighting influences on Main Street will not immediately be reduced
Allows for an informed conversation	A portion of the Public will not be pleased with any result, passion and politics will be intertwined
The elements of the Downtown plan can identify potential sources of revenue to fund recommendations	Building should be secured immediately to prevent vandalism and offset potential liability issues
Plan would identify feasible reuse opportunities	Although costs are currently unknown, may be well beyond the cost of razing and rebuilding

Alternative C: Demolish the Dustbowl	
Positives	Negatives
The site will be ready for new development	Demolition will be costly-\$125,000+?
The blighting influences at an important corner will be removed	A portion of the Public will be very disappointed or even agitated that a piece of the City's history has been permanently removed
A portion of the Public will be pleased that the building has been demolished	A portion of the Public will not be pleased that the dilapidated building has been retained

Alternative D: Upgrade the façade and stabilize the Dustbowl	
Positives	Negatives
The face of the building will provide an attractive element on Main Street	The upgrades could be costly-\$100,000-125,000?
It will provide a glimpse at what is possible with this building to market a potential user	May ultimately expend monies for a building that will not be reused
A portion of the Public will be pleased that the façade is improved and building stabilized	A portion of the Public will not be pleased that the building façade has been improved and building stabilized

Alternative E: Stabilize the Dustbowl for future options	
Positives	Negatives
It will diminish the continued degradation of the interior	The stabilization efforts could cost \$50,000-\$75,000?
It allows the building to remain in place for the right opportunity in the future	This investment may not ultimately succeed in the reuse of this building
Stabilization would include the roof- at a minimum	The blighting influences will not be reduced
A portion of the Public will be pleased that the building has been stabilized	A portion of the Public will not be pleased that the building has been stabilized

VII. COMMUNICATIONS:

Mr. Jeff Fairman gave a summary review to the Downtown Advisory Commission about the draft Pathway to Economic Prosperity document (draft economic development strategic plan). He introduced the names of the project team: Judie Scalise, ESI Corp, who is the Principal in charge, and responsible for Stakeholder Input, Market Assessment, Target Industry Analysis and Plan Development. Kevin Kugler, Michael Baker International, is responsible for the Industrial Site Assessment, Infrastructure Analysis and Plan Development. Lani Lott, LL Consulting, is responsible for the Downtown Assessment, Downtown Property and Business Owner Interviews and Plan Development.

Mr. Fairman reviewed the Planning Process: Stakeholder Input, Market Assessment, Industry Targets and Plan Development. The following were their findings: SWOT Findings-*Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities* and *Threats*. The *Strengths* are that Eloy is centrally located between Phoenix and Tucson, its proximity to major transportation and rail corridors, existing workforce in production jobs, Central Arizona College, strong civic leadership, concentration of education and civic uses downtown, Downtown festivals and events and the vacant industrial zoned land.

The *Weaknesses* are undefined image and no real brand, aging road infrastructure, absence of new workforce housing stock, slow household growth, shortage of amenities for residents and businesses, inadequate infrastructure to industrial sites, lack of available industrial buildings, absence of regional cooperation and collaboration, and under performing schools. For the *Opportunities*, there is a Downtown revitalization and adaptive reuse of old buildings, Downtown façade improvement program, leverage relationships with Sky Dive Arizona for Eloy tourism, target industry attraction, potential “Economic” corridor for electric and autonomous vehicles, new housing development to attract workforce population, transportation planning & improvements, and facilitating shovel ready sites. The *Threats* are economic development fragmentation, growing competition from other cities, a majority of sales tax is generated from I-10 businesses, the majority of property tax is generated by the correctional institutions, long term economic stagnation and a negative perception cast on the City due to the presence of the Eloy Detention Center.

Population growth projection comparison: Eloy household population growth is stagnant. Eloy Age and Gender: 51% are Males and 49% are Females. K-12 Preparation: School achievement scores lag the county and state. Educational Attainment: Eloy higher education attainment falls below Pinal County. Household by Income: Eloy average household income is \$46,627. Occupations: Eloy has a large percentage of its workers employed in Service (31%) and Production (15%) occupations. Unemployment Rate: Eloy’s historical unemployment rate is higher than the County. The Eloy worker inflow and outflow: Live and work in Eloy totals 478 workers; In-commuter workers 1,101; and Out-commuter workers 3,101. He also showed a table of the benchmarking Eloy has provided compared with other Pinal County Communities and one benchmarking employment by Industry. Eloy has identified five priority industrial sites: Sunshine Industrial Park, Toltec Business Park, Houser Road Industrial Park, 10eight Industrial Park and Bool property.

Plan execution: Success will be dependent upon: Alignment of goals and funding priorities among City departments and organizations who have a role to play in the City’s economic success; reliable multi-year operating support for the key initiatives, including work that supports job growth, capital improvements that foster economic development, and marketing

and promotion; collaboration of the public and private sector partners throughout the community/region to carry out the actions; and oversight will be managed by the Economic Development Manager in consultation with City leadership, including timely updates to City Council, Eloy Planning and Zoning Commission and Downtown Advisory Commission.

Desired outcome: Generate robust job growth within the industry clusters by maximizing the assets that Eloy has; continue to leverage the assets of downtown; guide investment in infrastructure and other capital projects to stimulate private sector development and job growth; align workforce development with industry needs; and create the branding to enhance Eloy's image within the market.

VIII. GOOD OF THE ORDER –Vice-Chairperson Benner thanked Mr. Vlaming and Staff for putting the meeting packets together.

Pinal Ways Magazine published, on June 20, 2019, an article on how Interstate 10 and Interstate 8 changed Pinal County, Council member J.W. Tidwell, Dick Myers, Tom Shope and others were interviewed.

IX. MOTION TO ADJOURN

Chairperson Varela asked for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Peterson moved for a motion to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Commissioner Crawford. The motion to adjourn passed 5-0 and the meeting adjourned at 4:23 p.m.