

**LODI CITY COUNCIL  
SHIRTSLEEVE SESSION  
CARNEGIE FORUM, 305 WEST PINE STREET  
TUESDAY, MARCH 15, 2016**

A. Roll Call by City Clerk

An Informal Informational Meeting ("Shirtsleeve" Session) of the Lodi City Council was held Tuesday, March 15, 2016, commencing at 7:00 a.m.

Present: Council Member Johnson, Council Member Mounce, Council Member Nakanishi, Mayor Pro Tempore Kuehne, and Mayor Chandler

Absent: None

Also Present: City Manager Schwabauer, City Attorney Magdich, and City Clerk Ferraiolo

B. Topic(s)

B-1 Receive Information and Request Feedback Regarding Downtown Maintenance, Capital Expenditures, and Downtown Events (PW)

Interim Public Works Director Charlie Swimley provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding downtown maintenance. Specific topics of discussion included an overview, background, maintenance, City-funded improvements, capital improvements, recommendations and feedback, and other considerations.

In response to Council Member Mounce, Mr. Swimley stated he would provide Council with a breakdown of the downtown revenue sources and how much comes from the general fund, transit, grants, and public benefit funds. He stated that, generally, transit funds are project specific, while general fund projects are for maintenance issues.

In response to Council Member Johnson, Mr. Swimley stated that the downtown area is largely Area 2 (as depicted in the PowerPoint) where the maintenance dollars are primarily dedicated; however, the funding could be expanded to a larger area.

In response to Council Member Mounce, Mr. Swimley stated that the wayfinding sign program will cost roughly \$10,000. Council Member Mounce stated she believed the program was a waste of money as the majority of the public has smart phones or GPS systems in their cars to locate and navigate to locales.

With regard to a recent survey of downtown business owners, City Manager Schwabauer stated he was discouraged to discover that the majority of responders was opposed to a downtown property owner district, which would invest funds toward improving and maintaining the area. The responses were few and negative with only three to four who stated they would support such a formation.

Council Member Mounce suggested making it mandatory that business owners clean and maintain the front of their properties versus the City taking that responsibility.

In response to Mayor Pro Tempore Kuehne, Mr. Swimley stated that staff is considering expanding the area of sidewalk cleaning to include portions of Pine and Oak Streets and to schedule cleanings every other year, which would make it more efficient for property owners to handle the day-to-day maintenance in front of their properties. Mayor Pro Tempore Kuehne stated that he believed annual sidewalk cleaning would be more beneficial; however, he explained that pressure washing may not be ideal on an annual basis. He further stated that the areas fronting bars and winetasting locations, where liquids are more likely to be spilled, need more frequent cleaning. Mayor Pro Tempore Kuehne expressed support for the wayfinding signs,

stating he was pleased with the design and size of the signs and he hoped other agencies, such as the Building Industry Association (BIA) and Visit Lodi!, would partner with the City in this program.

In response to Council Member Nakanishi, Mr. Schwabauer clarified that the downtown business owners are in favor of having the streets cleaned and maintained, but they want the City to fund that activity.

Council Member Johnson stated that initial discussions about pressure washing sidewalks was that staff was reluctant to allow civilians to perform the task because of the potential risk of damage to the pavers. He questioned if staff revisited the idea of allowing property owners to pressure wash sidewalks and suggested the concept of businesses checking out City equipment to clean the sidewalk fronting their properties. Mr. Swimley stated there was greater concern about the pavers when the infrastructure was new because the layer of sand between the pavers could become unsteady with minimal amounts of pressure. He stated, however, that this is less of a concern now that the area has matured, adding this is a concept worth pursuing.

Mayor Pro Tempore Kuehne cautioned there are laws requiring that wastewater from pressure washers be captured so as not to run into the stormwater system and that too much pressure from washers could disturb the sand, especially on the red bricks, if not handled properly. He suggested that business owners be allowed to pressure wash the yellow sidewalk and the curbs in front of their properties, but to leave the red brick to professional pressure washers. Mr. Kuehne added that pressure washers are relatively inexpensive and would be efficient for basic maintenance in front of stores.

Mayor Chandler stated he believed the function should be centralized instead of using different pieces of equipment on a variety of surface types.

In response to Council Member Nakanishi, Mr. Schwabauer stated that, when the City pressure washed the sidewalks, the contractor hired for the task used a recycling machine to capture the wastewater. Council Member Nakanishi stated this process should be handled properly and believed all downtown parties should share the cost with the City.

Council Member Mounce spoke in support of a business improvement district, stating that a similar district has done phenomenal things in San Diego and she has visualized what Lodi's alleys can become and the types of improvements that would better the downtown area with such a district. She expressed disappointment at the opposition from downtown property owners and their belief that the City should fund everything, pointing out that the City cannot adequately fund the Police Department to ensure a crime-free downtown.

In response to Council Member Mounce, Mr. Schwabauer stated that \$80,000 of the recommended downtown projects are funded by the general fund and that other capital needs will have to be sacrificed in order to pay for them. During the next year, \$200,000 in capital projects are programmed, most of which is toward the replacement of the Hutchins Street Square roof. The rest is not currently programmed, but there are other capital needs that Council can consider, as well as emergency projects that could arise. This will ultimately be a priority decision for Council on what to fund. Council Member Mounce stated she recognizes the need for the recommended projects, but she believed the Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services projects, which address health and safety concerns, are a higher priority. She hoped staff will conduct a Shirtsleeve Session to review Citywide projects, not solely a snapshot of the desired projects.

Council Member Johnson pointed out that the proposed improvements go toward protecting the \$19 million investment in downtown. He further questioned the recommendation to replace the lights on Elm Street as he believed they have no great affect on the ambience of downtown. Council Member Johnson suggested that the refurbishment of the Lodi Arch, which he believed to be a priority project, is an ideal project for Leadership Lodi or another organization to adopt as a community project.

Mayor Pro Tempore Kuehne agreed with Council Member Johnson that the Lodi Arch is an iconic

structure and should be funded, whether by the City or a community project. He further expressed support for the proposed projects that are not funded by the general fund, such as the bicycle racks, kiosk refurbishment, and the School Street arch lights, and stated he believed the Elm Street lights would provide a greater sense of security near the parking garage and would help to combat crime and beautify Lodi. In addition, that location was designed as a public space, and he believed the lighting may encourage more groups to utilize the area for the intended purpose.

Council Member Nakanishi expressed support for the projects that are not funded by the general fund and stated he would like the lights on Elm Street to be replaced and the Lodi Arch be refurbished if there is adequate funding. In addition, he believed the City should perform sidewalk cleaning as it is the City's obligation to ensure the wastewater is handled properly.

In response to Council Member Mounce, Mr. Swimley confirmed that an individual damaged the sink in the parking garage restroom, adding that it is difficult to prevent vandalism because the City does not have the means to post a guard in front of the washroom.

Council Member Johnson suggested the City consider a mandatory program that would require business owners to assist the City with alley lighting, which would aid in preventing vandalism, and he asked the City Attorney to review the legalities.

Mayor Pro Tempore Kuehne stated he was in favor of parking meters because it is a potential revenue stream for the City and further suggested the City consider a fee for utilizing the parking garage restroom, which would help with maintenance costs and potentially reduce vandalism.

Mr. Swimley provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding downtown special events. Specific topics of discussion included an overview, special event permit, application process, approval process, fees, and challenges/fixes.

In response to Council Member Johnson, Senior Engineering Technician Denise Wiman stated that staff recently implemented a process of requiring applicants for special events to obtain signatures of business owners within the potential street closure area with a 77 percent approval. Since that time, the responses from area businesses about street closures has improved. Ms. Wiman further stated that she encourages event planners to utilize the Elm Street area near the parking garage instead of closing streets as this space was designed for public use for events.

Council Member Mounce expressed appreciation to staff for reaching out to downtown business owners about street closures as these events can take away an entire day of sales from businesses and discourage tourists from visiting the area. Ms. Wiman stated that staff takes that into consideration and used the example of the Winegrape Commission, which requested closing downtown streets on a Friday night and Saturday, but staff responded that the long closure was too difficult on businesses and, therefore, did not approve the request for Saturday.

In response to Mayor Chandler, Mr. Schwabauer stated that the 77 percent approval figure was his attempt at reaching a supermajority number and that existing events were grandfathered in with regard to this process. He stated the perception is that a greater number of special events are occurring downtown and he wants to ensure downtown owners support an event as being beneficial to their business before allowing new events to take place. For the most part, the feedback from downtown owners about the 77 percent approval process has been positive.

In response to Council Member Nakanishi, Ms. Wiman stated that special events must include a first aid plan, explaining that certain events, such as the Street Faire, may require an on-site paramedic because of the large crowd, while other events may be asked to submit a plan for emergencies.

John Della Monica, representing the Downtown Business Alliance (DBA), submitted information to Council demonstrating the year-long discussions regarding the DBA, including its role, goals, and group structure, and the desire to form as a 501(c)6 organization. Long-term goals may

include health and employee benefits and become broader reaching than solely street closures. Mr. Della Monica hoped the concept of a property owner improvement district does not vanish and believed the circulation of information regarding the concept was lacking. The hope is to represent the tenant base of the businesses to reflect back to the ownership to encourage their participation, which would further benefit the tenants' growth by keeping them in the buildings. Mr. Della Monica agreed with earlier comments that street closures, particularly on a prime Saturday during the summer, can affect a business negatively by as much \$200,000 in revenue a day. The recent recognition of Lodi among the wine industry has had a positive affect on downtown, and Mr. Della Monica stated this winter cycle was improved over any in the last five years.

In response to Council Member Nakanishi, Mr. Della Monica stated that the DBA board members represent both business owners and tenants.

In response to Mayor Chandler, Mr. Della Monica agreed that the sidewalks fronting bars and wine tasting rooms are a greater maintenance issue and that he routinely power washes his property and portions of the properties abutting his. He does not believe the City should clean in front of properties, but the amount of foot traffic does require a greater amount of maintenance. Mr. Della Monica stated he could not speak for the DBA until it is fully organized, but he believed the group was not being established to raise capital. The proposed \$100 charge a year would serve as a community tool. He further stated that most business owners do not object to special events; rather, it is the timing of events while businesses are open instead of before or after hours of operation.

Clifford Weaver commented on an incident that occurred at the Transit Station, at which the Police Department was called several times to respond. He stated that he relies heavily on public transportation due to his disabilities and complained that riders are subjected to panhandlers at the Station who are vocal and assertive, as well as homeless individuals with dogs camping at bus stops and armed individuals on buses. Mr. Weaver stated that he recognizes the Police Department is understaffed, but he believed it is the City's responsibility is to ensure the public's safety, adding that a bicycle officer is desperately needed downtown.

Mayor Chandler responded that the City is also frustrated with the increase in homelessness and crime, adding that the Homeless Solutions Committee is trying to address the matter and the City is doing its best to hire more officers.

In response to Council Member Mounce, Mr. Schwabauer clarified that the Homeless Solutions Committee is not a Council-appointed committee, but some Council Members and staff sit on the self-created entity.

John Beckman with the BIA reiterated the BIA's previous offer to partner with the City on the wayfinding signage program and suggested he and staff meet to determine how to make it happen.

Nancy Beckman with Visit Lodi! stated that a significant investment was made toward downtown Lodi and it is important to keep up with maintenance. She believed the Lodi Arch should be refurbished now because deferring it will result in additional maintenance and that a priority is improving lighting and security in the downtown parking garage. Ms. Beckman agreed that pressure washing and street cleaning must be done and that businesses should be responsible for their store fronts, adding that a centralized solution is important. She thanked staff for figuring out a better solution for the wayfinding signage program and stated she found the signs to be attractive and eye-catching. She stated she has further recommendations on sign locations and expressed appreciation for the inclusion of cycling information as interest in this activity by residents and visitors is steadily increasing.

Myrna Wetzel cautioned that it may be illegal to charge patrons to utilize restrooms.

Mr. Schwabauer explained that the Lodi Police Department is inundated with calls on a daily basis and officers have reported a significant increase in calls, adding there are 150 more arrests

than this time last year. At the time the incident Mr. Weaver spoke about occurred, there were ten calls awaiting Police response. To further complicate the matter, the Police Officer did not witness the situation and the complainant refused to issue a citizen citation; therefore, there was little the Department could do. Contributing to the situation is the realignment legislation that released many criminals. Mr. Schwabauer suggested that citizens contact their State legislators to express their opposition to realignment and support for incarcerating those who should be.

Pat Patrick with the Lodi District Chamber of Commerce stated that, despite the majority of individuals who are technologically-advanced, many tourist communities rely heavily on wayfinding signs to welcome visitors and point them to amenities and he believed there was value to the signage. In response to Mr. Patrick, Mr. Schwabauer stated that the smaller wayfinding signs are older and have been standing for the last 15 to 20 years. Mr. Patrick stated he did not receive a survey and suggested that the question format may have contributed to business owners viewing this issue as a tax and a City responsibility. If, instead, the questions were more visionary and demonstrated improvements in downtown and an increase in property values, the turn-out may have been more positive. Mr. Patrick believed the Elm Street lights could be postponed, adding that the location was designed to be an event place, but the planning was poor because of what surrounds the area. He further stated that the lights on the Gateway Arch are unnecessary, but he was in favor of the bicycle racks and kiosks. The parking situation in the downtown areas is a challenge, and he suggested revisiting the set-up and determining a better method to address it. Mr. Patrick further expressed support for the arch rehabilitation as a community project and the 77 percent business approval of special events, adding that greater effort may be necessary with wineries to understand businesses' concerns regarding street closures.

C. Comments by Public on Non-Agenda Items

None.

D. Adjournment

No action was taken by the City Council. The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 a.m.

ATTEST:

Jennifer M. Ferraiolo  
City Clerk