



**Minutes**  
**BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**  
**Monday March 22, 2010**

**Commission Members Present:** Chair Robert Agee, Greg Phister, Sydney Vergis, Michael Faust,  
Dave Robert (Alternate), Finance and Budget Commission Liaison,  
Donald Palm

**City Council Liaisons Present:** Ruth Asmundson

**City Staff:** Sarah Worley, Economic Development Coordinator  
Brian Abbanat, Economic Development Specialist

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1. **Determination of Quorum and Seating of Alternates** - Quorum determined  
Absent: Richardson, Hruban, Saylor (Alternate)
  2. **Approval of Agenda** - Approved 7:06
  3. **Public Comment** - No comments
  4. **Approval of Minutes** - February 22, 2010 Approved 7:09 p.m.
  5. **Sacramento Metro Chamber presentation on Metro Pulse Business Retention Program**

Staff introduced Matt Yancey, from Sacramento Metro Chamber of Commerce, who oversees the Metro Pulse program. Program includes a partnership including 16 regional Economic Development programs and is currently supported by contributions from member jurisdictions. Metro Chamber is the managing partner. Program mission is to promote success and growth of region's businesses, with a focus on business retention and maintaining the growth of existing businesses.

MetroPulse has a client relation management system that includes information about the business and ability to track what services are provided to it. MetroPulse program also uses a "Business Walk" model with organized event with business outreach team allowing many outreach interviews to be conducted at one time (100-200 businesses on one day). These impromptu visits allow a brief initial contact that has been found to be productive. They help to gain a broader view and learn more about most pressing business needs. MetroPulse partners in the region have connected with over 2,300 employers over the past two years allowing the ability to report on economic development trends locally and in the region.

Commissioners questioned who does the outreach and how often are businesses contacted? Yancey responded that it would be City staff and business leaders from the community who volunteering to go out and walk. About 2/3 of the volunteers are business owners. Other 1/3 are staff front liners whose input has proven to be as valuable for the purposes of the Business Walk. They go out in groups of two and three and ask three questions. How is business? What do you like about doing business in (*Davis*)? What should be done about improving doing business in (*Davis*)? It's a conversation, not a survey. The program also allows for ongoing business outreach done on an incremental basis. The external software program provider

Execu-Pulse is responsible for system maintenance, information security, etc. The program allows economic developers to make sure the business community is getting what they need, the “quarterback” in customer service for businesses. It allows referrals and transparent follow-through.

Staff shared understanding of how the software application works and how other departments might be involved based on their contacts with the business community.

Yancey stated the program helps to make economic development a citywide service, and leverage human resources.

Staff shared that the program will better enable reporting back on the findings from outreach visits. The Commission has been asking for more than hearing anecdotal data. Business retention is a priority for the City. This program is set up so many people can be involved in it, collect data, and report back. The program can help to create a business inventory with more depth of information than simply what is on the business license form.

Commissioner raised a question about how many city people have to know how to use the system?

Yancey replied that it is up to each jurisdiction. Recommendation was that at least one person from each city department. Purpose is to streamline communication. It seems to work best where the economic development staff has a contact in each city department.

Commissioner raised question about the nature of the contract.

Staff responded that if the Yolo County Economic Development group got the Yolo County grant, a \$5k fee/city would allow Davis and other Yolo County cities to use the MetroPulse program for two years. The remaining bulk of Davis’s share of the grant (\$35K) would be used to contract with the Greater Sacramento Small Business Development Center to provide businesses with the business support services they identified as needing the most. As Davis has a high commitment to volunteerism, the City will be working with business organizations to organize its own business walk.

Commissioners commented that the system software sounds like an infrastructure investment to improve how the city handles business outreach and can become a platform to change the way the city can do case management.

**6. Business Park Land Strategy – Overview of Study Conclusions** – Staff made a power point presentation providing an overview of the conclusions of the Draft Business Park Land Use Strategy Report and described the general review process. The draft study report would be provided for Commission review and discussion at the April meeting. Highlights cited in presentation, The Draft BPLS Report:

- Summarizes current economic development policy
- Quantifies the value of knowledge-based business growth in Davis
- Analyzes the Davis economy, UC Davis activities contributing to business growth and entrepreneurialism, and economic development partnerships that will play a key role in future business growth
- Draws conclusions regarding the Davis business climate via interviews with the Davis business community across a broad spectrum of “key informants”

- Provides 25-year business growth projections
- Quantifies the economic impact of two future business growth projection scenarios as well as a hypothetical “business park”
- Analyzes the Davis vacant commercial land inventory and ability to accommodate future business growth in the 25-year timeframe
- Provides an implementation strategy to facilitate future business growth

The BPLS draws several primary conclusions resulting from the above analysis:

- The study confirms Davis’ economic development policy framework focusing on technology, life science, and knowledge-based business growth is appropriate for this community, complementing Davis economic and workforce strengths.
- Economic analysis of research and development and manufacturing activities by local technology companies confirms substantial benefit to the local economy.
- Based on historical business growth, 39 interviews with “key informants” across a wide range of the Davis business community, and business growth projections, Davis is poised for substantial growth in knowledge-based industries.
- Davis’ land supply represents immediate as well as future challenges to facilitating future business growth, particularly if the vacant 100 acre industrially zoned property at 1111 E. Covell Blvd is developed for other uses.
- The study confirms that while Davis has historically played a passive role in facilitating business growth, a more proactive role needs to be played in the future. This is needed particularly in knowledge-based industries to ensure Davis capitalizes on its competitive advantages and desired business

## **7. Staff Communication/Updates**

Staff shared that the City Council approved addition of three new non-voting ex officio to the Commission; one from each of the following business organizations: Davis Downtown Business Association, Chamber of Commerce and Yolo County Visitors Bureau. It’s possible they could be seated by the next meeting. City application to be considered for Google Broadband fiber community project was noted. Commissioners were also reminded that their Form 700 conflict of interest forms are due. Trader Joe’s was to begin construction in April. Forever 21 is serious about coming and involved in continuing negotiations for the former Gottschalks space.

Success of Business Award ceremony was noted, idea to pursue banners to publicly acknowledge winners. Discussion about improving process for business award recipients.

Resignation of Vice Chair Hruban noted, need for new commissioners discussed. Suggestions from Commission members encouraged.

## **8. Subcommittee Updates and Organization**

- Work Plan – no report, subcommittee was not able to meet last month.
- Economic Indicators - first steering committee meeting went well. Next focus to learn how committee members would like to participate. Subcommittee meeting to be scheduled to debrief, address questions raised, including budget.

## **9. Future Agenda Items**

Business Park Land Strategy Report  
Report on Redevelopment Projects  
Downtown Signage

Meeting adjourned at 9:36 p.m.