



CITY OF MILPITAS

Economic Development and Trade Commission

DRAFT SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

Monday, February 10, 2025
Committee Conference Room
Milpitas City Hall, First Floor
455 E. Calaveras Blvd. Milpitas

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Norwood called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Permit Navigator Nat Sandoval led the pledge of allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Economic Development Coordinator Michael Thomas called the roll.

PRESENT: Chairperson Chris Norwood, Commissioners Bill Bhagvat, Larry Ciardella, Parkash Daryani and Jacob Sanchez.

Alternate #1 Conrad Schapira, Alternate #2 Michael Nguyen

Student Commissioner Vasista Ramachandrani

City Council Liaison Councilmember William Lam

Staff: Director of Economic Development & Strategic Initiatives Alex Andrade, Economic Development Coordinator Michael Thomas, Economic Development Specialist Khaled Zubair and Permit Navigator Nat Sandoval

ABSENT: Vice-Chair Lynne Rice, Commissioner Casey McNeil

SEATING OF ALTERNATES

Alternate Member No. 1: Conrad Schapira was seated in place of Vice-Chair Rice

Alternate Member No. 2: Michael Nguyen was seated in place of Commissioner McNeil

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Recommended Action: Approve February 10, 2025 regular meeting agenda of the Economic Development & Trade Commission as submitted.

Mover / Second: Schapira / Norwood

Motion carried by a vote of: AYES: 7 NOES: 0

Ayes: Norwood, Schapira, Bhagvat, Daryani, Ciardella, Sanchez, and Nguyen

Noes: None **Abstentions:** None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Recommended Action: Approve January 13, 2025 special meeting minutes of the Economic Development & Trade Commission as submitted.

Mover / Second: Schapira / Sanchez

Motion carried by a vote of: AYES: 7 NOES: 0

Ayes: Norwood, Schapira, Bhagvat, Daryani, Ciardella, Sanchez, and Nguyen

Noes: None **Abstentions:** None

PUBLIC FORUM

No speakers provided comments.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Bhagvat requested the assistance of staff to prepare a questionnaire to assist in outreach to the hospitality sector.

Student Commissioner Ramachandrani summarized a recent intermural technology competition that the Milpitas High School (MHS) students attended in Mountain House. MHS students placed first in video game design and drone operation, as well as second place in coding, and third place in digital video production.

Commissioner Ciardella reminded the Commission about the Milpitas Chamber of Commerce's Crab Feed on March 14. Commissioner Ciardella also drew attention to the economic impact of the upcoming Super Bowl in 2026. Chair Norwood requested updates on the staff's strategy and planning for the Super Bowl and the FIFA World Cup in relation to the Commission's work plan.

Chair Norwood reported that Milpitas Unified School District (MUSD) is continuing to move forward on Innovation Campus Extension Programming with Adult Education and NovaWorks. Mr. Norwood also drew attention to the ongoing impact of federal immigration policy on MUSD students, as well as aspects of the District's response.

Councilmember Lam updated the Commission on an increase to the City's Storm Impact Fee in some areas of Milpitas. Mr. Lam also summarized City Council's recent action on Community Development Block Grant funding priorities and informed the Commission of a 9% increase in the City's garbage fee.

Permit Navigator Sandoval explained City Council's priority to improve and streamline the permitting process and provided an update on the steps that the City is currently taking.

Economic Development Specialist Zubair invited Commissioners to attend the City's AI Made Simple workshop taking place that evening at 5:30 PM.

BUSINESS ITEMS

9a. Milpitas Commercial Real Estate Profile – Commissioner Sanchez

Recommended Action: Receive a presentation on the state of Milpitas' Commercial Real Estate market.

Chair Norwood introduced the agenda item and Commissioner Sanchez presented a slide deck on the competitive advantages of the Bay Area, including educational institutions, logistics, and supply chains. The presentation also covered interest rates, Milpitas' commercial real estate inventory and a market analysis/forecast.

No public comment was provided.

Commissioners discussed the details of the presentation and Commissioner Sanchez provided additional clarification on the commercial real estate leasing process.

Mover / Second: Daryani / Schapira

Motion carried by a vote of: AYES: 7 NOES: 0

Ayes: Norwood, Schapira, Bhagvat, Daryani, Ciardella, Sanchez, and Nguyen

Noes: None **Abstentions:** None

9b. Commission Work Plan Prioritization

Recommendation: Identify work plan action items to be prioritized in 2025.

Chair Norwood introduced the agenda item and explained its nexus to the Commissioner Handbook. Economic Development Coordinator Thomas provided remarks on this item. Commissioners selected work plan items for which to volunteer according to their interests and backgrounds.

Mover / Second: Schapira / McNeil

Motion carried by a vote of: AYES: 7 NOES: 0

Ayes: Norwood, Schapira, Bhagvat, Daryani, Ciardella, Sanchez, and Nguyen

Noes: None **Abstentions:** None

9c. Regular Meeting Schedule

Recommendation: Determine if there is support to adjust meeting start time for future regular meetings and agendaize such consideration at a future regular Commission meeting.

Chair Norwood introduced the agenda item. Economic Development Director Andrade provided remarks on this item.

No public comment was provided.

After discussion, the Commission voted that the current regular meeting start time at 4:30 pm shall remain unchanged and requested that special start times be communicated in advance.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn the meeting.

Mover/Second: Daryani / Sanchez

Motion carried by a vote of: AYES: 7 NOES: 0

Ayes: Norwood, Schapira, Bhagvat, Daryani, Ciardella, Sanchez, and Nguyen

Noes: None **Abstentions:** None

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MEMORANDUM

Office of Economic Development



DATE: March 10, 2025
TO: Economic Development and Trade Commission
FROM: Margaret Tamisiea, Sr. Special Projects Associate
VIA: Alex Andrade, Director of Economic Development & Strategic Initiatives
SUBJECT: **Item 9a – Main Street Revitalization Update**

BACKGROUND:

The City of Milpitas has prioritized Main Street revitalization through several initiatives including:

- Economic Development Strategy – Strategy 31 focuses on positioning Midtown (Main Street) for business growth opportunity sites
- 2040 General Plan Update Economic Development Element Action ED-2c. Evaluate the feasibility of creating business improvement districts (BID) to fund improvements and maintenance that supports economic development.
- ARPA Funding – Main Street Revitalization with funds allocated for the attempted P-BID formation effort and Storefront Improvement Grant Program.

The Economic Development and Trade Commission's 2024-2025 Workplan requests members to serve on the City Council's *ad hoc* Main Street Revitalization Sub-Committee and to:

- Volunteer as ambassadors to assist city staff with business outreach for re-building Main Street and re-establishing a business association along Main Street
- Advance placemaking concepts, activation of the Main Street area or related tasks
- Participate in a future potential Main Street Business Association

ANALYSIS:

Forming a Business Association

The City of Milpitas hired the consulting firm Community Strong Strategies in September 2024 to conduct community outreach, create support for the formation of a Downtown Business Association, and determine if a Business Improvement District (BID) was feasible in the future.

Economic Development staff and Community Strong Strategies (CSS) have conducted five business walks. Staff visited over 100 businesses within the downtown boundary (Main and Abel Streets, from Winsor Street to Curtis Avenue) to promote the benefits of creating a business association.

Over the past several months, business owners have met regularly and have since established a board of directors appointing officers, and approving bylaws. CSS is providing ongoing training to the board and assisting with filing Articles of Incorporation to create a legal nonprofit organization with 501(c)6 status. A 501(c)6 organization is a not-for-profit association of people with some common business interest with

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the purpose of promoting this common interest and its activities directed to improve business conditions. A 501(c)6 organization's primary activity does not include performing services for individual persons. The association has adopted the name **Historic Milpitas Downtown Business Association**.

In the next six months, the consultant will assist the association with goal setting, identifying potential funding opportunities and creating marketing strategies. City staff will continue to support the association and address issues raised by the association (i.e., safety and security, homelessness and land use).

Night Market Event

The City Council has expressed interest in creating a night market and food truck event on Main Street. Staff researched the approaches of other local communities regarding these types of events and identified four companies that produce the majority of such events in the South Bay Area. The companies included Moveable Feast, Off the Grid, Food Truck Mafia, and Culture Night Market. After talking with each of the four companies, staff determined that Moveable Feast would offer the best event for Milpitas' Downtown. Moveable Feast representatives attended a special EDTC meeting on August 12, 2024, have walked the Main street area with staff and have submitted a proposal to the City. The proposal highlights Moveable Feast's years of experience and specific insights into what will work at the Main Street location.

Economic Development staff is committed to creating events that will activate Main Street and bring the community together. This two-day family-friendly event on Main Street will feature local vendors, restaurants and musical performers to create a unique placemaking event in Milpitas. While other event operators can produce Night Markets, staff notes Moveable Feast's ability to brand and promote the event to the target audience to help make the event successful for the Milpitas community. Additionally, Moveable Feast has more experience working with newly formed business associations and understands how these types of events can be catalysts for community engagement.

During their events in the South Bay, Moveable Feast has demonstrated strong marketing skills through their expertise in community branding, use of social media content, and event promotion. Moveable Feast will develop a unique logo, poster and marketing materials for this event. Their ability to create a compelling visual brand and promotional content will help attract a new audience to Main Street. Furthermore, Moveable Feast has a proven track record in managing social media campaigns and producing community-based events including the Berryessa, Gordon Biersch, and Story Road night markets in San Jose.

The cost of producing the two-day Night Market event is \$30,000 for the following costs:

- **Staffing:** A dedicated team of at least six staff members, including two senior staff overseeing all aspects of the event from set-up to breakdown, ensuring seamless execution. Responsibilities include vendor coordination, signage placement, decor setup, and on-site troubleshooting.
- **Event Planning:** Manage the event from conception to execution, developing the overall strategy, timeline, and necessary materials, including instructions and event maps, to ensure seamless coordination among all stakeholders.

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- **Vendor Management:** Leveraging its extensive network of over 1,500 local vendors, Moveable Feast will handle vendor outreach, selection, admission, preparation, and on-site support, drawing from its deep expertise in small business vendor management.
- **Entertainment Booking:** Oversee the selection, coordination, and management of entertainers, community groups, and cultural organizations, curating a lineup that reflects and enhances the Milpitas Night Market experience.
- **Permits & Logistics:** Navigate the necessary approvals, ensuring compliance with city, county health, and fire department regulations.
- **Rentals Coordination:** Source and oversee essential rentals including staging, lighting, generators, seating, restrooms, crowd control barriers, and waste management solutions.
- **Third-Party Services:** Coordinate and manage third-party services, including security, janitorial, and emergency medical support, ensuring smooth event operations.
- **Marketing & Promotion:** Lead branding, social media marketing, and advertising efforts, creating promotional content, engaging with the target audience, and capturing media assets for future events.

This is a pilot project, which staff will evaluate the success of the event in consideration of prospective future events.

RECOMMENDATION

Receive the update and provide feedback on event planning.

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DATE: March 10, 2025
TO: Economic Development and Trade Commission
FROM: Kal Zubair, Economic Development Specialist
VIA: Alex Andrade, Director of Economic Development & Strategic Initiatives
SUBJECT: **Item 9b – Debrief of AI Made Simple Workshop**

BACKGROUND:

The Office of Economic Development has launched a business resource workshop series for 2025. The series is an implementation of policies from the Milpitas 2040 General Plan and the Economic Development Strategy. The nexuses of the workshop series to these policies are detailed below:

Milpitas 2040 General Plan, Economic Development Element:

- Action ED-5g Support programs that offer technical assistance to local business owners, including seminars, marketing, consulting, and other key services.
- Action ED-5h In collaboration with the Chamber of Commerce, focus resources to help retain and expand small businesses including women and minority-owned businesses.

Economic Development Strategy:

- Action 2.1: Maintain and enhance relationships with nonprofits, foundations, and lenders that provide technical assistance or financial assistance to small businesses and refer local small businesses to available resources.
- Action 5.1: Restart the small business outreach program in partnership with organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce and Silicon Valley Small Business Development Center.
- Action 5.2: Conduct regular workshops, in partnership with the Silicon Valley Small Business Development Center, that direct small businesses to available resources.

The first workshop of the series, *AI Made Simple*, was held on February 10, 2025. The Office of Economic Development partnered with FalconX to facilitate the workshop's instruction. Other partners that supported the event included Milpitas Unified School District (MUSD), the Milpitas Chamber of Commerce, the Silicon Valley Small Business Development Center (SBDC), and San Jose State University (SJSU).

In December 2024, Economic Development staff administered a survey to small businesses throughout Milpitas to help inform the planning of February's *AI Made Simple* workshop. Responses were leveraged by staff during the planning of the workshop's content and organization to maximize impact on local businesses in Milpitas. Staff coordinated with the event's supporting partners in marketing the workshop.

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ANALYSIS:

The event was well-attended, with over 140 attendees, including Mayor Carmen Montano, Councilmember William Lam, EDTC Commissioner Jacob Sanchez, EDTC Student Commission Vasista Ramachandruni, and a representative from state Senator Aisha Wahab's office. The instructors covered basic AI concepts and highlighted three local small businesses as case studies to demonstrate how AI can be incorporated into their workflows to further productivity and efficiency.

The attendee count indicates an approximately 64% conversion rate from registration to attendance, which is high for a free City-organized event. The feedback staff received from attendees was overwhelmingly positive, which reinforces the notion that the Milpitas community is eager to learn more about how AI can impact their lives and businesses. In response to this clear demand, Economic Development staff are actively exploring opportunities to expand AI-related programming. Future workshops will adopt a more targeted approach, focusing on specific AI applications relevant to businesses and entrepreneurs. To ensure effective learning and measurable outcomes, a progress-tracking mechanism may be implemented, allowing staff to monitor their understanding, skill development, and outcomes.

Recognizing the valuable expertise of EDTC Commissioners, staff seeks their sector-specific guidance in planning future workshop events. Commissioners have unique insights into their respective industries and can advise staff on how best to reach businesses that would benefit most from the workshop series' content.

RECOMMENDATION

Receive the presentation and provide guidance on planning future business engagement events.

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DATE: March 10, 2025
TO: Economic Development and Trade Commission
FROM: Michael Thomas, Economic Development Coordinator
VIA: Alex Andrade, Director of Economic Development & Strategic Initiatives
SUBJECT: **Item 9c – Commission Member Name Badges**

BACKGROUND

During the Economic Development and Trade Commission's (EDTC) FY 2024-25 Work Plan discussion in October 2024, Commission members inquired about obtaining name badges to identify them at public and professional events. The request was made since the only current identifier the City provides to Commission members is 50 business cards per year. Staff has agendaized this item for the Commission to consider allocating funds from the EDTC's annual \$1,000 budget to purchase name badges.

ANALYSIS

The 50 business cards issued to Commission members annually is a limited resource to use during a 12-month period given the number of annual public and professional events commissioners participate in as representatives of the City and Economic Development and Trade Commission including engagement with the business community. Name badges provide a professional tool to identify commission members to the business representatives and community members and others they encounter in their official roles as commissioners.

Staff researched costs to provide one badge for each current EDTC member for a total of 10 badges fabricated of metal material to feature magnetic backings to avoid damaging clothing as could happen with badges featuring pinning mechanisms. As of the writing of this memo, staff obtained two cost estimates for at \$125.00 and \$136.00 from fabricators and is awaiting a third estimate.

FISCAL IMPACT

City Council allocates \$1,000 annually towards approved work plan tasks and projects, and administrative costs related to the Commission. Purchasing name badges would fall under administrative costs like business cards. Current fund balance as of the writing of this memo is \$425.00, which said balance can be expended up to June 30, 2025. The EDTC's budget will reset to \$1,000 on July 1.

Commissions that determine a need for additional funding shall return to City Council with a stated request for more funds and their purpose. City Council shall approve or deny any request for such expenditures.

Certain Commission work plans call for fundraising efforts. Those funds may be used for events, contributions to non-profits, or for other City services. Money raised on behalf of the City of Milpitas will be held by the City as part of and in accordance with best practices of the Finance Department. Disbursement of those funds require City Council approval. City staff works with commissions and advisory bodies to ensure proper accounting procedures and practices are followed to reflect compliance with City and state regulations.

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RECOMMENDATION

Request staff to purchase name badges.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Do not allocate funds to obtain name badges.

Pro: Funds can be used for other Commission-related costs.

Con: Commission members will continue to receive their annual allotment of 50 business cards.

2. Request funds be allocated for another type of identifying accessory.

Pro: Obtain a different identifying accessory the Commission prefers

Con: Cost unknown