

Staff Report

January 22nd, 2019 City of Prineville City Council Meeting

Staff: **Casey Kaiser** Department: **Community Development**
Subject: **Downtown Improvement Grants/Downtown Development Update**

Council Action:

Consider voting to approve the recommendation of the Downtown Strategic Planning committee to fund three Downtown Improvement Grant applications for fiscal year 2018/19, and authorize staff to distribute grant funds in the total amount of \$6,675.00 when the projects are completed.

Background:

The Prineville City Council budgeted \$10,000.00 in the 2018/19 Fiscal Year budget for the Downtown Strategic Planning (DSP) Committee. The majority of these funds were anticipated to be used for funding the Downtown Improvement Grant (DIG) program. The DIG program was put in place by council at the recommendation of the DSP committee in order to encourage businesses and property owners within the downtown area to make improvements the exterior features of their businesses. The overarching goal of the program is to continually enhance the visual appeal and attractiveness of the Prineville downtown.

The DSP committee is tasked each year with reviewing grant applications, determining which meet the grant criteria, and ultimately determining which should be recommended to council for funding.

This year the DSP Committee received 3 applications for DIG funds and is recommending all three projects for approval and funding. The three projects are summarized as follows.

Applicant #1:	Foundry Four Spirits, LLC
Property:	127 & 129 NW 4 th Street
DSP Recommendation:	Approve and Fund
Total Project Cost:	\$5,000.00
Grant Amount	\$2,500.00
Project Description:	Exterior paint and logo mural applied to east facing wall of building. Logo to be painted in historic style found on turn of the century buildings by award winning firm. Paint and mural will provide a visual attraction and point of interest to passersby and the surrounding neighborhood.

Applicant#2:	Ochoco Brewing Company
Property:	380 N Main Street
DSP Recommendation:	Approve and Fund
Total Project Cost:	\$3,350.00
Grant Amount:	\$1,625.00
Project Description:	Facade refinish and repainting. Apply bold red/brown exterior paint on street facing stucco surfaces, clean and treat wood shingles, paint trim, and paint street level area below awning.

Applicant #3:	Windermere Real Estate/Room 1868
Property:	150 NW 4 th Street
DSP Recommendation:	Approve and Fund
Total Project Cost:	\$13,000.00
Grant Amount:	\$2,500.00
Project Description:	Replace aging lava rock façade with red brick, new exterior paint, new flashing, new top paint design, and new sign for Room 1868 to match style of sign for Windermere currently in place.

With the approval of City Council all three grants will be awarded and staff will be authorized to distribute the funds upon verification of completion of each project.

The amount funded will be \$6,625.00 and will contribute to a total of \$21,350.00 of façade and exterior improvements to buildings within the downtown area.

Staff Comments/Recommendations:

The DSP Committee reviewed all three grant applications over the course of two separate meetings discussing how each would contribute to the beautification and visual appeal of the downtown. The DSP committee approved one of the three applications as it was submitted. The committee felt that two of the three applications as originally submitted did not sufficiently contribute to the overall visual appeal of our downtown and directed staff to contact those applicants and offer suggestions as to how their projects could better contribute to the visual appeal of the downtown. Both of those applicants took the recommendations of the DSP committee and modified their projects to better serve the intent of the grant program. The DSP committee reviewed their modified applications and voted to approve them.

Downtown Development Update:

In September of 2018 the consultant selected by the Downtown Strategic Planning committee completed an updated assessment of our downtown. One of the key results of the assessment was a recommendation that our downtown revitalization efforts could benefit from an active downtown association with a strong presence from the business and property owners in our downtown. It is critical to the continued development of our downtown to have the participation of the business and property owners. Many funding mechanisms (grant programs, urban renewal districts, etc.) require or prefer communities that have a strong citizen led downtown association.

While the council formed Downtown Strategic Planning committee has been instrumental in several projects that have benefitted the development of our downtown, there has not been a strong presence on the committee of downtown property and business owners.

Based on research into funding mechanisms and the recommendations of the consultant, staff began discussions with downtown business and property owners in attempts to determine interest in engaging in downtown development and revitalization efforts. As a result of those discussions there is currently a group of downtown business/property owners who have begun working towards creating a formal downtown association. At present the group seems to have momentum and enough resources to create a formal downtown association.

If the downtown association formalizes and begins to function well, council may want to consider whether there is need for continuing the Downtown Strategic Planning Committee. A functioning downtown association could fill the role the DSP committee is in currently for council. This group may be able to provide the City with the needed input on projects within the downtown area.