

# City of Monmouth

## City Manager's Report

*A Report on City of Monmouth News, Happenings, Successes and Other Items*

*September 24, 2012*

### **Pro Business**

A question comes up in communities periodically asking whether the City government is pro-business, or supportive of local businesses. I would argue that the City of Monmouth is highly supportive of our local businesses. Economic development and fostering a positive business environment are ongoing goals for the City Council. We see healthy businesses as fostering a healthy community. Here's why I think the above statement is true: **1) We offer high quality, responsive services.** This includes very affordable utility services (very cheap electricity), great amenities, such as our parks, well-maintained streets and our great Library and Senior Center, staff that is easy to get to and will work to help a business with any issue, a very professional and effective police force and solid overall management. **2) We are proactive towards growth.** Once completed this summer, we will have significantly expanded and renovated our water, sewer and electric utility systems to meet current needs and future growth. We also keep our development codes up to date and fresh. **3) The City is very serious about supporting our commercial areas through urban renewal.** We have had an active program for several years providing grants to Downtown businesses to help with façade improvements. We completed a major project on the S-Curves. The Downtown is currently undergoing a streetscape project and the building of a new Main Street Park Fountain, we are planning for a new amphitheater in Main Street Park, we have planted dozens of trees in the downtown area, City Hall was renovated, key downtown properties have been purchased by the City to support development, incentives have been

provided to help projects move forward and we initiated a plan help bring a large mixed use project to downtown, across from City Hall. **4) We are active in local business organizations.** I am on the Board of Directors for the Monmouth-Independence Chamber of Commerce. Both myself and the Community Development Director are active in the Monmouth Business Association. Staff interacts regularly with regional and state economic development officials. **5) We promote events that bring people to Monmouth.** We host the annual 4<sup>th</sup> of July activities in Main St. Park and are strongly involved in the Music in the Park series. We coordinate with events like the Mel Brown Jazz Camp and Cycle Oregon to get participants into our businesses. **6) We initiated and strongly support MINET,** which provides stellar, low-cost high powered services to our business community and provides a good reason to move to Monmouth. **7) We continuously promote our businesses.** New businesses are featured in our Community Notes and on our Facebook page. The above seems pretty "pro" to me.

### **Downtown Construction Update**

With waterline projects complete along Main Street and Monmouth Ave. the focus of downtown construction is on the streetscape project. The streetscape project is designed to closely mirror the look of the street on the "upper" blocks of downtown. With a lot of underground utility work completed, construction crews are moving on concrete work, which includes laying new street corner sections and sidewalks. The intersections of Main and Ecols and Catron Streets are seeing heavy activity at this time. Once the concrete work is done,

paving crews will move in and work will start on installing street furniture, trees and new streetlights.

### **Main St. Park Fountain**

Planning for the new Main St. Park Fountain is going very well. With valuable assistance from the City's Arts and Culture Commission and Parks and Recreation Board, the fountain design was finalized, which includes a piece of art and lighting. City Council approved the final budget for the project at its last meeting. Final design details are in process and we will be going out to bid in a few weeks. The project has a spring completion date, which will give the contractor plenty of time to finish the job. Below is the selected design:



### **Warren St. Project**

The City has been working with a development consultant to create a plan for developing the east ½ block across from City Hall. The project area includes the vacant lot along Main St., the old fire station and the WOU parking lot. The thrust of the project is to prepare a solid idea for use of the lots and then shop it to developers, hoping that a firm may be interested. The developer could build something similar to our conceptual plan, or they could take a different tack. Either way, our aim is to have this underutilized block developed to add to our downtown's already great vitality. As envisioned, the conceptual building would be two to four stories tall and would encompass retail, office and residential uses. We had a very

well attended workshop a few weeks ago to present the plan. Monmouth citizens engaged in a great discussion of the project and were supportive of the idea. Next steps include creating a development outline for the project and then contacting potential development firms. An architect rendering of the proposed building is shown below:



### **New Building at Monmouth and Main**

If you haven't been by the corner of Monmouth and Main lately, the building that replaces the one lost to a fire last year is going up very quickly. The new building will feature two commercial spaces at street level and apartments on the second floor. The City provided incentives to assist this project and has installed a new waterline to serve the building and upgraded electric service in this block.

If you have any questions about items in this report or anything related to the City, please call me at 503-751-0146 or e-mail me at [smcclure@ci.monmouth.or.us](mailto:smcclure@ci.monmouth.or.us).

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