



COUNCIL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES – April 7, 2025

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Salinas called the regular meeting to order at 5:01 p.m.

ATTENDANCE: (September 2024-July 2025)

Meeting Attendees	Present 04/7/25	All Meetings Year to Date		Meetings Mandated By Resolution	
		Present	Absent	Present	Absent
Mayor Salinas	✓	6	0	6	0
Council Member Andrews	✓	6	0	6	0
Council Member Bonilla	✓	4	2	4	2

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Ana Alvarez, City Manager; Sara Buizer, Development Services Director; Paul Nguyen, Chief Economic Development Officer; Daniel Mao, Economic Development Specialist; Amber Green, Economic Development Specialist; Javier Castro, Community Programs Specialist; Dominic Li Mandri District Manager; Nick Yoo, Assistant District Manager; Lucy Lopez, Chamber of Commerce CEO; Todd Falduti, Southland Mall General Manager; Tuyen Ho

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were none.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING March 3, 2025

A motion to approve the minutes from March 3, 2025, Regular Meeting was made by Council Member Andrews and seconded by Council Member Bonilla. The minutes were approved.

2. Downtown Hayward Improvement Association (DHIA) Update (Oral Report Only)

Chief Economic Development Officer Paul Nguyen introduced the item and invited District Manager Dominic Li Mandri and Assistant District Manager Nick Yoo to provide the oral update on behalf of the Downtown Hayward Improvement Association (DHIA).

Council Member Bonilla inquired whether DHIA tracks its accomplishments and upcoming projects. District Manager Li Mandri stated that their public relations firm compiles a monthly summary of accomplishments, which are included in the DHIA Board of Directors' meeting packets. He noted that

the association plans to begin sharing these summaries more broadly, including on their website and through a new newsletter. The newsletter will feature business openings, social media highlights, and ongoing initiatives to keep the public informed.

Council Member Bonilla asked if there is a formal strategic plan that can be shared with the City. District Manager Li Mandri explained that DHIA does not develop an annual strategic plan. Instead, the Board meets in the Fall to set priorities for the coming fiscal year. He added that the organization continues to operate under the original Management District Plan that was adopted when the district was formed in 2019.

Council Member Bonilla asked how DHIA engages with property owners. District Manager Li Mandri responded that property owners typically only reach out when there is an issue, but that he has gradually built relationships over time through consistent outreach and communication.

Council Member Bonilla asked whether crime and homelessness are recurring concerns among property owners. District Manager Li Mandri shared that DHIA previously contracted with two separate security firms for a combined cost of \$70,000, but the results were limited. He emphasized that public safety remains the jurisdiction of the Hayward Police Department. Regarding homelessness, he noted that Hayward is not experiencing the same scale of unhoused populations as neighboring cities. He said that many of the individuals in the area are either long-standing community members or are passing through the city using transit systems.

Council Member Bonilla inquired about collaboration between the City and DHIA around parking concerns. Development Services Director Sara Buizer responded that there have not been recent conversations on this topic. However, she noted that the City's Public Works Department had previously studied a pay-for-parking model several years ago.

Council Member Bonilla suggested DHIA consider developing a multi-year plan to help align with City goals. Development Services Director Buizer said the suggestion is valid, but one challenge is that DHIA Board Members serve two-year terms, and turnover can make long-term planning more difficult. Nonetheless, she acknowledged the importance of coordination and long-range thinking.

Council Member Andrews asked whether paid parking would deter people from visiting Downtown and whether there are sufficient anchor businesses to draw them in. District Manager Li Mandri responded that visitors already come Downtown to dine and receive services. The key question will be whether they are willing to pay for a positive and well-managed experience. He added that if the experience is enjoyable and easy, people will return—but if it's frustrating, they likely won't.

Council Member Andrews then asked whether DHIA ambassadors could monitor parked vehicles. She noted that the City Council may face backlash on a parking district, especially with rising service costs. District Manager Li Mandri explained that DHIA ambassadors are limited to "curb to property" services and do not have enforcement authority. Parking lots are City-owned, and any expanded role would require a separate contractual arrangement between DHIA and the City.

Council Member Andrews recommended that the City consider a hybrid model for managing parking in the district.

Council Member Andrews also asked whether DHIA contacts AT&T when there is graffiti on utility

boxes. District Manager Li Mandri responded that DHIA removes graffiti from utility boxes when appropriate, but they contact the City when it involves utility boxes with painted murals to avoid damaging commissioned artwork.

Council Member Andrews inquired whether DHIA speaks with business owners about keeping regular hours. District Manager Li Mandri stated that irregular business hours often reflect a lack of foot traffic in Downtown. He expressed a willingness to speak with business owners about their hours and reiterated that DHIA's focus is on creating a welcoming, active district.

Council Member Andrews asked whether DHIA plans to activate additional public spaces beyond Heritage Plaza. District Manager Li Mandri confirmed that the association is interested in activating locations such as Newman Park. He said they are open to ideas like large-scale game installations but would likely begin with Heritage Plaza first.

Council Member Andrews asked how DHIA collaborates with the Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development Division on events like Restaurant Month or the Taste of Hayward. District Manager Li Mandri said he is open to more collaboration with both groups.

Council Member Andrews also encouraged DHIA to partner with the Hashtag Hayward initiative and the Library's social media team. District Manager Li Mandri responded that DHIA helps promote Downtown programming through its own social media channels.

Mayor Salinas asked how the DHIA Board is structured. District Manager Li Mandri explained that Board terms are two years, with nominations held each fall. To be eligible, candidates must own property or a business in the district, be current on their assessments, and align with DHIA's mission.

Mayor Salinas asked how many nomination periods there have been. District Manager Li Mandri stated this year will be the sixth nomination period.

Mayor Salinas asked how many members serve on the DHIA Board. District Manager Li Mandri stated that there are twelve Board Members.

Mayor Salinas asked how the Board feels about the state of Downtown Hayward and what their concerns are. District Manager Li Mandri said that public safety is a major concern, particularly around police responsiveness and retail theft. He added that while those concerns are not unique to Hayward, they are top of mind for the Board. Development Services Director Buizer added that the current Board is highly engaged and passionate about Downtown's future.

Mayor Salinas commended DHIA for the progress made in recent years and echoed the safety concerns raised by Council Member Andrews.

Mayor Salinas also asked how DHIA members responded to the City's recent purchase of Cinema Place. District Manager Li Mandri shared that members saw it as a positive move and believe the property will be better managed under City ownership.

Mayor Salinas suggested the idea of a Downtown light show. Development Services Director Buizer stated that DHIA had explored the idea but found the cost to be far beyond the association's current budget.

Mayor Salinas remarked that difficulty finding parking on a Friday night can be seen as a sign of Downtown's success. District Manager Li Mandri agreed, stating that a parking district is intended to improve turnover and ensure availability, as long-term parking limits access for potential customers.

Council Member Bonilla, on behalf of Council Member Syrop, asked whether the upper floors of parking structures could be reserved for employee parking. District Manager Li Mandri stated that in other districts, top-level parking is commonly reserved for employees, and he expressed interest in exploring that option in Hayward

3. Future Meeting Topics

Council Member Andrews requested that Cinema Place be added as a standing item for future meetings to allow for ongoing updates.

COMMITTEE MEMBER/ STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REFERRALS

Chief Economic Development Officer Paul Nguyen announced that the Holiday Inn Express & Suites, located at 25640 Mission Boulevard, is now open. The hotel includes 82 rooms, a fitness center, an indoor pool, and meeting space. It is owned by the Hall Group, based in Dallas, Texas.

Chief Economic Development Officer Nguyen also shared that at the recent East Bay Economic Alliance Innovation Awards, the City of Hayward had two finalists:

- Veev, a modular home manufacturer, and
- Endiatx, a health tech company developing swallowable camera devices.

Chief Economic Development Officer Nguyen added that Endiatx received an award at the event. He then congratulated both companies and highlighted their roles in Hayward's growing innovation economy.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 6:36 p.m.