



## CITY OF SIGNAL HILL

---

2175 Cherry Avenue • Signal Hill, California 90755-3799

THE CITY OF SIGNAL HILL  
WELCOMES YOU TO A REGULAR  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
August 20, 2024

The City of Signal Hill appreciates your attendance. Citizen interest provides the Commission with valuable information regarding issues of the community. Meetings are held on the 3rd Tuesday of every month.

Meetings begin at 7:00 pm. There is a public comment period at the beginning of the regular meeting, as well as the opportunity to comment on each agenda item as it arises. Any meeting may be adjourned to a time and place stated in the order of adjournment.

The agenda is posted 72 hours prior to each meeting on the City's website and outside of City Hall. The agenda and related reports are also available for review online at [www.cityofsignalhill.org](http://www.cityofsignalhill.org).

**To participate:**

- In-person Participation: Council Chamber of City Hall, 2175 Cherry Avenue, Signal Hill, California.
- To make a general public comment or comment on a specific agenda item, you may also submit your comment, limited to 250 words or less, to [commDev@cityofsignalhill.org](mailto:commDev@cityofsignalhill.org) not later than 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, August 20, 2024. Written comments will be provided electronically to the Planning Commission and attached to the meeting minutes. Written comments will not be read into the record.

Planning Commission Members are compensated \$125.00 per meeting.

**(1) CALL TO ORDER – 7:00 P.M.**

**(2) ROLL CALL**

CHAIR SAVOULIAN  
VICE CHAIR MILLER  
COMMISSIONER BELL  
COMMISSIONER PARKER  
VACANT

- (3) **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- (4) **PUBLIC BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR ON ITEMS NOT LISTED ON THIS AGENDA**
- (5) **PUBLIC HEARING**
- (6) **DIRECTOR'S REPORTS**
  - a. UPDATE REGARDING WALNUT AND ORANGE BLUFF HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS

Background:

**Workforce Housing Sites**

The City's Certified Housing Element identifies two sites owned by Signal Hill Petroleum for the future development of workforce housing. As part of the Housing Element update process, the City Council entitled both sites to collectively accommodate up to 380 units. These sites, along with two additional market-rate sites, achieve the City's goals of meeting its Regional Housing Needs Assessment allocation. Once constructed, the two properties would fulfill the City's broader housing goals by increasing the available inventory of housing for low- and moderate-income residents.

Similar to properties found throughout Signal Hill, the workforce housing sites have active and abandoned oil wells and significant topography issues that need to be addressed as part of the site preparation process. The Notice Of Funding Availability (NOFA) issued by staff included substantial discussion regarding the associated challenges so that prospective developers could account for these factors as part of their financial assessment of the sites. As the owner and development partner, Signal Hill Petroleum would provide its technical expertise throughout the process.

For the Planning Commission's reference, the section below provides a description and conceptual site plan for both sites. The first site is known as "Orange Bluff" and comprises approximately 8.6 acres of property located on the south side of East 28th Street between Orange Avenue and Gundry Avenue. The City entitled the site to accommodate up to 290 workforce units in a village cluster setting of six 3 to 5-story structures around a common open space with internal private drives for circulation. The property has two access points onto public streets, at East 28th Street and at Gundry Avenue. The second site is known as "Walnut Bluff" and is a 2-acre property located at the northwest corner of East Willow Street and Walnut Avenue. The site is entitled to accommodate up to 90 workforce units in three 3- to 4-story structures clustered around an internal parking area and open space.

Summary:

Earlier this year, the City Council authorized the City Manager to negotiate and enter into an Exclusive Negotiation Agreement (ENA) with the City's selected development partner, National Community Renaissance (National CORE). National CORE is actively working on the development of the two proposed workforce housing sites, known as Walnut Bluff and Orange Bluff. National CORE has made substantial progress in its due diligence phase of the Walnut Bluff site and in its negotiations with the property owner for site control. National CORE also confirmed that the Walnut Bluff site is financially feasible as an affordable housing project and structured its proposed capital stack to confirm available funding sources, despite changes to the State budget. The Orange Bluff property, given substantially more complex and cost intensive site remediation issues, will require additional time for due diligence and for National CORE to determine its financial feasibility. At the July 23, 2024 City Council/Housing Authority meeting, National CORE presented its findings as part of an interim status update. Staff will present this update to the Planning Commission.

At the July 23, 2024 Council meeting, the City Council and Housing Authority Board directed staff to renegotiate the Exclusive Negotiation Agreement to establish separate performance schedules for the Walnut Bluff and Orange Bluff properties. The City Council and Housing Authority Board also authorized staff to negotiate an Affordable Housing Agreement for the development of the Walnut Bluff property.

Strategic Plan Goal(s):

Goal No. 1 Financial Stability: Ensure the City's long-term financial stability and resilience.

Goal No. 3 Economic Development: Improve the local economy, support local businesses, and create a vibrant downtown core.

Goal No. 4 Infrastructure: Maintain and improve the City's physical infrastructure, water system, and recreational spaces.

Recommendation:

1. Receive a presentation from staff regarding the City's affordable housing development partner, National Community Renaissance, regarding its progress on the Walnut Bluff and Orange Bluff workforce housing sites.
- b. UPDATE ON SELECTION OF ON-CALL CITYWIDE GRANT WRITING AND MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS

Background:

The City has historically relied on more common methods, internally conducting grant finding and grant writing activities, to seek funding opportunities for various projects and activities. Each department has typically been responsible for

researching grants through its own efforts while also managing ongoing operational activities. The City recognized that this approach is time-consuming and staff intensive. Given the level of effort necessary to successfully apply for opportunities, track expenditures, and report back to granting agencies, staff believes that contracting for these services would create economies of scale that may provide additional grant opportunities for the City.

On March 21, 2024, the City released an RFP for qualified firms that could provide comprehensive citywide grant writing and management services. The RFP established a detailed plan for the firm selection process and timelines, including desired expertise and qualifications (Attachment A). The scope of work includes grant writing services associated with the preparation and submission of applications, program administration, and fulfilling progress reports and other grant requirements. Staff aims to establish on-call service agreements with multiple firms to augment technical expertise as well as allow the City to apply for a variety of additional grant opportunities.

The City evaluated qualifications demonstrating a high level of expertise and successful track record in obtaining grants and the ability to align funding opportunities with the City's ongoing or future projects in the following areas identified below:

- Economic Development
- Library, Parks, and Recreation
- Public Safety-Policy and Disaster Recovery
- Public Infrastructure Capital Projects/Maintenance
- Water Infrastructure Capital Project
- Sustainability Programs and Infrastructure-including electric vehicles and charging stations
- Transportation and Street Rehabilitation

The City requested that proposers provide for a flexible billing model, offering an hourly rate fee schedule to ensure both transparency and flexibility. This time and material model allows the City to adapt as grant opportunities become available and obtain a clear outline of anticipated expenses.

Analysis:

In response to the RFP, the City received fifteen (15) proposals; staff deemed all proposals complete and timely. The City established a Selection Committee comprised of the Community Development Director, Parks, Library and Recreational Services Director, Public Works Director, Assistant to the City Manager/Economic Development Director, and the Emergency Management Coordinator. The Selection Committee conducted a three-tiered evaluation process, consisting of an evaluation of proposals, interviews of the top firms, and reference checks. The initial proposal evaluation criteria was based on the following evaluation criteria:

- Experience with similar projects involving municipalities and/or local

government agencies (Weight 20%)

- Team member's experience and performance (Weight 15%)
- Track record and success in obtaining grants of similar scope to the RFP (Weight 25%)
- Cost Estimates (Weight 10%)
- References (Weight 20%)

Following the initial review, the Selection Committee invited the top firms to participate in the interview process. Following the interview process, the Selection Committee ranked six firms as having the highest overall scores: Engineering Solutions Services, Evan Brooks and Associates, Global Urban Strategies, Land CM, Townsend Public Affairs, and Villa Civil.

Staff conducted reference checks for each of the highest-ranked firms. The City asked the referenced cities a series of fourteen performance questions, including experience with the subject firm, cost of service relative to success rate, quality of work, communication and expertise. Staff received positive responses regarding performance and qualifications for all six firms, summarized below:

**Engineering Solutions Services (ESS)**, based out of Laguna Hills, ESS has twelve years of experience preparing winning grant applications for municipal governments. The ESS team is comprised of former municipal managers, including a managing Principal with more than forty years of experience and technical expertise. ESS has a track record of successfully securing grants in the areas of public safety & emergency preparedness, infrastructure, transportation, parks & recreation and sustainability.

**Evan Brooks and Associates (EBA)**, based out of Pasadena, EBA has 13 years of experience. EBA has worked with more than 70 cities and regional planning agencies throughout the Western United States. EBA was ranked high by the City of Covina, who they have worked with for more than ten years. EBA has a successful track record of securing transportation related grants.

**Global Urban Strategies (GUS)**, based out of Alhambra, GUS has eight years of experience. GUS has worked with more than 70 cities and regional planning agencies throughout the Western United States. In 2023, GUS secured \$33.8 million in state and federal grants.

**Land CM (LCM)**, based out of Laguna Niguel, has 15 years of experience. LCM has worked with more than 35 public agencies, including the City of Signal Hill since 2022. LCM provides reliable support throughout the grant application and administration process for public works grants.

**Townsend Public Affairs (TPA)**, based out of Newport Beach, TPA has 25 years of experience and has worked with more than 250 public agencies. TPA has secured over \$3 billion in competitive funding for clients in the areas of

transportation, water & wastewater, housing development, and parks and recreation.

**Villa Civil**, based out of Encinitas, has four years of experience, and staff with a combined 60 years of experience with various granting agencies. Villa Civil has successfully secured over \$116 million in grant applications and low-interest loans.

The City Council authorized the City Manager to enter into a one-year Contract Services Agreement with each firm for on-call grant writing and management services, for a not-to-exceed annual amount of \$80,000, with two additional one-year extensions per firm.

**Summary:**

At the July 23, 2024 meeting, the City Council authorized the City Manager to execute six (6) on-call Professional Services Agreements with qualified firms to provide on-call Citywide Grant Writing and Support Services, for a not-to-exceed amount of \$80,000 each. The contract authority limit for each proposed contract is intended to provide the City with the opportunity to use one or more of the firms to perform the services. Staff will monitor spending associated with each contract to ensure expenditures remain within the City Council's approved budget allocation.

**Strategic Plan Goal(s):**

Goal No. 1 Financial Stability: Ensure the City's long-term financial stability and resilience.

Goal No. 3 Economic & Downtown Development: Improve the local economy, support local businesses, and create a vibrant downtown core.

Goal No. 5 High Functioning Government: Strengthen internal communication, recruitment, retention, systems, and processes to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of City services.

**Recommendation:**

Receive and file the report.

c. UPDATE ON SELECTION OF SUSTAINABLE CITY COMMITTEE MEMBER AND ALTERNATE

**Background and Analysis:**

During the Planning Commission re-organization meeting in June 2024, the Commission inquired whether they should also select their SCC Member and Alternate. Staff researched the rules and the selection procedures from the June

2023 Commission meeting and were reminded that each position is for a two-year term. Therefore, the next selection will be at the June re-organization meeting in 2025.

Staff will take the opportunity under this item to request a summary report from Chair Savoulian regarding the most recent SCC meetings including the previous selection by the SCC of Member Savoulian as Chair of the committee, modification of the rules regarding a quorum, and the role and participation of Alternate Members.

Summary:

In June of 2023, the Planning Commission selected Commissioner (now Chair) Savoulian and Commissioner (now Vice Chair) Miller to be the Sustainable City Committee (SCC) Member and Alternate, each for a two-year term. The next selection for Member and Alternate will be in June of 2025 (Attachment A and item 7a of Attachment B).

Strategic Plan Goal(s):

Goal No. 5 High-Functioning Government: Strengthen internal communication, recruitment, retention, systems, and processes to increase the effectiveness of City services.

Recommendation:

Receive ad file the report

**(7) CONSENT CALENDAR**

The following Consent Calendar items are expected to be routine and non-controversial. Items will be acted upon by the Commission at one time without discussion. Any item may be removed by a Commissioner or member of the audience for discussion.

a. PREVIOUS MINUTES

Summary:

Regular meeting of June 18, 2024.

Recommendation:

Approve.

b. CITY COUNCIL FOLLOW UP

Background and Analysis:

- 1) At the July 09, 2024, City Council meeting:
  - Mayor Woods presented a proclamation to the Parks, Recreation, and Library Services Department for "Parks Make Life Better" Month.
  - Mayor Woods continued the proclamation of needing to continue the emergency contracting authority delegated by the City Manager.
- 2) At the July 23, 2024, City Council meeting:
  - The City of Long Beach, Long Beach Animal Care Services staff introduced a pet available for adoption.
  - Signal Hill staff introduced recently hired employees with the City from the Human Resources, Finance, and Administration Departments.
  - Shirley's Temple Deli and Mocktails was introduced as the new spotlight on small business video series.
  - An ordinance was introduced amending Chapter 5.06 (sidewalk vending) and Chapter 12.14 (camping and storage of personal property on public property).
  - National CORE provided an update regarding the two workforce housing projects, Walnut Bluff and Orange Bluff.

Summary:

A brief summary of the City Council's actions from the last City Council meeting(s).

Recommendation:

Receive and file.

c. DEVELOPMENT STATUS REPORT

Summary:

Attached for your review is the monthly Development Status Report which highlights current projects.

Recommendation:

Receive and file.

d. IN THE NEWS

Background and Analysis:

Articles include:

- Complete Streets Drive Housing, Jobs, and Retail Gains - Planning Magazine
- House of the Month - Architectural Record

Summary:

Articles compiled by staff that may be of interest to the Commission.

Recommendation:

Receive and file.

**(8) COMMISSION NEW BUSINESS**

COMMISSIONER PARKER  
COMMISSIONER BELL  
VICE CHAIR MILLER  
CHAIR SAVOULIAN

**(9) ADJOURNMENT**

Tonight's meeting will be adjourned to the next regular meeting of the Planning Commission to be held on Tuesday, September 17, 2024, at 7:00 p.m., in the Council Chamber of City Hall, 2175 Cherry Avenue, Signal Hill, CA 90755.

**CITIZEN PARTICIPATION**

If you need special assistance beyond what is normally provided to participate in City meetings, the City will attempt to accommodate you in every reasonable manner. Please call the City Clerk's office at (562) 989-7305 at least 48 hours prior to the meeting to inform us of your particular needs and to determine if accommodation is feasible.

**AFFIDAVIT OF POSTING**

I, Colleen T. Doan, Commission Secretary of the Planning Commission, do hereby affirm that a copy of the foregoing agenda was posted at City Hall, the Signal Hill Library, Discovery Well Park, and Reservoir Park, 72 hours in advance of this meeting.