



Agenda Item

City Council

Item #: 9.4.

8/12/2025

File #: 25-0465

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

THRU: Jarad Hildenbrand, City Manager

1. SUBJECT

Presentation of Orange Yards vision for development in the West Katella gateway area.

2. SUMMARY

Orange Yards is a long-term vision to develop a district that is complimentary to OC Vibe and OC River Walk in the West Katella gateway area.

3. RECOMMENDED ACTION

Receive and file.

4. FISCAL IMPACT

None.

5. STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

Goal 2: Enhance Economic Development and Achieve Fiscal Sustainability

Objective 2.4: Diversify tax revenue

6. DISCUSSION AND BACKGROUND

The West Katella Avenue area is bounded by the Santa Ana River on the west, the water channel on the south, Batavia Street on the east, and the properties on the northside of Katella Avenue on the north. Although the area is surrounded by industrial development on three sides, its close proximity to the Honda Center, Anaheim Regional Transportation Intermodal Center (ARTIC), and Santa Ana River create the potential to develop a visitor serving entertainment and hospitality district. Recognizing this development potential, several years ago the City Council re-zoned many of the properties in the area with an urban mixed-use zoning that provides flexibility for property owners to develop a mix of commercial, hospitality, and residential uses in response to market conditions.

Just across the Santa Ana River in Anaheim, development has begun on the OC Vibe project which will include the Honda Center and surrounding properties. This multi-billion-dollar development will be phased over several years and is currently slated to include multiple entertainment venues, restaurants, office spaces, public parks and trails, 1,500 housing units, and two hotels. In addition, the City of Anaheim is working with several partners including the City of Orange to develop the OC River Walk along the Santa Ana River between Ball Road and Orangewood Avenue. This project would transform the Santa Ana River into a regional destination for recreation and entertainment and include a pedestrian bridge across the river from OC Vibe to West Katella Avenue in Orange.

The City of Orange Economic Development Strategy includes creating a district that is complimentary to OC Vibe and OC River Walk in the West Katella Avenue area. Unlike OC Vibe, where one developer controls all of the properties in the development, the West Katella Avenue area is made up of dozens of properties with various property owners.

Creating a vibrant, cohesive district has necessitated working closely with property owners and other stakeholders in a multi-step approach:

1. **Visioning Process** to develop a design concept and framework for the area.
2. **Development Feasibility Analysis** to provide an analysis of what types of development are economically feasible in the area.
3. **Place Branding** to develop a brand and marketing for the area.
4. **Place Making Plan** to guide efforts to develop signage, street trees, and other aesthetic elements for the area.

With the launch of the Orange Yards vision for development along with the market study, place branding, and place making plan, staff will now focus on creating the necessary tools to realize the City's vision for development in this area. This focus will include:

- Pursuing funding to build out the public infrastructure that will support and incentivize private investment. The key funding source will be the formation of an Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District (EIFD) to provide a stable funding source while enhancing our ability to successfully obtain state and federal grants.
- Development of marketing materials to communicate the vision for development including a website and brochures.
- Expanded outreach to property owners, commercial brokers, and the development community.
- Continued dialogue with our educational and healthcare institutions on the creation of an Innovation District as a sub-district in Orange Yards.
- Research to identify additional City policies that could be adopted to further accelerate the development of the district.

7. **ATTACHMENTS**

- None