



**Planning and Economic Development  
MINUTES**

**Date:** May 12, 2021  
**Time:** 8:30 am

**Members Present** Marsha Berzins, Dave Gruber, Angela Lawson

**1. Call to Order**

**2. Approval of Minutes**

April 14, 2021 minutes were approved.

**3. General Business**

**3.a City Center Vision Project Update**

*Summary of Issue and Discussion:*

Daniel Krzyzanowski, Planning Supervisor

- Daniel presented on the City Center Vision Project.
- Despite a delayed start due to Covid-19, the project was initiated in 2020. The project team has facilitated steering committee and community engagement and has started development of guiding principles and articulation of the community's vision for future area development.
- The city requested community input through an online survey that was open to the entire Aurora community and available in both English and Spanish. Over 860 responses were received and provided the project team with a wealth of information on key topics important to the community. There was a lot of support for an active "downtown" district at City Center that includes a wide variety of uses and activities. Unique or locally owned businesses were especially desirable as were high-quality public parks and plazas. Respondents supported the idea of a "park once and walk" type of district that is safe, convenient, and comfortable to move through.. The presentation from the December 2020 Housing, Neighborhood Services and Redevelopment Policy Committee meeting also provided a summary and details of the public input received.

## APPROVED

- Staff has developed a first draft of the City Center Vision document. The document includes a vision statement, guiding principles, and a series of recommendations to support the city's implementation of the area vision. The recommendations fall into four major categories which staff addressed in more detail: vision, development framework, zoning and development standards.
- Staff is creating a draft plan and will be taking it out to the community for feedback. Once that is complete, they will bring it back to Council for consideration and adoption.
  - Council Member Berzins asked for clarification on the presentation. Daniel responded this presentation provides the draft document content they are creating to take out to the public for feedback. This is like the process they did for the housing study. They will refine the draft into something they can bring forward to Council for consideration and adoption.
  - CM Berzins asked if socialized housing is included in the plan presentation? Daniel responded the way housing is addressed in the draft is a mix of housing types in the area. They will take into consideration the feedback from individual council members and the community then articulate the feedback in the draft.
  - CM Berzins expressed concern with the effort since there is already an area plan, and the city does not own any of the land. She expressed her belief that socialized housing will not pass Council. She does not want this process to hold up any area projects. George Adams responded that this process is not delaying any of the current area projects. The input received at HORNS (Housing Neighborhood Services and Redevelopment) regarding socialized housing is not part of the plan Daniel is presenting. They will meet with Council Members Marcano and Coombs to get a better understanding of their vision for the area. The staff is shaping the plan to include ideas of what the stakeholders and community want to see in the area. They want to get feedback from area property owners and developers on a more defined plan and set of regulations, and standards. CM Berzins expressed appreciation for the clarification and remarked about the time spent on the process with the department's workload. George responded this an important project. They want to make sure the plan is achieving the vision of the council for a more urban district in the area.

- Council Member Gruber asked about the city's financial relationship regarding this project. Daniel responded there will be an opportunity for the city to contribute in the future by improving streets and connections. CM Gruber asked whether the developer, Washington Prime, has asked the city to contribute any money to this overall project. Daniel responded at this point there is not a specific public ask for any projects at the mall site. If one of the property owners wants to discuss a TIF or other public support, we have processes in place for those specific discussions.
- CM Gruber asked if the property developer at the Metro Center site has asked the city to partner with them or for a contribution? George responded early on there were discussions, however, the project was not providing the kind of development that would justify incentives. There is a significant historic investment by the city in the larger site as Daniel noted. This includes the I-225 interchange, the pedestrian pathway under Alameda Parkway, and significant drainage improvements associated with the AMC. More recently there is an incentive agreement for the Parkside project. There has been a lot of public money put in the area in the past, and there is potential for more in the future. This study is a refinement of the current station area plan, zoning rules, and guiding recommendations to help the next generation of area development. This vision will help the area evolve into a much more robust mixed-use, dense, and economically productive area. CM Gruber asked if this a viable work project that the developers must follow or something they can ignore? George responded he believes it is a worthwhile effort. Many times, it's welcomed by the development community as they understand the city and council priorities. It also assures them that development in the area will be of a quality and character that justifies the higher investment. CM Berzins commented she agreed that the city already has high development standards. They want people to come to Aurora and have a good experience. CM Lawson agrees with the plan and the community engagement. She also asked for clarification on what is being expected by the developer, and how will the community engagement be structured? Daniel responded this project is the development of an area plan by the city for the entire city center area. This is a plan that staff would like to develop with the intent to have the council review, approve and adopt the plan. There are elements of the plan that will articulate the vision for what the community wants to see in the area and a series of specific zoning regulations and development standards. The plan will also include direction on some of the financial tools available to the city and private property developers, in public-private partnerships.

- CM Berzins added she toured the Fieldhouse USA project that will serve the mall. She stated kudos to those who got the project. It's a wonderful project that is unique and amazing to see. She added encouragement for everyone to tour the project which is scheduled to open at the end of summer.
- CM Gruber asked about the plot of land the city owns that is North of Alameda and South of the Aurora Municipal Center (AMC). He also asked if there will be an opportunity for a public-private partnership? Mindy Parnes responded at one time there were ideas for an entertainment center. She indicated there is an area master plan that shows it can be developed. CM Gruber stated he would like to have this land included in the presentation charts to show that land as potential public-private partnership development.
- CM Lawson asked who at RTD is involved with the meetings for the station and have those conversations started? Mindy responded RTD recently received the plan so they can consider development on their property and they are part of the steering committee, stakeholder meetings and are willing to join in conversations with the city.
- CM Berzins asked when Parkside will be opening? Jennifer Orozco responded they were targeting June for their opening of the residential portion.

**3.b A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AURORA, COLORADO, EXPRESSING THE AURORA CITY COUNCIL'S SUPPORT OF THE CREATION OF A VIRTUAL AURORA KOREATOWN AND CELEBRATING THE CREATION OF A KOREATOWN LOGO**

**Summary of Issue and Discussion:**

Council Member Gruber and Council Member Berzins

- This resolution supports the creation of a virtual Koreatown and the logo and recognizes the contributions of Korean-Americans to the city of Aurora.
- Does Council wish to approve this resolution supporting the creation of a virtual Korea Town and celebrating the creation of the Koreatown logo?
  - CM Gruber shared the Korean community has created their logo, a marketing package, and a virtual Korea Town independent of the city. Becky Hogan shared a thank you to Council Member Gruber and Peter Lee for piloting this idea early on. This model is open to anybody in the

city. There are several Korea Towns, but the name for this will be Korea Town - two separate words with a capital K and a capital T. CM Berzins asked if there is a plan for a website? CM Gruber responded this will have nothing to do with the city. Becky added next week they will adopt a formal brand for Korean business windows, a website, and an interactive map. This will help Koreans outside of the community come to shop, eat and do business in Korea Town. CM Lawson suggested correcting the spelling of Korea Town in the Resolution.

- CM Berzins asked if this resolution is okay to have the spelling corrected then to go to Study Session? CM Gruber & CM Lawson approved the revised resolution to move forward to Study Session.

### **3.c Havana Street Corridor Study Update**

#### Summary of Issue and Discussion:

Huiliang Liu, Principal Transportation Planner

- CM Berzins requested this item to be moved to next month's meeting due to time constraints.

### **3.d Authorize two (2.0) FTE Over-hire Positions for Development Staff**

#### Summary of Issue and Discussion:

Tod Kuntzelman, Development Process Improvement Manager, General Management

- In 2016, the Development Review Fund created "over-hire" budget authority for 15.0 FTEs that will remain unfunded until needed. This provided hiring flexibility to respond quickly to workload levels and improve performance measures for services that impact customers. The activation plan for these positions is as follows: 1) Notify appropriate council policy committee (PED) with justification; 2) Include required funding in the next budget appropriation process. Staff will review development activity, workload, performance statistics and fund balance on a quarterly basis and respond appropriately with staffing levels.
- The Development Review Fund has authorized 13.0 of the 15.0 FTE from the original over-hire authorization created in 2016. This request is to authorize the remaining two positions (2.0 FTE); 1.0 FTE for PROS Planning, Design and Construction Division, and 1.0 FTE for Public Works, Engineering.

- CM Gruber asked for confirmation this will not require an update to the budget? Tod Kuntzelman clarified they just need the spending authority. Approved by CM Gruber, CM Berzins, and CM Lawson.
- CM Berzins asked how recruitment is going? Victor Rachael responded recruitment is done through the typical broadcast. They also go out to specific areas of expertise like the Institute of Transportation of Engineers, and specific organizations. They have filled two vacancies, added a new supervisor that was an internal candidate, and have extended an offer to backfill the internal candidate's position.
- Cindy Colip asked if they could provide an update to the performance metrics from last month. Victor reported in 2020 they were at 48% on time and 62% within a five-day window. In April for civil plans, they are up to 77% on time and 87% within a five-day window. They are rapidly approaching their metric and expect to hit it by next month.

#### **4. Miscellaneous Matters for Consideration**

##### **4.a Aurora Economic Development Council**

- Yuriy Gorlov reported on:
  - Deals closing soon will result in about 1,500 jobs as well as 1,000 other jobs lined up with a few other deals. These are good operations that are e-commerce, manufacturing, or construction related.
  - They continue to see landowners who want to sell and develop the land.
  - Currently, they have about a million and a half square feet of industrial space under construction.
  - There is some negative absorption in the office market due to some companies downsizing.
  - They are working to get more Class A office space out of the ground.
  - They are working with educational partners like Metro State College and the workforce development centers on a talent pipeline.
  - They are keeping an eye on assessment values to stay mindful as they compare the area to other markets across the region.

##### **4.b Havana Business Improvement District**

- Chance Horiuchi reported on:

## APPROVED

- Closed - They have had zero businesses that have remained closed due to Colorado-specific orders. The very last restaurant reopened on May 1<sup>st</sup> after being closed for five months.
- New Businesses -
  - Sharetea was a deal that died during the pandemic but has come back. They have their sign-up and have re-leased at Village on the Park.
  - Old Town Hotpot is a new business. Mr. Subra Panda Buffet closed but have updated their business model; same ownership, now doing Hotpot.
  - Coffee Story will be going in the former Denver E-Cig on Iliff and Havana.
  - Broadview Kennels was sold and closed. Will now be a new auto dealership.
  - Mazal Motors will be opening.
  - Grand opening of Shin Milan Guan Korean BBQ.
- Focused on COVID-19 recovery and vaccination clinics and helping the workforce access different resources.
- Five major water projects along Havana Street.
- Marker signs - Looking at maintenance or replacement.
- Redevelopment - Colorado Golf Association (CGA) is looking to relocate their association to Aurora from Greenwood Village. CGA will be looking for stakeholder, community, and city feedback on what that redevelopment looks like. Mazda & Hyundai will be going through redevelopment. Argenta is being redeveloped. Zurich is looking to redeveloping their six acres at Concord.
- Eat on Havana Street Week is still going on.
- CM Gruber commented Tri-County Health said that Arapahoe County is going to clear this Saturday, which is a big deal. They haven't received the briefing from Adam's County yet but anticipate it to be the same. There is a lot of Cares Act money coming into the city. CM Gruber is asking the business community to consider ways to advise Council on how best the Cares Act funds can be used to help businesses, help the economy, and restart the jobs.

**4.c Aurora Chamber of Commerce**

- Kevin Hougen reported on:
  - The Leadership of Aurora class is accepting nominations for the class.
  - Golf Tournament at Heritage Eagle Bend on June 17<sup>th</sup>.
  - Armed Forces recognition luncheon on August 20<sup>th</sup>.
  - Awards banquet for Unsung Heroes and frontline workers on October 15<sup>th</sup>. People can nominate people from their organizations.
  - The current legislative session has the public policy moving forward on a statewide insurance program. Former Mayor Wellington Webb wrote an article in the Denver Post opposed to the public option. Representative Jodeh from Aurora is carrying that bill.
  - Mike Weisman and the metro districts at the state capital may affect future investments for Aurora and the counties.
  - YMCA opened in Ward six yesterday.
  - Redistricting – Jason Crow will be moving out of Aurora to Centennial before this next election.
  - The Registered Apprentice Program is going well.

**4.d Planning Commission**

- Dennis Lyon reported on:
  - The agenda item for tonight's planning commission is Murphy Fuel. A conditional use site plan on the vacant land at Colfax and Altura.
  - At the April 28<sup>th</sup> Planning Commission Meeting, they approved the Fitzsimons Village office building (Fitz 500). This is an eight-story 231,000 SF building with parking structure located across from Children's Hospital. This is one of the first class A office buildings of substantial size in Aurora in 30 years which is a great achievement.

**4.e Oil and Gas Committee**

- Brad reported on:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Qtr 2021 Report was included in last month's Agenda Packet.



- There is a Citizen position vacancy that will be available in July. The application deadline was last Friday. Interviews will be at next Wednesday's meeting.
- Oil & Gas Manuals - Attended with Jeffery Moore the Ward II Town Hall meeting on oil & gas manuals to answer questions and respond to comments from the constituents. The Planning Commission Study Session is tonight which will be about the oil & gas manual. The manual is due to come to City Council on May 24<sup>th</sup>.

**4.f Business Advisory Board**

**4.g Retail**

- Bob Oliva reported on:
  - Kimco who has three centers in the area just bought Weingarten. Now Kimco picks up all those centers which is a big deal in the retail industry.

**4.h Small Business**

- Marcia McGilley reported on:
  - The SBDC (Small Business Development Center) is on target or better than needed in representing the small business communities as presented in the self-identified ethnicity chart.
  - The Advanced Colorado Procurement Expo was virtual where the city of Aurora, AURA (Aurora Urban Renewal Authority) were co-presenters with the Minority Business Office and OEDIT (Office of Economic Development and International Trade). Mayor Coffman announced the in-person Advanced Colorado Procurement Expo will be in Aurora, October 7, at the Hyatt.
  - The Home-Based Spanish Language Child Care Business Training Course was a huge success. It was a six-session program in the evenings from April 6 to May 12. The English language program will run later this summer.

**4.i Visit Aurora**

- Bruce Dalton reported on:
  - Ryman Hospitality bought the remaining 35% of the Gaylord Rockies from Rida for \$188 million as well as the three parcels surrounding the property.

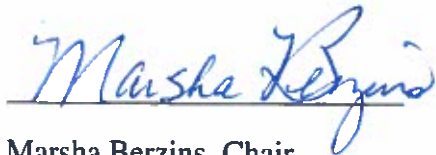
APPROVED

- The Fieldhouse – Over 100,000 SF of space with a 40-foot ceiling.
- They are seeing growth in the hotel industry. Last Saturday the hotels were running close to a 60% occupancy.
- Visitor Guide – They will be sending out the visitor guide to all residents in the next couple of weeks. They are excited for the residents to see all the different activities to do over the summer in Aurora.
- CM Berzins asked if Ryman (who owns the Grand Ole Opry building in Nashville) will be doing something like that or maybe a big auditorium? Bruce responded with Ryman now owning the 130 acres surrounding the property there is an opportunity to start the Rockies Village sooner rather than later. Ryman is looking forward to developing that area for their highest-level customers. There will be a larger investment into the property with a lot of great additions.
- CM Lawson asked about the new staff member, Candace Hobson. Bruce responded they have their first hire back, Candace Hobson. She previously worked at the Crown Plaza Hotel. She is a strong personality that will work as a national salesperson with the hotels on the group business side.

**5. Confirm Next Meeting Date**

June 9, 2021 at 8:30 AM Teleconferencing meeting

**6. Adjournment**



Marsha Berzins, Chair