

APPROVED

PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

MINUTES

**Date:** March 8, 2023

**Time:** 8:30 am

Members Present Chair: Council Member Francoise Bergan, Vice Chair: Council Member Steve Sundberg, Council Member Angela Lawson

Others Present Council Member Crystal Murillo , Council Member Juan Marcano, Adrian Botham, Andrea Amonick, Andrea Barnes, Anthony Youngblood, Ariana Muca, Becky Hogan, Brad Pierce, Brandon Cammarata, Cesarina Dancy, Chad Argentar, Chance Horiuchi, Crystal Vigil, Dan Harrington, Daniel Brotzman, Daniel Harrington, Daniel Krzyzanowski, Daniel Money, Darcy Dodd, David Schoonmaker, Diana Rael, Elena Vasconez, Ghislaine Torres Bruner, Ian Best, Jacob Cox, Jake Zambrano, Jason Batchelor, Jeannine Rustad, Jeffrey Moore, Jennifer Orozco, Jose Rodriguez, Joseph DeHerrera, Julie Patterson, Kelly Bish, Kevin Hougen, Leah Ramsey, Marcia McGilley, Maria Alvarez, Marisa Noble, Mark Smith, Melissa Rogers, Mindy Parnes, Morgan Cullen, Philip Nachbar, Rachel Allen, Robert Oliva, Sasha Easton, Scott Berg, Steve Durian, Thomas Oldenburg, Tod Kuntzelman, Yuriy Gorlov

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

CM Bergan calls the meeting to order.

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**2. APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 8, 2023, DRAFT MINUTES–COUNCIL MEMBER BERGAN**

**2.a.** The minutes were approved.

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**3. GENERAL BUSINESS**

**3.a. A/D Works!**

Summary of Issue and Discussion:

Andrea Amonick, Development Services Manager

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Sasha Easton, Workforce Director for Arapahoe/Douglas Works, presents on A/D Works!. Arapahoe/Douglas Works Workforce Center is part of a network of workforce centers throughout the state of Colorado. One of ten local areas, primarily serving Arapahoe and Douglas counties, but also has the ability to serve citizens from any other county, provided those citizens are able to access their services. Mission as an organization is to strategically invest in human capital and contribute to the regional economic vitality by meeting talent pipeline needs as well as providing business and industry crucial individuals to meet their needs for growing occupations and industries. Vision is a best-in-class workforce development organization that is responsive to the needs of business, industry, and job seekers with an individual consultative approach.

Arapahoe/Douglas Works (A/D Works!) collaborates with job seekers to provide opportunities through career counseling and labor market support by walking them through career pathways and career lattices available to them, identifying what credentials they may need to be successful and marketable in the industry of their choice. If citizens are eligible A/D Works! will help pay for training, credentialing, or micro-credentialing. A/D Works! also offers the ability to partner with business and industry on work-based learning opportunities through internships or a work experience. If eligible, A/D Works! can subsidize their wages for a period of time at 100%.

For more marketable individuals needing support in minor areas, A/D Works! has on-the-job training and could subsidize a portion of their wage. The expectation in those instances are that organizations have the ability to work with individuals, see if they are a good fit, and the goal is to have them be hired on following that opportunity.

A/D Works! helps develop career pathway opportunities by participating in a variety of sector partnerships. They work in business and industry to help understand those organizations' needs, what their challenges are, and conduct education and consulting. A/D Works! is data driven and labor market driven. They have the ability to connect candidates to business, do pre-screening events, and set up or support continuing registered apprenticeships statewide that walk business industry and training providers through the process.

A/D Works! offers layoff prevention services, where they come in and do direct support with individuals before the layoff occurs. Offers labor force data and analysis including site selector data and commuter data. They have a variety of partnerships and ability to coordinate networking events and other business and industry events, as well as providing a consultative approach.

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A/D Works! is driven by their Workforce Development Board which is made up of primarily business representatives and labor representatives representing community-based organizations. These include adult ed, higher ed, vocational, rehabilitation, human services, and state staff. Key results show A/D Works! meets clients where they are at in providing opportunities and career pathways that are growing, sustainable, and meeting the needs of the economy.

A/D Works! conducts longitudinal data tracking for the individuals they work with. Looking at over 33,000 individuals that they have worked with through this four-year period, the individuals tracked one-year post-exit were earning 108% of what they were earning previous to working with A/D Works!. Between 1 and 4 years after exit, their median wage grew at 6.6% annually. In comparison, wages in the Metro Denver area for individuals that A/D Works did not work with only grew 5.5% annually. Over that same time frame of 2016 through 2021, A/D Works! used labor force data through the statewide database, based on BLS statistics, in which exiters made 46 million. That 33,000 that were tracked made 46 million more than they were making two quarters prior to coming to A/D Works!. These new worker earnings are directly attributable to the value of services by Arapahoe/Douglas Works. This methodology is nationally recognized to demonstrate the return on investment for A/D Works! services and is utilized statewide. Individuals that are 18 and up typically have one or more barriers to employment. These individuals may be on public assistance, have a disability, etc. By providing credentialing training, consultative support, and labor market navigation, individuals recapture their wages at a higher rate, allowing adult participants to more than double what they were making over the four years after exiting the program.

A/D Works! has a team that supports business and industry. During the current program year, the business services team has posted over 93,000 job openings and helped local employers with solutions to meet their needs. A/D Works offers sector partnerships such as the Aerospace Sector Partnership, planning the logistics, and coordinating Aerospace Day at the Capitol. They also provide consultative approach and skill mining services.

CM Sundberg asks what some of the most common training and tutoring topics are you find yourself teaching people. Sasha answers A/D Works has hard skill and soft skill assessments, so it depends on what area people are entering. A/S Work has helped people enter fields of Health/CNA, IT, transportation/ CDL, HVAC, etc. Their role is to help the individual understand what occupations and industries are a good fit, and then, set them up for success.

CM Sundberg asks what items are taught on the soft skill aspect of things. Sasha answers that A/D Works! facilitation team offers virtual and in-person

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workshops including emotional intelligence workshops, workshops on career transition, resume interviewing, and salary negotiation. Sasha will share with Crystal their workshop calendar and link their website to share with the group.

CM Lawson asks how long this program has been implemented as far as the youth part of the organization. Sasha answers the legislation has been around in various iterations since the 80s under different names, evolving with legislation. Currently, it is called the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. But there are also youth services for individuals that are not eligible through our career services program, and a youth program funded out of TANF funds in Douglas County. A/D Works! has been in existence since the late 80s in various iterations. The apprenticeship is a newer conversation and gaining traction at the federal level. A/D Works! is 100% grant funded and does not receive any city or county funds, their funds are only through the federal level and some state discretionary funding sources. A/D has apprenticeship grants to fund those opportunities for individuals where that four-year college is not the best fit. Much of the youth they work with are opportunity youth, which are individuals that dropped out or have not connected to post-secondary pre-apprenticeship, apprenticeship, community college or some type of higher ed.

CM Lawson asks how A/D Works! are marketing this program through the schools. Sasha answers it's one of the challenges they face. WIOA (Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act) is up for reauthorization currently. A/D Works is not able to market through a paid marketing campaign. They are only able to leverage through word of mouth, fliers, and websites. Their Workforce Board has three new task forces open to anybody within the community. A Marketing and Outreach Task Force, a Mental Health Task Force, and a Young Adult and Youth Engagement Task Force.

CM Lawson asks if Sasha could put WIOA information in chat for the board to review which Sasha complies.

CM Bergan asks do you have opportunities for internships and are you working with anyone to fill the gaps. Sasha answers they have in the past at various intervals, and they are happy to explore new possibilities. A/D Works! has a work-based learning team that can discuss those opportunities. A recent example of such a partnership is with the Arapahoe County Health Department assisting them with administrative aspects and helping them expand as a career pathway into nutrition, primarily for youth. A/D Works! is also partnered with a contractor, Lockheed Martin, which does manufacturing and helps them with their internship needs.

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CM Bergan asks if A/D Works! Website can be pushed out to school districts. Sasha answers they have staff that go to the school districts and partner to do workshops. A/D Works provides materials for these events. Recently, they partnered with the Cherry Creek Innovation Campus in this way, funding 50 students in pre-apprenticeship tracks.

CM Murillo asks for clarification on the full spectrum of wages when citizens who A/D Works worked with, as opposed to just the median. Sasha answers it depends on that industry and occupation, but they have an internal dashboard of our average wage at placement for a different population. Sasha puts links to those in the chat. Sasha mentions dislocated workers, those are individuals that were laid off through no fault of their own are being placed at a higher wage, but the median wage is how the US Department of Labor tracks wage at placement for A/D Works! performance measures. Sasha proceeds to show how to navigate the database in chat.

CM Murillo asks if Sasha is aware of the Global Talent Task Force out of the Office of New Americans State Office, working on increasing licensures for global talent and being able to make use of that workforce here. CM Murillo posts a link to them in chat. CM Bergan offers that CM Murillo and Sasha connect in a meeting to further discuss this outside of this meeting and move on to the next item.

**Outcome:**

Information only.

**Follow-up Action:**

None required.

**3.b. Prairie Dog Relocation Ordinance****Summary of Issue and Discussion:**

Jeannine Rustad, Planning and Development Services Director

CM Marcano, CM Murillo, Jeannine Rustad, the Planning and Development Services Director, and Dan Money present the Prairie Dog Relocation Ordinance. CM Marcano states this ordinance came about after a group of concerned residents reached out to them about the threat to Prairie Dogs, Western Burrowing Owls, and the Black Footed Ferrets that they interact with and help house in the city. The town of Parker has an ordinance in place to help protect the habitat that Prairie Dogs provide, not just for themselves, but for these other species and the requirements for humane relocation, as opposed to utilizing poison which has an impact that can affect other local wildlife as well as some of our household pets. If something eats a Prairie Dog that was poisoned then somehow winds up in a citizen's backyard and their dog gets ahold of it, that can actually make

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the citizen's dog sick. Team worked to put together an ordinance to emulate what the town of Parker has done, as their requirements are fairly reasonable. CM Murillo adds this is not the first-time conversations around Prairie Dogs were had. A Chapter 14 Revision occurred a few years ago with the impetus being developments in Ward I, the affordable housing units that were being stood up along Potomac, near Sixth Avenue, where people saw this happening. Residents reached out to do something about it.

Dan Money shares Parker's ordinance on screen. showing that developers must relocate before getting a demolition permit, a grading permit, sketch/preliminary plan, minor development plat, replat, site plan or preliminary. They are encouraged to partner with nonprofits and then they cannot relocate or bother Prairie Dogs in between April 1st and June 1st, which is birthing season. There is no explanation of whether a developer is supposed to not do anything with their land for those three months. If they must do extermination, they have to go through the federal government and the state of Colorado. The Parker ordinance does not give a specific timeline, however the ordinance drafted for Aurora does give a timeline of six months because they were asked by developers.

Jeannine Rustad discussed the ordinance with a few individuals on the Development Review Advisory Board. One concern that arose is the timing of the six months. The city is trying to shorten its development review processes, but with this timing, it's not only Prairie Dogs that may be present, but Black Footed Ferrets and Burrowing Owls. If there are Burrowing Owls, they are prohibited from or are limited to doing any work during the winter months. That would be longer than the months in the Parker ordinance. This could add an estimated 12 to 14 months if developers have to wait to start in summer. Another problem, whether talking to developers or Colorado Wildlife members, is the limited number of receiving sites being hard to find. Relocating animals out of the county requires approval of the receiving Board of County Commissioners. Developers are not only going to have to go through the city process, but potentially another county process to get approval with no guarantee. As a matter of cost, relocation is ten times greater than extermination based on a few estimates received. There are also hazards, because relocation requires vacuuming the critters out of the holes and there is a 45% death and injury rate with that process. With staff looking more closely at the drafted ordinance, as well as the developers, there would need to be some refinement to this ordinance. There would need to be a definition for "treated humanely." The ordinance is limited to one way of extermination if they cannot be relocated. One of the developers spoke with an exterminator about using the CO, a method some use, in which some Prairie Dogs just go to sleep and once oxygen is back, they wake up. So, there are other ways that are safe for Prairie Dogs and other critters. It is important to use best practices that are humane and not restricting the time limit.

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In terms of demolitions, the magnitude should be considered before having to go through the process. Such as, would this all be necessary for something as simple as a house on the property they want to demolish? Jeannine suggests they would like some more time to work on refining the ordinance and see if they can discuss more on the timeline.

CM Bergan agrees that disposing of the Prairie Dogs humanely is something they want to strive for, however while sitting on the Red Tape Ad Hoc Committee with several other council members, they wanted to cut down on regulations because developers mention every day that when they are delayed, it costs them money. CM Bergan mentioned they wanted affordable housing and attainable housing to go quickly as possible on the market, and this current ordinance slows that down tremendously. It does not seem reasonable to put these kinds of barriers in place.

CM Lawson says he agrees they must do things humanely but there has to be balance. As they are trying to get affordable housing, waiting six or even three months could lose potential developers. CM Lawson asks Jeannine if the Advisory Group said what would be the ending cost for something like this if they did have to wait. Jeannine answers that they have not yet taken this ordinance to the entire advisory group, but it is going to vary because of the cost of the land, interest rate, and economic environment.

CM Sundberg asks if a certain representative number of Prairie Dogs could be trapped and relocated. CM Bergan answers they can, but with a permit from Colorado Parks and Wildlife. CM Sundberg stated Colorado Parks and Wildlife described and classified Prairie Dogs as a destructive rodent pest. They are not endangered. The 45% success rate of relocation is not a good rate. CM Sundberg asks if relocated, do they have to have existing burrows there and how quickly can they burrow and make a new home. Jeannine answers that she does not know. Several sources mention that if they are relocated where there is an existing colony, that the existing colony is territorial, protective of their food source, and will likely kill the incoming Prairie Dogs. CM Sundberg agrees, stating families within the colonies need to be considered as not all of them are going to get along and coexist in relocation. Boulder has gone through a similar relocation process and possibly chose the lethal control approach. One of their soil health experts indicated that the problem with Prairie Dogs is that they do not stay where you want them to stay in relocation. Even if you remove them from certain properties, they will still graze where they want to graze.

CM Marcano says that the ordinance does not seem to be adversely impacting development in Parker and does not believe it would necessarily impact development here in a negative light. Making tweaks to the ordinance would be important. While Prairie Dogs are not endangered, they

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are a keystone species. The Burrowing Owl and the Black Footed Ferret are currently threatened in Colorado, so a benefit of this is to ensure that those animals do not continue to lose population and become endangered or potentially extinct in Colorado. In terms of timeline and costs, CM Marcano is happy to work with staff to get the answers to those questions and find a more reasonable timeline.

CM Murillo apologizes for having this discussion during the policy committee, saying their goal is to have some of this feedback and things thought through a little bit more in advance. This was brought to the HORNS Committee, but staff did not prepare the presentation and instead at the meeting essentially said they did not think this was the right committee, without ever telling CM Murillo as the Chair that that was the case. A staff conversation of the ordinance was intended to happen in advance to talk through some of these things but did not happen. CM Murillo feels there may be some obstruction of the process moving forward, expressing he is a little frustrated. CM Murillo understands the concerns on timeline as well and wishes to dig up more on some of those points. Especially regarding Parker's and Boulder's ordinances which have not necessarily impeded their development and growth rate. CM Murillo would like to talk about concerns having them thoroughly vetted by committees and reaching out to the different cities to get a sense of how ordinances like this have impacted their development. The way the city exterminates Prairie Dogs is legal, but it is not very humane. It is not always going to be feasible to relocate.

CM Bergan does not feel like the ordinance is ready to move forward. The CO mentioned is not foolproof, and the overall relocation section is very difficult to accomplish. Other alternatives should be looked at and how the ordinance is enforced in Parker.

CM Sundberg asks if a nonprofit could be created or if one exists now to work in good faith with the developer to go in and trap a certain representative number of Prairie Dogs in agreement and then relocate them before the development. CM Marcano answers that there are nonprofits who help with relocation, and the developers would be encouraged/required to contact those folks as part of their good faith effort. That is something that already exists in Parker's ordinance as well. CM Bergan mentions the issue with the nonprofit is figuring out when the nonprofit could do the relocation and what are the steps. Are they the same steps to get through the county commissioners and Colorado Parks & Wildlife? It would be better to look at this ordinance from a perspective of what other alternative methods exist. CM Marcano says they will work with Steph on this. Jeannine says any changes to UDO or development process will get feedback through the Development Review Advisory Board. Jeannine will collaborate with Crystal to meet with CM Murillo and CM Marcano and go over these issues.



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**Outcome:**

Information only.

**Follow-up Action:**

None required.

**3.c. Crestone Peak Resources Operator Agreement****Summary of Issue and Discussion:**

Jeffrey Moore, Oil & Gas Manager

Jeffrey Moore, Manager of the Oil and Gas Division, presents amendments to Exhibits A & B to the Crestone Peak Resources Operator Agreement. Jeffrey announced that the Oil & Gas Division is changing its title to Energy & Environment Division. Jeffrey shares their screen to showcase the City and Crestone Peak Resources Exhibits A and B, maps and the description of the wells in the Operator Agreement to which they are planning to do adjustments. The Operator Agreement does allow revisions to those exhibits to the wells and Wells Sites, but it has to be after a public hearing at City Council. Today is the first step of that process. There was a previous revision two years ago in January of 2021. Crestone is requesting three things. The first is a reduction in the total number of wells and total number of Well Sites. Cancellation of a previously approved Well Site, less than 2000 feet from a residence, and a shift in the location of two Well Sites to avoid existing drainages and better align with surface owner plans. The area discussed is north of I-70, specifically northwest of the intersection of 26th Avenue and Monaghan Road. The green outline is the ATEC area. The blue sites are currently active Well Sites with wells drilled. Jeffrey goes through changes that are being proposed. The map shows the Bijou North location where it is currently approved in the Operator Agreement. There is natural drainage that goes through that location. Crestone is proposing to move this to the southeast to get it out of that particular drainage. The number of wells will stay the same.

On to the Schuh South Well Site, there are four existing wells already producing and there is an approved phase two expansion of that site to add an additional four wells. They are now requesting to cancel that phase two development and not add any more wells there. The King North Well Site has been in process for approval for a while. They are asking to cancel that site and shift those wells down, as a phase two, onto the King South site, which is an existing site with four wells. They would add 12 wells to those existing four. The proposed plans have been reviewed fully by the Oil and Gas Division, which has confirmed support by the surface owner and the mineral owners. There are some advantages to the city from these changes. It does reduce the total surface impact of oil and gas within the city. It avoids having to reroute natural drainages, which is a preference by Aurora Water. It removes the previously approved Well Site that was less than 2000 feet

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from a residence, and provides greater protection for public health, safety, welfare, the environment and wildlife resources.

There is currently one residence here on this property. Drawing a 2,000 foot radius circle there from that residence to show what that distance looks like. One can see they are canceling the site that is there inside the 2000 foot radius from the residence, that phase two expansion of Schuh South. The other sites, Bijou North and King North, remain well outside of that 2,000 foot limit. Since creating the slides, it was learned that the surface developer owns that residence, and its tenant has agreed to vacate that residence and it will be removed prior to the grading activity.

In summary, Crestone has the right to request this change. It would result in one less Well Site and four less wells, cancel an approved site, reduce total surface disturbance in the city, and avoid two drainages. The surface owner and mineral owner support this change, as does the Oil & Gas Division. It's recommended to move this forward to the study session on April 3rd.

Dan Harrington shares slides of proposed changes and justifications. Modifying Exhibit B of the Aurora-Crestone Operator Agreement and covering four locations in that agreement. The Bijou North to move a site about a third of the mile to the south and the east. The King North intended to be eliminated. 12 wells and one site out of the agreement. We would take those 12 wells and drill them as a phase two to the King South site. An existing well pad with four wells currently. Fourth, cancel phase two of the Schuh South site, an existing site with four wells. Forego the remaining four wells.

The modifications to Exhibit B will not modify the text or the contractual language of the main Operator Agreement. The net effect on the Operator Agreement would be one fewer Well Site in Aurora and four fewer total wells. Positive changes to both the Bijou and the King sites reflect the surface owner's preferences around siting and timing. The changes will increase the surface owner's available area for residential development. In the case of the Bijou, this will avoid a Mile High Flood District designated stream Second Creek in the area.

All changes are within the ATEC area, Sections 21 and 28. North of 26th Ave, a few miles east of E-470. Starred locations are the Bijou North site and the proposed King South expansion. To the Bijou North on the left is a page from Exhibit B. In the Pale Gray is how the site is currently depicted. The revised site is depicted in dark gray with the change and highlighted are changes to the language. The highlighted language is a legal description of the new site. That last site is sliding 1800 feet to the southeast. Well count remains 12. An aerial map shows how the original designated pad site

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overlaps the Second Creek drainage, which is going to be moved off of that area.

The new pad site aligns better with Aurora Highlands Surface Development Plan. Intending residential development to the west and moving this site eastward allows more residential development and better stand off from what is built. The Original King North site is being requested to be eliminated and translated down to expand the King South phase one into a King South combined. That site would have four plus 12 new wells, and then the King North would be entirely removed from the Operator Agreement. The advantage is this siting works better for ATEC planned surface development in the area. It opens more land and it is also more efficient to co-locate wells on one site, allowing for one consolidated facility rather than two and is more efficient from land use. Lastly, the Schuh South site phase one was built and drilled in 2019. Foregoing phase two and its four wells, you can see on the map here the area that will not be built in red X's.

**Outcome:**

Council unanimously approved this item to move forward to City Council.

**Follow-up Action:**

Staff will add this item to City Council agenda.

**3.d. Retail Strategy****Summary of Issue and Discussion:**

Robert Oliva, Retail/Commercial Supervisor

Robert Oliva of Retail Economic Development from Development Services Department presents on the Retail Strategy 2023 strategy. The mandate is mostly focused on sales tax generation, which begets jobs. Discusses attracting high volume retailers and restaurants to Aurora. Assume that there was an old Chicago that went out of business leaving a 5000 square foot restaurant to fill. If it was filled with an average local operator in Aurora, the city would get about \$37,000 a year in sales tax, and they would employ probably about 40 people. But, taking that same space and putting a high volume restaurant there, they could do \$187,000 in sales tax out of the same space with the same landlord and probably produce about 60 to 70 jobs. A lot of times people think high volume businesses are national chains, but they are not necessarily. Seoul Hospitality has eight different concepts in Aurora. If you walk into one, you're walking into a mom-and-pop. But, behind the scenes, they have sophisticated systems in place where they can be run sort of the way a chain runs. They are very efficient and local. This is low hanging fruit to use technological advantages to help them find better locations, fill the holes in their marketing, and allow them to produce more sales. This is a very fine group, and they are working on a project to

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open another restaurant. That is how they deal with existing operators that are already in Aurora.

The Development Services Department like to help landlords fill vacant space with traditional and nontraditional uses. Nontraditional uses would be opening a store selling widgets. If someone wants to open a store, they can spend a quarter of \$1 million and open a store to try to sell these, or they can go to an incubation market and spend about \$200 for the weekend to test out whether this will sell. One of the nontraditional uses for a big box space would be an incubation market. A traditional use could be anyone that would be coming out of the SBDC, and they want to open in a temp store and move to a permanent store later. They very much encourage tenants to try concepts before spending all their money opening a store, and that is what incubation markets are for. Providing incentives to renovate older functional shopping centers. A perfect example of this is Southlands. They were having some difficulty with the two vacant spaces they had, but there were two players that were interested. One was a traditional use, Nordstrom's Rack, and one was a nontraditional use, an entertainment complex. Incentivizing Nordstrom's Rack made a lot of sense because there is not a Nordstrom's Rack east of here all the way past the Kansas border. This prompted Lululemon to also coming to Southlands

The Development Services Department also help centers renovate into a mixed use. Recently, they have done a lot of changes to zoning allowing mixed use where it was not allowed before. The Kimco Center at the corner of Parker Road and Quincy is a perfect example of where there was a functioning center with an obsolete elbow in the corner. The old Cairo Fabric space. The number one thing that retail developers try to do is bring in residential, so they have a captive audience in their parking lot. 300, 400, or 500 people living in a parking lot allows that center to become a shopping center. It makes a lot of sense to produce residential in a functionally obsolete place. The Aurora Mall is an obvious one. The Target Center across the street as well. They could put more retail in if they wanted. Those are the types of things they look at. They look at parking lots as opportunities with infrastructure. We look to help people take a look at mixed use, and we also bring in nontraditional uses.

Development Services Department also increased sales tax amongst existing operators and new operators. They team up the SBDC and Economic Development. They are currently canvassing and run into operators that have somehow survived in their operation selling this widget, but do not know how to expand. A large number of people in canvassing want to expand, and do not want to move their location. They may want to open a second location or expand their current location, and so the SBDC can give them the tools to start online marketing or to open an online store or a whole plethora of things.

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Development Services Department has a lot of technology that can support businesses by showing them where all their customers are coming from and a heat map of all the areas that have their customers, so that they can market directly to that area. A lot of technology they can afford because we distribute it amongst all of our operators, but they cannot afford to have it themselves because they would only use it like once every five years. Development Services Department has the tech advantages and has the SBDC in order to increase their sales of current operators and anyone coming into Aurora.

Development Services Department is a welcoming environment to mom-and-pop operators. It is very time consuming, but it is the number one most requested operator that they get. By far, everyone says they do not want chains, they want to shop local. One of the things they would like to do is help businesses stay in business, which every shopping center developer does. Once they open, help them get through the first six months, because if they make it through the first 6 to 12 months, they are probably going to make it. Robert can come up with a program to help those businesses.

CM Bergan says that often on Next Door she gets constituents that want certain stores. They do not understand why those stores are not in the city or in a particular area. CM Bergan asks Robert to provide an explanation of how the Development Services Department works with those brokers. Robert answers that they are in a neutral position whenever they bring someone to the site. The Development Services Department is not the landlord, tenant, or broker. They do not collect commissions. They do this as an amenity. If one does business in Aurora, they are going to help lease one's space and help one get their sales up for their tenants. They have a good idea of what kind of sales tax companies generate and get an idea of what the overall sales are. They rank every single restaurant in every single retailer in Aurora and know what percentage in the Ward are being delivered in sales tax. 56% of the revenue that comes into the city comes from sales tax.

CM Sundberg asks how often the Development Services Department proactively reaches out to potential businesses. Robert answers they do almost every day.

CM Sundberg mentions the market is what really helps dictate a lot of what is going to come the city's way. There is no promised land other than the Aurora One Project, and they are limited as a city in what we can bring to the people, who look to the city but should be looking to the private market forces that shape things. Robert answers that the technology that is out there today, called Placer, will tell a business what the sales for their business will be within about 2% or 3% variance. They just go stick a pin in

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the map and figure out whether that is a profitable store or not. What Robert's team is trying to do is update their demographics to tell businesses about growth and give them the growth patterns that they are not picking up in AI. A lot of the story for Ward II is that rooftops are coming and there are players that are interested, who are just playing this game of waiting for those last rooftops to show up. There are a couple of interested parties of significance that are looking to go out there that are going to kick off that whole area. Once one of them shows up, their competitors must show up and split the market.

CM Sundberg says they could have the best businesses interested in coming here, the best defense contractors, primary jobs, and companies, but certain factors need to work together. Aurora must have a reputation of a safe city and cannot leave the police department unsupported. They must think differently about how they support and recruit officers. Also, the reputation of having quality education is imperative. 3<sup>rd</sup> grade proficiency reading level at 19% is unacceptable. All these things need to come together. They all must work together and support each other in these different segments to have a city that is attractive to come to, otherwise businesses will avoid the city.

Robert replies this is a good point as businesses know every statistic one could possibly imagine. Some of the things discussed are triggers for them. The amount of home ownership versus rental is a trigger. They get over a certain percentage of home ownership and they want to be there. Home Depot would be a good example. Robert brings up that they started tracking how many jobs the city is creating in September, and how many new retail businesses are opening. From September 1 to January, the city opened 471 new retail businesses and created about 2705 jobs.

CM Lawson asks if the Development Services Department tracks businesses that close and the reason for them closing. Robert answers that they do not, but it is likely that if those tenants left, then sales have dropped.

CM Lawson asks if they are helping businesses who are having difficulty staying in business in Aurora. Robert answers that every shopping center developer knows how to keep their tenants as well as how to train them to increase their sales and increase their marketing. As a city, they are in a neutral position. It is complicated. There are a lot of things they can do, including bringing in the SBDC to audit the business's books and tell them everything they are doing wrong by the numbers.

CM Lawson says that he needs to talk with Robert and Andrea offline about this.

**Outcome:**

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Information only.

**Follow-up Action:**

None required.

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**4. MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION**

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

- Yuri Gorlov

NO REPORT

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

- Chance Horiuchi

Updates on Havana Business Improvement District are in the packet.

**4.c. Aurora Chamber of Commerce**

- Kevin Hougen:

NO REPORT

**4.d. Planning Commission**

- Becky Hogan

NO REPORT

**4.e. Oil and Gas Committee**

- Brad Pierce:

NO REPORT

Vacancy on Industry Position.

**4.f. Business Advisory Board**

- Garrett Walls

NO REPORT

**4.g. Retail**

- Bob Oliva

NO REPORT

**4.h. Small Business**

- Marcia McGilley

## APPROVED

Marcia McGilley presents on small businesses. The Human IT or Humanity and Visa Digital Empowerment Program was given 95 refurbished Chromebooks to give to small business owners. Looking at clients that took courses from them and got technical assistance as well as gave them to all the people in the Spanish language childcare program and a catering program and other clients. It was very successful. The second program is from Senate Bill 21-241, and that was a grant program for our businesses in Colorado for more than a year. Fewer than 19 employees and businesses located in an opportunity zone, enterprise zone, historically underutilized rural jumpstart or transition community. There were three programs funded by the legislature. The first was access to capital which is having their second round now in Denver Metro. SBDC is running that one for the whole state and the whole SBDC network. Then Market Research, run by Boulder, at the end of their first round and ready to do their second round. They are going to run the one in the Aurora South Metro SBDC for the statewide program in digital marketing.

They will collaborate with the Office of Economic Development and International Trade, the minority business and then SBA Network statewide. They developed the English and Spanish curriculum. They have two modules on digital marketing, two on website development, and two on online selling. In-between those three subject matters, they have a consulting session with a cohort group. 80 people will qualify for \$5,000 grants to use towards their digital marketing. They must write a plan and explain how they are going to use it.

As of this morning, Marcia got the numbers. They will do two rounds. Round one had the English language. 424 applied and 303 qualified and were accepted. In Spanish, they had 103 individuals apply and 56 were accepted. They had planned on having 40 groups of cohorts in a meeting after this. They may up that and maybe let everyone in instead of just 250. Marcia will update in a couple of months.

These are preservation of business activities. A reminder, 65% to 70% of the clients they see are existing businesses. That economic gardening is what is helping the businesses that are already here versus the startups, which is 30% to 35%. They do not stop helping startups, but they spend most of their time, training, consulting, and programmatic decision making on existing businesses.

Chance Horiuchi presents on celebrating small businesses on Havana Street in the month of March. It is National Mom-and-Pop Month, but many businesses do not like being referred to as mom-and-pop. Therefore, they just "celebrate small on Havana Street" during the month of March. All are welcome to visit [OnHavanaStreet.com](http://OnHavanaStreet.com) to learn more. Today is also International Women's Day and Women's History Month. They will be



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highlighting women owned and diversely owned businesses along the corridor. They have done different marketing campaigns and worked with different local publications, and have quite a few new businesses like Paris Baguette, Nana's, Dimsum and Bao. Chance believes David's Bridal will be opening with about 7000 to 8000ft<sup>2</sup> at Village on the Park. The city and Chance think Bob mentioned J.W. Lee just recently opened. Tofu Story opening, a nice sushi restaurant in the former Thai Basil near Havana and Yale. Bob announces that there'll be six festivals/global markets. Three-day markets called the Havana Street Global Market, and three night markets. The night markets were a request from the stakeholders in the community, wanting to be able to celebrate Global Fest year-round, and throughout the summer leading up to Global Fest to promote the city of Aurora's festival.

**5. CONFIRM NEXT MEETING DATE**

Scheduled for April 12, 2023, at 8:30 AM MT.

**6. ADJOURNMENT**



APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Françoise Bergan, Committee Chair