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**PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES**

Date: September 13, 2023

Time: 8:30 am

Members Present Chair: Council Member Francoise Bergan, Council Member Angela Lawson

Others Present Adrian Botham, Alicia Montoya, Andrea Amonick, Andrea Barnes, Ariana Muca, Becky Hogan, Brad Pierce, Brandon Cammarata, Brian Rulla, Bruce Dalton, Cathy DeWolf, Chance Horiuchi, Crystal Vigil, Curtis Gardner, Daniel Krzyzanowski, Danni Danko-Holloway, Darcy Dodd, Elena Vasconez, Jacob Cox, Jason Batchelor, Jeannine Rustad, Jeffrey Moore, Jennifer Orozco, Johnny Watson, Jonathan Woodward, Julie Patterson, Laura Perry, Laurie Womer, Leah Ramsey, Lynn Baca, Mac Callison, Marcia McGilley, Marisa Noble, Mark Witkiewicz, Melissa Rogers, Melvin Bush, Michelle Gardner, Michelle Teller, Mindy Parnes, Morgan Cullen, Nicole Ankeney, Rachel Allen, Rian French, Robert Oliva, Scott Berg, Tod Kuntzelman, Tom Oldenburg

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. APPROVAL OF AUGUST 2, 2023, DRAFT MINUTES–COUNCIL MEMBER BERGAN

2.a. The minutes were approved.

3. GENERAL BUSINESS

3.a. Fitzsimons-Colfax and 13th Avenue Station Area Plan Update

Summary of Issue and Discussion:

Daniel Krzyzanowski, Planning Supervisor

Daniel Krzyzanowski and Jennifer Orozco presented this item. D. Krzyzanowski mentioned exciting development opportunities in and around the Colfax and 13th Avenue Station Areas. The presentation covered several points, including background information on past planning and development activities in the area. Information was also provided about the process schedule and public engagement for future planning efforts.

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During the presentation, a map was shown highlighting the study area and the area that surrounds the Fitzsimons-Colfax Station Area and the 13th Station Area. Their area of focus was situated about a quarter to half a mile surrounding these stations, mainly on the east side of 225 and straddling north and south of Colfax.

Over the past 15 years, significant activity has taken place in this area. Notably, the current Station Area Plan was adopted in 2009, in anticipation of the light rail service to Aurora. Besides the introduction of light rail service, there were notable developments, including the opening of the Hyatt Regency in 2016 and the Rocky Mountain VA Medical campus in 2018, as well as various developments along the Colfax corridor. In 2021, RTD, the transit provider, adopted an equitable transit-oriented development policy. These policy changes opened opportunities for developing housing, especially affordable housing, in underutilized transit properties and station areas. This policy shift aligned with the city's goals of housing development within transit-oriented development areas. Between 2021 and 2023, the city conducted a 13th Avenue Multimodal Corridor study aimed at improving transit, bike, pedestrian, and other modes of transportation in the area. During this time frame, discussions with property owners in the vicinity of the 13th Avenue Station began regarding residential development. In 2022, city staff and professionals held a design charrette to explore development opportunities near the 13th Avenue Station.

D. Krzyzanowski stated that the primary reason for presenting before the committee was to provide a preview of an update to the Station Area Plan, which had been in place for 15 years. This plan was initially developed before the introduction of light rail service, before the adoption of the city's Comprehensive Plan and Unified Development Ordinance, and before the implementation of the city's housing strategy. Consequently, an update to the Station Area Plan was deemed necessary to incorporate these new plans and policies and effectively apply them to the area. Furthermore, she emphasized that there were several near-term development opportunities near these stations. The planning discussed that morning aimed to pave the way for the city to shape and support new residential developments in the area.

J. Orozco continued with a detailed discussion of the development opportunities, the process, and the timeline. She mentioned the city's active involvement in the Urban Renewal in the area and highlighted how the Station Area Plan and a potential Urban Renewal Plan would complement each other. She then discussed two development opportunities. First, she talked about future development possibilities on both the RTD property and Bach Homes property, situated south of the RTD station area across Toll Gate Creek. These properties were substantial, each spanning over 14 acres. However, they faced a challenge in terms of access, as there was only one access point to each property, which did not support dense development from a safety perspective. To maximize these sites' potential, a bridge connecting them was necessary, providing secondary access to both sites. Such a bridge could unlock the potential for up to 1,000 housing units, depending on the

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site plans. She showed a concept diagram of the bridge created by the Public Works Department in 2019-2020, which estimated the cost at approximately 7.6 million at that time, acknowledging that inflation might have increased this figure. She emphasized the site's strategic location, surrounded by employment opportunities like the Fitzsimons Campus, Buckley, logistics along the I-70 corridor, and the airport. It was well-suited for workforce housing and potentially market-rate housing, addressing the city's pressing need for housing. She highlighted the completed 13th Avenue Multimodal Corridor Study and recent infrastructure improvements at the station, such as trail extensions, making biking more efficient without the need to cross surface streets. She also emphasized that this housing initiative aligned with the city's housing strategy by utilizing publicly owned land, promoting sustainability, expanding housing inventory, and introducing innovation, as the city had not previously undertaken a project on RTD property.

J. Orozco reiterated RTD's TOD and Equitable TOD Policy, highlighting RTD's increased flexibility in using its sites for housing. She mentioned that RTD was more accommodating with replacement parking and shared parking, aiming for 35 percent of units on RTD property to be affordable housing, aligning with the city's housing goals. She stated funding sources for affordable housing, including grants from DOLA (Department of Local Affairs) like the Strong Communities Infrastructure Grant Program, which the city had applied for. There was also funding from Proposition 123, which the city had committed to and was accepted. She mentioned the governor's proposal, even though it hadn't advanced in the last session, indicating that it might resurface in the future, aligning with state goals. She presented a map showing an area previously declared blighted by the Council in a 2019 study, with plans to establish an Urban Renewal Area. Tax increment financing would be used to cover infrastructure costs, including a bridge.

J. Orozco reiterated that a Housing Charrette was held in October 2022, jointly hosted by Housing and Community Development and Development Services. They each shared the cost and hired an external consultant to assess the site, with a specific focus on the RTD site. The goal was to explore housing possibilities and determine the suitable capacity for the site. External consultants, Bach Homes, a neighboring entity from Utah, RTD representatives, and various city staff members from different departments participated in this effort. They conducted on-site visits, evaluated challenges and opportunities, and spent half a day at city hall to experiment with different concept scenarios. The result of their intensive work was refined by their architect, resulting in Scheme 1, a medium-density proposal of approximately 200 to 240 units. This scheme retained half of the RTD parking and incorporated four-story affordable housing with tuck-under and surface parking. Scheme 2 was a two-phase plan, initially preserving half of the RTD parking. In the southern portion, it proposed townhomes along the creek, potentially for sale as affordable housing. Above that, there were plans for Permanent Supportive Housing and a four-story development of attainable housing. The second phase involved replacing all RTD parking with a structure and adding parking for higher-density

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residential units, potentially mixed-income, on the northern side, totaling 340 to 400 units across both phases.

A preview of Bach Homes' ideas for their southern property was also presented. It included townhomes, podium-style structures, and tuck-under configurations. They planned a phased approach for their development, with a vision of approximately 600 market-rate units in the area. J. Orozco mentioned that Bach Homes' rezoning was unanimously approved by the Council in June, a significant achievement that they were enthusiastic about. Funding for the bridge was being pursued through state grants, and Bach Homes was willing to design, construct, and front-fund the bridge, with the expectation of reimbursement through an agreement with the Urban Renewal Authority using property tax increment financing (TIF). Additionally, the Station Area Plan was highlighted as a crucial factor in guiding the development proposals for both sites, as it outlined the desired design and character of the development in the city, complementing the efforts related to Urban Renewal.

D. Krzyzanowski then provided details about the proposed project schedule. He mentioned that, in response to the committee's direction to proceed with the project, they planned to kick off the Station Area Plan and Urban Renewal Plan concurrently. They intended to engage the public in the process, with the first public meeting scheduled for the fall and a second one in winter or early next year, aiming to finalize the Station Area Plan by Quarter 1 of 2024. The Urban Renewal Plan, being a more complex process, would continue into 2024, with the exact completion date depending on agreements and the timeline of the development partner, Bach Homes.

Regarding public engagement, two rounds of engagement were proposed, including reaching out to adjacent neighborhoods, such as The Meadows mobile home park residents, and established neighborhoods to the east and west of the area. They also planned to engage with major property owners, RTD, Anschutz (a major employer in the area), area developers, and businesses.

Additionally, D. Krzyzanowski mentioned the formation of an internal working group within the city, which would involve various departments, including Housing and Community Services, Public Works, Parks, Recreation, and Open Space, as necessary to collaborate on the project.

- CM Lawson expressed her support for the project, emphasizing its uniqueness and potential for various types of developments in the area. She had a couple of general questions about the bridge. She noted that, based on the presentation, the funding for the bridge would rely on state funding grants and contributions from developers. She inquired whether there were plans to seek federal grants, specifically mentioning the National League of Cities and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, which included programs aimed at reconnecting communities and neighborhood access equity. She wanted to know if the project would

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explore federal grant opportunities to support the bridge project. J. Orozco mentioned that they had looked into federal transportation dollars but were informed that the bridge might not be a strong candidate for such funding because it typically goes towards regional improvements, whereas this project was more focused on a neighborhood-level improvement. However, J. Orozco acknowledged that other federal avenues, such as HUD (Department of Housing and Urban Development), might be more suitable, and they were actively searching for such opportunities. She highlighted the advantage of having Bach as a partner in the project, as their involvement in the design and construction could help keep costs down. She also mentioned that federalizing projects could lead to longer timelines and higher labor costs, potentially increasing the project's overall expenses. Despite this, she assured CM Lawson they were exploring various options for funding.

- CM Lawson brought up her previous advocacy efforts in Washington, D.C., related to regional projects like the Alameda corridor, which connected to 225, highlighting the potential for federal funding in such cases. She acknowledged that securing federal grant dollars could be challenging but considered it a valuable opportunity. Her next question pertained to dense areas and potential challenges with street parking and signage visibility. She expressed the need for proactive measures, especially in dense areas like the one under consideration. She hoped that the project would address the issue of signage and traffic patterns early on, as dense development could lead to increased movement and traffic. She also noted the likelihood of people continuing to use cars, even with efforts to promote public transit, especially for those commuting to work. She inquired about when the project's planning would incorporate considerations for the actual traffic patterns and related concerns, recognizing the upcoming engagement meetings and discussions in the planning process. D. Krzyzanowski acknowledged that residents were an essential source of information regarding what was currently working or not working in terms of transportation and traffic. He emphasized the importance of engaging with the people who live in the area, as they experience these issues daily. He also recognized that redevelopment projects involve fitting something new into an existing environment, which necessitates an assessment of how things currently function and how they will change. To address this, they planned to involve their Transportation Planning Department and Public Works Department to determine necessary signage or other improvements to accommodate new residents or transit users. Furthermore, he mentioned that all projects like these must go through the city's development process, where they are reviewed for their impact on traffic and transportation, ensuring that any potential issues are addressed and mitigated.

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- CM Lawson expressed her satisfaction that the area's density and potential traffic issues would be considered in the project. She mentioned that the area was indeed very dense, with people parking along the streets, leading to accidents. She stressed the importance of being proactive in addressing these concerns during development. She believed that taking proactive measures could make safety in the area better and prevent the need for additional stop signs and similar measures in the future. She emphasized the significance of addressing such issues in tight development projects.
- CM Bergan sought clarification regarding parcel ownership. She asked to confirm that Bach Homes owned approximately 14 acres and RTD owned the other portion, and J. Orozco and D. Krzyzanowski affirmed this.
- CM Bergan then asked about the development of the RTD site, specifically who would be responsible for it. J. Orozco explained that RTD would issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) to seek development partners for their site. While the city would provide significant input and assistance in crafting the RFP, RTD would lead the process since it was their property. Any development on the RTD site would also require approval from the RTD Board. J. Orozco emphasized that they were actively demonstrating their interest in the site and working proactively to address development challenges, particularly related to access. They aimed to make a compelling case for RTD, highlighting that the current use of the land, as a grassy area and empty parking lot, wasn't the highest and best use and proposed building homes for people in need.
- CM Bergan sought clarification on the handling of the land by RTD, inquiring whether they were conveying it to the city. J. Orozco explained that RTD's approach varied by site, with a preference for long-term leases. This arrangement would work well for affordable housing, where the land would be leased for housing purposes. However, it would complicate ownership housing options. She mentioned that negotiations with RTD were yet to be finalized.
- CM Bergan asked about the initial step in the process, suggesting that making it an Urban Renewal area might be the first step. J. Orozco confirmed this and mentioned they had a draft Urban Renewal Plan in progress. They needed to present it to the AURA Board and engage in negotiations with taxing partners, which required detailed calculations based on Bach Homes' development plans.
- CM Bergan asked if Bach Homes planned to establish a metro district. J. Orozco replied that it was an option, though the final decision was not yet determined.
- CM Bergan concluded her questions and comments by expressing hope that their vision for the project would be recognized at the state level, referring to the governor's involvement. She thanked the presenters for their presentation.

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Outcome:

Information only.

Follow-up Action:

None required.

3.b. Original Aurora Special District Discussion with a Community Development Plan***Summary of Issue and Discussion:***

Andrea Amonick, Development Services Manager & Mindy Parnes, Long-Range Planning Manager

Mayor Pro Tem Gardner introduced the item. He introduced the proposal to hire Progressive Urban Management Associates (PUMA), an outside consultant, for two specific tasks related to northwest Aurora, often referred to as Original Aurora, which includes the area from Colfax Avenue from Yosemite to Florence. The first task was to create a Small Area Plan, a document commonly used in various cities, including Denver, to guide development.

Mayor Pro Tem Gardner explained that over the years, there have been multiple plans and ideas for the area's development, but a Small Area Plan would provide a comprehensive vision based on community feedback and stakeholder input. He emphasized the importance of having a clear plan to guide development, as it would prevent ad hoc development and ensure a consistent vision. While there has been positive momentum in the area with the introduction of businesses like Bánh & Butter, Baba & Pop's Pierogis, Lady Justice Brewing, and Cerebral Brewing, much of the development has occurred on an ad hoc basis. The Small Area Plan would help create a vision for the area's development, involving input from various stakeholders, developers, business groups, and existing businesses. He highlighted the potential for the area to become a revenue-generating hub for the city, emphasizing the importance of balancing arts and culture with revenue-generating businesses like bars and restaurants. He stressed the need for a clear development plan, expressing confidence in the district's potential for economic growth.

Mayor Pro Tem Gardner proceeded to discuss the second part of the project, which involved the establishment of a taxing district. He mentioned two potential district opportunities outlined in the provided document: an improvement district and a Downtown Development Authority (DDA). He explained that the DDA was a less common concept, and each municipality could only have one identified DDA. Aurora did not currently have an identified DDA, while Denver had Union Station as its designated DDA. Creating a taxing district would allow for revenue capture and funding of improvements within the district. He noted that over the past several months, meetings had taken place involving city staff, himself, and local businesses in the area. Many of these businesses expressed interest in forming a taxing district to fund necessary improvements. He highlighted some of the businesses, such as Bánh & Butter, owned by Thoa, who had decades of experience with New Saigon

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Bakery in Denver. He also mentioned Cerebral Brewing, which had relocated 90 percent of its operations from Denver to Aurora's Arts District. He emphasized the presence of high-caliber businesses in the area and their active participation in discussions about creating a taxing district. He expressed excitement about the group's commitment to making the project successful and seizing the opportunities ahead.

Mindy Parnes, the Long-Range Planning Manager, discussed the extensive planning history related to the Colfax corridor and the need to take action now. The focus was on exploring the potential for a Special District, and she referred to the Previous Focus Area where community meetings were held to gather input.

M. Parnes presented a list of plans dating back to 1974 that highlighted various efforts to enhance the area, including market studies and arts plans. She emphasized the emergence of community organizations, businesses, and the strengthening of the arts community. These entities had defined visions and missions, all aiming to strengthen the community in different ways. The presentation also featured past visioning efforts, including input from community members like Mr. Medina. The latest Vision Statement was discussed, emphasizing the need for a Special District along the Colfax corridor. She pointed out that a Special District should reflect the community's needs and serve as a centralized repository and marketing platform for various groups. She mentioned legal requirements for establishing the Special District and stressed the importance of quickly moving forward to establish a Community-Focused Action Plan with input from trusted voices in the community.

Andrea Amonick, Development Services Manager, discussed the forum and the specifics of the Special District. She acknowledged the extensive planning and redevelopment efforts spanning over 20 years. She emphasized the collaborative nature of the current effort, involving the city's Planning Department and the Aurora Urban Renewal Authority, with special recognition for Commissioner Lynn Baca and Johnny Watson from the Authority Board, who joined the meeting. She outlined the four Urban Renewal Areas associated with the Original Aurora Area, both in Adams County and Arapahoe County. She mentioned that the initiative began as a community-driven effort in 2021 and 2022 to address issues along the Colfax corridor, focusing on safety improvements, the activation of public spaces, homelessness, housing, and community engagement. She highlighted the importance of community engagement and noted that the Special District discussion was driven by the community's desire to actively participate in shaping the area's future. She clarified that the initiative would be a bottom-up effort led by a third-party consultant, PUMA, with Brad Segal, the principal of the firm, having over 35 years of experience in similar projects.

A. Amonick explained that creating a Special District is a legal process with specific requirements, and the goal was to meet those requirements by the end of 2024. PUMA proposed a three-step process, starting with addressing district feasibility, followed by outreach and community development planning, and finally,

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meeting the legal requirements. She mentioned the importance of educating the community about different Special District options, their boundaries, and revenue sources. She outlined the proposed timeline, initiating the process in the fall and commencing community outreach at the beginning of the following year. She also mentioned that funding for this initiative would come from the Urban Renewal Authority, and the next step would involve presenting the outlined components to the Aurora Urban Renewal Authority Board for an allocation of funding if the committee recommended moving forward.

- CM Bergan sought clarification regarding the proposed taxing district options, specifically business improvement districts (BID) and DDA. She wanted to understand who would be taxed under these arrangements. A. Amonick explained that BIDs typically tax businesses, not homeowners or renters. On the other hand, DDAs have more flexibility; they can use tax increment financing and, depending on the authority granted by the City Council, may use property taxes from all property owners, potentially including homeowners and renters. DDAs can fund a broader range of improvements beyond just businesses. A. Amonick explained that in the case of a new taxing jurisdiction, taxes within that area would be allocated similarly to how they are done within an Urban Renewal Area. She mentioned that there's an overlapping Urban Renewal Area where the tax increment financing provision would be closed to enable a broader increment to be used.
- CM Bergan asked about the four overlapping Urban Renewal Areas and how the city generates revenue from sales and property taxes. A. Amonick clarified that when establishing a new taxing jurisdiction, a base would be set, and the existing base of property and sales taxes would continue to be collected, ensuring some revenue for the city.
- CM Bergan inquired if the funds generated would be adequate to develop the necessary infrastructure for the plan. A. Amonick clarified that the DDA would have the authority to propose using those funds for implementing items outlined in the Community Development Plan associated with this initiative.
- CM Bergan asked about the previous initiative called FAX Aurora and why it didn't succeed. A. Amonick explained that the key difference with the current initiative is that it has more interest and a more stable financial structure. FAX Aurora was a voluntary membership-based model, whereas the new initiative, whether it's a DDA or a BID, relies on a taxation system, making it financially more stable in comparison to the previous membership-based approach.
- CM Bergan raised concerns about the Arts District's contribution to the BID since they receive subsidized rent. A. Amonick explained that the Arts District, while having its location and generating some revenue through sales, would still be considered a stakeholder in the BID. Many BIDs and DDAs in other communities allocate a portion of their funds to support neighborhood infrastructure, and the presence of the Arts District could

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contribute indirectly by drawing people to the area and increasing taxes through events, shows, and other activities.

- CM Bergan acknowledged that businesses were now showing more interest in the area, recognizing that a thriving business community is essential for the success of the Arts District, and A. Amonick agreed with her statement.
- Mayor Pro Tem Gardner joined in the discussion and answered CM Bergan's question on FAX Aurora. He explained the history of various organizations in Aurora, including FAX Aurora, Pam Wilson, the North Aurora Business Alliance, and the Aurora Economic Opportunity Coalition. He noted that these groups often seemed to be working in different directions. He envisioned that the government could bring everyone together and create a unified plan. He explained that organizations like FAX Partnership, North Aurora Business Alliance, and Aurora Economic Opportunity Coalition had different missions but were somewhat similar to a Chamber of Commerce for their respective areas. He envisioned the government's role in getting everyone on the same page and rowing in the same direction. Regarding the Arts District, he compared it to RiNo in Denver, highlighting the importance of complementary businesses. He mentioned that an Arts District alone might struggle, but with complementary businesses like restaurants and entertainment venues, it could thrive. He emphasized the need to generate such complementary businesses to make the Arts District a revenue-generating area for the city, similar to successful arts districts in the metro area.
- CM Lawson expressed support for the idea, especially in light of the upcoming Bus Rapid Transit implementation in the corridor. She raised a question about businesses in the area surrounding those listed as interested in the tax district, wondering if they would be automatically included in the tax district even if they didn't want to be. A. Amonick explained that the boundaries and participation of businesses in the district would be determined through outreach and the Community Action Plan. It would be a collaborative process with PUMA to identify who would be part of the initiative. She also emphasized the importance of ensuring that the community embraces the plan.
- CM Lawson raised concerns about businesses in the corridor, mentioning that some might have reservations or resistance to joining the district due to potential extra taxation, even though there could be benefits. She inquired about the process in case not all businesses were willing to participate. M. Parnes mentioned the example of the Havana BID as a similar case. CM Lawson clarified if this scenario was comparable to what they were discussing, and M. Parnes affirmed this. A. Amonick explained that outreach and education to the community, led by PUMA, would be a crucial part of the process. She mentioned that in BID, businesses generally had to opt in, and there was a formal election. The goal was to engage the community and provide information so that businesses, residents, nonprofits, and others could understand their role in the proposed structures and make informed decisions.

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- CM Lawson inquired about the approximate cost of using the organization for the Havana BID. A. Amonick answered that the estimated cost was \$200,000, which could be funded through the Aurora Urban Renewal Authority if the commissioners decided to proceed with it.
- CM Bergan raised the issue of safety, which had been a significant concern for both existing and potential businesses in the area. She inquired whether the BID or DDA could allocate funds to address security. A. Amonick responded affirmatively, explaining that the BID or DDA could use funds to hire private security, which was a practice employed by some other districts.

Outcome:

Council Member Bergan and Council Member Lawson approved this item to move forward.

Follow-up Action:

Staff will add this item to an AURA Meeting Agenda

3.c. Our Parks, Our Places- A Plan for Aurora's Parks, Recreation and Open Space**Summary of Issue and Discussion:**

Michelle Teller, Senior Planner, and Rian French, Project Manager

Michelle Teller, Senior Planner, presented this item. She outlined the purpose of the meeting, which was to provide an update on the Our Parks, Our Places master plan. She mentioned the intention to highlight upcoming approval processes related to the plan and to provide key dates for public review and comments.

The Our Parks, Our Places master plan was designed to set a vision for the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) department for the next 5 to 10 years. The plan was based on five key objectives derived from the Aurora Places Comprehensive Plan, including community connections, equitable access, health and safety, sustainable growth, and operational efficiencies. The project began in May of the previous year and went through four phases, which included baseline assessment, gaps analysis, recommendations drafting, and culminated in the current phase of assembling the draft document.

M. Teller discussed the approval processes for the master plan. She mentioned that there were two main approval processes in place. The first involved approving the master plan as the guiding master plan for the department. The second process required amending the Aurora Places Comprehensive Plan to include a reference to the master plan. The committee will be approached in the future to seek an advisory recommendation for this second process.

M. Teller then provided an overview of the different phases of the master plan development. The first phase focused on creating an existing conditions and inventory report, which served as the foundation for the master plan. During this

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phase, they conducted a thorough review of various data sources and regional planning documents, including county and regional plans. They also engaged in extensive community outreach, including surveys, open houses, focus groups, and participation in special events to gather feedback from the community. During the first phase of the project, the team collaborated with the community to establish six guiding principles. These principles were an extension of the initial five objectives outlined in the Aurora Places Comprehensive Plan. The principles were refined based on community feedback received through open-house events.

The six guiding principles that shaped the document and future recommendations included: Meeting the Evolving Needs of the Community, Strengthening Connectivity to PROS Assets, Serving as Stewards to the Environment, Providing Opportunities for Lifelong Education, Proactively Investing in the Present and Future, and Providing Welcoming and Safe Spaces. The project also aimed to explore the relationship between the PROS system and real estate, land use, and economic development. The consultant's findings indicated that within a two to three-minute walk from any PROS-developed spaces, there was a 20 percent premium in real estate value, encompassing businesses. Within a five-minute walk, there was a 10 percent increase in value. Consequently, the project sought to establish partnerships with various businesses and entities to leverage these findings for future collaboration.

During Phase 2 of the project, the focus was on comprehensively understanding the gaps and needs within the PROS system while keeping equity as a central concern throughout the process. Instead of having a single recommendation dedicated to equity, an Equity Value Statement was created to serve as an overarching framework for all the recommendations and strategies. With input from the public, equity was defined as both a means to create and sustain healthy communities and an end that benefits everyone, acknowledging the varying circumstances, resources, and opportunities that individuals have. In alignment with the equity principle, a Gap Analysis and Needs Assessment were conducted to assess how the existing PROS system aligned with the identified needs in Aurora. The assessment considered factors such as access to parks, recreation areas, and amenities. Additionally, community input played a vital role in understanding where the gaps and needs were perceived within the community. A map highlighting the highest-need neighborhoods was created to assist in this analysis.

M. Teller discussed the process of creating a map to identify key factors in assessing the needs of Aurora's neighborhoods within the PROS system. They considered three key factors: Density, which focused on neighborhoods with existing residential areas, Demographic Vulnerability, comprised of social vulnerability and health indicators, including childhood obesity rates, to pinpoint areas with high needs for parks and open spaces, and Park Acreage Per 1,000 residents, which helped evaluate park availability. Additional analyses were conducted, such as examining Tree Equity to identify areas with a greater need for city trees, gathering Community Feedback to understand community preferences

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and gaps, analyzing Program Seasonality to assess program distribution and reach, and studying Ecological Connectivity to support habitat corridors. Throughout these phases, there were over 16,000 interactions with the community, eventually reaching approximately 17,000 individuals. The team ensured accessibility by translating materials into Aurora's top six most-used languages and providing interpreters at open houses. The community's input was integral in shaping the vision for the PROS system, reflecting their needs and priorities. The engagement efforts were seen as a significant achievement in involving a broad spectrum of the community.

During Phase 3 of the project, M. Teller mentioned the team began refining ideas based on information gathered in Phases 1 and 2. Recommendations and strategies were drafted with the assistance of a consultant, prioritizing key recommendations and creating an action plan around them. Additionally, a Dog Park Study was conducted alongside the master plan, focusing on developing design standards and recommendations for dog parks within the system. This study was integrated into the public engagement and needs assessments. Moving on to Phase 4, the team compiled all the gathered information into a document. They shared key upcoming dates with the committee, indicating that the draft would be made available for public review and comment between 10/02 and 10/16. Staff were already reviewing a copy, and once it was deemed complete, it would be distributed to various stakeholders for further refinement based on their feedback.

Looking ahead, in the first quarter of the following year, M. Teller anticipated starting the approval processes involving several committees, including the Planning and Economic Development Policy Committee and would provide more information to the committee at that time.

- CM Lawson expressed gratitude for M. Teller's presentation and acknowledged the extensive community engagement efforts. She raised concerns about safety in city parks, mentioning that there had been reports of people not feeling safe in some of them. She noted that the presentation mentioned health and safety but did not provide specific details on how safety would be addressed. She questioned whether measures like increased lighting, cameras, or park rangers were needed. M. Teller explained that the presentation was meant to provide a high-level overview. However, she mentioned that safety concerns had been discussed with the consultants. The master plan did address safety concerns through design changes aimed at creating more welcoming spaces, including signage and modifications to park entrances. She assured CM Lawson that these safety considerations would be included in the draft document based on feedback received during open houses and community discussions.
- CM Lawson expressed the need for additional safety measures in parks, including increased lighting and other considerations to make people feel comfortable. She emphasized the importance of safety to encourage park usage. M. Teller acknowledged the need for such measures. She mentioned

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that they would be part of a separate initiative. The Director, Brooke Bell, tasked them with conducting a lighting study and exploring various alternatives. These efforts would be more strategic and detailed than what was covered in the master plan, but the master plan would serve as a foundation for addressing these specific safety elements in the future.

- Laura Perry responded to CM Lawson's question regarding safety in parks. She emphasized that safety was a top priority for the parks and outlined several measures they had taken. These included actively tracking data, deploying mobile camera units to hotspots, engaging a nighttime security patrol for areas with reported crimes, and maintaining direct coordination with APD on park-related crime tracking. Regular updates on these efforts were provided to the Parks, Foundations & Quality of Life Policy Committee. L. Perry offered to forward the latest update from the previous month, which detailed the strategies being deployed. She also mentioned the need for flexibility and adaptability to address community issues and noted that the planning initiative M. Teller mentioned would complement their ongoing work.
- CM Bergan expressed concerns similar to those of CM Lawson regarding park safety. She appreciated the mobile cameras but suggested allocating additional funding for more of them due to the city's size and the number of parks. She also inquired about equity and mentioned the absence of a dog park in Ward VI, noting that constituents frequently ask for one. M. Teller responded by mentioning the existence of a private dog park in Ward VI but clarified that it wasn't city owned. She added that the demand for dog parks was widespread, and people wanted more of them in various locations. The goal was to distribute dog parks throughout neighborhoods and ensure access in every ward.
- CM Bergan expressed her interest in understanding what plans were in place to complete and develop existing parks. She mentioned an example of a park, which she referred to as Dome Park, that had remained mostly grass and dirt for the 21 years she had lived in the area. She also raised questions about regional parks and the trail system, seeking clarification on whether these were separate initiatives. M. Teller responded by explaining that the project included the development of a Geographic Information Systems Tool (GIS) to track undeveloped spaces and identify areas of greatest need. She cited Dome Park as an example and mentioned that the master plan aimed to establish a foundation for tracking and addressing such gaps and needs in park development.
- Nicole Ankeney, the Manager of Planning, Design, and Construction, provided an update regarding Dome Park. She mentioned that they had recently engaged a consultant to initiate the site master planning process for Dome Park. They were in the process of creating a schedule and a plan for public engagement, which would be shared on Engage Aurora soon. She clarified that the current master plan was a high-level overview, setting the goals and vision for the entire park system. In the following year, they planned to develop a strategic plan with more detailed information. She

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noted that they were actively assessing undeveloped parks across the city, utilizing GIS and analysis tools. Additionally, they were working on filling staffing vacancies within the planning team to ensure they could address the development of undeveloped park effectively.

- CM Bergan raised a point about Phase 2 gaps and needs in the park system. She mentioned that park fees and impact fees played a significant role in funding and noted that some of these funds needed to remain within the area where they were collected. This added complexity to the funding process. N. Ankeney acknowledged the importance of this issue and mentioned that she was working on an RFP to address it. She specifically referred to the PROS dedication and development criteria manual and explained that they were planning to conduct a deeper analysis of fees and be responsive to both the development community and the community at large. She noted that this analysis would be undertaken in the coming year.
- CM Bergan inquired about the timeline for presenting the Comprehensive Plan changes to the PED Committee. M. Teller confirmed that the changes to the Comprehensive Plan, specifically referencing the document discussed, would likely come before PED early the following year.

Outcome:

Information only.

Follow-up Action:

None required.

4. MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION**4. a. Aurora Economic Development Council**

- Yuri Gorlov

NO REPORT

4.b. Havana Business Improvement District

- Chance Horiuchi

C. Horiuchi announced the upcoming Halloween events. She mentioned various activities, including a drive-in movie, a Halloween costume contest, a networking event in partnership with the African Chamber, and a trick-or-treat event at The Gardens in Havana. The annual meeting was scheduled for November 15 at the Stampede, and catering would be provided by an Argentinian caterer. She noted that this year's presentation would be shorter, and they had a videographer to create a video overview of the events held in 2023.

4.c. Aurora Chamber of Commerce

- Naomi Colwell

NO REPORT

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4.d. Planning Commission

- Becky Hogan
- NO REPORT

4.e. Oil and Gas Committee

- Brad Pierce
- NO REPORT

4.f. Business Advisory Board

- Garrett Walls
- NO REPORT

4.g. Retail

- Bob Oliva
- NO REPORT

4.h. Small Business

- Elena Vasconez

E. Vasconez mentioned that since the fall of 2022, the SBDC has been part of a collaborative effort involving 13 community and business organizations led by the Center for Community Wealth Building. They developed an online marketplace called ShopBIPOC to support businesses owned by Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), including Asian, Latino, biracial, and multiracial individuals. She reported that ShopBIPOC currently featured 415 BIPOC small businesses from the entire Denver Metro Area, including Aurora. The marketplace aimed to connect consumers and anchor institutions such as the University of Colorado, Anschutz Medical Center, and Metro State University with BIPOC-owned businesses to enhance their growth opportunities. She shared the success of the online marketplace's launch event on August 31 at The People's Building, attended by approximately 300 people. Five Aurora caterers, who were SBDC clients, provided catering for the event. She mentioned that CM Marcano represented the city and delivered a welcoming speech. She recognized several individuals and organizations for their support, including Aaron Vega, the curator for The People's Building, A. Amonick, and the SBDC Team. She also noted the city's efforts to raise awareness among different departments about BIPOC small businesses and shopping locally in Aurora. She highlighted a recent Lunch and Learn Session conducted by the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, the SBDC, and Community Wealth Building for city employees. This session aimed to educate them on purchasing from local small businesses to support community growth. Prieto's Catering, an Aurora food truck owner and SBDC business, provided catering for the training, which received a positive response. Due to its success, they planned to hold another training event in the coming months. She concluded by mentioning that she would provide a comprehensive report on all SBDC outreach efforts during the November PED Meeting and thanked everyone for their time.

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4.i. Visit Aurora

- Bruce Dalton

NO REPORT

- CM Bergan announced that Southlands would be hosting a Wine Walk the following evening, describing it as a fun event for those who hadn't experienced it before.

5. CONFIRM NEXT MEETING DATE

Scheduled for October 11, 2023, at 8:30 AM MT.

6. ADJOURNMENT



APPROVED: _____

Françoise Bergan, Committee Chair