

Office of Economic Development
Economic Development Advisory Board
MEETING MINUTES

Date: September 4, 2007: 7:00 A.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Brian Campbell, Chair
Jim LeCheminant, Vice Chair
Christian Alder
Dale Easter
Vern Mathern
Steve Shope
Steve Wood

EX-OFFICIO

Mayor Keno Hawker (excused)
Chris Brady
Jack Sellers
Charlie Deaton

STAFF PRESENT

Shelly Allen
Sue Cason
Mike James
Cathy Ji
Shea Joachim
Amy Morales
Patrick Murphy
Mike Paredes
Scot Rigby

MEMBERS ABSENT

Ted Wendel (excused)

GUESTS

Marc Soronson

1. Chair's Call To Order

Chair Brian Campbell called the September 4, 2007 meeting of the Economic Development Advisory Board to order at 7:03 A.M. at the City of Mesa Council Chambers, Lower Level, 57 E. 1st Street, Mesa, Arizona 85201.

2. Approval of Minutes of the August 7, 2007 Meeting

Chair Campbell called for a motion to approve the minutes from the meeting held August 7, 2007.

MOTION: Dale Easter moved that the minutes from August 7, 2007 be approved as written.

SECOND: Vern Mathern

DECISION: Passed unanimously

3. Hear presentation and discuss the Central Mesa High Capacity Transit Corridor Study

Mr. Mike James, Deputy Director of Transportation and Transit Planning, gave a short introduction of the High Capacity Transit Corridor Study. He explained that for the last

three weeks they have been meeting with boards and community groups, as well as holding two public scoping meetings. Mr. James then introduced Mr. Marc Soronson of HDR/S.R. Beard & Associates.

Mr. Marc Soronson, Project Manager for HDR, stated that the project was started several months ago and over the last few weeks the scoping meetings have been held. The purpose of the scoping meetings are; inform the community about the study, develop study goals and objectives, present potential alternatives (Bus Rapid Transit and Light Rail Transit), identify study area issues, assess travel demand, obtain community comments, and identify interested stakeholders.

The purpose of the Project is to increase access to regional employment areas for the City of Mesa residents and analyze appropriate transit technology and routes to connect with the Central Phoenix/East Valley Light Rail Transit System. One of the goals of this study is to facilitate continued development of a regional and seamless transportation system. This new system will attract new transit riders and facilitate economic development.

The High Capacity Study Overview includes funding on a regional level from the voter approved Proposition 400. Proposition 400 includes a half cent sales tax that provides funding for roadways, freeways and alternate modes of transit. The funding plan includes a fifty/fifty match from the city and federal funding. The purpose of the Alternatives Analysis is to identify alignment (Main Street/Sycamore Station to Superstition Springs Mall) and technology alternatives including the Light Rail Transit, Bus Rapid Transit, or a combination of the two.

The process is federally guided and the steps that have to be taken are; define study area with project goals and objectives, develop preliminary alignment and modal alternatives, Tier 1 screening (fatal flaws and inconsistency with project Goals and Objectives), Tier 2 screening (ridership potential, traffic impacts, land use impacts, community issues, economic development potential, environmental considerations, design and constructability considerations, historic resources, construction costs and right of way issues), identify locally preferred alternatives, refine locally preferred alternative report, adoption and submittal of the Alternatives Analysis report to the Federal Transit Administration. The process will take approximately fourteen (14) months.

The Public Involvement Contact person is Ms. Erin LeSueur-Seibel, Metro Light Rail. Please contact her with any concerns or comments.

4. Hear presentation and discuss Williams Gateway Area Strategic Development Plan

Mr. Scot Rigby, Interim Project Manager for Williams Gateway Area, referred to the material hand-out, which included an aerial map and the detailed scope of work. In the last year the City completed a ULI (Urban Land Institute) Study. The study covered fifty (50) square miles. The decision after the study was to move from a fifty thousand (50,000) foot level down to a twenty thousand (20,000) foot level. A consultant group was brought in to study this issue from different angles. The first issue is economic development, second is land use, third is transportation, and the fourth is the fiscal

modeling. HDR is the consultant group chosen to lead the project. There are six phases to the Strategic Development Project:

- Phase 1 --- Project Start Up/Mobilization
- Phase 2 --- Baseline Data Collection
- Phase 3 --- Alternatives and Draft Plan/Mini Studies
- Phase 4 --- Refinement and Testing of Draft Plan to Final Draft Plan and Completion of Mini-Studies
- Phase 5 --- Presentations to the Elected and Appointed Officials and;
- Phase 6 --- Plan Production.

The Project will run through July of 2008 with Phase 1 recently completed and Phase 2 has begun.

Chair Brian Campbell encouraged HDR and staff to stay within the time frame, which is critical. This is a very exciting plan and the City is to be commended for the different moving pieces of three different tracks that will be paralleling through the process. The plan and staff need the support of the Economic Development Advisory Board to help keep the tracks on point. He commended the staff for the work, plan and the aggressiveness on this project.

5. Hear a presentation and discuss the Fiesta District Area Project

Ms. Cathy Ji, Economic Development Specialist, provided a presentation on the Fiesta District Area Project. The boundaries of the Fiesta District are the Tempe Canal on the west, the U.S. 60 on the south, on the east side of Extension Road, and a couple hundred feet north of Southern Avenue. The district is roughly two (2) square miles in area. The City is working with the businesses and the consultant contracted for the Fiesta Design Project. There is already over \$500 million dollars worth of projects either in the planning stages or under construction. The projects include renovations, expansions and new construction. Banner Desert Children's Hospital and MCC are planning \$45 million dollars in upgrades. M & I Bank and McDonalds recently rebuilt their buildings; Hilton underwent a \$6 million dollars renovation. Bank of America Tower has invested \$3 million dollars in renovations, and the new owner is continuing with renovations to bring it back to its Class "A" status. The Desert Medical Plaza, adjacent to the Desert Medical Center, completed renovations at their centers. Two additional projects planned are the Aqua Terra Luxury Condos and a mixed-use project at Southern Avenue and Extension Road.

Banner Children's Hospital will be a \$328 million dollars, seven-story expansion with 173,000 additional square feet. The pediatric beds will expand from 137 to 248. The scheduled completion date is the summer of 2009.

The Aqua Terra Project will be a mix of luxury residences, upscale shopping, dining and services. There will be over 430 loft condos, 20,000 square feet of street level retail, with up to 24 live/work units. Sales will begin in the fall of 2007 with planned construction beginning (depending on the sales) in February 2008, and a scheduled completion of fall 2009.

Westcor's Fiesta Mall continues with their expansion plans. The interior remodel is complete and the exterior remodel is to be complete in 2008.

The Design Project is with a consultant named PMC World. They are working on a plan to help revitalize the area. The five main elements include transportation, urban design, branding, public outreach and implementation. The consultant is working on an Implementation Plan covering; programs, policies, projects, incentives, preliminary budget (costs), fiscal impact analysis (funding options) and recommended phasing. The private sector has invested in the project and wants to see it become a reality.

6. Directors Report

Ms. Shelly Allen, Acting Economic Development Director, announced that the ULI (Urban Land Institute) conference is coming up in October. Ms. Allen and Mr. Rigby will be attending the conference in Las Vegas. The City of Mesa will be joining with Williams Gateway Area and East Valley Partnership in supporting a booth. It is a great opportunity to showcase the City of Mesa.

Ms. Allen encouraged the EDAB Board members to indicate their interest in attending the Greater Phoenix Economic Council (GPEC) Annual Dinner on Wednesday, October 3, 2007.

7. Other Business

Next EDAB Meeting: October 2, 2007 at 7:00 a.m. Location: City of Mesa Lower Level Council Chambers, 57 E. 1st Street.

Chair Campbell encouraged the Board members to give comments for agenda items for the October meeting to Ms. Allen.

Mr. Vern Mathern suggested an update on the Country Club area going west.

8. Items from Citizens Present

No comments.

9. Adjournment

Chair Campbell adjourned the meeting at 8:20 A.M.

Submitted By:

Shelly Allen, Interim Economic Development Director
(Prepared by Betsy Adams)