

GRAND JUNCTION CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP SUMMARY
JOINT WORKSHOP WITH THE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
August 12, 2021

Meeting Convened: 7:36 a.m.

Meeting Adjourned: 8:46 a.m.

City Councilmembers present: Councilmembers Abe Herman, Randall Reitz (City Council representative to DDA), Anna Stout, and Mayor Chuck McDaniel. Councilmembers Phil Pe'a, Dennis Simpson, and Rick Taggart were absent.

DDA Board members present: Josh Niernberg, Cole Hanson, Libby Olson, Garrett Portra, Vance Wagner, and Chair Doug Simons, Jr. Board members Dan Meyer and Maria Rainsdon were absent.

City Staff present: City Attorney John Shaver, Parks and Recreation Director Ken Sherbenou, Randy Coleman, Public Works Director Trent Prall, Deputy Chief Matt Smith, and City Clerk Wanda Winkelmann

DDA Staff members present: Executive Director Brandon Stam, Administrative Specialist Vonda Bauer, Community Engagement Manager David Goe, and Project Coordinator Sarah Dishong.

DDA Board President called the meeting to order.

Agenda Topic 1. Discussion Topics

a. 4th and 5th Street Feasibility Study

DDA Executive Director Stam report stated the consultants were present to review the feasibility study.

Denise Aten, Senior Vice President with consulting engineering firm Bohannon Huston reviewed the goals/vision-based criteria of the study: enhanced safety; improved walkability and bikeability; activate economic development; and optimize traffic circulation. She noted that there are two enhanced alternatives: the first alternative is to convert the one-way streets to two-way streets; and the second alternative keeps the streets as one-way streets.

Bohannon Huston conducted public polling and over 300 total comments were collected. An interactive map, project email, public open house, and an online survey were used to gather comments.

Ms. Aten introduced subconsultant and Landscape Architect Chad Caletka with MIG. Mr. Caletka reviewed the existing conditions of 5th Street and particularly noted that the wide lanes are more conducive to speeding. The proposed alternative would make the traffic lanes narrower and increase the sidewalk space. The angle parking would become parallel parking and dedicated bike lanes are added.

On 4th Street, the current lane conditions are very similar to 5th Street, with very wide roadway widths and tree lawn areas. The proposed alternative would increase the sidewalks, add a bike lane, and parallel parking.

Ms. Aten reviewed the Traffic Analysis Summary, which included 2045 Regional Travel Demand Model Assumptions, 2045 Travel Demand Model Results, and Additional Traffic Analysis that will be completed to ensure the appropriate infrastructure, signals, and signs are integrated at the intersections during the design phase.

The 4th and 5th Street Proposed Alternatives Analysis Matrix was described that utilized the vision-based criteria to score the enhanced one-way alternative and the enhanced two-way alternative:

- Enhanced Safety - both scenarios reduce speeds and reduce crashes.
- Optimize Traffic Circulation – the enhanced one-way and enhanced two-way reduce driver confusion (maintains current travel patterns for locals in the short term, less long-term confusion for all travelers), encourage traffic calming (slower speeds), promote direct local connections, support corridor truck deliveries (may need designated loading zone and encourage use of alleys), support transit (opportunity for improved bus stops)
- Improved Walkability and Bikeability – improve crossings (shorter crossing distance plus pullouts), provide/improve bike facilities (provide consistent bike facilities), improve sidewalks (widen and enhance sidewalk area).
- Activate Economic Development – improve business access (slower speeds improve business access), provide opportunities for amenities (widened sidewalks allow for placemaking and landscaping opportunities), enhance parking (consistent, parallel parking), preliminary costs (higher cost due to modification to signals and signage).

Discussion ensued regarding the use of sidewalks vs. bollards to protect the bike lane, speed limits, input on design elements, benefits of enhanced one-way vs. two-way alternatives, costs for each alternative, parking and bike lanes, and community habits.

Next steps include additional public outreach to solicit feedback on the alternatives, firming up the costs for each alternative (how these enhancements would be funded), the timeframe to build the enhancements, and forming a recommendation.

b. Downtown Improvements

DDA Executive Director Stam noted these improvements are ways to encourage investment in the downtown.

Restrooms

Current facilities do not meet the need of the visitors to downtown and are subject to vandalism. Parks and Recreation Director Sherbenou noted this improvement is part of the PROS Master Plan.

Breezeways

Activating breezeways and alleyways enhances the downtown experience. There are opportunities for dual entryways due to the length of some buildings. Enhancements can help these areas function more efficiently by creating dedicated delivery spots and shared trash/recycling areas.

It was noted that the state has funding available for downtown revitalization.

Employee Parking

Providing parking for employees that is safe is a priority as the demand for parking continues to grow. Parking lots could be used to create employee parking areas that are well-lit.

Public Safety

Ensuring downtown is activated helps increase safety and discourages vandalism.

Discussion ensued regarding 4th and 5th Street parking meters and possibly replacing them with an electronic parking system, costs, feedback from downtown merchants and residents, flexible plaza space and alleyway activation, housing and resources for individuals who are houseless, and how activating alleyways and other spaces decrease crime. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is a crime prevention approach that uses urban and architectural design to build a sense of community and deter unwanted activity.

Next steps include obtaining the costs for these items (including the maintenance) and the priority of these improvements (as rated by residents and businesses of the downtown).

Agenda Topic 2. Public Comments

Matt and Rock Cesario with Triple Play Records suggested adding recycling options for downtown businesses who could share recycling bins, noted that parking tickets are not issued in certain areas of downtown on Main Street, and stated that the installation of a disc golf course improved safety of a local park.

Jeremy Nelson with Regeneration Development announced that there will be a soft launch for Chris Dutton with Gemini Beer Company on August 20.

Adjournment

The Workshop adjourned at 8:46 a.m.