

GRAND JUNCTION CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP SUMMARY
May 5, 2014 – Noticed Agenda Attached

Meeting Convened: 5:03 p.m. in the City Auditorium

Meeting Adjourned: 8:05 p.m.

Council Members present: All. Staff present: Englehart, Moore, Shaver, Romero, Evans, Tice, Moberg, Portner, Watkins, Valentine, Kovalik, Lanning, and Tuin.

Downtown Development Authority / Downtown Grand Junction Business Improvement District (DDA/BID): Harry Weiss

Agenda Topic 1. Economic Development Plan (continued) – Moved to follow Agenda Topic 2.

City Manager Rich Englehart said that they will review Economic Development Indicators first. Some components have been added to the Plan since the last time it was reviewed by Council and the goal is that the Council is comfortable with the Plan so that it could go forward for adoption by resolution at the May 7th City Council Meeting.

Agenda Topic 2. First Quarter Economic Development Indicators

Revenue Supervisor Elizabeth Tice reviewed the 1st quarter 2014 retail and revenue report (which highlighted the gross retail activity) as well as the 1st quarter 2014 sales tax revenue both by category and by geographic area within the City. The report showed an increase over the five years and compared them to the national trends. She answered a variety of questions regarding the various categories listed for sales tax collections. Council will be kept informed on the revenues on a quarterly basis. Ms. Tice then gave an overview of the economic indicators and the demographics for the 1st quarter of 2014 highlighting the energy industry (currently down 24% statewide), real estate (showing a small decline), the construction industry (based on building permits issued), and the labor market (the number of jobs are higher than it has been since March 2009).

Agenda Topic 1. Economic Development Plan (continued)

City Manager Englehart informed City Council that, as part of the Economic Development Plan, the data Ms. Tice provided will be used to assess the local economy. Once the Plan is adopted by Council, the Plan and the data will be shared with the other Partners. All the plans and data will be coordinated.

Ms. Tice provided an overview of the Demographic Profile, Section 2, of the draft Economic Development Plan which included projections for population, workforce, educational attainment, housing, employment, and wages. City Manager advised that the information provides baseline data and will be reported to Council on a regular basis. City Council felt that the timeline should go back 10 years instead of 5 years for the workforce statistics. Councilmember Chazen suggested the inclusion of rental rates for commercial space as a

marketing tool. There were comments made on the ratio of the income to housing ratio for Grand Junction. Councilmember Traylor Smith suggested the wages and employment by industry job category be broken down further, i.e. educational services and government. It was suggested that the Education Attainment table include Associate and Technical degrees.

Deputy City Manager Tim Moore advised Council that, regarding land use, there are a mix of what is called “ready to develop” properties, that is, properties that have utilities to them, or very close to them. There are some long range properties suitable for heavy commercial and industrial uses. He also said that they have identified the properties, how big they are, and where they are located which could help out as part of a marketing plan.

Greg Moberg, Planning Services Supervisor, reviewed Section 3, Land Use, of the drafted Economic Development Plan. It is broken out into four subsection summaries: Zoning, Residential, Commercial, and Industrial. The City allows a lot of mixture within its 26 separate zone districts (except Community Services and Recreation, it allows some uses, but mostly open space). When asked about Form Districts, it was explained that they were put into place in 2010 for neighborhood centers, although none have been built yet. They are based on the form and structure of the building, not the use. Mr. Moberg described each zone district map in the Plan. There was some discussion regarding the vacant property available in the Residential Zone Districts in the City. Council agreed that the area in the 201 boundary should be looked at as well. Mr. Moberg said there is approximately a 7% vacancy rate for the Commercial Zone District which equates to 565 vacant properties. Comparing to other areas, a 5% to 7% is a normal, healthy vacancy rate. There was discussion about the square footage of vacant, commercial zoned, buildings that are available. Mr. Moberg said they don't have those numbers but can look at the square footage of vacant buildings. He summarized the Industrial Zone Districts and the Industrial Zone map and stated that there is a good inventory of industrial land available. The vacancy rate for the buildings is at about 8% and there are over 600 acres of readily available property. Over half of the properties that are readily developed are between one and fifteen acres and the average site is three acres. Dependent on growth, this provides the City with about 23 years' worth of industrial lands which could be developed.

Councilmember Boeschstein opened the discussion on Enterprise Zones. He noted the State process is cumbersome so perhaps the City could look at local Enterprise Zones. Council and Staff discussed various ways to offer incentives or fees that could be discounted.

Deputy City Manager Moore outlined two changes that were made regarding the goals and actions in the Plan. One was to get out to the community, existing businesses, and building relationships with them to find ways to help them grow their businesses. That action step was identified under economic gardening. City Manager Englehart advised that the other change to the Plan was to add in “part of the annual budget process” when coordinating with the City's partners and looking at marketing and the strengths of the community.

There was some discussion whether or not the Economic Development Plan should be considered a plan, strategy, or a policy. Council was unanimously in favor of leaving it as a plan. Adding arts and culture into the action steps because of its importance to the community was also discussed and when polled, Council was in favor of adding it in 4 to 3. When considering

how often the Plan should be reviewed, City Manager Englehart advised that components to the Plan will be brought to Council on a continual basis however, it will also be set up as an annual review overall.

Other topics regarding the Plan were discussed including marketing, whether to move forward with the Plan now or later, and the resolution adopting the Plan, whether it needs changed or not.

After polling Council, it was decided to place consideration of adoption of the Plan on the agenda for the Wednesday, May 7th City Council Meeting (five in favor, two opposed).

Councilmember Doody left the meeting.

It was decided to postpone Agenda Topic 3, Vision/Capital Planning, and schedule a workshop to discuss it on May 7th at 5:00 p.m. prior to the City Council Meeting.

Other Business

Annual Reorganization of Council

Council discussed what changes should be made for the Council committee assignments. No changes were suggested and Staff was directed to place the assignments on the May 7, 2014 City Council Meeting agenda.

City Manager Englehart asked Council to consider June 6th as a possible date for an all-day retreat for Council where Department Heads could present reports and Council could look at five year capital plans.

City Attorney Shaver advised Council that he would like to add the Riverview Technology Corporation's Bylaws housekeeping changes to the Consent Calendar on the May 7th City Council Meeting agenda. There was no objection.

City Manager Englehart reported that the Mesa County Commissioners met with their own Staff regarding the Persigo Biogas and they would like more detailed information from the City Staff so the Public Hearing scheduled for May 7th will be continued to May 21st.

With no other business, the meeting adjourned.

**GRAND JUNCTION CITY COUNCIL
WORKSHOP**

**MONDAY, MAY 5, 2014, 5:00 P.M.
CITY AUDITORIUM
250 N. 5TH STREET**

To become the most livable community west of the Rockies by 2025

- 1. Economic Development Plan (continued)**
- 2. First Quarter Economic Development Indicators**
- 3. Vision/Capital Planning**
- 4. Other Business**
 - Annual Reorganization of Council**