

**GRAND JUNCTION  
CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP  
SUMMARY**

**July 14, 2003**

The City Council of the City of Grand Junction, Colorado met on Monday, July 14, 2003 at 7:00 p.m. in the City Hall Auditorium to discuss workshop items. Those present were Harry Butler, Cindy Enos-Martinez, Bruce Hill, Dennis Kirtland, Bill McCurry, Gregg Palmer and President of the Council Jim Spehar.

**Summaries and action on the following topics:**

1. **PATRIOT ACT DISCUSSION:** The City Council was presented with a request to consider a "Bill of Rights Defense Resolution". Some Councilmembers employed their decision-making model to determine the extent their involvement should be with this request. The majority of Council did not feel this issue should be considered. Councilmember Kirtland expressed that such symbolic-type of actions have no regulatory affect yet can create controversy. Councilmember Hill wanted more information. It was expressed that there are other forums where this would best be served.

**Action summary:** Based on the consensus of the City Council, it was decided that this request is out of their purview and they declined to consider the resolution as presented.

2. **GRAND MESA CENTER DEVELOPMENT REIMBURSEMENT**

**REQUEST:** City Manager Kelly Arnold updated Council on this request. He referred the Council to the information in the packet materials. He reminded Council that there were many meetings and discussions between Staff and the developer. The developer has been waiting for the adoption of the infill-redevelopment policy which has occurred.

Jay Timon, AIG Baker, representing the developer of Grand Mesa Center, was present. He refamiliarized the Council with the company and the development. He then talked to the Council about the future of retail development in Grand Junction. He felt that the area around 25 Road will not ever be redeveloped because large retail developers are going to look toward purchasing vacant land west of 24 Road, where it is less expensive and easier to develop. Council President Spehar noted that the downtown continual redevelopment is financed through Tax Increment Financing (TIF). Mr. Timon asked the Council to consider sharing in the benefit created after the fact. Councilmember Kirtland noted that manufacturing has been the type of development that has been pursued in the past, retail has not been something that the City has had to pursue. A change to that policy would be a new approach for this City. Councilmember Palmer asked Mr. Timon what things a developer such as AIG Baker looks at to build a center. Mr. Timon said Grand Junction was identified as a booming city in the west and the population was here. He referred to an analysis that he distributed at the meeting two years ago.

Next he directed the Council's attention to the specific case for Grand Mesa Center. Councilmember Enos-Martinez asked for the reason for the request. Mr. Timon said the senior management in AIG Baker will not allow a new project if no support is forthcoming for the previous project. He commended the City on its stepped up architectural requirements and landscaping that were put in place.

Mr. Timon identified an area that was required to be dedicated plus allowed access to adjacent properties. The new road alignment will cause Quikcrete access through the Center's parking lot. These additional requirements cost over \$1 million yet AIG Baker is only asking for \$211,000 in reimbursement.

City Manager Arnold addressed the issue of incentives and the uniqueness of Grand Junction. While it is true that many cities are, and Grand Junction is too, reliant on sales tax, Grand Junction does not have the competition of other surrounding metro areas. Incentives for retail outlets are very commonplace in the metro areas where suburbs are competing for those new centers. Community Development Director Bob Blanchard said he does not see much redevelopment in Grand Junction because ownership is of small parcels and assemblage of such parcels is complicated. Most of the development is on vacant land.

Councilmember Palmer asked if Grand Mesa Center was asked to do more improvements than would normally be required. Community Development Director Blanchard said no, it was all normal requirements. Anything over would have been accompanied by a request from staff to have the City participate. Councilmember Butler noted that it appears from the information provided that staff did work with the developer to reduce the expense of the improvements. City Manager Arnold noted that one such way was the treatment on the back side of the building.

Council President Spehar asked Community Development Director Blanchard what are the remaining steps in getting the infill/redevelopment policy put in place. Mr. Blanchard answered 1) identifying parcels, 2) discussing incentives, and then 3) developing design standards.

**Action summary:** The Council decided not to consider the request from AIG Baker for reimbursement retroactively.

Recess was called at 9:10 p.m.

The meeting was back in session at 9:19 p.m.

- 3. WEST SIDE DOWNTOWN AREA PLAN:** Planning Manager Kathy Portner presented options drafted for this area plan. She reviewed the history of the

study and listed the various meetings that have been held. Greyhound Bus dropped out early in the discussions of the multi-modal hub. One option shown, an interim design, refocused land use groupings and did not contemplate roadway changes. The preferred plan includes a consolidation of Ute and Pitkin, eliminating a “no man’s land” in-between the two and providing better automobile and pedestrian access to depot area. The next step in the plan development will be meetings with staff, DDA and other agencies to talk about the draft plan, look at the technical aspects, and then have another property owner meeting. The adoption process will go through the Planning Commission and then City Council. Ms. Portner clarified that there would be a transition from newly combined single roadway back to the split roadway at Fifth Street.

Council President Spehar asked when the cost gets discussed. Ms. Portner responded that only very broad costs are included in the plan, it will be looked at in more detail later. Council President Spehar questioned the value of creating an expectation when there are no funding sources identified.

Councilmember Hill saw it as a vision and as a Gateway Vision Committee member believes it will really be a great gateway. Councilmember Palmer inquired as to what can be done at low cost. Ms. Portner replied that the minimal changes plan (interim) could be the first step, or could be the plan for that matter, which will start establishing the land use pattern.

City Manager Arnold noted the key component is the new hotel location; many of the other areas overlap. Councilmember Kirtland suggested they establish the land use areas, particularly the mixed use housing and consider that the “Utekin” project will have to come after the bypass. Councilmember Butler agreed with the mixed use housing concept.

Harold Staf, DDA Director, expressed that this problem occurred 40 years ago, through compromises, and combining the two streets is the cornerstone of claiming value in downtown. He said it may be down the list in priority but if it is the right way to go, it should be on the drawing board.

**Action summary:** Council President Spehar suggested that the uses be coordinated between the two versions and start with the first. Councilmember Hill encouraged Council to envision Plan B and to work toward that through Plan A. City Manager Arnold said he will get the proposal finalized and bring it back in a month or so. Councilmember Kirtland asked that sources of funding be included in the final report.

The meeting adjourned at 9:53 p.m.