
AGENDA
Downtown Redevelopment Advisory Board
Wednesday, June 8, 2011
8:30 AM
Florida Community Design Center
300 East University Avenue
1st Floor Suite 110

A. ROLL CALL

B. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

C. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES – April 13, 2011

D. REQUEST TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

Receive presentation from City of Gainesville – Public Works Department on Downtown Parking. The presentation is staff's recommendations regarding implementing the CRA commissioned Parking Study performed by Rich & Associates.

E. COMMUNICATIONS

1. Chair's Report

2. Staff Report – Information Items

As a regular informational item on CRA agendas, Staff provides a brief update on selected referrals, redevelopment projects and development agreements under review. This monthly update is typically a limited sampling of the CRA's many on-going projects, as opposed to a complete list.

CRA Annual Report – The Annual Report for FY 2010 has been published, in accordance with the CRA's statutory requirements. Hard copies will be provided to DRAB members, and the document is also available online at www.gainesvillecra.com

SW 3rd Street – Utility, roadway, and sidewalk construction is largely complete, and the corridor is reopened to normal traffic patterns. Installation of the new light fixtures, conversion to the underground power system, and removal of the old utility poles/wires is being coordinated with GRU.

Power District Redevelopment – CRA staff continues to examine a variety of issues at play in the Power District. The CRA is working with the City Manager, City Attorney, and GRU General Manager in order to navigate the issues at play in the Power District and coordinate a successful transition from utility support uses into redevelopment.

Depot Park Program – The Depot Park Program consists of several projects being implemented by multiple agencies for the purpose of providing infrastructure and amenities to the south downtown area ("Power District"). In 2008, the CRA was designated as the lead agency to coordinate the multiple agencies and implement a series of projects with the purpose of executing the City of Gainesville's vision for the redevelopment of a 35-acre Brownfield site into a premier urban park and public space. Below is an update of program elements:

- GRU Remediation Phase I is complete.
- GRU Remediation Phase II is underway and is expected to be complete fall 2011.
- PWD Depot Regional Stormwater basin construction documents are approximately 75% complete. Construction work for the stormwater ponds is expected to commence summer 2011.
- PWD additional contamination site investigation commenced in August and the initial findings report was completed in October 2010. More assessment is needed in order to delineate the full extent of arsenic and other contaminants that will remain on site after GRU is completed with the coal tar remediation project. Development of a contamination management plan is expected to take approximately 1 year to complete. It is anticipated that the contamination will be managed through removal in combination with engineering and institutional controls.

- Depot Building construction documents are 100% complete and have been reviewed and approved by the State Department of Historical Resources (DHR). The project has been bid, with construction of Phase I Core + Shell scheduled to commence in June 2011.
- Depot Park design development documents are 100% complete; the master plan and Phase I site plan were reviewed/approved by the Development Review Board on September 9, 2010.
- Depot Park construction document development is currently on-hold pending information from the PWD regarding assumptions on site ending conditions following the arsenic contamination management plan and stormwater pond construction.
- Depot Park Construction Manager RFQ is currently on-hold pending information regarding additional site contamination.
- Park Phase I construction is anticipated to begin after the management of arsenic and other contaminants and the construction of the PWD regional stormwater basin project, estimated 2013.
- Depot Park funding scheduled to expire includes: 1/2011-RTP Grant (\$250,000 matching); 6/2011-LAP Funds (\$627,000); 12/2011-HUD EDI Grant (\$140,000). LAP funds are expected to be encumbered for the Depot Building prior to expiration. All grant extensions have been exhausted.

Bethel Station & Downtown Community Plaza – The Florida Redevelopment Association has named Bethel Station/Lunchbox Café as the state’s top Historic Preservation & Adaptive Reuse project in 2010! The project has also won awards from both the City Beautification Board and from Historic Gainesville, Inc. The Lunchbox is gearing up for the summer season with extended evening hours and additional live music events. Additionally, The Lunchbox is taking a leading role in Downtown’s regular ArtWalk events. Stop by for quality entertainment and a tasty treat!

Wayfinding Signage – This project is under construction.

SE 1st Street Landscape Improvements – The CRA solicited competitive quotes and selected Cottage Gardens to perform the installation and maintenance. The installation involves improving soils, removing old materials, and installing new, low maintenance plans and paving stones adjacent to parking areas to minimize impacts. Construction is expected to begin on June 6, 2011 and conclude around the end of the month.

Art Line – CRA staff presented the concept and proposed routes for the Art Line project to the Downtown and CRA boards during their last meetings. The CRA received good feedback on the project concept and possible routes from the boards. The next steps include doing an in-depth analysis of the most favored routes and to begin scoping the project.

F. OLD BUSINESS

1. Downtown Redevelopment Plan (B)

..Explanation

At the last meeting, Staff presented a general outline of the redevelopment objectives and initiatives being formulated for inclusion in the updated Downtown Redevelopment Plan. The plan will be structured identifying a series of redevelopment objectives describing broad goals for the Redevelopment Area. Each objective will be further supported and clarified through a series of initiatives that provide a more focused strategic framework for implementing CRA goals.

Since the last meeting with DRAB, staff has taken the draft outline and expanded this document into a draft plan. (A copy of which is included in the backup to this agenda.) In addition to the redevelopment objectives and initiatives, which comprise the bulk of the plan’s content, staff has also included certain elements that are required by state statutes. These sections include maps, legal descriptions, and discussions of residential/neighborhood considerations, financial considerations, and implementation information. Staff will review this draft with advisory board members and guests and we will utilize comments as we continue to refine and finalize the updated redevelopment plan.

..Fiscal Note

None at this time; plan updates are being completed in-house

..Recommendation

CRA Staff to the Downtown Redevelopment Advisory Board: 1) Receive update from staff; 2) Provide input as necessary

2. Strategic Planning Meeting #2 (B)

..Explanation

The CRA strategic planning system was developed in order to provide clear linkage between the goals and objectives outlined in each district's Redevelopment Plan and the CRA projects which are pursued and implemented. The system is also designed to maximize efficiency and promote action-oriented redevelopment activities and a timely implementation of CRA initiatives, and it has been recognized by the Florida Chapter of the American Planning association as an exemplary and innovative planning/redevelopment tool. The end result of strategic planning is the creation of a document known as the 3-Year Roadmap, a high-level snapshot of CRA projects over a three year timeframe. This document is utilized to help coordinate the budgets, timelines, resources, and partnerships necessary to bring reinvestment to the community and to achieve implementation of high-quality redevelopment projects.

This year's strategic planning session will be organized over two advisory board meeting dates:

COMPLETED - Strategic Planning Meeting #1 (April 13, 2011): Advisory board members and CRA staff will have reviewed the previous 3-year redevelopment roadmap, Downtown Redevelopment Plan, and strategic planning points matrix in order to provide input and suggestions for updating and tweaking the current redevelopment roadmap. New projects or initiative suggestions will be discussed at the meeting with respect to meeting redevelopment plan goals and objectives, current workload, budget, and staff resources.

TODAY - Strategic Planning Meeting #2 (June 8, 2011): Staff will present the results of the updated 3-year redevelopment roadmap and strategic planning point matrix based on the discussions with the board during the strategic planning meeting #1. Upon approval by the board, the 3-year redevelopment roadmap will be implemented for FY 2012, 2013, and 2014 with the opportunity for tweaking during yearly strategic planning sessions.

In order to prepare for the discussion during strategic planning meeting #2, a copy of the draft 3-year redevelopment roadmap and strategic planning projects list and points matrix is attached.

..Fiscal note

None at this time

..Recommendation

CRA Staff to the Downtown Redevelopment Advisory Board: 1) Hear presentation from staff; and 2) Approve the 3-year Redevelopment Roadmap.

G. NEW BUSINES

1. Strategies for Attracting Retail to Downtown (B)

..Explanation

Retail establishments add vibrancy to a downtown. Downtown Gainesville has a few boutique-type retailers, though not enough for the area to be considered a retail destination. Several vacant properties in downtown are well-suited for new retail development.

Downtown Gainesville currently has a good mix of restaurants, coffee shops, bars and nightclubs. These establishments draw people to downtown in the evenings. However, few people other than those that work or live in the immediate vicinity come to downtown in the daytime or on weekends. Retail can draw people into downtown during these times.

Providing support for the development of retail in downtown can be the catalyst for a robust retail cluster. Retail development can alleviate blight by filling empty storefronts, create jobs, foster innovation and entrepreneurship and encourage new residential development in the vicinity.

Downtown retailers face several challenges, including:

- **Parking:** There is a general perception among retailers and potential customers that parking is difficult in the downtown area.
- **Demographics:** Retailers target areas that have particular income levels, traffic and population densities, often focusing on areas outside of the downtown area.
- **Foot Traffic:** Successful downtown retail needs relatively high levels of foot-traffic. Currently, there is not much foot-traffic during the days and on weekends.
- **Cost:** Rent and tenant improvements can be costly for small and new retailers. Commercial developments in other parts of the City often attract new retailers by providing financial incentives and assistance for tenant improvements.

Staff is in the process of developing several programs to address some of the challenges outlined above:

- 1) **Retail Incubation Program** – The program would leverage existing space and available technical business assistance to help attract and grow new retail concepts in downtown. The proposed program would provide participants with a subsidy on their rent for a fixed time period. Participants would also receive technical assistance and mentoring from other downtown retailers.
- 2) **Tenant Improvement Grant** – The program would be structured similar to the Façade Grant Program and provide a matched grant for tenant improvements. The program would lower the startup costs for retailers.
- 3) **Parking Validation Program** – The program would leverage the City-owned SW parking garage to help alleviate parking concerns.

The intent of these programs is to spur retail development, particularly new and local concepts. As more retail comes to downtown, foot traffic will increase, thereby making downtown more attractive to other larger retailers.

Staff is requesting feedback from the Downtown Redevelopment Advisory Board, which will be incorporated into specific program policies.

..Fiscal Note

\$89,792 has been allocated to retail development as part of the CRA Amendatory Budget. There are no proposed expenditures at this time.

..Recommendation

CRA Staff to the Downtown Redevelopment Advisory Board: 1) Hear update from Staff; 2) Provide feedback on proposed initiatives.

H. REPORT OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE

I. BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

J. PUBLIC COMMENT

K. ADJOURNMENT