

# EDA Updates 11082013

## **(1) Old Municipal Center Site Development**

### Background

The City's Economic Development Authority (EDA) and Council are in the process considering the future development of the "Old Municipal Center Site." The City is considering two general development scenarios for the 20.5 acre site: (A) data center development and (B) residential development.

Today, the *Old Municipal Center Site* is zoned Public/Quasi Public. On Tuesday, June 12, 2013 the Council considered submitting an application to the Planning Commission to amend the City's Comprehensive Plan to allow for either a data center or residential user. The Council decided to re-engage surrounding property owners regarding a data center development before submitting a Comprehensive Plan Amendment application to the Planning Commission; for either type of use.

On July 9, 2013 the City Council directed Staff to formulate a study group consisting of various stakeholders; including: surrounding property owners, at large Ramsey residents, one Planning Commission member, one Economic Development Authority member and one City Council member.

The purpose of the Study Group is to better understand under what circumstances would a data center development be an acceptable use for the Subject Property. The key outcome of this process is a proposal for Council consideration; which will include (1) further documentation/information addressing specific concerns (2) mitigation proposals addressing specific concerns (3) updated site concept maps.

### Update

The OMC study group met for the first time on Monday, November 4, 2013 to hold a scoping meeting. The meeting began with introductions and a presentation by City staff—which, outlined the history/background of OMC site. At the conclusion of the presentation, the OMC study group was asked to brainstorm topics (i.e. concerns) they would like to discuss moving forward—with the intention of diving into each concern in detail at subsequent meetings.

A number of concerns/ topics were raised by the OMC study group during in the scoping meeting—and, initial/ preliminary discussions and dialog took place. Topics included: Noise, Aesthetics/Building Design, Property Values, Traffic, Safety and Electrical Field Hazards. A copy of the written comments from the scoping meeting are attached for your review.

Based on consensus from the OMC study group, listed below is the proposed\* meeting schedule:

Meeting 1: Noise (Monday, December 16, 6:00 p.m., Lake Itasca Room)

Meeting 2: Aesthetics/Building Design, Property Values

Meeting 3: Traffic, Safety, Electrical Field Hazards

\*Subject to change, per the OMC study group.

## **(2) Prospect Updates**

### Molin Concrete

#### **LAST UPDATE: NOVEMBER**

Molin Concrete is a pre-cast concrete panel manufacturer with locations in Ramsey and Lino Lakes. Over the past few years Molin has experienced significant growth, and expects the trend to continue for the foreseeable future. As the EDA may know, Molin's Ramsey location has remained vacant and unused for a number of years.

Recently, Staff learned Molin Concrete is planning to re-open their Ramsey operations this winter—which will include a 10,000 square foot expansion and creation of 15-20 high quality jobs. Additionally, Molin has indicated they will be completing a second, significant, expansion to their facility in Ramsey next year (2014).

### Cullinan Rigging

#### **LAST UPDATE: NOVEMBER**

Cullinan Rigging is a machinery moving and rigging business located in Ramsey's industrial park. Cullinan expanded their existing 40,000 square foot facility by 10,000 square feet this summer—and, expects to need additional space in the coming years. At this point, Cullinan is out of space for future expansion. Therefore, Staff will be working with Cullinan moving forward to find a long term solution for their facility in Ramsey.

### Diamond Graphics

#### **LAST UPDATE: NOVEMBER**

Diamond Graphics purchased a 4.8 acre City owned parcel for \$410,000 in July 2013 for the purpose of expansion from their existing site located at 14280 Azurite St NW. Diamond Graphics would like to complete a 30,000 square foot expansion to their existing building by winter 2013. Diamond Graphics has gone through the site plan review process and has recently granted a building permit.

### Prospect Alpha

#### **LAST UPDATE: NOVEMBER**

A small sized Ramsey precision manufacturer is experiencing significant growth and is looking to expand at their existing location in 2014. However, due to size limitations of their existing site, this manufacturer is also looking for a long term solution. Staff is working with this prospect to provide options for expansion on their existing site as well as other locations in Ramsey. NOTE: Staff has worked with this prospect multiple times over the past few years.

### Prospect Beta

#### **LAST UPDATE: NOVEMBER**

A significantly sized and well known Ramsey manufacturing is in need of 10-20,000 square feet of warehouse space. Additionally, said manufacturer has previously expressed interest in a long term solution for their growing need for space. Staff is working with this prospect to provide potential solutions in Ramsey (including existing space and new build).

### Prospect Echo

#### **LAST UPDATE: OCTOBER**

A quickly growing, successful, Ramsey manufacturer has expressed interest in relocating their operations to a new facility. Said manufacturer has posted a 20% increase in sales each year for the past five years, employs 196 people in Ramsey, employs 52 people in a different metro city occupies about 110,000 square feet in Ramsey and about 100,000 square feet in a different metro city.

Staff is working with prospect Echo now; and has made development proposal. Additionally, Staff has provided options for expansion at their existing Ramsey location; along with lease options. The prospect is reviewing opportunities outside of Ramsey as well.

### **(3) Business Retention & Expansion Program**

Due to workload levels, Staff has not conducted proactive business retention and expansion visits since January. Staff anticipates time to be available to conduct business visits either when an Economic Development Manager is hired (November 18). Events, admin tasks, leases, responding to prospects, 167/47 and the old municipal center and the future business park projects are taking priority.

NOTE: staff has conducted 4-6 'reactive' business visits since January.

#### Update

In reaction to information received from the 2012 EDA Business Retention and Expansion Visits—the Ramsey Police Department will be visiting all Ramsey Businesses over the next two months. The purpose of visits is: (A) network/touch-base/meet and (B) conduct preliminary safety checks of Ramsey businesses—which will include providing information/suggestions on common business concerns/issues.

### **(4) Economic Development Manager Position**

#### Update

The City Council will consider hiring the City's new economic development manager on Tuesday November 18, 2013. Staff will provide an update at the November EDA meeting.

### **(5) 167/47 Commercial Node**

#### Update

Please reference the EDA agenda (this is a separate case).

### **(6) Future Business Park**

#### Background

Historically, the City of Ramsey has remained competitive in economic development recruitment and expansion opportunities. Unfortunately, the City of Ramsey has recently run low on an inventory of available land for business recruitment (new businesses) and expansion (existing business). Therefore, the City of Ramsey is currently not in a strong position to compete for economic development prospects.

The Ramsey City Council and EDA have recognized the state of the City's economic development position and have identified finding a solution a priority. For the past three months the EDA has discussed potential future business park locations. The EDA reviewed six major sites. As a result, the EDA provided staff with direction to pursue the Al Pearson Site (north) as the primary future business park for the City. Said action included a public input process and a feasibility study (to begin the process).

#### Update

The City will be holding a public input session on December 12, 6:00 p.m. at the Ramsey Municipal Center regarding a potential future landuse change (i.e. allowing for a business park) on the Al Pearson property.

## **(7) Award Letters/Plaques**

### Update

Formal letters were drafted, placed in plaques, signed by various City officials and recently delivered to eight Ramsey businesses for various accomplishments.

- MN Manufacturer: Small-Size Manufacturer: Dynamic Group, Finalist
- MN Manufacturer: Mid-Size Manufacturer: Sign Zone, Winner
- New Business: Noble Romans Pizza
- New Business: Dollar Cents
- New Business: Fairway Liquors (1 year)
- Re-Branded Business: Salon Ciry (St. Germain)
- Anoka Chamber: Retail/Mfg. Biz of the Year: Bank of the West, Winner
- Anoka Chamber: Service Biz of the Year: Acapulco, Finalist

## **(8) RFP, Real Estate Services**

### Update

The City Council direct staff to conduct a RFP for real estate services on September 10, 2013.

Staff solicited about 100 brokers to provide a response to the adopted RFP, the City received five total responses and Staff conducted three informal interviews. One response included interest in listing both commercial and residential real estate--the remaining four responses indicated interest in listing residential real estate only.

Overall, Staff was unsatisfied with the number, and quality, of RFP responses received. However, through the original RFP process, Staff has concluded a better model is evident (for real estate broker services) than was prescribed in the original RFP. Consequently, staff is proposing the City Council terminate the original RFP process initiated on September 10; and, consider a new process for soliciting real estate broker services--Request for Qualifications (RFQ).

On Tuesday, November 12, the City Council will be considering a case to terminate the original RFP process initiated on September 10; and, consider a new process for soliciting real estate broker services--Request for Qualifications (RFQ). Please review case via agenda quick for details. Staff would expect a broker to be selected mid-December or early January.