

## Tim Gladhill

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**From:** Ralph Brauer <tsc@mtn.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 30, 2015 12:18 PM  
**To:** Tim Gladhill; Chris Anderson; Patrick Brama  
**Cc:** Sarah Strommen  
**Subject:** PC COR Discussion

Since I hope to be catching fish during the next meeting, thought I would volunteer a suggestion. Briefly, what we need is a Plan D for the COR. Plan D was the impetus for the Ramsey Three group. Its name came from the three alternatives proposed by a consulting firm for how to handle the increased number of residents the Met Council said we should handle. They came up with three plans (A,B,C) all of which involved increasing the number of townhouses in the city. The difference between them was largely number and location. Several of us felt there had to be better way, hence the name, Plan D. When we started we didn't know what it was, but we knew we didn't want more townhouses. Eventually that evolved into Ramsey 3, the McKnight grant (which is a critical piece often left out) and the last comp plan.

By a Plan D for the COR, I mean the two current alternatives have generated mixed reviews. The first alternative is to somehow tweak the old Town Center plan. The second seems to be evolving into some version of Riverdale, Maple Grove, Woodbury and various other species of non-enclosed mall. I think we need another alternative. I don't know what it is, but I believe a group analogous to R3 could find it. They could create a retail center unique to Ramsey.

Appointed by council, the group at minimum should have representation from various commissions plus citizen expertise in:

- Real estate
- Retail
- Transportation
- Demographics
- Current COR tenants, investors
- Ramsey residents/future customers

As you know, I have long advocated that Ramsey take advantage of the unique resource running by the RR tracks: the high speed Internet backbone that has a percentage of gray fiber (I.e. Unused fiber). It is the one commercial asset we have that other communities in our area cannot match.

The second piece I have advocated for is a business/retail incubator. It could be tied to the Internet backbone, but does not need to be.

I do not believe we need consultants for any of this. Staff have both expertise and facilitation skills to manage the project.

What I term Plan C (for COR and as an alternative to options A and B above) needs to address the following:

- 1) What is the current retail environment? This should include cluster data such as Claritas along with CPS (Current Population Survey, I.e. Census) figures.
- 2) What are projections for the future?
- 3) What would people like to see there? This latter could easily be done through OST with the question being what three (five?) business, facilities would you like to have in the COR? This final one is critical for three reasons: it obviously provides guidance for businesses we should recruit, the OST data becomes a recruiting tool, and it provides some sense of what should be in Plan C. The definition of "Like to see" could be both generic (a hardware store) and specific

(Subway). All could be done in an evening or maybe two with an alternative night for folks who could not make the first). It could include a brief intro by the Mayor and staff on what is there that might attract retail. This includes the light rail station, Highway 10, the new Armstrong interchange, land available, and perhaps the Internet backbone piece.

4) Other concerns from PC and Council.

Feel free to pass this on to the rest of the group in whatever form you wish.

Sent from my iPad