

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
CITY OF RAMSEY  
ANOKA COUNTY  
STATE OF MINNESOTA**

The City of Ramsey Economic Development Authority (EDA) conducted a regular meeting on Thursday, October 12, 2017, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present:     Chairperson Jim Steffen  
                          Member Glen Hardin  
                          Member John LeTourneau  
                          Member Chris Riley  
                          Member Wayne Skaff

Members Absent:     Member Brian Burandt

Also Present:         Patrick Brama, Econ. Dev. Mgr./Assistant City Administrator  
                          Kurt Ulrich, City Administrator

**1.     CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Steffen called the Economic Development Authority meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.

**2.     APPROVE AGENDA**

Motion by Member Skaff, seconded by Member Hardin, to approve the agenda.

Motion carried.   Voting Yes: Chairperson Steffen, Members Skaff, Hardin, LeTourneau, and Riley. Voting No: None. Absent: Member Burandt.

**3.     APPROVE MINUTES**

**3.01:   Approve Meeting Minutes Dated September 14, 2017**

Motion by Member Riley, seconded by Member Skaff, to approve the September 14, 2017, minutes as presented.

Motion carried.   Voting Yes: Chairperson Steffen, Members Riley, Skaff, Hardin, and LeTourneau. Voting No: None. Absent: Member Burandt.

**4.     EDA BUSINESS**

**4.01:   Receive Update on The COR Interim Development Plan**

Economic Dev. Mgr./Assistant City Administrator Brama presented the staff report.

City Administrator Ulrich read aloud the vision statement, noting that the statement is less restrictive than it has been in the past, which provides the opportunity to be responsive to the current market and provides more flexibility.

Economic Dev. Mgr./Assistant City Administrator Brama highlighted the different subdistricts within The COR and the differences in opinion on the topic of floor area ratio. He provided additional details on the different colors used and the potential concepts. He stated that the Planning Commission recognized that the City needs to remain flexible in the northwest portion of The COR.

Chair Steffen noted that the plan should remain flexible throughout The COR to be open to market opportunities. He asked how the document would be used and who it would be shown to.

Economic Dev. Mgr./Assistant City Administrator Brama replied that the document is a roadmap for the Commissions and staff to make amendments to The COR Master Plan and zoning districts. He noted that the final formal adoption would occur through those documents.

City Administrator Ulrich stated that this will be a working plan used to review requests that come forward, as the City is still acting as developer.

Member Riley asked if the EDA still agrees with their comment on the plan or whether they would like to change that, specifically the green box on page six. He stated that there was a recent developer that came in and said that structured parking would be a deal killer. He stated that flexibility was created in the floor area ratio.

Chair Steffen asked how that would play out with the EDA and Planning Commission giving conflicting opinions.

City Administrator Ulrich stated that the Council would be the deciding body and perhaps the EDA would like to affirm their statement if that is still the position of this body.

Member Hardin stated that the theme seems to allow for different options and opportunities and therefore it does not seem to fit with the theme of the document to require a developer to include structured parking. He asked if the document would read in this manner in its final form, with the highlighted boxes or whether the form would be changed.

City Administrator Ulrich confirmed that the format would remain the same.

Member Skaff stated that he would like to reaffirm the statement of the EDA. He stated that shared parking works and if his church was forced to build structured parking they would not have been able to be located in that space. He stated that it has been a great success between the church, PACT, and Allina to share parking without the expense of structured parking.

Chair Steffen agreed to confirm that statement. He asked when the comment period would be ending.

Economic Dev. Mgr./Assistant City Administrator Brama reviewed the timeline, noting spring 2018 would be the end of the comment period when the document will return to the City Council.

Chair Steffen stated that he would be curious to hear a summary of the public input.

Member Hardin stated that the document has a lot of “City speak” and was unsure that the public would be able to follow some of the language.

City Administrator Ulrich noted that did come up at the Council level and noted that staff would repackage the language for presentation to the public to make the document and intent more user friendly.

Member Hardin stated that he has made some grammatic comments that he will provide to staff.

Motion by Member Skaff, seconded by Member Hardin, to reaffirm the previous EDA statement regarding The COR Interim Development Plan.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Steffen, Members Skaff, Hardin, LeTourneau, and Riley. Voting No: None. Absent: Member Burandt.

#### **4.02: 2017 EDA Business Networking Event Update**

Economic Dev. Mgr./Assistant City Administrator Brama presented the staff report.

Chair Steffen asked for details on the development update.

Economic Dev. Mgr./Assistant City Administrator Brama stated that the presentation would be a mix between himself, City Administrator Ulrich, and Community Development Director Gladhill and would focus on highlight updates.

### **5. MEMBER / STAFF UPDATE**

The EDA reviewed the Staff Update. He provided updates on recent marking for development, and the Sunfish Lake gas station demolition. He provided information on an upcoming case for the EDA. He provided an update on the resilient communities program that the City has partnered with the University of Minnesota on. He stated that staff continues to work on shovel ready certifications and identified prospects within the City for development. He stated that this is the highest level of prospects that the City has ever seen, which is a good indication that the City is heading in the right direction. He highlighted some of the concerns that staff continues to hear regarding demographics. He noted that staff is concerned that there is a lag in the data regarding demographics and current development projects. He stated that the City previously worked with Buxton, noting that the group has approached the City once again with a desire to work together. He noted that Buxton has a new approach and product model. He asked if the EDA would have interest in providing Buxton with the opportunity to make a presentation to the

EDA. He stated that it is a different approach than the City has looked at in the past, noting that the City has not had overwhelming success with the other approaches and therefore believed it would be worth it to hear what they have to say.

Member Skaff stated that he heard the pitch in the past. He asked if there is a way to share the cost.

Economic Dev. Mgr./Assistant City Administrator Brama agreed that there would be value to others in the community and therefore there could be an option to share the cost. He noted that the contract time could range from one to three years.

Member Riley stated that finding out this type of information could be helpful and has been suggested by the Planning Commission in the past. He stated that although he is not certain that this is the best product. He stated that the City could buy this but retailers and developers still use their own data and therefore it could be redundant. He stated that he would be interested in hearing more but perhaps his concerns could be shared with the group prior to their presentation.

Chair Steffen stated that perhaps the deliverable from nine years ago could be dusted off to be discussed at the presentation. He asked the repeat customer range.

Economic Dev. Mgr./Assistant City Administrator Brama stated that he would prepare a good list of questions if the EDA would like to take the time to hear the presentation.

Member LeTourneau stated that the community sells itself short sometimes and believes that the City knows what is going on in the market. He stated that in instances like this perhaps the City is looking for someone to tell them what they want to hear, rather than what they already know. He stated that he is not opposed to hearing the presentation but would be skeptical. He stated that the City is emerging, but is not there yet in attracting the prospects they want to have here. He stated that this seems that the City would be spending money to hear what they already know.

Chair Steffen agreed noting that the City has seen more prospects lately than they have ever seen and are hearing the concerns from the market directly. He noted that he would be open to hearing the presentation.

City Administrator Ulrich agreed that staff could do more research. He agreed that retailers and developers are still doing their own research and is unsure that a retailer would jump on a site because Buxton says they are a good fit. He stated that perhaps \$50,000 would be better spent on the City doing its own research or on a restaurant incentive program.

City Administrator Ulrich noted that there will be a special election for former Councilmember on April 10, 2018. He stated that Member LeTourneau was the designated alternate and a formal designation will soon go before the Council to make Member LeTourneau the formal Member with a new alternate. He stated that the date has been extended to accept applications for the current vacant position on the EDA and noted that the Council will conduct interviews on October 24<sup>th</sup>. He stated that the City held a tour with the Metropolitan Council on Tuesday night.

Member Skaff stated that he spoke with two of the representatives from the Met Council who were happy to be a part of the tour.

Member Hardin stated that each one of the staff members that spoke did a great job. He commended staff for their planning of the event.

Chair Steffen advised of a new business that will be coming to The COR, My Computer Hero, was a homebased business, and is operated by two Ramsey residents. He encouraged members of the EDA to stop in and share their support.

Economic Dev. Mgr./Assistant City Administrator Brama stated that will fill the last vacancy in that retail node.

## **6. ADJOURNMENT**

The regular meeting of the Economic Development Authority adjourned at 8:27 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Kurtis G. Ulrich  
City Administrator

ATTEST:

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Patrick Brama  
Econ. Dev. Mgr/Assistant City Administrator

Draft by Amanda Staple  
*TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.*