

**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, November 9, 2017, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present:     Chairperson Wayne Skaff  
                              Member Glen Hardin  
                              Member Chris Riley

Members Absent:     Chairperson Jim Steffen  
                              Member Brian Burandt  
                              Member John LeTourneau

Also Present:         Patrick Brama, Econ. Dev. Mgr/Assistant City Administrator  
                              Tim Gladhill, Community Development Manager  
                              Kurt Ulrich, City Administrator  
                              Kevin Kielb, Senior Project Manager at Bolton & Menk  
                              Cody Gundstenson, Buxton  
                              Jim Hornecker, Oppidan  
                              Dominic Kanaventi  
                              Brian Pankratz, CBRE

**1.     CALL TO ORDER**

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

It was noted that the EDA did not have a quorum present and therefore would not take formal action today but would still move forward with the discussion items.

**2.     APPROVE AGENDA**

The agenda was approved as presented.

**3.     APPROVE MINUTES**

**3.01:   Approve Meeting Minutes Dated October 12, 2017**

This item will be considered at the next meeting.

**4.     EDA BUSINESS**

#### **4.01: Preliminary Deal Structure: Case of National Auto Body and Glass User**

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

Jim Hornecker provided background information on Oppidan noting that the company is primarily a retail developer, providing examples of clients that the company works with nationwide. He stated that Oppidan is a national company, primarily based between Minnesota and California. He stated that the user has identified a gap in their network and believe Ramsey to be a good location for their business. He stated that this is a four-acre parcel, but the user would only need a building size of 18,000 square feet on the western half of the site, which means that the eastern portion of the site would be preserved for future development.

Acting Chairperson Skaff asked if the business would be open six days per week or seven days per week.

Mr. Hornecker replied that the business would be open six days per week.

Acting Chairperson Skaff asked if there would be any impact with the future overpass of the railroad crossing.

Community Development Director Gladhill replied that once staff receives renderings they would be able to better gauge.

Member Hardin asked for input on how the building would face.

Mr. Hornecker provided details on how the building would be faced.

Member Riley stated that Oppidan seems to be a great developer for Ramsey and the site seems to be a good fit for the user.

Economic Dev. Mgr./Assistant City Administrator Brama stated that staff would continue discussions about the remnant parcel and the City's policies for remnant lots.

Member Riley stated that he likes the proposal for the commission.

Acting Chairperson Skaff stated that he would also like to see this item move forward and confirmed the consensus of the members present.

#### **4.02: Preliminary Deal Structure: Case of Paxmar**

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

Member Hardin asked if the cost-share for the road would be the typical cost-share.

Economic Dev. Mgr./Assistant City Administrator Brama noted that is a future item outside of this potential purchase agreement as that would be done through the entitlement process.

Acting Chairperson Skaff stated that this seems to make sense and the details will come forward the following month.

Member Riley agreed that this seems to make sense, as this would simply be the other side of the parcel.

#### **4.03: Public Infrastructure Feasibility Study for The COR**

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

Kevin Kielb displayed the Center Street area analysis, noting that this not only looks at the individual parcels but at the area as a whole. He explained that The COR has been developed from the outside in, and therefore the study will provide staff with something they can use to talk with developers about. He stated that this would give the City a level of confidence that they will not be selling themselves short when the parcels are developed. He stated that developers would see this as a benefit as there will not be surprises with the road costs and development expectations. He appreciated the cooperation of staff, noting that staff had to pull together all the record drawings and as-builts in order for this company to use those elements in the study. He hoped to have a report done for the Center Street portion by the end of the month and the remaining portion of The COR by the end of the year.

Member Riley stated that someone originally planned where elements are already and asked how things already built interacts with this study and specifically whether this should be the last time the City has to plan things.

Mr. Kielb replied that this should be the last time this planning needs to occur. He explained that this portion of the planning would in essence be the third dimension of the plan that looks at road interaction and drainage. He explained that development has been pieced together and slowed down during the recession, but now that development is increasing again, this should be the last look to ensure that everything fits together.

Economic Dev. Mgr./Assistant City Administrator Brama stated that the Master Plan for The COR has evolved over time, noting that everything needs to be up to date and up to speed before the last phase of infrastructure for The COR is implemented. He noted that there are many inconsistencies.

Member Riley asked the scope of the study.

Economic Dev. Mgr./Assistant City Administrator Brama confirmed that this study would include public infrastructure elements including roads, sidewalks, and drainage.

Member Hardin stated that he was glad to see that the cost estimates were included and hoped those elements would be as accurate as possible.

Acting Chairperson Skaff confirmed the consensus of the EDA to authorize the Bolton & Menk Work Order, not to exceed \$25,384 to complete concept designs and feasibility reports for all remaining public infrastructure needed in The COR.

#### **4.04: Buxton Group, Review Available Services**

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

Cody Gundstenson stated that he met with staff about one month ago and had some discussion with the City's challenges for retail development. He stated that he would like to highlight some of the new products and benefits that Buxton has gained since the group last crossed paths with the City ten years ago. He stated that Buxton comes from the retail world and has partnered with over 5,000 concepts, helping those companies grow their brand by adding new locations. He stated that within the private sector Buxton helps to create a data consumer driven story. He noted that Buxton has also partnered with 800 municipalities and provided examples of municipalities that have recently partnered with Buxton in the past five years that received a beneficial return on investment. He provided details on the retail recruitment and business retention element of the Buxton plan. He noted that they would not want to bring in new business that would harm the existing businesses. He stated that the first step in recruiting retail is to get beyond the demographics. He explained that Buxton provides a consumer driven approach, which is what a retailer wants to see, as demographics are only a small portion of the pie. He stated that retailers want to know where their core customers are working and living and that is why Buxton leads with a consumer driven story.

He provided details on where Buxton gathers their data on consumers, noting that they have a very unique partnership with the largest credit card provider in the world. He stated that he can then look at the household data to determine which brands the household members are purchasing. He stated that Buxton looks beyond the political boundaries and looks instead at a drive-time trade area. He stated that typically you would look at a ten to 15-minute trade area and provided a map of this area. He stated that Buxton can quantify the demographics and then take it several steps forward with the consumer driven story. He stated that Buxton would use the consumer profile added with the drive-time trade area and the retail market conditions to identify the strongest retail matches.

He stated that in the past Buxton provided a much larger list of possible retailers, but has found instead that it benefits to focus on a smaller list of about 20 retailers that would be the best fit the community, fit the long-term strategy, and also fit the checklist for the individual retailer. He stated that a huge difference from the past partnership is that Buxton now has an implementation piece of the partnership. He stated that once the list of retailers is developed, Buxton would send out targeted information to the retailer, written in the retailer format. He stated that the Buxton names goes a long way in the retail world and with Buxton starting the outreach process, that shows the retailer that the City is retail friendly. He stated that this information helps retailers see similar markets where the retailer has been successful and that they can be successful in the Ramsey market. He stated that Ramsey would receive an outreach team of four to five individuals that would do the upfront data collection work and then begin the initial outreach process. He stated that the outreach team would then facilitate conversations and in-person site

visits with Ramsey staff members. He noted that the most successful clients lean on the outreach team to the fullest, including the conference calls and on-site visits. He stated that a huge component of what they do is business retention as well; capitalizing on how new foot traffic could also benefit the existing businesses. He stated that they would provide the existing retail businesses with a competitive advantage with on-demand trade area reports and market intelligence specific to each business, which helps keep local dollars local. He stated that the application is included in the package and is called LSMX, which helps local businesses understand who their customers are, how to target customers, and how to market to those customers and potential customers.

Member Riley left the meeting.

Mr. Gundstenson provided information on the Scout platform that Buxton uses and the City would have available for all members of staff able to access. He thanked the EDA for their time and provided information on what the City could expect in the first 60 days of a one-year partnership. He noted that within the first 60 days Buxton would gather the data for the consumer driven story to develop the strategic list of retails and then work on implementation of that list.

Acting Chairperson Skaff stated that he was a member of the EDA ten years ago when the City partnered with Buxton and felt that the City did not get much out of it at that time, acknowledging the challenges of the recession.

Mr. Gundstenson acknowledged that in the past model some clients were successful while others were not and therefore Buxton revamped their model to provide additional support with implementation. He stated that Buxton works every day with retailers to find new locations. He stated that very different from the last partnership, Buxton will be involved in implementation, reaching out to retailers that would fit with Ramsey and marketing to those retailers. He stated that Buxton would stay involved through conference calls, in person site visits, and conference attendance on behalf of the City.

Acting Chairperson Skaff stated that there are questions from the community on the desire for an anchor, such as Target, and asked if this partnership would provide that information to share with the community.

Mr. Gundstenson stated that after completing the data collection process, perhaps it would be found that Target would not be the best for this community. He stated that perhaps the process would identify that retailer would not be the best fit and would identify a retailer that would be a better fit for the consumers in this area and spur additional foot traffic to bring in more retailers.

Acting Chairperson Skaff asked for information on the fee.

Mr. Gundstenson stated that in the past they looked at a one-year term but now model on a three-year term. He stated that within the first 60 days of year one they would do all the leg work to identify the City's grow strategy and find brands that fit within that strategy to develop the list of targeted retailers. He stated that once that list is composed, the implementation team would send

out targeted marketing materials. He stated that the subsequent years would be a refresh of those efforts, as retails brings retail. He stated that the subsequent investment is \$50,000 per year. He stated that while they initially structure on a three-year agreement, there is an annual opt-out clause included.

Economic Dev. Mgr./Assistant City Administrator Brama thanked Mr. Gundstenson for coming to the meeting today. He noted that the next steps would be to bring back the notes from this discussion to the full EDA the following month for further discussion.

#### **4.05: CBRE Real Estate Listing Contract: Amendment #3**

Economic Dev. Mgr./Assistant City Administrator Brama presented the staff report. He noted that a detailed update would be provided by CBRE at the next meeting of the EDA and to the Council in December.

Member Hardin stated that he is okay with adding number to the CBRE contract. He asked if it would make sense to do an RFP for the McDonald's site, rather than just automatically adding that site to CBRE to get thoughts and ideas from other brokers.

Economic Dev. Mgr./Assistant City Administrator Brama stated that perhaps that could be discussed in a case at the December meeting. He noted that from a marketing prospective removing that site geographically might not make sense.

Member Hardin stated that it is a shovel ready site that has been off the market for some time and thinks it would be beneficial to have other input.

City Administrator Ulrich stated that CBRE has been marketing that site and has been talking to prospective clients. He stated that CBRE has been working hard and whether CBRE is listed or not, they would receive the broker's commission if they brought a deal in. He stated that if CBRE is not successful on that site, the City could look at bringing in someone else.

Acting Chairperson Skaff stated that he would be fine with allowing CBRE to handle that site and therefore perhaps this should be moved to the next meeting when more members are present.

Economic Dev. Mgr./Assistant City Administrator Brama confirmed that the EDA members present would be comfortable moving amendment #3 forward to the Council only with site #37.

#### **4.06: 2018 Annual EDA Business Expo: Select Date**

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

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

The EDA reviewed the Staff Update.

#### **5.01: MNCAR/Xceligent Integrated Commercial Listings**

Economic Dev. Mgr./Assistant City Administrator Brama stated that MNCAR has an online listing service available that cities can subscribe to. He noted that the cost would be \$3,300 per year and advised that staff would like to subscribe to the service and link to the City's website update. He stated that this would put things out in front of staff and brokers and would be a time savings as developers would be able to access the information as well. He stated that City staff would also be able to add sites that are not listed with a broker to the City's map. He stated that there are funds available in the marketing budget.

Member Hardin asked who, on City staff, would verify the accuracy of the data.

Mr. Pankratz explained the process that a broker follows to enter in the information for parcels. He noted that brokers are then required to update the listings at a minimum of every 60 days.

Economic Dev. Mgr./Assistant City Administrator Brama stated that the data is gathered using current broker listings. He noted that City staff would then be able to submit a work order for parcels that are listed within the City that are not marketed by a broker. He noted that staff could then review that information to ensure that it is update to date.

Acting Chairperson Skaff confirmed the consensus of the EDA to move forward with this item.

City Administrator Ulrich noted that the School District referendum was passed and therefore the new elementary school site will move forward. He provided an update on recent activity, upcoming meetings, and projects.

Economic Dev. Mgr./Assistant City Administrator Brama provided an update on recent activity noting that Stonebrook closed the previous day and construction should begin today. He advised of a recent grant application submit by the City. He provided an update on the Sunfish Lake gas station site, noting that the building should be removed by the end of next week. He noted that the outside walls of the first PSD building are almost complete and the long-term lease from Adrenaline Sports has been signed.

## **6. ADJOURNMENT**

The regular meeting of the Economic Development Authority adjourned at 9:10 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.*