



**Downtown Development Authority of Colorado Springs
Board of Directors Meeting
May 11, 2021 at 8 am
Convened via Zoom Meeting**

Board members present: Carrie Bartow, Aaron Briggs, Jordan Empey, Jeff Finn, Nancy Henjum, Stella Hodgkins, Chris Lieber and Tony Rosendo

Staff: Jan Branham, Susan Edmondson, Chelsea Gondeck and Laurel Prud'homme

Guests: Ryan Tefertiller and Peter Wysocki

Welcome and roll call

Tony Rosendo called the meeting to order at 8:15 a.m. and roll call was taken.

Minutes

Board reviewed minutes dated April 13, 2021. Following a motion by Jeff Finn, seconded by Jordan Empey, minutes were approved unanimously without change.

Financials

Board reviewed financials dated April 30, 2021. Susan Edmondson shared that there is nothing significant to report; April's expenses were very ordinary. Marketing expenses are also low in April. Spring months are when the majority of revenue from the mill levy and TIF are received.

Old business

Marketing

Laurel provided marketing updates to the board. Social media followers have increased by 7,000 and the marketing team has ramped up our website assets with updated dining and shopping directories. Katy Houston has spent many hours working on both social media and online directories. The Dining Directory has about 800 visits per month, and 500 visits per month for the Shopping Directory. Downtown merchants asked for our help in filling job openings, so a Downtown is Hiring campaign and webpage was launched, with over 1,000 page views. Press releases are issued for every new business opening. The State of Downtown report release garnered extensive local news coverage. This summer will see a strong increase of tourism marketing. Plans include targeting visitors with digital ads. The marketing team also will be heavily promoting the Discover Downtown Savings Pass. Laurel also shared that a new tool has launched which uses our current website like a mobile app so that users can access directories, events and other information more easily. The June issue of 5280 magazine will feature an advertorial section about Downtown; reprints will be made available to hotel rooms.

Building Enhancement Grants

Susan referred board to a memo in the board packet about refining the terms of Building Enhancement Grants. Staff recommends increasing the minimum total project cost for eligibility to \$5000 so that the DDA is encouraging more long-lasting improvements into properties and the pedestrian experience.

After some board discussion about merits of the proposed refinement, the benefits of lasting improvements to properties and the current cost of materials, the board suggested changing the policy to state that grant

applicants must have a minimum of \$10,000 in building enhancements. Chris Lieber led a motion to change the Building Enhancement Grant policy to only consider applications with a minimum of \$10,000 in planned improvements to a property. Stella Hodgkins seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously with none opposed.

Artspace

The Artspace team intends to submit an LOI for LIHTC funding in June, with a full application due in August. However, there also is a potential for a state funded grant which aligns perfectly with the Artspace purpose. Such grants would become possible if a bill making its way through the Legislature is approved. The bill establishes a Community Revitalization Fund with \$65 million in funding and the sole purpose of supporting workforce housing and creative spaces specifically in creative districts and historic districts. The grants aim to fund up to 50% of shovel-ready projects.

Nancy Henjum joined the meeting at 8:52 a.m.

Board recommended inviting Artspace to an upcoming board meeting to provide an update on the project.

Carrie Bartow joined at 8:54 a.m.

Board members are encouraged to reach out to our senate representative to show support for the bill.

Tejon Revitalization

Chelsea presented updates on the CDOT Main Street Revitalization Grant application, which seeks up to \$2 million for Phase 1 reconfiguration of Tejon Street. The application is due this Friday and proposed improvements focus on the blocks of Tejon between Colorado and Kiowa. These improvements would include dedicated biking infrastructure, adding a shuttle stop, increasing sidewalk width, change from diagonal to parallel parking, eliminating the center turn lane for deliveries and adding delivery spots at each end of the block. Board discussed merits of parallel parking and removing the center lane which is both unsightly and a safety hazard. Susan noted that the proposed changes will slow the flow of vehicle traffic, which benefits pedestrians. The changes have a minimal impact on stormwater infrastructure. Dedicated bike lane plans are still in flux, either buffered or parking protected.

Peter Wysocki joined the meeting at 9:15 a.m.

Board supports a plan that emphasizes a hierarchy of users, with pedestrians given top priority. Board wants to maintain the status of the Great Streets Award that Tejon Street was awarded last year by adding improvements that enhance the experience.

State of Downtown Report

Susan asked for any board feedback on the 2021 State of Downtown report. Board was pleased with the report and the presentation. Board wants to recognize the staff on an outstanding printed report.

Susan reminded board that we will plan to meet in person next month if no objections.

Tony reminded board to reach out to Jan if you want bulk copies of the report.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 9:28 a.m.