

Council Economic Development Committee

2nd Floor Conference Room
City Hall

November 15, 2018

1:30 p.m.

Members:

Council member White
Council member Gutiérrez
Council member Cousens

Staff:

Ana Cortez, Assistant City Manager
Cally Price, Assistant to the City Manager

Others:

Luz Gutiérrez
John Cooper
Andrew Holt
Verlynn Best
Jonathan Smith
Maria Rodriguez
Joe Morrier
Jerry Mallen

Executive Minutes

White called the meeting to order.

1. Review draft minutes from September 27, 2018 meeting:

The September 27, 2018 meeting minutes were reviewed. Gutiérrez motioned to accept the minutes as presented and White seconded the motion. The minutes were approved as presented.

2. Discussions:

a. Strategic Priorities per Plan

i. Main arterial development

White suggested that this go back to the full Council for discussion during the Strategic Planning study session in January. Gutiérrez stated that the Council needs to identify the standards and who will maintain them.

ii. Downtown Plaza

Cortez asked for direction from the Committee members on how to create a more dynamic downtown without a plaza.

b. Economic Development Plan

White asked that staff present the Economic Development Plan with the Committee. He would like to see the findings that warranted the plaza and incubator projects be moved forward. Participants thought the City had a good plan and conducted a thorough process with a lot of time commitment; therefore, they would like Council to support the Plan and keep moving it forward.

Mann stated that there is plenty of parking in downtown but that it isn't being used adequately and suggested that Council revisit parking enforcement.

Morrier stated that people miss things to do. The Convention Center is vital to the community and attendees want some where to go for shopping and entertainment.

Holt added that a key element of the Plan is to make downtown more walkable.

Best would like to see traffic on Yakima Avenue slowed down.

Committee member Gutiérrez would like to see the following things:

- Solicit new ideas – replace the plaza
- Different approach to port district marketing
- New or modified parking regulations
- Shared ride pick up spots on Yakima Avenue
- Curb cuts for emergency vehicles
- Restrict the number of banks on Yakima Avenue
- Incentives for the former mall site

i. Community Pride

1. Cinco de Mayo

Committee members discussed whether the Cinco de Mayo event should be added to the Master Plan. Committee member Gutiérrez doesn't think it should be added to the Master Plan without full Council support and public input.

2. Image: Creative District

Committee member Gutiérrez believes there needs to be a more thorough assessment of the Creative District concept and should not be included in the Master Plan. She moved that the Creative District discussion be moved to the full Council for discussion as part of the strategic planning session in January. White seconded the motion. The motion passed.

c. Competitiveness

i. Private sites

ii. City sites

iii. Mill site

iv. Public Port Authority

Committee member Gutiérrez would like to begin working on a Port District in 2019 with the goal of moving it forward to the voters in 2020.

v. Incentives

vi. Education Alignment

vii. YKM

Partners need to support this asset.

viii. Convention Center

d. Traded Sector

i. YKM

White asked staff to provide an analysis of how to use a port district, potentially Yakima Airport as a centerpiece.

ii. Clusters

This concept needs to be emphasized with the Airport.

e. Council policy requests

i. Vacant Building Ordinance

Cortez shared what she believed was Holly's ideas about vacant buildings. White would like to see an inventory of all vacant businesses.

3. Staff and Partner Announcements

White asked staff to research if hotel/motel funds can be used for Airport marketing.

Committee member Gutiérrez asked about the City's partnership with the Sundome and what it would take to appropriately promote the venue to Tri-Cities.

There was discussion about the restaurant at the Airport and its usability.

Gutiérrez believes the Cinco de Mayo event should be added to the Strategic Plan.

Smith reminded everyone of the Enterprise Challenge that will be starting. The first year 20 participants participated and in 2017 there were 34. Opportunity Zones and tax incentive guidelines will be out in November.

Mann reported that the Light Parade will be December 2 at 6:00 p.m. The tree has been secured and will be decorated in time for the parade.

4. Future agenda items

The next meeting will be December 20 at 1:30 at the Yakima Airport. CWSF representatives will be invited to the meeting so they can share their ideas of how to increase events at the Sundome.

a. Agenda items:

- i. Vacant building ordinance
- ii. Review Economic Development Plan and Downtown Master Plan
- iii. CWSF presentation
- iv. Tour airport property

5. Audience Participation



Jason White, Chair