

The Redevelopment Agency (RDA) of Murray City met on Tuesday, May 21, 2024, at 5:30 p.m. in the Murray City Council Chambers, 10 East 4800 South, Murray, Utah.

Members of the public were able to view the meeting via the live stream at www.murraycitylive.com or <https://www.facebook.com/Murraycityutah/>. Public comments could be made in person or by submitting comments via email at: rda@murray.utah.gov. Comments were limited to three minutes or less, and written comments were read into the meeting record.

In Attendance:

RDA Board Members

Rosalba Dominguez, Chair
Pam Cotter, Vice Chair
Adam Hock
Paul Pickett
Diane Turner

Others in Attendance

Doug Hill, Mayor's Office
Brooke Smith, City Recorder
Phil Markham, CED Director
GL Critchfield, City Attorney
David Rodgers, Senior Planner
Brenda Moore, Finance Department
Pattie Johnson, Council Office
Jennifer Kennedy, Council Office
Camron Kollman, IT Department
Kim Sorensen, Parks & Recreation
Joey Mittelman, Fire Department
Jeff Puls, Fire Department
Members of the public, per sign-in sheet

Chair Dominguez called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Vice Chair Cotter made a motion to approve the minutes for April 16, 2024.

Board Member Hock seconded. Roll call vote:

Y Rosalba Dominguez
Y Pam Cotter
Y Adam Hock
Y Paul Pickett

Motion passed 4-0.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Chair Dominguez opened the public comment period for the meeting.

Zachary Smallwood read an email from Margaret Paul, Vice President of Historic Murray First Foundation. She said she is writing to encourage the board to prioritize improvements along the 4800 South frontage vacant property for the first phase. Historic Murray First Foundation is seeking a developer who wants to and can afford to restore the historic buildings along State Street. Construction along the 4800 South frontage will draw attention and new businesses to our

downtown and allow for incremental absorption. She said there are many units nearby already approved but not occupied. She asked the board to take this suggestion seriously.

Chair Dominguez closed the public comment period for the meeting.

DISCUSSION ITEM

Review of the Central Business District Site project area (discussion on history, potential projects, and priorities for the project area)

Phil Markham provided a history of the Central Business District (CBD) Urban Renewal Area. This included a timeline, starting with the establishment of the area in 1979. The tax increment was triggered in 1983 and set to end in 32 years. An amendment to the project area extended the tax collection period an additional 20 years. The collection area was later amended to increase the acreage. The tax increment collection period will expire in 2034. He directed the board to review the project area objectives in the packet provided. He said the board has been trying to do something with this district since 1979. He said efforts have not been concerted or well organized. He listed some of the previous ideas suggested for the area. He said there are only ten years left before the tax increment expires.

Mr. Markham stated that Elvon Farrell put together a proposed project list of discussion items from the RDA planning meeting. Mr. Markham said most of these are currently in the early stages of being addressed. The projects are: (1) to enter into a master development agreement with the developer to purchase and redevelop block one, (2) to develop public space and amenities around Murray Mansion, (3) The 4800 South pedestrian and road improvements, and (4) repair damaged gutter and sidewalks, as well as new asphalt.

Staff has been talking to developers and should have a master development agreement with the chosen developer by the end of the year. He said they will be asking for funds to develop the public space and amenities in the historic plaza. Staff have final renderings of the plaza design concept from lo LandArch. Cost proposals will be provided soon for low-range, mid-range and high-range options for the plaza development. They should have final numbers by the next RDA meeting.

Several of these projects involve collaboration with Public Works, and an alignment with their priorities. Those priorities include the widening of 4800 south, signal improvements on State Street, developing structured parking, utility connections from Hanover Street to block one need to be enhanced, addressing utility connections for the old city hall site, relocating of sewer lines near soccer facility, improving trail infrastructure to improve walkability throughout the area, running powerlines underground on Box Elder Street & Fifth Avenue & Fourth Avenue, the widening of Fifth Avenue between Poplar & State Street, installing updated street lighting on State Street, improving bicycle infrastructure in the project area and surrounding areas, and implementing improvements recommended by the 2024 Downtown Strategic Plan. He asked for the board's assistance in prioritizing those projects.

Board Member Hock asked for clarification on the Public Works projects and asked how critical those projects are. He specifically asked about the sewer lines near the soccer facility.

Mr. Markham said there's a high level of contamination on that site. He was told that the contamination goes as far down as 20 feet, so building would have to be removed. The site would have to be excavated down to at least 20 feet and have the material removed and backfilled. That would be their opportunity to redo the sewer lines, which will be costly.

Board Member Turner said that she feels a parking structure is the most important project. She said they can't expect people to come and appreciate all the projects that staff are planning without adequate parking.

Mr. Markham said that as they have more development around Block One, they will be able to identify the optimal places to have parking structures. He said they will investigate different types of structures and platforms, including privately-owned partnerships.

Board Member Hock said he advocates for improving the trail infrastructure. He said the Parks Master Plan calls for the city to improve the Cottonwood Creek Trail right there. He feels that citizens would use that trail.

Mr. Markham said there's a good opportunity to work toward that with the installation of bicycle lanes in the development process.

Chair Dominguez asked if they could use the Brownfield grants for the cleanup of the soccer facility.

Mr. Markham said he thinks it's strictly for study and analysis of specific properties within the area. He needs to see if the grant can be used in a broader area. He said there also isn't enough money from the grant to cover the costs of cleanup.

Chair Dominguez said the RDA doesn't have enough funds on its own to cover those costs. She said that one of her priorities is cleanup of that area and supporting any business that would come into the area. She said that other priorities of hers include allocating funds for facades or improvements of historic buildings and homes. She'd also like to expand the partnership with NeighborWorks for those historical areas to work towards making those areas more cohesive. This includes improving sidewalks and lighting.

Mr. Markham said they have begun that process with NeighborWorks, expressing to them that the staff want more focus on the housing rehabilitation. They have extended home improvement grants to senior citizens in the area.

Chair Dominguez asked how funds can be best leveraged to address these priorities.

Mr. Markham said he'll need to look into that. He pointed out that when federal grants are used, there are a lot of strings attached and detailed accounting procedures.

Chair Dominguez said she understands the hesitation in using grants but feels it's not appropriate to ask citizens to pay more taxes to cover these projects without leveraging other resources for funding.

Mr. Markham said the mayor's office coordinates grant applications, so they will need to work through them.

Board Member Turner asked how much the Brownfield grant was.

Mr. Markham said the city was awarded \$500,000.

Board Member Pickett pointed out that most of these projects are in his district and he is grateful to see progress being made in the area. He hopes the city can find a balance in using federal funds so that they aren't too restricted with what they can do.

Board Member Turner and Mr. Markham discussed having the board members write up a list of priorities and then ranking each priority to help guide staff and other departments in focusing their efforts. He said he really needs specifics from the board. He said he'd provide costs, where possible, but may not have the information.

Mr. Smallwood said they are moving rapidly on the form-based code, which will facilitate progress in the CBD area.

Doug Hill spoke on behalf of Mayor Hales. He said the mayor's number one priority is the development of Block One. He said that a lot of the other priorities on this list will be solved by having a development agreement. After meeting with developers recently, he acknowledges that it will require substantial funds from the RDA to make this development successful. Any developer that is asked to adhere to the form-based code, will require a donation of land and potentially tax increment financing. He doesn't want to see the board focus on smaller projects at this time and detract from the development of Block One, which is fast becoming a blighted area. He said the number one priority is to get a developer for Block One who will also cohesively do the historic park at the same time.

Board Member Hock clarified that if they want to save funds, they will do high density development.

Mr. Hill said that's what they've been hearing from developers. If they are allowed to develop what the market currently dictates, it's going to require greater height, greater density, and probably more residential than any other type of use. For the city to develop low density, low height, with parking, offices and restaurants, it will require the RDA to give up something, such as land and tax increments, to the developer. He stressed the sense of urgency because the tax increment will expire in ten years.

Board Member Turner asked if the board member should still prepare a priority list.

Mr. Markham said he'd still like to see those lists. They will help discussions move forward with a developer to show what the board thinks is important, and what needs to be considered in the type of development.

Board Member Hock agreed that knowing the other priorities is important in case the current development plans can be adjusted to consider how they will affect future projects.

Mr. Smallwood said this year the focus is Block One. He said that with the sale of the old city hall, this will provide more cash to accomplish the other priorities on the list. That cash infusion will allow them to address those other projects in the CBD area.

PROJECT UPDATES

Mr. Markham said the board members should stop by to check out the progress on the Townsend House and Cahoon House, as it is coming along quickly. He said there will need be some repairs to the porch roof that were unforeseen. The Parks department has done a lot of work on the landscaping at the Cahoon House, and it is much improved. He hopes that in the near future funds can be allocated to make the structure more presentable. He provided an update on the NeighborWorks Downpayment Assistance Program. He said that there are no more funds available for the rest of the year. They will be able to open the program up again at the beginning of 2025. They do have still have funds set aside for the Home Improvement Program.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements during this meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Dominguez adjourned the meeting at 6:08 p.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Philip J. Markham". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end.

Philip J. Markham, Director
Community & Economic Development Department