GRAND JUNCTION DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2024
750 MAIN STREET-GROWL CONFERENCE ROOM & VITRUAL OPTION
7:45 AM

Board Members present: Libby Olson (Chair), Faith Rodriguez-via zoom, Cris Silverberg-via zoom, Doug Simons Jr., City Council Representative Abe Herman

Board Members absent: Garrett Portra (Vice-Chair) Steven Boyd, Cole Hanson, Maria Rainsdon

Downtown Grand Junction staff present: Brandon Stam, Dave Goe, Vonda Bauer, Kyra Seppie, Sarah Dishong

City of Grand Junction staff present: City Attorney John Shaver

Guests: James Palmer (DTJ Design, Senior Associate & Architect-via zoom), Isabel Loos (Hello Lamp Post, Community Engagement-via zoom)

CALL TO ORDER: Libby called the meeting to order at 7:47 a.m.

CONSENT AGENDA
Approval of Minutes:
Meeting on August 22, 2024
Libby made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 22, 2024, Downtown Development Authority Board meeting. Abe seconded the motion. The motion passed.

REGULAR AGENDA
VIBRANT MAIN STREET PROJECT UPDATE
Brandon mentioned at the last meeting that they received feedback from the board and had additional discussions to clarify concepts, especially regarding the Splashpad area, as well as next steps, timing, and outreach. He stated that there are multiple ways to approach the roll out, either block by block, or project by project, and wanted to gather the board's thoughts on these options.

James Palmer from DTJ Design gave an updated presentation of the Main Street Improvement concepts. He shared the various options for the splashpad in front of the Dalby, Wendland building. He also addressed concerns about parking in front of Goal High School and Mama's Treasurers Antique store, presenting a new plan that replaces angled parking with parallel parking to create more space for the play area. For safety, fenced barriers would be installed. A revised concept of the playground design was provided as well. James also recommended adding an ADA parking stall in the clustered area and moving the delivery drop-off lanes to the back of the buildings to keep trucks off main street. This would free up space for another ADA stall. This approach could be applied to other blocks.

The board provided feedback supporting the idea of increasing pedestrian space without removing parking spots. They liked the concept of parallel parking and the addition of handicap parking. There were questions about bike parking, with a suggestion to place it near ADA spaces. Another recommendation was to create a dedicated space for local artists to display public art, and there was an inquiry about plans for a law enforcement kiosk.

James responded that bike parking has been considered. He proposed the large plaza space on the 300 block in front of Wells Fargo Bank and a space on the 600 block in front of the Avalon as potential areas for public art displays. Additionally, discussions about police presence have taken place.

Other topics discussed covered how to proceed with the improvements, focusing on block-by-block enhancements, budget allocation, and event layouts. It emphasized the importance of detailed conversations to determine the best layout for events during the improvement phase. Additionally, the City project team may handle some improvements in-house instead of hiring a contractor. Next steps involve refining concepts, particularly for the splashpad area, with input from Ken Sherbenou and Randy Coleman to align the timing of the City of Grand Junction Parks funding.

FACADE GRANT-425 MAIN STREET

The Façade Grant Committee reviewed a grant request submitted by Tom Brown, property owner of Brown's Shoe Fit Co. to fix the back door and entrance of the building at 425 Main Street. The project will include removing existing rear storefront from opening and furnishing and installing a new storefront framing system, door, and hardware. The total estimated eligible cost is $12,520, making the project eligible for a matching grant of $6,260.

Abe made a motion to approve the Façade Grant request for the building located at 425 Main Street contingent on proper approvals for the building permit. Doug seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

IGA-TERMINAL PROJECT

Brandon provided an update regarding the Intergovernmental Agreements (IGAs) for the Terminal Project. The Grand Junction City Council approved resolutions to proceed with both the OEDIT Community Revitalization Grant and the DOLA Small Communities Grant, along with an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA). The DDA will assume responsibility for any required payback of these grant funds. The current action is to approve the separate IGAs for each grant, formalizing the relationship between the DDA and the City regarding these funds.

John added that since the grants are through the State of Colorado, the City of Grand Junction must be listed as the obligor. He explained that the DDA does not have the authority to directly obligate to those grants and would assume the City's role in case of default through the IGAs.

Libby moved to approve the IGAs for the Small Communities Grant and the Community Revitalization Grant. Doug seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

HELLO LAMP POST PRESENTATION

Brandon previously sent a proposal to the board for Hello Lamp Post, a product aimed at enhancing engagement with businesses and the community. It would serve as a virtual ambassador, using AI and QR codes to interact with visitors. Since visitor kiosks are costly, this offers a flexible solution. Downtown GJ would like to implement it for the holiday season, starting in November. The total cost will be approximately $12,000 with $6,000 due in 2024 to start building the platform and the rest to be paid in 2025. The funds will come from the DDA special projects account, and the contract will be renewed annually.

Isabel (Hello Lamp Post, Community Engagement) provided an overview of Hello Lamp Post, a platform designed to enhance public spaces by facilitating communication and engagement in downtown areas and business improvement districts. It acts as a digital assistance or guide, providing information and answering questions for visitors exploring the area. Through signage such as stickers, A-frames, or decals featuring a QR code, users can engage in a chat that serves as an "on-the-ground ambassador", available 24/7. The platform

offers details on local businesses, wayfinding, events, parking, and other helpful resources. Dave suggested using the bison as the character visitors interact with, naming it Chromeo.

Hello Lamp Post is simple to use, with no need to download an app, create an account, or provide personal information. It supports multiple languages. In addition to providing information, the platform collects data on user interactions, such as the number of users, their locations, common questions asked, and custom reports.

Libby asked for clarification on how onboarding works for getting data into the chat tool, where the data comes from, how information is updated, and if there were additional costs and Abe asked how the system determines which responses are returned when a question is asked. Abe also indicated that the chat would be the preferred method instead of text messages.

Isabell explained that the DDA would provide links to existing content, such as business directories, event calendars, FAQs, or wayfinding information. The goal is to use existing resources without needing much new content creation. Their team handles structuring the conversation, populating the tool, and making it flow smoothly. There would be monthly check-ins to update or change content, add new questions, or reflect changes for local businesses. Additionally, direct integration with the website is possible, so any updates made there can automatically syn with the chat tool. Costs depend on the complexity. If updates live on the downtown website, they can be captured automatically, and the cost typically isn't high. Answers can be randomized or prioritized.

Doug made a motion to approve $6k for the first ½ of the Hello Lamp Post. Abe seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

UPDATES
A Request for Quote (RFQ) has been issued for the White Hall property, with a closing date in mid-October.

OTHER BUSINESS
Brandon stated that Stella's has purchased the property on 7th Street where Sunrise Café was previously located. Stella's has inquired about a façade grant. The property falls within the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) boundaries; however, it is not currently part of the Business Improvement District (BID). In 2018, the board discussed how to handle properties like this, which are in the DDA but not the BID, especially for restaurant and retail businesses. Brandon suggested the board revisit the policy, stating that if a business receives a DDA façade grant, they should also be a part of the BID for marketing purposes, including being listed in the Downtown guidebook. The topic will be discussed at the October board meeting.

Stella's is a Midwest-themed, locally owned restaurant known for pork loins, and they are currently operating in the Brass Rail location. They plan to open at their new location in 2025.

Art on the Corner (AOTC) 2024-25 Temporary Sculpture Exhibit
Sarah Dishong, Downtown Project Coordinator, gave a presentation of this year's 40th Anniversary of the Art on the Corner (AOTC) temporary sculpture exhibit. There were 91 submissions from 48 artists including 5 from Colorado Mesa University (CMU) students. George Turner, one of the AOTC's original founders, and rising young sculptor Justin Squire served as the curators. Twenty-two pieces were chosen, with three of them coming from CMU students. The sculptures will be installed on Saturday, October 5, 2024, starting at 7:00 am. A new feature this year includes sculptures along Colorado Avenue to attract more visitors to the area. FCI Constructors, longtime contributors to AOTC, will assist with the installation. A reception will be held on Friday, October 4th from 5:00 pm-7:00 pm at Springhill Suites.

Public voting for the People's Choice award will be done electronically, with voting open until November, giving the public extra time to select their favorite sculpture. Best in Show ballots were given to the board to vote for their favorite sculptures.

PUBLIC COMMENTS
None

ADJOURN
There being no further business, Libby made a motion to adjourn. Doug seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned 9:10 a.m.