GRAND JUNCTION DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, JANUARY 23, 2025
750 MAIN STREET-GROWL CONFERENCE ROOM & VITRUAL OPTION
7:45 AM

Board Members present: Libby Olson (Chair), Garrett Portra (Vice-Chair), Steven Boyd, Cole Hanson-via zoom, Faith Rodriguez, Cris Silverberg-via zoom, Doug Simons Jr., City Council Representative Abe Herman-via zoom

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

Other: Northland Securities, Inc Financial Advisor Troy Bernberg (representing the DDA)-via zoom

City of Grand Junction staff present: City Manager Mike Bennett, City Attorney John Shaver, Director of Engineering and Transportation Trent Prall, Parks & Recreation Director Ken Sherbenou

Guests: Steve Reimer (Co-owner-Main Street Management), Kelson Reimer (Operations Manager-Main Street Management)

CALL TO ORDER: Libby called the meeting to order at 8:14 am.

CONSENT AGENDA
Approval of Minutes:
Meeting on December 12, 2024
Garrett made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 12, 2024, Downtown Development Authority Board meeting. Doug seconded the motion. The motion passed.

REGULAR AGENDA
DDA RESOLUTION 2025-01 MEETING SCHEDULE
Doug made a motion to approve DDA Resolution 2025-01 meeting schedule. Garrett seconded the motion. The motion passed.

4TH & 5TH UPDATE/BACKGROUND – TRENT PRALL
Trent Prall, City of Grand Junction Director of Engineering and Transportation provided an update/background presentation on the 4th and 5th Street Project. Multiple plans and a Feasibility Study addressing safety, improved bicycle and pedestrian connections, and downtown infrastructure have been completed.

- 1984 DDA Plan of Development
- 2019 DDA Vibrant Together Plan
- 2013 Greater Downtown Plan
- 2020 One Grant Junction Comprehensive Plan

As construction was about to begin in the Spring of 2023, business owners had some concerns about parking and requested consideration of a one-way one-lane configuration with a bike lane. The Engineering firm completed a traffic analysis for the change and said it would work. The DDA Board and City Council approved the change and City Council included the funding in their 2024 budget.

Construction work began August 5, 2024; however, lanes were too narrow, so further adjustments were made. As a pilot project, ongoing evaluations and modifications were implemented over the following weeks.

The City's EngageGJ.org had over 700 posts regarding the changes. Many additional concerns as well as support have been shared via direct communication with the City Council and/or staff or through the Letter to the Editor, You-Said-Its, and social

media feeds. Some concerns were raised about congestion, slower speeds, perception of an increase in crashes, tight radius turns, aesthetics, sight distance, and difficulty parking.

Trent provided an analysis of speeds, volumes, crashes, and visitation since the project's implementation. City staff will review the project in 3-6 months.

Two more pilot phases remain: Pilot v1.2 Q1-2025 and Pilot v2.0 Q2-2025.

The Board discussed improving sightlines, removing bollards, adjusting angled parking, shifting the bike lane from next to parallel parking to alongside the vehicle travel lane. They also emphasized the need to better communicate the project's benefits to address negative feedback and improve public awareness of the 4th and 5th Street changes.

Steve Reimer (Owner-Main Street Management) expressed support for the project but advised against making changes based solely on opinions. He encouraged reviewing data and stated his preference for parallel parking with protected bike lanes against the curb. He acknowledged resistance to change but emphasized the importance of safety. If the design improves safety, he believes it should be accepted. The changes will help pedestrian's cross streets more easily and slows traffic.

City Manager Mike Bennett acknowledged the feedback and stated that the proposed changes aim to address various concerns. He noted ongoing challenges at intersections with buffered bike lanes and the need to balance lane configurations to maintain lower speeds. The goal is to reduce confusion and improve intersection safety. Communications are a challenge, as changes cannot be implemented until late April due to the weather.

DOLA GRANT MATCH

Parks & Recreation Director Ken Sherbenou discussed the progress and future plans of Whitman Park. He mentioned that the city has invested over 19 million dollars in the past two years, with a significant portion of that investment to support housing. The park's design is currently at the schematic level, with plans to take it through full design and construction documents in 2025. The design includes a multi-use stage, a food truck court, a synthetic ice rink, a climbing zone, and a dog park. The park's design seeks to reduce the amount of irrigated turf by approximately 50%. Ken also mentioned the potential for further development and progress around Whitman Park, given the improvements happening in the surrounding areas.

Ken stated that the schematic design cost estimate is planned as part of the 2024 budget. The total project cost is estimated at $5.3 million. In 2025, $525K has been approved, adding to the $100K spent by the city in 2024, bringing the total city investment to $625K. This funding will allow the project to reach full construction documents, enabling it to go out for bids and assess progress toward the total project cost. To fund the remaining amount, the city is pursuing grants and partnerships. A Bureau of Reclamation grant has been submitted, with additional funding sources including DOLA, CDGB, and a secured $50K from CDOT for sidewalk relocation.

In the short term, the plan is to demolish the existing on-site restroom facility. An architectural engineering team will be selected to finalize design and construction documents this year. If funding and contracts align, construction will begin in 2026, with a grand opening in early 2027.

Ken asked the DDA to consider contributing $200K to the project.

City Manager Mike Bennett stated that securing funding for the entire project remains a challenge.

Board members agreed that the project would enhance the area's activation and improve the entrance coming into Downtown. They also noted that a DDA contribution would demonstrate community support.

Doug moved to direct Brandon to identify a source of funds for the Whitman Park development project for $200K. Garrett seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ken also emphasized the success of the Emerson Park renovation.

HOTEL SECURITY

Steve Reimer, co-owner of Main Street Management, discussed their challenges since the Resource Center opened. They have had increasing incidents of individuals accessing their hotels, particularly at night. He highlighted the importance of safeguarding their guests and staff, and the need for additional security. Last year the DDA contributed $15K for six months of security which was ½ the cost of the contract. Mr. Reimer asked the DDA to consider contributing additional funding for security until the Resource Center's closure on April 15, 2025.

Board members expressed concerns about focusing security on one area when it's needed throughout Downtown. They agreed that this is a temporary measure tied to the Resource Center and not a permanent security expectation. It was decided to direct security efforts to the Resource Center area rather than the hotels. The board agreed to extend the security contract until April 15th, the Resource Center's closure date.

Garrett made a motion to extend the security contract through April 15th when the Resource Center moves. Doug seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

DDA GRANTS

The discussion on DDA grants was postponed. Brandon will email the drafts of the grant changes/updates and present them to the board for review.

UPDATES

This was Kyra's last meeting, and the board expressed gratitude for all she has contributed to Downtown. Kyra expressed gratitude for working with the board and staff and shared her excitement for her new role at United Way. She will remain on contract until a new event coordinator is hired and trained.

OTHER BUSINESS

Brandon shared that they have had productive discussions with OEDIT to address some procurement challenges and clarify the next steps for the grant.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

ADJOURN

There being no further business, Doug made a motion to adjourn. Garrett seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 9:43 a.m.