

# **Grand Junction DDA/BID Retreat Summary Notes January 31, 2017**

Gary briefly talked about the importance of strategic planning and a brief overview. The Board members introduced themselves and identified key skill sets they bring to the table, as follows:

- Jodi – Food and beverage/real estate broker
- Marty – City Council Mayor pro tem/retired accountant
- Dan – Commercial lender
- Duncan – Business owner/property owner
- Jason – Resident of downtown/service businesses
- Kirk – Non-profits/retail leases/property owner
- Shane – Retail representative/native of Grand Junction
- Tom – Attorney
- John – Legal representative for DDA/BID

Gary pointed out the diversity of experience among the Board members and encouraged them to utilize that as they move toward their goals.

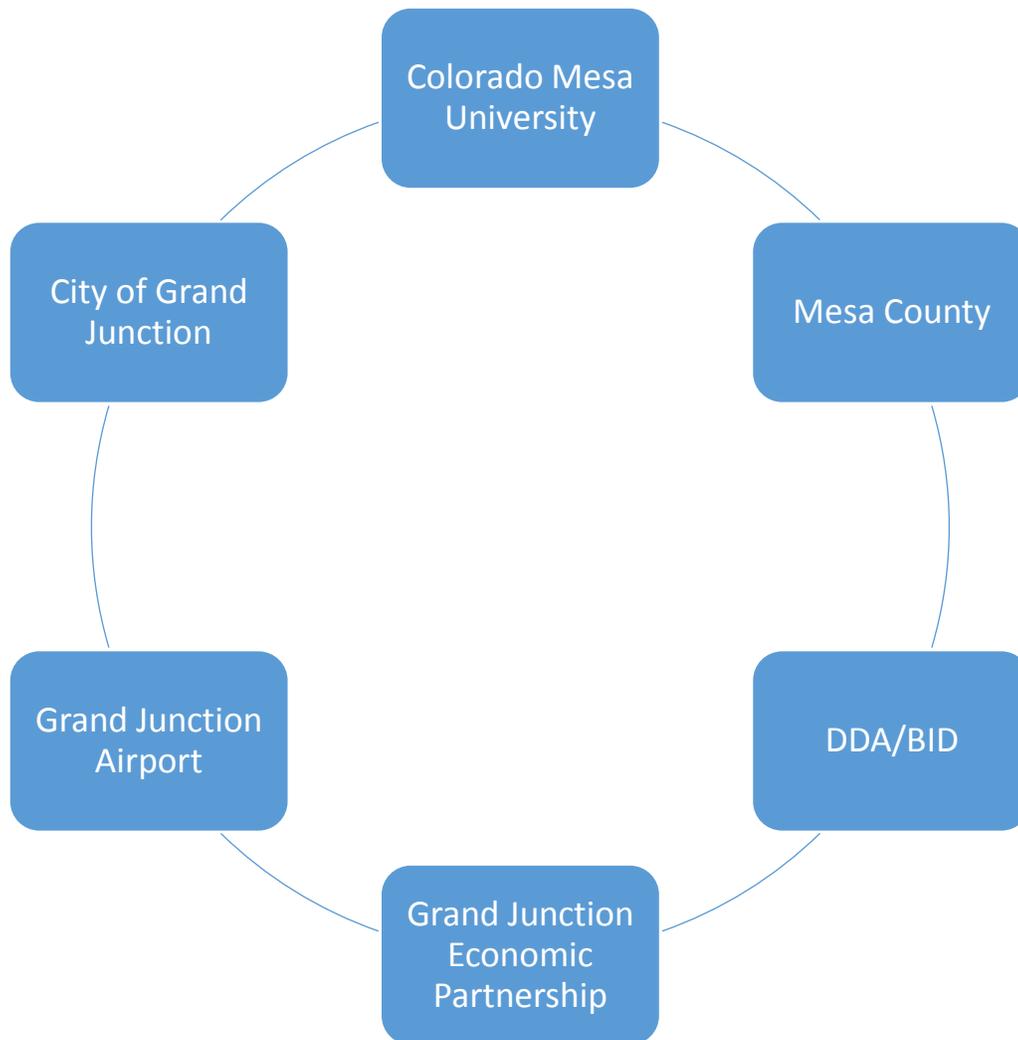
The participants agreed to the following Objectives for the day:

- Improve time efficiency of Board and Staff
- Agree to Board / Staff roles and protocols
- Develop and agree to several goals for 2017-18 to provide more Board focus and clarity of direction to staff

The Board had a brief discussion on the Visitors and Convention Bureau. It was noted there are some overlapping functions with the BID. The Board also thought the VCB could use some influence from downtown Grand Junction.

Partnerships and relationships were discussed including the importance of relationship building with the agencies shown in the graphic below.

The Board agreed that the DDA/BID could do more to foster relationships and partnerships with other agencies. This was identified as an actionable item under the goals.



The importance of intercepting free independent travelers (FIT) was also discussed.

There was also general agreement to the goal of getting more people to live downtown. This would include potential development projects.

It was also discussed that transients needed to be addressed in order to meet the goals.

It was suggested that more jobs needed to be created in the downtown area and noted that Grand Junction is losing status as a regional hub. We need to identify what makes us unique? What makes us different?

There was also general agreement that an increase in community involvement was desirable. The importance of business recruitment was also noted.

There was a brief discussion regarding the connectivity of the South DDA area and agreed that it should be kept in mind for the longer-term picture.

The facade grant was also briefly discussed. It was noted, ironically, that the storefronts that really needed the work did not seem interested in improving their properties.

Gary did a brief presentation on Board roles and staff roles. Everyone grasped the concept of policy making versus the “how to” that is the responsibility of administration.

The group then discussed at some length meeting protocol the following points were agreed to:

- Avoid surprises (especially with the agenda)
- Manage meeting length better, and pay particular attention to “other business”

Documents will be provided via Dropbox, or hard copies will be provided, if requested.

The Board discussed meeting schedule and agreed that the twice a month was beneficial and will remain in order to keep processes expedited. Staff will speak up if they feel that duplication is occurring, or overlap is occurring, with agenda items. The Board should also keep an eye out for redundancy and speak up.

There was candid discussion regarding role of the City of Grand Junction. It was acknowledged there seem to be some confusion as to the respective roles of the city and the DDA/BID. It was noted that the BID pays \$24,000 annually to the city for services provided. This will be verified by city staff.

In general, support from the city has been good, overall. There were two places where tension seems to be occurring: 1) The process for Board appointments, and 2) Agreeing on how to spend available resources.

The Board agreed that they would create a more formal process using nomination forms, then interview potential candidates, and make written recommendations to the City Council.

The Board generally agreed they could do a better job of articulating the needs of the Board to City Council.

*Action item: The Board will send a letter of recommended nominees to the City Council.*

John pointed out that the city is here to support the DDA/BID. And that regardless of differing opinions, the Board should always assume positive intent on the part of the city.

*Action item: The DDA/BID Board will encourage community involvement and recruit qualified board members using an open recruitment process, with advertising.*

The participants then reviewed each of the recommended goals and action steps as proposed by staff. The updated goals and action steps are attached as Attachment One.

Gary thanked the group for their participation and encouraged the Board to continue to support their staff and stay focused on their goals.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gary Suiter

## Attachment One Goals and Action Steps

**Downtown Partnership Mission/Purpose:** Sustain Downtown Grand Junction’s role as the preeminent hub for economic activity and commerce, cultural experiences and as a vibrant area to live and visit.

**DDA Mission/Purpose:** Facilitate reinvestment and redevelopment in Downtown Grand Junction. The DDA is established to halt and prevent deterioration of property values within its district and to assist in the development and redevelopment of its district and to use its power to promote the general welfare of the district by the use of its direct and supplemental powers.

**BID Mission/Purpose:** The mission of the BID is to support, market, and promote Downtown Grand Junction with the goal of improving the economic vitality and overall commercial appeal of the Downtown Grand Junction.

Downtown Grand Junction Goals	
Strategic Focus Areas	Action Items
<p><b>Downtown Living:</b> Utilize a mix of housing that provides market-rate options and increased density that fits the Downtown Character. Look into incentives and programs that will encourage urban infill.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and encourage development projects that bring unique and attractive live and live-work spaces to Downtown.</li> <li>• Develop incentives through potential use of TIF dollars to spur further housing development.</li> <li>• Partner with employers and community partners to market housing as draw for potential employers and employees.</li> <li>• Work with City and other entities to identify potential barriers to downtown housing and work to find solutions.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Organizational Development:</b> Develop updated strategies for dealing with current issues in the DDA/BID areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a strategic plan (i.e. updated Plan of Development) that better reflects current challenges and serves as a guiding document for Staff, Board and community and correlates with findings from Northstar Report and Greater Downtown Plan.</li> <li>• Increase organizational effectiveness by leveraging partnerships at the local, regional and state level.</li> <li>• Develop partnerships with organizations like GJEP, VCB and others to ensure our efforts work in synergy with other efforts.</li> <li>• Create a pool (<u>Board Function, not staff</u>) of potential board members and Board resources that align with identified organization goals and actions.</li> <li>• Engage Downtown constituents</li> <li>• Develop a strong pool of resources that can be utilized to provide guidance to DDA/BID.</li> <li>• Better communicate Downtown goals, actions and achievements to community in order to develop more buy-in, participation and transparency.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Economic Vitality:</b> Create incentives and programs to encourage more businesses to locate downtown. Seek businesses that enhance Downtown vitality. Assist existing businesses and property owners to improve business through training, marketing assistance, and capital improvement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Re-design website to better reflect priorities and provide access to community resources (i.e. one stop shop).</li> <li>• Integrate GIS tools into website to market vacant properties in downtown as well as past projects and community assets that can be used as a marketing tool for Downtown.</li> <li>• Develop grants programs that better reflect the challenges of Downtown development (i.e. building enhancement grants, sewage impact grants, etc).</li> <li>• Incorporate Business Incubator, Factory and other business development partners into downtown business development activities and potential programs (i.e. pop-up shops, Downtown Incubation facility, workshops, etc) to encourage better business techniques and strategies for attracting customers.</li> <li>• Host informational sessions for downtown businesses on a variety of topics-serve as a conduit for information.</li> <li>• Identify potential catalyst projects that could serve as an economic driver (could be public or public/private partnerships). These projects should complement other efforts and should not be done in a silo in order to maximize financial support.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify unique historic assets that could be re-purposed or re-tooled as an economic driver (Train depot, sugar beet building, etc).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Downtown Vibrancy and Identity:</b> Brand Downtown Grand Junction as a unique draw and asset for the region. Develop Downtown as a center for culture and retail activity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue work to brand Downtown as a unique hub that is both a regional and statewide attraction.</li> <li>• Creative Arts District and Blueprint programs to increase prominence and visibility of Downtown arts and cultural activity.</li> <li>• Continued promotion and encouragement of activities and robust events that serve as a regional draw and a boon to DDA/BID businesses.</li> <li>• Continued marketing efforts and partnerships with groups like VCB to showcase Downtown Grand Junction (i.e. Shop Local campaigns, etc).</li> <li>• Continued development of sponsorships to support Downtown activity and events (i.e. St. Mary's, Banks, etc).</li> <li>• A fully supported and thriving Art on the Corner program through partnerships with the Parks Department and Art Center.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Pedestrian Environment:</b> Maintain and create the unique pedestrian environment that makes Downtown a destination. Create linkages between Central Business District, River District and Rail District.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expanded Wayfinding for visitors coming from both the south and the west as well as in the Downtown core.</li> <li>• Identify ways to connect downtown corridors with other community assets such as CMU, the river and the Monument in order to increase traffic flow to and from downtown.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Encourage and activate pedestrian spaces in Downtown by utilizing tactical urbanism concepts (i.e. low-cost high-reward projects like parklet, food carts, street designs, block parties, etc.).</li><li>• Develop special projects grant to fund concepts that improve the downtown environment and encourage pedestrian activity in Downtown.</li><li>• Expand multi-generational activities and space in Downtown (i.e. creating space that is attractive for older and younger residents).</li><li>• Implement a Downtown Ambassador program</li><li>• Continued modernization of Downtown parking utilizing results identified in the Parking Study.</li></ul>
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