



**Economic Development Authority
Regular Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, September 10, 2024
4:00 PM**

North St. Paul City Hall – Council Chambers
2400 Margaret Street

I. CALL TO ORDER

President Monge called the meeting to order at 4:01 PM.

II. ROLL CALL

EDA Members

John Monge, President/Mayor
Josef Matthews, Vice-President
Terry Furlong, Member
Brandon Bramscher, Member
Peter Gagliardi, Member
Tim Cole, Council Representative

Staff/Ex-Officio Members

Brian Frandle, Executive Director
Riley Grams, Community Development Director
Daniel Winek, Finance Director
Chris Cherne, EDA Secretary

III. ADOPT AGENDA

President Monge requested a motion to adopt the agenda.
M/Furlong, S/Matthews.
Motion carried 6-0.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Approval of June 11, 2024 Meeting Minutes

President Monge requested a motion to approve the June 11, 2024 meeting minutes.
M/Cole, S/Matthews.
Motion carried 6-0.

V. MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

No public comments.

VI. EDA DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS

A. Downtown Design Manual CIP Item & Budget Impacts

Finance Director Winek stated that the Downtown Design Manual is currently in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and is indicated to be funded by the general fund. Winek stated that this item would make more sense to be included within the EDA budget, but it would need to be approved by the EDA first.

The Downtown Design Manual was developed under the guidance and direction of the Design and Historical Review Commission and was adopted by City Council in 2005. The

manual illustrates portions of the zoning code as it relates to the desired built environment within the downtown. The zoning ordinance was updated in 2015, the 2040 Comprehensive Plan was approved in 2018, and the Redevelopment Master Plan was updated in 2022. The Downtown Design Manual is no longer consistent with city plans and ordinances and should be updated.

The EDA agreed that the project should be pursued. Winek asked the EDA if the project should be brought up in 2025 or 2026. With the Façade Improvement Program potentially incoming, it should be questioned when to fund the update to the Downtown Design Manual and how the Manual and the Façade Improvement Program relate to each other. Grams reiterated his previous discussions with Winek about potentially pushing this project in 2026 to allow for a definition of the façade improvement projects that would be incoming.

Furlong stated a year seems like a long time and asked if it is possible to revisit this in half a year. Winek stated this item can be worked into the budget and can be approved at a later date. The EDA could also come back sometime next year if they want to get started on the Downtown Design Manual, and they would recommend to City Council to change their budget. Winek stated the estimated costs for the Downtown Design Manual project are \$60,000. Winek stated that there are a number of unknowns with the City levy, as there are impending union contracts, additional funding for parks, or additional funding for facilities. In order to reduce those levies, City Council is looking to move this \$60,000 project to the EDA.

Winek asked if there is an appetite from the EDA to fund the Downtown Design Manual project. The EDA reached a consensus that the project should be under the EDA. Winek stated he would reflect the changes on the proposed 2025 budget and place \$60,000 under capital. If everything goes through in December, the EDA would get the funding in 2025. If the EDA decides to postpone the project, that will not be an issue as there would already funding there for whenever the EDA would like to pursue this project.

B. Façade Improvement Program

Winek presented to the EDA a draft Façade Improvement Program overview and application.

The grants will pay for 50% of the total project costs, up to a maximum grant amount of \$20,000 per property. Grant funds must be matched 1:1 with private dollars. Owners of multiple properties can apply for separate grants for each property, as long as the cumulative grant amount awarded does not exceed the maximum grant amount. The minimum grant amount is \$5,000 (\$10,000 total project cost). The total program amount is \$200,000. Applications will be accepted at any time throughout the year. Winek reviewed eligible and ineligible projects.

The EDA had a robust conversation regarding signs being listed as an ineligible project. Cole stated that a couple buildings downtown could benefit from signs being allowed as an eligible cost. Matthews recommended that a façade be improved prior to a sign. Monge stated if a sign is a permanent attachment to the building, maybe it should be considered. Furlong stated that signs are very expensive and the cost hinders a lot of people from upgrading their signs. Grams stated he is concerned that it is possible only signs will be applied for. Bramscher recommended implementing signs as a separate phase of the program. Matthews stated the structural integrity of the buildings should be the main focus. Grams stated that if the property owner can demonstrate that other improvements are being done, then a sign could be eligible. Winek stated under eligible costs, the EDA could clarify: "Signs, if they are an integral part of the improvement, will be considered."

Winek reviewed the rest of the program overview and the draft application form. Winek stated the program documents can be adjusted and amended as time moves forward. This program

can and should be evaluated and modified as it goes through, and it should inspire ideas for the Downtown Design Manual. Monge stated that if this project is brought out in phases, it could include other business corridors as well. Matthews stated that there should be an action plan to get this promoted to eligible businesses. Frandle stated the City's Communications Coordinator would be able to help spread the word and advertise it in the City newsletter and social media. Matthews stated he would be more than happy to get out and knock on doors as well to spread the word. Winek recommend creating a brochure or handout advertising the program and to get the website prepared. Monge asked about a timeline for projects. Winek stated an agreed upon timeline should be included on the signed agreements, including an avenue to extend the deadline if needed. Winek stated January 1, 2025 would give ample time to prepare staff for the program's kick-off. Monge agreed.

Grams asked if the EDA is looking to approve projects, or if staff may give approval. The EDA reached a consensus that staff will do a review of the projects and their merits and offer a recommendation for EDA approval.

C. EDA Project Updates

Frandle provided updates on the following EDA projects:

- **Article No. 7:** Construction is well underway and the developers are right on track for their grand opening on December 1, 2024.
- **Delaware Place Plat:** Andrus Built, LLC has applied for and received their first building permits to construct the first townhouse units on the property located on the corner of Delaware Ave and 17th Ave E. Construction is expected to begin shortly.
- **Margaret Street Commons:** Staff presented a draft Request for Proposals (RFP) to the North St. Paul Planning Commission for development proposals at the site located across City Hall on Margaret Street. Based on their recommendation, the RFP will be presented to City Council for their review and consideration at their regular meeting on September 17, 2024.
- **Taco Bell (Formerly Oil Can Henry's):** Construction is well underway for a new Taco Bell at 2371 McKnight Road N. The project is expected to be completed in the fall of 2024.
- **Pine Tree Center:** There was some recent activity at the Pine Tree Center with some dumping of debris on the north side of the building. The debris has since been cleaned up. The current restaurant tenant is expected to complete their lease at the Pine Tree Center by the end of the year.
- **EDA Consultant:** Cole stated that the League of Minnesota Cities encouraged the EDA to utilize their marketplace and message boards to get some more information and recommendations for an EDA consultant.

VII. **UPDATES**

A. Staff Updates

There were no updates.

B. EDA Member Updates

Monge stated he and Cole were at a ribbon cutting for Old National Bank. The bank donated a check for \$1,000 to the North St. Paul Food Shelf.

Cole stated that there is little to no visibility from Hwy 36 to the incoming Taco Bell business on McKnight Rd N and indicated there is a lot to the west of the credit union that also has some overgrowth. Cole mentioned that he would like to see somebody reach out to Buddy's Pizza Factory as a last effort to see if they are interested in staying in the City of North St. Paul. Cole indicated that his term with the EDA will expire at the end of the year and indicated that he has a desire to continue onward in 2025 as an EDA member.

VIII. **ADJOURNMENT**

President Monge requested a motion to adjourn the meeting.
M/Cole, S/Matthews to adjourn the meeting at 5:11 PM.

Motion carried 6-0.

The next regularly scheduled Economic Development Authority meeting is Tuesday, October 8, 2024 at 4:00 PM.

Members, please notify any planned absences to:

Chris Cherne
EDA Secretary
651-747-2440
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