

Chair:
Dan Erickson

Commissioners:
Ed von Holtum
Kyle Lassen
Liz Johnson
David Radziej
Vacant
Vacant
Vacant
Vacant

Council Liaison:
Brenda Holden



**Economic Development
Commission
May 4, 2016
8:00 am to 9:30 am
City Hall**

Address:
1245 W Highway 96
Arden Hills MN 55112

Phone:
651-792-7800

Website:
www.cityofardenhills.org

City Vision

Arden Hills is a strong community that values its unique environmental setting, strong residential neighborhoods, vital business community, well-maintained infrastructure, fiscal soundness, and our long-standing tradition as a desirable City in which to live, work, and play.

Agenda

CALL TO ORDER

1. Call To Order

2. Approval Of The Agenda

3. Minutes
 - 3.A. Approval Of Minutes
Documents: [03-02-16 EDC MINUTES.PDF](#)

4. Unfinished And New Business
 - 4.A. Business Retention And Expansion
Documents: [MEMO.PDF](#), [ATTACHMENT.PDF](#)

 - 4.B. State Of The City
Documents: [MEMO.PDF](#)

5. Updates
 - 5.A. Rice Creek Commons (TCAAP) Update

 - 5.B. Commission Members

5.C. Council Liaison

5.D. Staff Comments

6. Adjourn

ADJOURN

**A quorum of the City Council may be
present at this meeting.**



**CITY OF ARDEN HILLS, MINNESOTA
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
MARCH 2, 2016 8:00 AM
CITY HALL -- 1245 WEST HIGHWAY 96**

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Erickson called the meeting to order at 8:05 am

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Dan Erickson and Commissioners Kyle Lassen and David Radziej

Also Present: Community Development Director Jill Hutmacher; Senior Planner Matthew Bachler; and Deputy Clerk Julie Hanson

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Radziej moved to accept the agenda and it was the consensus of the Commission to accept said agenda.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Radziej moved to accept the minutes from the January 6, 2016, meeting, and it was the consensus of the Commission to accept said minutes.

3. UNFINISHED AND NEW BUSINESS

A. Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) Recommendations

Community Development Director Hutmacher stated there would be an additional meeting with the EDA in the future in order to discuss further recommendations.

Chair Erickson stated that some EDA members appeared to want additional clarity on the data included in the BRE Report.

Senior Planner Bachler indicated City staff would be meeting with Jonathan Weinhagen of the St. Paul Area Chamber of Commerce (SPACC) to discuss the recommendations in detail and to obtain further recommendations for next steps. He said that staff would request that SPACC make

additional revisions to the report based on the comments provided by the EDA. The revised report could then be provided to the EDA at a future meeting.

Senior Planner Bachler outlined the four key recommendations of the report as follows:

Transit Advocacy – Proposal to extend the Snelling Avenue Bus Rapid Transit corridor into Arden Hills. Recommend the City invite Metro Transit to an EDA work session to discuss what they are considering in terms of transit in the area.

Workforce Training – City staff to meet with local technical and community colleges with job training programs to obtain valuable information that could be passed on to local businesses in an effort to assist them in meeting their workforce needs.

Tracking Growing Businesses – City staff to create a system to check in regularly with growing businesses to determine the status of their needs.

Continued BRE Program – City staff to put system in place to identify a targeted list of businesses to visit each year. Coordinated effort with local Chambers and GreaterMSP. Potentially share data with regional and state databases.

A discussion ensued regarding these four main recommendations.

A list of action steps to further the goals for each recommendation was created as follows:

Transit Advocacy

- Meet with businesses that would be affected by expanded transit
- Invite Metro Transit to future EDA meeting
- Design infrastructure to accommodate transit

Workforce Training

- Understand what skills are needed
- Identify a clear point of contact at the City
- Build employer relationships
- Investigate satellite programs and partnerships with local schools such as Century College, Anoka-Hennepin Technical College, Anoka-Ramsey Community College, Dunwoody Institute and Normandale Community College

Tracking Growing Businesses

- Obtain data from SPACC
- Obtain and provide regular business updates

Continued BRE Program

- Expand current site visits
- Coordinate with other entities
- Show value to existing businesses
- Share regional information
- Communicate information back to businesses

- Consider frequency of formal BRE Program (3 to 5 years, formal report, continue visits, etc.)
- Track results of BRE initiatives

Community Development Director Hutmacher asked EDC Commissioners to identify priority action items.

A discussion ensued regarding determination of top priorities. The priorities were selected as follows:

- Obtain data from SPACC
- Expand current planned visits
- Show value to businesses pertaining to site visits (information and contacts)
- Communicate information back to the business community

Commissioner Lassen suggested adding to the next EDC agenda various ways to communicate the BRE plan to local businesses.

Commissioner Radziej agreed, stating this would show the City's continued interest in assisting the local businesses.

Commissioner Lassen asked about next steps regarding transit advocacy.

Community Development Director Hutmacher stated that the Met Council conducted a study and created a draft report regarding the BRT extension. The draft report was provided to the cities of Arden Hills, Shoreview and Roseville, as well as Ramsey County, MnDOT, and SPACC. A final report will be provided that incorporates feedback and suggestions.

B. Small Business Workshop Project

Community Development Director Hutmacher stated that a small business workshop will take place on March 17, 2016, in Vadnais Heights and everyone is welcome to attend.

A short discussion ensued regarding the workshop and its value to the business community.

C. New Business Update

Community Development Director Hutmacher stated future EDC agendas would include an update regarding new business visits. She indicated recent visits included Counselor Realty, China Express and Preferred Insurance.

4. UPDATES

A. Rice Creek Commons (TCAAP) Update

Community Development Director Hutmacher stated that responses to the Solicitation for Master Developer are due March 9, 2016. She explained that an evaluation of the responses would

then take place by a Solicitation Review Committee, followed by an evaluation, interviews and recommendations to the JDA. The JDA will select a master developer. She said the selected master developer would then enter into a development agreement with the JDA as well as a purchase agreement with Ramsey County as the property owner. She said this process will take some time.

B. Commission Members

None.

C. Council Liaison

None.

D. Staff Comments

Community Development Director Hutmacher stated that at the February 29, 2016, meeting, the City Council approved a Resolution Regarding the Support of a Job Creation Fund Application by Land O' Lakes as the company is considering a significant expansion.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:26 a.m.

Dan Erickson, Chair

Jill Hutmacher
Community Development Director



ARDEN HILLS
MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 4, 2016 **EDC Agenda Item 4.A**

TO: Economic Development Commission Chair and Commissioners

FROM: Matthew Bachler, Senior Planner

SUBJECT: Business Retention and Expansion Program Priority Projects

Requested Action

Review the implementation plan for the Business Retention and Expansion Program Priority Projects and discuss next steps.

Background

The EDC reviewed the Business Retention and Expansion Program Report from the St. Paul Area Chamber of Commerce at their meeting on March 2, 2016, and provided recommendations on priority projects. Staff worked with SPACC on a draft implementation plan for three projects based on these recommendations, which was presented to the Economic Development Authority on March 28, 2016 (Attachment A). The EDA approved the implementation plan as presented, but set priorities for which projects staff and the EDC should focus on first.

Discussion

The implementation plan includes three projects: conducting ongoing business visits, convening a commercial real estate broker roundtable, and exploring the City's role in workforce development. The following section outlines each of these projects in more detail.

Project 1: Ongoing Business Visits

The first project would focus on developing a system so the City can maintain its efforts to build relationships with the business community. The implementation plan recommends establishing an objective for business visits each year, for example targeting a specific industry or business district. Realistic goals should be set on the number of visits expected to be completed by staff and the EDC, and visits should be coordinated with other entities, such as Chambers of Commerce and Greater MSP, completing BRE visits. Information collected throughout the year would then be compiled into a year-end report.

Staff recommended to the EDA that the City focus its BRE visits on the Red Fox/Grey Fox business district in 2016 due to transportation issues, new businesses in the Red Fox Business Center, and recent business turnover in the area. The implementation plan sets a goal of visiting 6 to 8 businesses during the remainder of the year. Staff is recommending the following next steps for this priority project:

- Work with SPACC on modifications to the BRE survey to include questions specific to businesses in the Red Fox/Grey Fox area.
- Update business community newsletter with relevant news and information to distribute at business visits.
- Identify priority businesses and coordinate visits with SPACC and Greater MSP. Set goal of completing one visit per month.
- Notify EDC members of scheduled visits and invite them to participate.

Project 2: Commercial Real Estate Broker Roundtable

The purpose of the second project is to gather information from commercial real estate brokers in Arden Hills on local office, industrial, and retail market dynamics. SPACC has expressed a willingness to convene this roundtable discussion in the upcoming months. Brokers will be able to comment on the facility needs for different commercial users and where Arden Hills is meeting or not meeting these needs. Staff will prepare a summary report based on the discussion and present the findings to the EDC and EDA.

Project 3: Explore the City's Role in Workforce

One of the main issues that came out of the BRE program was the challenge businesses face finding skilled workers. The third project recommends that the City gain a better understanding of what workforce development resources are currently available through Ramsey County, the State of Minnesota, and Greater MSP, and to begin building relationships with local community colleges and Mounds View Public Schools.

Staff would like to complete additional research on workforce resources and set up a meeting with the Director of Community Partnerships with Mounds View Public Schools this summer. Identifying and meeting with community colleges would begin in the fall. The information gained from these efforts could be provided to businesses at future BRE visits and posted on the City's website.

The EDA encouraged staff to complete all three projects this year, but identified Project 1 as a high priority, Project 2 as a medium priority, and Project 3 as a low priority. Therefore, staff will focus its efforts on completing Project 1 and work on Projects 2 and 3 as time allows.

Attachments

- Arden Hills BRE Program Priority Projects Implementation Plan



March 24, 2016

Jill Hutmacher, Community Development Director
City of Arden Hills
1245 West Highway 96
Arden Hills, MN 55112

VIA EMAIL

RE: Business Retention and Expansion Program Priority Projects

Dear Ms. Hutmacher:

Thank you again for allowing us the opportunity to partner with the City of Arden Hills to conduct a Business Retention and Expansion program. By all measures the program was a success, achieving the multitude of goals set out by the visionary leadership of your Economic Development Commission and City Council.

As a follow-up to the formal report that included recommendations, we have consulted with staff and reviewed feedback from the Economic Development Commission and prepared a draft implementation plan for priority projects. I look forward to presenting the formal report and discussing a strategy for advancing some of the recommendations through priority projects in 2016 and beyond at the Economic Development Authority meeting on Monday, March 28th.

As always, please feel free to contact me with any questions at jonathan@saintpaulchamber.com or by phone at 651-238-6043.

Best Regards,

Jonathan Weinhagen
Vice President



Business Retention & Expansion Program Priority Projects Implementation Plan

Priority Project 1: Ongoing Business Visits

The recommendations section of the Business Retention and Expansion Program that was administered in 2015 recognized the importance of conducting ongoing business visits in an effort to maintain up to date information and relationship building with the business community. Developing a system for and conducting ongoing business visit should be a top priority of the city.

Feedback received from the Economic Development Commission

- Expand current, planned visits
- Show value to businesses with visits (information, contacts)
- Communicate information back to business community
- Coordinate with other visiting entities
- Share, consider regional information
- Consider frequency of formal BRE program
- Track results of BRE initiatives

Questions to consider when developing a sustainable business visit model:

- Who should be targeted to receive a visit?
- How many visits should be conducted each year?
- What is the core objective of the visits?
- Who should conduct the visits?
- What should the frequency be of conducting a formal BRE program?

Recommended Implementation Strategy

- Choose to target a specific industry (i.e. manufacturing, med tech, etc.) or defined geography (i.e. Red Fox/Grey Fox, Round Lake, etc.) for business visits throughout 2016.
 - It is recommended that the City focus on the Red Fox/Grey Fox district initially in response to some of the feedback regarding transportation in the area and recent changes in the make up of the local business community, such as Smiths Medical leaving and the opening of the Red Fox Business Center.
- Plan to conduct 6-8 visits during the remainder of 2016
 - It is estimated that business visits require approximately 4 hours of time to conduct, inclusive of outreach, scheduling, visiting, and inputting data.
- Aggregate information collected throughout the year and produce a year-end report.

Timeline

Ongoing through 2016 with plans to review strategy for 2017 near the end of the year

Priority Project 2: Commercial Real Estate Broker Roundtable

The recommendations section of the Business Retention and Expansion Program identified an opportunity to engage in meaningful dialogue with the commercial brokerage community in light of the reality that the City is served by a finite number of commercial real estate brokerage firms. The City would benefit from this type of roundtable discussion as staff will be able to make connections with brokerage firm representatives and gain a better understanding of local market dynamics. The Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce expressed a willingness to convene this roundtable with City staff and brokers as part of its initial scope of work for the Business Retention and Expansion Program.

Recommended Implementation Strategy

- Identify commercial brokerage firms who have considerable interests in the City of Arden Hills
- Develop a series of questions based on the findings in the BR&E Program report and industry trends that aim to isolate challenges and opportunities that are unique and specific to the City of Arden Hills.
- Poll contacts to identify a date to host a 90 minute roundtable that works for the greatest number of firms.
- Facilitate the roundtable.
- Report findings and recommended next steps to the Economic Development Commission and Economic Development Authority.

Timeline

April-June of 2016

Priority Project 3: Explore the City's Role in Workforce

Challenges related to accessing skilled workers emerged as one of the most significant themes as a result of the Business Retention and Expansion Program visits and survey. Recognizing the limited capacity within the city to develop training programs and engage in the broad variety of workforce initiative, it is recommended that partnerships be leveraged to gather additional information and provide resources to your business community.

Feedback received from the Economic Development Commission

- Understand what skills are needed
- Building employer relationships
- Single point of contact at City between businesses and schools
- Schools to contact: Century College, Anoka-Ramsey, St. Paul Technical College, Dunwoody, Normandale (satellite programs)

Recommended Implementation Strategy

- Identify a staff lead at the City of Arden Hills to be the point person for issues related to workforce.
- Leverage existing capacity that is resourced to engage in workforce issues in the community
 - The Mounds View Public Schools recently created and filled the role of Director of Community Partnerships. The City should begin conversations with this role to determine how information can be shared.
 - Gain better understanding of other workforce development resources in the area, such as Ramsey County, Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development, and Greater MSP.
- Identify and begin building a relationship with a point of contact from each of the community colleges that serve the metro area (Century, Anoka-Ramsey, Saint Paul College, Dunwoody).

Timeline

Ongoing through 2016 and beyond with the following target dates:

- April/May – Identify Staff Lead
- June – Meet with Mounds View Public Schools
- End of Year – Complete meetings with each of the community colleges



MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 4, 2016 **EDC Agenda Item 4.B**
TO: Economic Development Commission Chair and Commissioners
FROM: Jill Hutmacher, Community Development Director
SUBJECT: State of the City

Requested Action

Provide input to the City Council on potential 2016 State of the City events.

Discussion

A State of the City event has been held in four of the previous five years. During the last two years, an event was held at Flaherty’s Arden Bowl on a weekday morning to be convenient for the business community. The original purpose of the State of the City event was to build relationships with the Arden Hills business community and to provide local businesses with information about City projects and goals. In the past two years, an evening event was added to be more convenient for residents.

Feedback for State of the City events has been positive, although 2015 attendance was less than in previous years.

	Flaherty’s	City Hall	Total
2013	75	--	75
2014	70	60	130
2015	40	35	75

Options for a 2016 State of the City event include:

1. Hold the event as it has been for the last two years;
2. Hold the event but change the presentation topics;
3. Hold community meetings (day and evening events) to introduce the community to the TCAAP master developer and provide updates on development plans, but do not market the meetings as State of the City; and
4. Other options suggested by the EDC.