

LDDA Board of Directors Retreat

527 Main St., Longmont, CO 80501 (Christ Church International)

February 22, 2017 – 9:40 a.m.

Present:	Ex-officio Member: City of Longmont, Jim Golden; Chris McGilvray; Jeff Moore; Joe Perrotto; Sharon Smith-Eisler; Thaxter Williams
Absent:	Burbidge Austin
Guests:	Shawn Lewis; Brien Schumacher; Tamar Hendricks; Joanne Kirves; David Starnes; Steve Lane; Janine Ledingham
Staff:	Executive Director, Kimberlee McKee; Del Rae Heiser; Emelie Torres
Facilitators:	PUMA – Erica Heller; JJ Folsom

Downtown by the numbers – Kimberlee presented a snap shot of downtown and its success to date which will also be presented at the City Council retreat on February 24.

- Assessed Value through TIF – over 41.5 million in 2011. Butterball left which was the biggest single property owner and tax generator. In 2016, downtown was close to 2011 before Butterball was redeveloped. The DDA property values have rebounded even before Butterball was redeveloped. The majority of this is the Brownstones apartments, RPA and other smaller investments.
- Sales and Use tax has increased by 57% since 2011. These revenues contribute to the City's General Fund.
- Incentive programs – 132 incentives since 2011
- Alleyscape projects – \$85,000 to leverage over \$500,000 to the backs of the buildings
- Façade programs – private and DDA investments have shown programs are working very well
- Total Investment – since 2011 the DDA has put in \$4.1 million to leverage over \$36 million of investments
- Market Assessment – downtown at 1% of the land mass is producing over 4% of total property tax base and account for 13% of the city's business and 10% to the jobs making downtown the most economically impactful productive part of the city acre per acre
- Office space – down 4.5% from 19% in 2011 and one of the best locations for modern format office with more demand for class A offices. Jeff commented that this has been a topic for a few years now. How can the DDA stimulate this? Investment on class A or modern format office space, large floor plan that are more adaptable to tech businesses. Lodging demand could grow.
- 1/5th of the job thru the public sector, 3x as much as the land owned outside
- 3.3% of sales tax of city revenue in 2015
- Downtown attracts smaller businesses which makes it authentic and unique.
- Downtown was covered on magazines like 5280 which brought people from Denver. People recognize downtown as vibrant, authentic and diverse in multicultural.
- Received Governor's award in 2016 for excellence for Cheese Importers' reuse of space.
- 2016 Stats – new website responsive design has gotten more visits.
- Facebook – 134 % up in referral, over 5,000 friends, more responses from different demographics around the county.
- 142,000 business and event emails sent out with 75,000 opened, 6,800 driven to website for more information
- Increased placemaking efforts have made downtown a sense of place
- Focus on South Main streetscape extension and west side alleyscape in 2016
- Parking and Access Study completed in 2016

- Better Cities dialogue helpful with the community awareness about downtown
- Global Transit and rise of mid-tier city will be added topics in city council retreat
- Local businesses who own and live it help make downtown with its authenticity.

LDDA Master Plan

- I. Recap of what we have accomplished - Erica gave a brief review of the Master Plan Update and asked the board and steering committee to get the master plan ready for adoption. Master Plan needs to do two things – endure through 20 years and inspire action.
- II. Plan Summary Overview & Big Idea concepts - priorities and programs – values, feedback - everyone agreed that ‘downtown has come a long way’.
 1. 18-hour economy – thrives in weekends, certain times during the day and need to see consistency
 2. Sense of authenticity – downtown to be a place to do things
 3. Downtown is abundant to local creativity and culture – making downtown evident when people visit (placemaking, window display etc.)
 4. Safety – making it safe and comfortable environment for visitors and workforce
 5. Infrastructure improvement – parking, biking, transportation
 6. Collaboration with partners – focus groups; energizing people to get behind the plans for downtown and getting things done
- III. Group Discussion
 - Alex stated that even with the 6 big ideas identified, we need to keep moving forward.
 - Joanne asked why housing was not shown. The 18-hour economy concept would support market rate housing for workforce downtown is trying to attract. South Main Station with over 200 units in downtown will help balance between market rate and affordable housing. The plan needs to support market rate. Time-frame for SMS is scheduled to start at the end of 2017.
 - Kimberlee stated that the 6 big ideas are broad but helps focus. There is room for identifying and justifying projects that touch one or more of these goals. Jeff added that the 6 big ideas are good reasons for people to come here, invest and encourage residency and development.

Implementation Priorities & Map Overview - Programs and priorities in the next 5 years or so that need work.

- Projects are physical phase and can be done by the DDA as well as partnerships.
- Programs – day to day tasks by DDA
- Partners – identified - DDA and City of Longmont are primary partners
- Sites – redevelopment and new
- Funding – programs from TIF or mil levy; 501c3 can be a growing funding source for arts etc.

MAP – JJ walked everyone through the color coded map identifying alternative areas for different uses.

- Events on Main St. – alternative areas on 4th/Main; 5th/Main; Kimbark and 5th Ave
- Bike route enhancement – streets need to be prioritized – Coffman and Kimbark/Emery should be the focus for enhancement and protective bike lanes with connections from Longs Peak Ave. down to St. Vrain Creek.
- Key intersections (2nd, 3rd Avenues; railroad tracks) – can be enhancement with signage; sidewalk treatments etc.
- Opportunity development sites (southern area of Main St.; public parking lots; county building lot) – look at current lots for possible private/public mixed use buildings

Break out discussion focus & priorities (two groups)

Group 1 – Joe, Jeff, Thaxter, David S., Brien, Tamar, Del Rae

Group 2 - Sharon, Alex, Kimberlee, Jim, Shawn, Joanne, Emelie

(Janine – joined group 2 at 10:40 a.m.)

(Steve Lane – joined group 1 at 10:52 a.m.)

1. What are the top 5 projects; top 5 programs? 3-5 years process

Top 5 projects:

- Workforce/market housing
- Office space
- Business development – craft/culinary
- Extending Coffman as a complete street (LDDA and City priority)
- Mixed use - public/private partnership with parking as part of it

Discussion/addition:

- Kimberlee added private/public redevelopment that advance planning goal.
- Alex added – adding parking within mixed use prioritizing redevelopment with structured parking in the next 5 years.
- Private/public mixed use which may or may not include parking
- Alley treatment discussed within group 2

Top 5 programs: - 4 identified

- Continue role of coordinating marketing/arts/culture
- Design Guidelines - volunteering for development to those not receiving subsidy or public participation
- Parking Entity – organizing, tracking, management capacity (implement study)
- Assist local shops – challenges of shops in downtown
(other items had many ties)

Sharon asked how much parking discussions take place in meetings. It comes up a lot. Alex added parking discussion has been going on for 16 years and will be an on-going issue in downtown.

Combining parking with mixed use project would be helpful.

Erica noticed that events have not come up – a shift of management - what events DDA would manage and support. Further discussion on priorities, resources, times and fund allocation need to happen. Joanne added that events are always discussed and attended but no other groups are willing to execute besides the LDDA and art organizations. Erica suggested leading events initially, identify groups to lead and transition the ones that would evolve.

2. What is missing that needs to be prioritized? –

Prioritization of top 5 overall metrics

Indicators & what metrics do we track?

- Thaxter - safety, beautification; downtown jobs, downtown population, downtown revenue
Top Item: Safety - If you don't feel safe you don't come downtown.
- Joe – activity, commercial vacancy, downtown population, downtown tax revenue, residential vacancy
Top Item: Activity - it is a measure that is real
- Chris – activity, commercial value, downtown job, downtown tax revenue, investment
Top Item: Commercial Vacancy – indicator of economy over time
- Alex – downtown jobs, downtown tax revenue, investment, marketing, satisfaction
Top Item: Tax Revenue - determines activity, investment and satisfaction
- Jeff – activity, commercial vacancy, downtown jobs, downtown revenue, safety
Top Item: Commercial Vacancy - primary indicator of economy overall and how well other categories will fit into
- Jim – downtown jobs, activity, commercial vacancy, safety, parking
Top Item: Parking – need to recognize the difference between perception vs. reality

Steve Lane – commercial vacancy; downtown population, downtown tax revenue, marketing; housing

Top Item: Housing – increases population and revenue while decreasing parking issues

- Joanne – activity, creative industries and businesses, downtown tax revenue, investment, safety

Top Item: Creative Industries and Businesses – keep bringing creativity in downtown

- Janine – investment, commercial vacancy, downtown tax revenue, mixed uses, marketing

Top Item: Mix of uses – DDA needs it

- David Starnes – commercial vacancy, investment

Top Item: Mix of uses – when we know what we want we know where to focus our energy on building what's missing

- Kimberlee – office/retail space vacancy, number of jobs, downtown tax revenue, safety, satisfaction

Top Item: Commercial vacancy – overall in downtown, since no one else is tracking this. Economic partnership mainly comes from commercial brokers and mostly outside downtown. Craigslist has been a good resource for downtown spaces. Sharing resources is important. Parking needs to be tracked also in reference to turnover occupancy. Bicycling should also be tracked sometime in the future.

- Sharon – housing, activity, commercial vacancy, downtown tax revenue, housing, investment

Top Item: Housing - as the City grows we need to keep up with it and have a good balance of housing prices.

- Brien – downtown population, downtown tax revenue, mixed-use, safety, activity

Top Item: Need to look at Historic Rehabilitation and Restoration in downtown

- Shawn – property tax, sales tax, number of jobs, vacancy rate, activity (pedestrian count)

Added Top Item- Permit Value of new construction and renovation would tie into Brien's point of historic rehab

- Del Rae – activity, beautification, parking, bicycle, downtown jobs

Top Item: Activity - helps to encourage businesses to stay open later

Janine asked about keeping track of pedestrian count in downtown. Cameras are the most cost effective. The LPR can be a helpful tool with an added tracking feature. Downtown event attendance is helpful. Certainty of methods can be continually defined.

1. What are top 10 indicators to track? 7 identified as strong indicators.

1. Downtown Tax Revenue
2. Commercial Vacancy
3. Activity
4. Investment
5. Downtown Jobs
6. Safety
7. Residential Vacancy

2. Is anything missing that needs tracked?

1. Making the case for downtown to citywide – marketing should be embraced as a good indicator
2. Effectiveness of programs internally
3. Downtown as audience
4. Activity – social media is a good indicator for marketing downtown and events. Feb. 2nd Fri was a good example of an event with good audience through social media and good weather.
Revenue and activity were 2 indicators of the marketing effort.
Consistency of social media is important regardless of physical event attendance.
5. Downtown to host events that become a habit on a regular basis

Steve Lane asked why marketing is low as an indicator. Kimberlee felt tracking social media helps guide marketing.

Redevelop a Downtown Block

1. Get out & get moving around – work groups become master developers – visioning what it takes to redevelop a ½ block of Downtown. What does it look like, what are the uses, how do you get there, what is the wow factor?

Group 1 - Steve Lane presented and shared his own experience of losing current space and not being able to find a new location in downtown.

- Mixed use – retail/office (class A) with tall ceilings and allowing for flexibility for new use (boutiques/retail when desirable); residential on upper floors; hotel on 1 floor; possibly 8-10 story building
- Activate streetscape – landscaping and trees on sidewalk; breaking up Coffman St. center lane; allow for outside seating from the building; emphasis on corners to make a statement; street lighting enhancement
- Convert 600W parking lot into a park and relocate parking
- Continuity of breezeway from Main St. (thru new building) to Coffman St.
- Protective bike lane
- Cohesive sidewalk design
- Gateway and seating spaces on corners
- Del Rae commented that downtown has great historical buildings with character that David Lane was referring to.

Group 2 - Chris presented.

- Coffee shop on ground floor on a high density building (at least 6 floors)
- Central hub for a commissary kitchen
- Condominium
- Class A offices
- Hotel
- Central lane taken out

More items discussed:

- Include parking within the development for tenants
- Shared park/seating area can be added
- Any housing placed in that lot would have higher rental due to the location
- Condominium needs to be looked into and consider adding design guidelines for this type of building
- More street and alley lighting
- Bike lane

Resources/Incentives:

- Land for development
- DDA development guide - permit reimbursement; guidelines; process assistance; tax lien
- Make 1st and Main happen. How? Showcase studies (URI) or issue national RFP
- Grants and remediation (Brownfield grants)
- TIF to provide infrastructure dollars
- Looking into how to close development funding gap
- Fast track connection improvements

JJ shared information about how organizations showcase development opportunities to gauge interest from developers. Longmont could showcase its available properties. David Starnes stated this has been done for the Boulder County redevelopment. The Private/City shared ownership (with incentives) offering did not appeal to developers.

DDA Roles to Implement Plan - What role should/could the DDA do?

- Local property owners communication
- Identify partnerships
- Identify grants
- Marketing, buzz and events in downtown, making it desirable
- Identify priority industries and proactively court/recruit
- Influence others and champion the plan vision
- Strengthen relationship with downtown brokers
- Partner to redevelop/upgrade current vacant commercial spaces
- Educating lookers/buyers
- Clarity on policy/vision for partnering on redevelopment with existing parking lots

Report out of Vision

Check in on priorities – are we still good?

Role of the Board – Champions of the Plan

1. Managers
2. Advocates
3. Resource Development

Advocacy and Policy Setting - What is put in place to move forward?

- Establishing rapport with City Council as the Council is in support of revenue. One challenge is that council members change often.
- Visual guidance - design standards and guidelines; create an idea/visual book
- Events criteria and level of support – more frequent and reoccurring monthly events vs. yearly
- TIF policy + uses priorities

Management Structure:

1. Design Board / Committee
 - Focus on the 10K ft. level
 - Design – need written guidelines; committee/staff decisions
 - Grants – staff level approval or consent if it meets written criteria up to a specified dollar amount. Board to set approval amount.
2. Executive Committee – designate 2 or 3 board members responsible to review and identify items with Executive Director and decide which can be approved prior to the next board meeting or need voting/approval at the meeting.
 - Alex and Sharon volunteered
3. Fund raising & resource development - Project dependent

Advocacy - How can and should the board be involved?

- Liaison between the DDA and the City council – Championing - the board would be the voice at City Council, with regional agencies and downtown owners.
- Telling the story – proactive effort to garner support of the document.
- Make sure the LDDA's voice is being heard.

Policies & Criteria

1. TIF – how do we use moving forward
2. Event Support – what level are we involved? what role?
3. Incentives & Design Criteria – what do we evaluate on?

Next Steps for Plan Approval & Wrap up

1. March 2 – Open house
2. March 15 – Planning and Zoning meeting; All business owners and stakeholders meeting
3. Website and social media posts
4. March 22, LDDA Board meeting and adoption (PUMA requests you forward to your contacts – what does this mean for downtown, encourage the public to attend the City Council meeting on April 11)
5. April 11 – joint meeting with City Council and LDDA Board

Adjourn – 3:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Kimberlee McKee
Executive Director, LDDA

Alex Sammoury
Chairperson, LDDA