

# MISSOULA REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

## CONDENSED BOARD MEETING MINUTES

April 15, 2021

DRAFT

A Regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Missoula Redevelopment Agency was held on Thursday, April 15, 2021 via Zoom at 12:00 p.m. Those in attendance were as follows:

**Board:** Karl Englund, Ruth Reineking, Melanie Brock, Tasha Jones

**Staff:** Ellen Buchanan, Chris Behan, Annette Marchesseault, Tod Gass, Jilayne Dunn, Lesley Pugh

**Public:** Dori Brownlow, Missoula County; Spider McKnight, Six Pony Hitch, LLC; Kiah Hochstetler, Goodworks Ventures; Dawn McGee, Goodworks Ventures; David Koel, Cushing Terrell; Tim Erickson, HDR Inc.; Rob Brewster, InterUrban Development; Bob Boyce, InterUrban Development; Kristine Fife, Big Sky Public Relations; Paul Filicetti, A&E Architects; Cody Thorson, WGM Group; Keith Walzak, Cushing Terrell; Casey Gannon, Missoula County; Todd Schaper, Cushing Terrell; Steven McDaniel, WGM Group; Jon Updike, HDR Inc.; Andrew Czorny, Missoula County; Bradley Seaman, Missoula County; Chris Lounsbury, Missoula County; David Strohmaier, Missoula County; Jan Van Fossen, Citizen; Lisa Fischer, HDR Inc.; Sam Duncan, North Missoula Community Development Corporation; Missoula Weaver's Guild; Eric Matten, Jackson Contractor Group; Missoula Access Community Television (MCAT)

### **CALL TO ORDER**

12:00 p.m.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

February 26, 2021 Regular Board Meeting Minutes were approved as submitted.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Dunn posted the call-in instructions for public comment. There were no public comments.

### **ACTION ITEMS**

**Scott Street Property Development Plan (North Reserve-Scott Street URD) – TIF Request (Behan)**

Behan said the Scott Street Property in the North Reserve-Scott Street Urban Renewal District (NRSS URD) has been before the Board several times, either as an Action Item or an informational item. He said the site was a former lumber finish mill for about 100 years and there were contaminated soils on the north end of the site. After a long process, half of the parcel north of the White Pine buildings was cleaned up to residential standards. The other half, about nine acres, is being cleaned up to commercial industrial standards. In the latter part of 2020, the City purchased the entire 19 acres, labeled Parcel A and Parcel B on the map attached to Behan's memo, through MRA using a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Revenue Bond. The vision for the land is to try to create a model, relatively dense and livable neighborhood on Parcel A along Scott Street. Parcel B will be used to consolidate and expand City Shops from their location just south of Parcel B, as well as other City departments and perhaps similar operations such as Mountain Line and Missoula County.

Behan said City Administration talked with several people about a way to develop Parcel A. They ended up working with Ravara Development LLC, whose sole membership is Goodworks Development, a local investment firm represented by Dawn McGee and Kiah Hochstetler. Their business is working on housing problems in Western Montana. Goodworks Development has in turn partnered with InterUrban Development, owned by Rob Brewster and including Bob Boyce in this project. They are a real estate development firm that has done projects throughout the Northwest and in Washington D.C.

Behan said the Letter of Intent (LOI) entered into by the City as part of the sales process of this piece of land to Ravara describes the objectives of the development in terms of its ability to creatively put together a dense but livable neighborhood and also include neighborhood-level retail and other service opportunities on about 2/3 of the property (6 acres). At some point there will be streets there which will shrink the developable size down a bit. Approximately three acres will be given to a Community Land Trust (CLT) for permanently affordable ownership housing. Clark Fork Commons is an example of a CLT project that MRA has previously been involved with. A more recent example is Lee Gordon Place on East Front Street. Behan said according to the LOI there will also be a minimum 6,000 square foot day care facility in the six-acre development. Daycare is one of the primary livability issues the Northside Neighborhood has requested in their neighborhood. The intent is to create a dense new development, that still feels like it is part of the Northside neighborhood. There is an architectural vision someone will have to come up with in order to make that happen.

Behan said the development plan being discussed today is in the LOI. MRA is proposing to finance a Master Plan for this parcel that will be managed by Ravara. He noted that this is authorized in Urban Renewal Law. A similar example is the Master Development Plan for the Old Sawmill District. MRA financed that master plan, which was managed by the developer with oversight by MRA and other City departments. It allows MRA and the City to oversee what is going on and make sure the vision that was originally part of this deal goes through and becomes a reality.

The Development Plan for Parcel A would include a complete layout of utilities as well as vehicular and bicycle connections. A shared use of parking with Parcel B is also part of

that, as well as transportation analyses of other current and potential developments in the area. The combined developments will create different kinds of traffic patterns. Behan said Ravara conducted a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a design team to undertake innovative aspects of the project. Cushing-Terrell was the selected firm. Their team includes WGM Group who will conduct the street and utility engineering, survey, boundary and site map work, and transportation and environmental analyses. WGM will also provide support for planning and public engagement.

Behan said when you drive by the property it is vacant with a few weeds. Scott Street Village is a little oasis out there. When you look at it from a different vantage, there will be some amazing views and it will definitely be part of the neighborhood. Behan showed pictures of projects that InterUrban Development has been involved in. One of the reasons they selected the Cushing Terrell team was that the team proposed unique concepts for different types of housing and incorporating mixed-use. . What they are aiming for are products that were built in the middle of the last century for modest to moderate income working families that are not being built in a cohesive fashion today.

Behan said the staff recommendation is to approve the selection of Cushing Terrell as the Parcel A development plan manager at a cost to MRA of up to \$226,160 and direct MRA staff to prepare all the necessary documents between MRA and Ravara to be executed by the Board Chair. The document will be an agreement of sorts that spells out the schedule and deliverables to MRA and the City. There is a major component of the planning process that will be interaction with the Northside (and to a certain extent the Westside) neighborhoods so they can assess the impacts to their neighborhoods and be included in the planning process.

Dawn McGee, Goodworks Ventures, said they have been working in and around Montana for 16 years through various economic development enterprises . Housing has created a critical issue in Missoula and elsewhere, and employers' ability to continue to hire good people is affected by their ability to find housing. Goodworks Ventures has been working with the City over the last seven months to put together a project in the most unforgiving of times to try to build anything. She said two of the most critical materials for build-out have increased in the last year - 2x4s have doubled in price, and OSB (oriented strand board) has tripled. They are hopeful to provide housing for people to stay in Missoula. Kiah Hochstetler, Goodworks Ventures, said without the City's support this project would not be possible. He said it is, in the truest sense, a public/private partnership. They are digging in and setting standards for what can be done in an area for permanently affordable home ownership.

Reineking thanked them for considering this in terms of the "missing middle." Advocates these days are not talking about affordable housing so much as housing that people can afford, which is a little bit different. While there clearly is a need for low-income housing, there also is need for housing at virtually all income levels in Missoula. Companies are finding it difficult to hire new employees, because people moving to Missoula find it incredibly difficult to find a place to live no matter how much they make. She asked about the process by which Goodworks Ventures determined Cushing-Terrell would be the consultants on this. McGee said the City was keen on using the people who wrote the book *The Missing Middle Housing* which was Optikos Design based out of Berkeley, CA.

However, when it came down to putting numbers together for a master planning effort, Optikos' numbers far exceeded what anybody expected to see. They also have several limiting factors such as wanting to own the design work. They also wanted to charge per housing unit. Things came up that made it untenable for Goodworks Ventures to move forward with Optikos. So, Goodworks went back to the drawing board and put together a comprehensive RFP. They got back various responses that were incomplete and/or the numbers were not where they wanted to be. In the end, Cushing Terrell rose to the top. They have extensive experience doing master planning and design work, and they have a large enough team to pull everything together. Hochstetler added they were the most qualified as well as a local firm, which is what they wanted.

Reineking said she has confidence in Cushing Terrell. She said it sounds like Behan and Buchanan were part of the team that selected them. Behan said that was correct. They both reviewed the RFP in addition to Dale Bickell, the City's Chief Administrative Officer, before it went out to make sure it included the City's vision. They also were able to look at all of the responses. There was a series of interviews with each of the firms to make sure all of the questions were asked so they could select the best group. Behan said the process is similar to what the City would have to go through by state law and it followed that process closely. He said it was really important that Ravara feel very comfortable with the folks they will be working with. Reineking said she appreciates that some of the development will go into a CLT that will be permanently affordable for lower incomes and that they are looking at parking and the transportation pattern that looks beyond the borders of Parcel A. She has friends that live on the northside just off of Scott Street and they are very concerned about the traffic that is already there.

Englund asked about the chronology. Behan said the parcels are not officially divided yet and that will need to be figured out. There is a sales agreement in place with Goodworks Ventures that is contingent on this planning process. The planning process set forth in the LOI has the minimum criteria that the City wants to see on this property. Those criteria have to be checked off during the planning process for putting together this project. Once those are checked the conditions of the sales agreement will be met. McGee said at the end of the day they are looking at this as doing a massing project to figure out what the design and scope are going to be for both the CLT and multi-family. This parcel is in an Opportunity Zone (OZ) so once they have the massing blocks put together and understand what kind of form and function they will be doing, they will drill into their spreadsheets even further to make sure the return profile is acceptable to the OZ investor and that they are able to move ahead in this environment with astronomical input costs. They want to be able to deliver the quality product both the City and the Northside residents are looking for.

Englund asked what happens after they go through this process and the plan gets developed. Hochstetler said the next step after they've completed the design process will be to come back and look at cost inputs to deliver on the CLT portion. They will return with a TIF request to develop that side of it. The creation of the unique tract for sale is done through the right-of-way (ROW) process. Englund asked about the development and what will happen long-term. Hochstetler said the 70 permanently affordable units for home ownership will be held on the CLT. Those are targeting between 100-120% of the Area Median Income (AMI). They are estimating between \$250,000-\$340,000 as the range those

houses will be sold for. They want to make sure they can make the math work and deliver on this. McGee said on the multi-family side they will try to incorporate as many community comments as possible. Traffic is one of the things everyone has expressed concern over, so they are trying to figure out how to keep everything in the neighborhood to minimize traffic. So far the one thing they have built in for sure is daycare, small grocery, and food services. They will look at other amenities to keep people in the neighborhood so there is less reason to frequently cross the Scott Street Bridge.

Rob Brewster, InterUrban Development, talked about their process. He referred to Reineking's comment about traffic and people staying within the neighborhood. Their hope is provide a development that will have the right balance of services, such as grocery, that will encourage people to shop in the neighborhood. They did a project in Portland called Pine Street Market ([pinestreetpdx.com](http://pinestreetpdx.com)) which was a nine-restaurant market hall concept. They think they can do something similar to that. Brewster said they need to get through this exploration period to better understand the potential. Their goal is to build 240 apartment units. He said he likes market-rate apartments. If they can effectively get more of them, they will end up with a lot more affordable housing units too. They will have a wide range of market-rate apartments because they believe market-rate is not just one rate. It is a spectrum of rates. They also want to have parking so the neighborhood feels like it is comfortable and nobody is flooding the neighborhood with additional cars. The City is willing to look at an overlap of parking. The City has been flexible and energetic about different ideas that could minimize an impact on the neighborhood, and they certainly want to work with that.

Brewster said they would also like to have outdoor spaces and community spaces. Between InterUrban Development and Cushing Terrell, they can come up with some really innovative ideas. Part of it is that they hope it inspires other development in the neighborhood, Missoula, Montana and the Northwest. The next step would be to engage with an architect. They have identified a couple of contractors to involve early in the process to help figure out costs and what design path makes the most sense.

Reineking said once they get started and dig down into the spreadsheets to figure out if they can afford to build it, the City will still end up with the plan it is paying for that includes shared parking, streets, and transportation options. She wondered if the plan will be usable for some other development if they determine, worst-case scenario, that this is not economically feasible. Behan said yes, the City will own the plan. Brewster said it could mean that the building types change. They may recommend townhouses, one versus two story units, etc. That is why they want to get everything going now with the contractor on board because they don't want to get into planning something they cannot build because nobody was paying attention to costs.

Buchanan said one of the things they don't want to lose sight of is that the City is trying to facilitate a different kind of development pattern in Missoula than what is typically seen. Because the City controls the land, it is in an URD, and and it is in an OZ, they have the tools to do that. She said the last thing they want is to come up with a plan that's not buildable anywhere. The goal is to come out with a model that can be used elsewhere in the City. It needs to be looked at as bigger than just this Scott Street project.

Keith Walzak, Cushing Terrell, said he worked on the Three Springs project in Durango, CO and encouraged everyone to look at it because it is very applicable. It was a market-driven project with certain metrics set aside to make sure the project was successful. It included market-rate housing and affordable housing with attainable housing target goals. It was a 700-acre project designed over multiple phases. Walzak said shared parking really only works when you have daytime employment that can then share the nighttime uses. He said while it is good to talk about child care and restaurants, what's great is to find appropriate neighborhood micro-employment opportunities that can then truly share the parking slots from daytime to nighttime. He said they are not only working with everyone on the nine acres, they as designers are thinking about the 100 acres beyond. They will look at what the entire area could look like over the course of the next 15 years or so. That is very important because it affects circulation, open spaces, product type, employment opportunities, etc. Also, they will look at the tools such as design guidelines, codes and standards to make sure the quality of development in the urban form meets the standards decided upon in the early visioning process. Reineking said she appreciates that the planning goes beyond the nine-acre parcel.

Englund said the bottom line is that the idea is to spend this money to produce a plan that meets the City's goals and is realistic and doable, as well as be a model for other places. Behan concurred. Englund asked what the risks are if it doesn't work. Behan said the risk is that the City ends up with a product that cannot be built at this time, or they lose the master developer. In the end, the worst-case scenario is that the City has a feasible plan it can work on with other developers in the future. Buchanan said construction costs are escalating significantly. At the end of the day, the City needs product on the ground. Missoula has a housing crisis at the same time construction costs are escalating. She said staff's recommendation is to move ahead with this and get the model. If the craziness continues, maybe it can't be built next year, but at least we'll have the fabric and foundation done so it can be built when it is feasible to build it.

Englund asked if the conditions in the LOI are flexible enough to allow for changes in scale to account for the reality of trying to build something like this a few years after the plan is done. Buchanan said the LOI does have a fair amount of flexibility built into it because there are so many unknowns. The LOI lays the groundwork. It will be followed by a Development Agreement the MRA Board is used to seeing on other projects, when there are fewer unknowns. Behan said the LOI does include flexibility to tweak the process and criteria as they move along.

Jones said she understands these agreements being entered into would provide some opportunities to escape if the costs of construction look unachievable. However, she asked Brewster if they have, at least preliminarily, penciled this out and think it is possible. Brewster said yes, they have invested a lot of time in it already. They have put together proformas and had conversations with contractors and architects to see if they can design and construct it within budget. They don't want to design something so outlandish that it will never get built. There are all kinds of factors to think about. He said they would not be here today if they didn't think they could build it.

Jones asked what the best-case scenario time frame would be. Brewster said they have a process to go through to get to what the City wants. It includes an understanding of

massing and of the whole project master plan. He noted that, as Walzak said, it incorporates a lot of other areas which means it incorporates neighborhood and community input, which are important components that take four to six months. Then they have to get the contractor working more diligently to refine numbers. Then they will get going with the true construction documents including permits. Hochstetler said it is likely an 18-month construction project.

Reineking said in terms of acquiring the property and coming up with a master plan, this is something that will actually move pretty fast and she is excited about that. She said she wanted to know the worst-case scenario because it is using tax dollars, but feels the best-case is more likely to happen. Brock thanked Goodworks Ventures for entering into this aspect of work. She said they have been doing good work in western Montana for years and the City is grateful to have them.

Behan said he anticipated the question being asked of what will happen to the money when the developers buy the property from the City. He said in accordance with the LOI, the proceeds from the land sale will go into the Housing Trust Fund.

**BROCK: I MOVE THE BOARD APPROVE THE RAVARA, LLC SELECTION OF CUSHING TERRELL AS THE PARCEL A DEVELOPMENT PLAN DESIGNER AT A COST TO MRA OF UP TO \$226,160 AND DIRECT MRA STAFF TO PREPARE THE NECESSARY DOCUMENTS BETWEEN MRA AND RAVARA TO BE EXECUTED BY THE MRA BOARD CHAIR.**

**Reineking seconded the motion.**

**No further discussion. No public comment.**

**Motion passed unanimously (4 ayes, 0 nays).**

**County Elections Complex – 140 North Russell Street (URD II) – TIF Request (Buchanan)**

Buchanan said staff has been working for several months with folks from the County, specifically Dori Brownlow, on the improvements that need to be made to the property they bought at 140 North Russell Street. It is in use as the County Elections Complex. As her memo states, they bought the property from Western Montana Mental Health Center (WMMHC) who did not own it for very long. The long-term owner was Plum Creek and the way they used the property was very different than the way the County will use the property for public interface during elections. There are a number of improvements that need to be made there. MRA has historically been receptive and happy to work with other taxing jurisdictions on needs they may have that are within MRA's URDs. When a district terminates, the County sees a benefit from all the investment and increased taxes just like the City does, but they forego those funds during the life of that district. Because they are publicly owned buildings there is more latitude as to how TIF funds can be used. They can be used for bricks and mortar, site improvements, public improvements, etc. The big difference is the bricks and mortar assistance that is not eligible for private benefit projects.

Buchanan said if this request is approved, one of the big things that the use of TIF funds accomplishes is that this project is on one of the major arterials recognized in the Design Excellence regulations as being a very important corridor in the City that should be compliant to the degree possible with the standards in the Design Excellence (DE) regulations. She said the County doesn't have to do that and could make a public declaration that they are not going to comply with certain regulatory elements that the private sector would have to comply with. Staff sat down with various people from the County and their design team, and with the folks in Community Planning, Development and Innovation (CPDI) who review all of the projects for compliance with DE. They worked through how to make modifications to the site to bring it more in line with what DE is trying to accomplish. She said because TIF money is potentially going into this the City does have the ability to help the County think about how to comply with all of that. They have gone through that process and included in Buchanan's memo are before and after site plans. Buchanan said those changes have made a vast improvement in terms of interface with the public and with the public realm from where the project started out.

Buchanan said the improvements will be done over a period of two to three years, so MRA can stage that money over a period of two or three fiscal years with respect to the District so it doesn't put an undue burden on URD II. There is money in the District that is unobligated. MRA's estimated revenue for last fiscal year and this fiscal year was in excess of \$3M and there is no reason to think it won't continue to be along that order of magnitude. There are a lot of projects MRA wants to accomplish in URD II in its last ten years. Staff has looked at all of those and this project is certainly doable within MRA's financial constraints within the District.

Buchanan said the County Elections Complex upgrades will also be a huge benefit to the citizens of Missoula. One of the main emphases for some of these improvements is to make that the site and the buildings more accessible to citizens who mobility challenged. It also creates more convenient parking and provides a public meeting space that does not exist in that neighborhood.

Paul Filicetti, A&E Architects, showed graphics of the proposed project upgrades and uses. The site is at the corner of Wyoming and Russell Streets. It consists of two buildings: the elections office and the elections center. The elections center is already undergoing renovation right now. It will contain two large conference room spaces with ADA (American's with Disabilities Act) accessibility. The entrances and restrooms will be upgraded to be ADA compliant. Filicetti said another goal in addition to ADA compliance was to maximize parking. The public use of the building requires a tremendous amount of public parking and ADA-compliant access. They added a landscaping area with turf, additional trees and landscaping around the site. Filicetti said they are developing the site in terms of three plazas that are specifically geared to the public face of the project. He reviewed schematic site designs that are attached to Buchanan's memo.

Casey Gannon, Missoula County, said there are reserve areas on the site for future buildings. The City's DE standards require new buildings to be sited close to Russell Street to have pedestrian interaction with storefronts. The County currently is not adding any buildings with the project -- they needed that space for the parking -- so they're not complying with the reserve area by putting parking in that zone. Through their redesign,



they expanded parking to allow for a voter drop box in the lower section. They needed better traffic flow through the site to make that happen, which is why the parking expanded to the south and into that reserve area. As the County worked with Buchanan, they came up with an agreement that if there ever is a future building on the site they will comply with the City's DE standards for the Russell Street Corridor.

Buchanan said the street furniture proposed for the plaza areas is the same as the furniture used in the downtown. They have a "downtown look" and a "midtown look" and have tried to bring the same light fixtures and street furniture throughout this urban core area. The pedestrian-scale lighting on Wyoming and Russell Streets is the same as the lighting in Downtown. The City is trying to create an urban menu of site furnishings for cohesiveness. She said this is a great compromise. DE recognizes that there will be development in areas where there are already existing buildings in locations that are not ideal for DE. Thus, the County has agreed that should they add buildings they will add them in the proper locations. If the County ever decides to sell this property and it is developed privately, the private developer will not be exempt from the regulations in place. They will have to build in concurrence with DE if it is still in existence at that time.

Buchanan said this is a good compromise and a way to improve the elections experience for the community. It helps the County with a big undertaking. They paid \$2.75M for the property with improvements costing \$3M. The degree to which MRA can bring TIF to the table to help with this is a really appropriate use of those dollars in this District.

Dave Strohmaier, Missoula County Commissioner, thanked the Board for considering the proposal. He said he could think of no function of local government more important than elections. The County has tried hard in the past and will continue to set the standard for elections excellence in the state of Montana. Part of that is accessibility and transparency. That doesn't end at the internal functions of conducting the electoral process and elections; they see it also being manifest in the built environment. The County chose carefully where they wanted to locate their elections facility in Missoula. Thankfully this property opened up and it is ideal. It's at the center of the community along a major trail system and beautifully renovated and reconstructed Russell Street. They are delighted to see what they can do in partnership with MRA and the City to embody that sense of excellence, accessibility and transparency in the physical space they call the Missoula County Elections Center. Englund asked if there were any plans to move the Elections Office if the County moves into the Federal building. Strohmaier said no. This is for the foreseeable future the Elections Center in Missoula County. It is not one of the functions that would be relocated.

Jones said a significant part of the request is related to the meeting room space. She asked if that includes both meeting room spaces and why it is a significant expense. Gannon said it is just for the south meeting room, the north half has already been completed and renovated for the most recent election. The south side will be used for elections and a large meeting space and/or space to assist with responding to emergency situations like flooding or wildland fires. He said that is the general cost of having ADA accessible bathrooms and all of the necessities in that room for that building. It was previously an uninsulated warehouse with a freezer in it, so it needs significant renovations to bring it up to spec. Brownlow said the freezer removal was a good chunk of that money. Filicetti concurred. He said deconstruction of the freezer was a large chunk of it. They took it apart piece by piece

to be used elsewhere. He said there is also utility infrastructure required for elections that needs to come into the building, including a diesel-powered generator for backup power and all the requirements for that. He said the cost seems high when you consider the overall space, but the space use itself is very specific, which pushed the costs up higher than a typical office space.

Englund asked if the Board received a Proceed Without Prejudice request on this. Buchanan said no. She said it was her understanding that the funding that is being requested is for work that has not been done yet. She asked that question on the front end and that was the response. If that doesn't continue to be true, they may be looking at a diminished request. Buchanan said when you're trying to convert warehouse space into occupied space, sometimes it can actually be more expensive than starting from scratch. Englund said he understands that. He was concerned when he started hearing about how expensive it was to deconstruct the freezer. He said MRA has been insistent with all applicants that they get approval to proceed without prejudice because MRA does not pay for things that occur before funding is approved. Englund said that is a rule that has served MRA extremely well. Buchanan said some work has started such as the north office space for the last election. That is not what they are requesting funding for. If there is work that has taken place already that is included in today's numbers within the buildings then those numbers will be adjusted to exclude the cost of the work that has already occurred. Brownlow said she was clear on that. She said they have all talked about that and took out some of the ADA door handles and things. Gannon said it has been a moving target working through this process as it is still under construction currently. Since completing the north half, they decided to keep their contractor on site to save costs that way. He said he expects the \$330,000 request to be lower and they won't request reimbursement for anything that was done prior to approval.

Reineking asked if any of the outdoor benches are covered, particularly the one by the bus stop on Russell Street. Filicetti said they are not planned to be covered. The landscape architect was trying to provide some sort of a shade shelter using a tree or other landscaping. Gannon said the bus stop there is covered already, so this is an additional spot for people walking along the street.

Brock asked if the Board would approve this and the amount would change if work has been done on some of the pieces. Englund said the motion can be reworded to include an "up to" amount. He said the Board has made it clear and the County understands that those things that might have otherwise been eligible that are completed now are not eligible. Buchanan said as they apply for reimbursement they will have to present invoices and paperwork about work that was done within the time frame after this approval.

**JONES: I MOVE THE MRA BOARD APPROVE A REQUEST FROM MISSOULA COUNTY FOR UP TO \$726,334 FROM URD II TIF FUNDS FOR IMPROVEMENTS THAT HAVE YET TO BE COMMENCED TO THE MISSOULA COUNTY ELECTIONS COMPLEX WITH THE CONDITION THAT THE SITE BE DEVELOPED AS PRESENTED TO THE BOARD TO BE IN COMPLIANCE TO THE DEGREE PRACTICAL WITH DESIGN EXCELLENCE STANDARDS AND THAT THE COUNTY ENTERS INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE CITY WITH RESPECT TO THE SITING OF ANY ADDITIONAL**

**BUILDINGS ON THE SITE AND AUTHORIZE THE CHAIR TO SIGN A DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT TO THAT EFFECT.**

**Reinking seconded the motion.**

**No further discussion. No public comment.**

**Motion passed unanimously (4 ayes, 0 nays).**

Reineking said in Moe's absence, she wanted to bring up the question of recycling. She said it sounds like they reused the freezer sections and the rest of the building is being deconstructed rather than demolished. She asked if going forward they would have recycling with the staff during operations of the building. Filicetti said the building is energy compliant and has water conservation fixtures and a low emitting irrigation system. It has a new roof and the glazing in the doors is all insulated glass with automatic door controls and daylighting management as well as LED light fixtures. Early on there was an attempt to salvage the freezer on site and incorporate it into the site, but it was not possible given the use of the site so it was shipped elsewhere. Gannon said they will have a recycling dumpster in addition to trash.

Behan added that he spoke with Hochstetler and McGee about recycling efforts in the future Scott Street development. It will be included in any kind of Development Agreement moving forward.

**Front/Main Conversion to Two-Way (Front Street, Riverfront Triangle, Hellgate URDs)  
– Request to Approve Professional Services Agreement and Scope of Services  
(Behan)**

Behan said this project has been discussed for a number of years, trying to figure out a way to get the 1950s one-way conversion of Front and Main Street converted back to two-way streets. The 2009 Downtown Master Plan emphasized how important that conversion would be. In 2014, MRA sponsored a Feasibility Study to see how that would work. The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) has been included in the process along the way. Since the Feasibility Study was completed there have been a lot of changes on those streets. ROAM was built along with other apartment and condo buildings, there is a new library, and there will be a development of the former library site. The Merc was built along with AC Hotel, Wren Hotel, Conflux Brewing, etc. and the parking structure. The 2019 Downtown Master Plan Update talked about different kinds of uses along the street including the intersection of Front and Pattee Streets and the block between Higgins and Ryman Streets on Front Street.

Behan said they ended up with a design project based on the 2019 Downtown Master Plan Update and the North Riverside Parks & Trails Plan. Along the way they also recognized the original Front Street Urban Renewal Plan and its mention of the lack of connectivity in the Kiwanis Park neighborhood. There is an inability for large emergency vehicles to turn around there, and some places emergency vehicles cannot get to. When MRA issued the RFP in January, it included designing a connectivity and access program for that District. One of the reasons this is being done now is recognizing that the area touches three different Districts: Front Street, Riverfront Triangle and Hellgate. None of the three singly or

together can afford to construct the conversion project. Staff is thinking that with the new Administration, the new Director of Highways and Transportation may do something similar to what happened at the end of the recession where the Obama Administration put together an ARRA (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act) program. They looked at projects that could have immediate impact and were shovel-ready. An example of that was the North Higgins conversion of four lanes to two lanes with protected bike lanes. MRA had already designed it and it was shovel-ready and went to the front of the line and competed well with other projects that were being suggested. Staff hopes making this Front/Main Conversion project shovel-ready will likewise put it at the front of the line for federal funding. Worst-case scenario would be having a shovel-ready project that might have to wait a bit longer for funding.

Behan said staff put together a selection team after the RFP responses were received. The unanimous selection was HDR Engineering with Dover, Kohl & Partners (DKP) as planners. Big Sky Public Relations will provide a variety of communication and managing public input. HDR was the author of the Feasibility Study. DKP was the author of the Downtown Master Plan and the North Riverside Parks & Trails Plan. Big Sky Public Relations is highly regarded in being able to put together programs like this. The Scope of Services is divided into categories and attached to Behan's memo. The service fee for everything is \$428,215. Behan said that gave him some sticker shock, but added that most projects in terms of percentage of estimated construction costs in relation to design are much higher. He said this is a much lower number than he would expect for a \$10-\$15M construction project. It is an appropriate and good price for the work. The staff recommendation is for the Board to approve the RFP Selection Committee's recommendation and authorize the Chair to execute a contract with HDR Engineering in an amount up to \$428,215.

Reineking said she looked at the report HDR did in 2015. One of the things in that report was about safety. Most of the accidents in that area were occurring at the corners of Front and Higgins and Main and Higgins. Another thing in the report was an economic development component that a typical increase in retail sales could be expected in the neighborhood of 10-13% which is significant for some of those small, locally owned businesses. She guessed that number has changed and could even be exceeded by the new developments that have already gone in there. She said the new Scope of Services didn't have an economic development update in it, but guessed that if they were applying for any federal funding it would have to be in there. She asked if that was the case. Behan said there is not an economic development portion, although it would be important to have for the best application for funding. Buchanan said the Higgins Avenue planning process will be going on simultaneously with the engineering for the Front/Main Conversion. At MRA's insistence, the Higgins Avenue planning project does have an economic analysis component with The Leland Group, the same group that did the original Front/Main Conversion analysis. Between what was done with the original Front/Main Conversion Study by HDR and what will be done as part of the Higgins Avenue reassessment, that should be pretty well covered.

Reineking said today's discussions have mentioned some of the original findings of blight. She doesn't want to lose track of the other charge MRA has for URDs, and that is to create economic development to eliminate blight. She said another thing the 2015 Study had to do with was the particulate count and change in air quality. At that time, they assumed there

would be a lower amount of particulate counts and she didn't know how that would play going forward, but hoped there would be opportunities created to use alternative transportation and not have a major impact on air quality. Behan said HDR will be working with Mountain Line for the same and/or additional bus stops. There are currently quite a few in that area because of the residential component. The bike/ped portion will also be looked at. The 2019 Downtown Master Plan Update recommended protected bike lanes on either Main Street or Front Street or both. HDR will also work with the North Riverside Parks & Trails Plan to enhance the ability for cross river traffic.

Englund said this is all being done in anticipation that there will be federal money available. He asked if this is the right time to be doing this and how long the shelf life is if the money isn't immediately available. Buchanan said this could have been done at any point in time. The engineering drawings are needed and they need to understand what the cost is. The City can't put the money together to get this done with or without federal assistance until a lot of questions have been answered, the design has been refined, and the costs have been determined.. Englund asked when that would be known. Buchanan said they'll have a good idea at the 60-70% drawing level. There are cost estimates from the previous concept drawings. Those drawings need to be refined. In reference to shelf life, what is going to happen out there will not change drastically whether it's today or in five years. Tim Erickson, HDR, concurred with Buchanan. He said each step along the way is additional refinement. They address some of the big-ticket items early in the design process, so at the 60-70% stage they will have a high confidence level of what the overall scope looks like. As far as cost estimates, there is definitely some contingency because all of the I's haven't been dotted and all of the T's haven't been crossed. It is important to have a well-defined scope in order to estimate construction costs with a high level of certainty. Erickson said you can put the drawings on the shelf at any level. The further complete they are, the easier it is to do a quick dust-off and make them ready to go when the funding becomes available. Buchanan added that this continues to be the number one priority for the Downtown Master Plan Implementation Committee. From their perspective, it is money well spent. It's not a project that will be easy to fund, so to position it to be able to take advantage of any unexpected funding that may come about is money well spent.

Reineking said she knows there has been concern from the Kiwanis Park Neighborhood. Former MRA Board member, Daniel Kemmis, talked about how this conversion would affect the residents as opposed to the commercial entities. She said there have been some letters to the editor in the Missoulian that had some objections. She asked if those have been addressed. Behan said he didn't recall the specific objections, but said they will find out because the public portion of this is focused on that neighborhood and the commercial neighborhood, so there are two parts to the Communications Plan. Buchanan said over the years since the original planning was done by HDR, about every year there is an inquiry from the residents of the neighborhood around Kiwanis Park regarding what will happen to them if it goes to two-way traffic. This will answer those questions. How to deal with access in and out of that neighborhood may be the most important part of this planning process. To give them something concrete will be comforting and they are entitled to that.

**BROCK: I MOVE THE MRA BOARD APPROVE THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE RFP SELECTION COMMITTEE AND AUTHORIZE THE CHAIR TO EXECUTE A CONTRACT WITH HDR ENGINEERING IN ORDER TO COMPLETE THE SERVICES LISTED IN THE**

**SCOPE OF SERVICES NEGOTIATED BY MRA STAFF RELATED TO ENGINEERING AND DESIGN OF THE FRONT STREET/MAIN STREET TWO-WAY CONVERSION AND KIWANIS NEIGHBORHOOD ACCESS AND CIRCULATION DESIGN PROJECT AT A COST UP TO \$428,215 WITH PAYMENTS TO BE BASED ON DOCUMENTED HOURS WORKED, MATERIALS USED, AND EXPENSES LISTED.**

**Jones seconded the motion.**

Englund asked if staff has looked at the introduced Infrastructure Bill to see if there is this type of shovel-ready kind of criteria in it. Behan said his understanding right now is that the funding categories are within the Bill, but the actual programs that would enact those categories have not been ironed out and probably won't be at the congressional level. Erickson said he hasn't seen a lot of detail in the overall categories. There is a very recent notice of fund opportunity for the BUILD (Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development) Program, which has been renamed RAISE (Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity). It will have a focus on some opportunities here, and HDR believes this project could be very competitive for an opportunity like that, such as providing for low-income neighborhoods, equity for access, and climate change opportunities. Englund asked if there is any notion that MDT could change as a result of the change in Administration. Buchanan said the main reason they did the project several years ago was to work with MDT to establish that levels of services at intersections with state routes would not be adversely impacted. That was the result of that study and there is nothing that's happened in downtown that should modify that. Staff feels there is a green light from MDT on this. Erickson concurred. He said there will be coordination and additional review and collaboration with MDT, but they feel that moving forward MDT is a partner on the project.

Reineking wanted to be clear that the funding for this will come from a combination of three URDs: Front Street, Riverfront Triangle and Hellgate. Behan said that was correct.

**No further discussion. No public comment.**

**Motion passed unanimously (4 ayes, 0 nays).**

**MRA Communications Plan – TIF Request to Approve Contract Amendment**  
**(Buchanan)**

Buchanan said MRA contracted with Six Pony Hitch, LLC (6PH) to create a Communications Plan for the MRA to be able to talk with citizens, elected officials, etc. around the use of TIF and how it works, what MRA does as an Agency, etc. Part of that Plan is a series of interviews with MRA Board, staff, City Council, City staff, and community members who are proponents and opponents of TIF. 6PH has tried to get as broad a cross-section as possible in terms of input and understanding where the information gaps are in the community and where MRA needs to be more engaged and educational. In talking with Spider McKnight, 6PH, Buchanan said almost everybody she has interviewed has suggested at least three more people she should interview. That doesn't mean everyone should be interviewed or that all the suggestions are necessarily valid, but there is a desire to make sure MRA has credibility at the end of this process, that it has reached out to the entire spectrum to the degree possible to gauge how much people understand about TIF

and MRA, what their opinions are of how funds should be used, and so on. The contract between MRA and 6PH is for \$46,500. The interviews were \$24,000 of that amount, based on an assumption of roughly 24 interviews. There have already been 29 interviews conducted and 6PH is willing to absorb the extra cost for the additional interviews. Buchanan said there is still a list of a number of potential folks to interview that have been suggested by the Board, Mayor Engen, other citizens, etc. She talked with McKnight and suggested requesting an additional \$10,000 from MRA, with the understanding that the entire amount may not be needed for additional interviews. She added there are folks who have chosen not to be interviewed either overtly or by lack of response. By and large, those folks are people who don't agree with TIF or the way MRA uses it.

McKnight said as 6PH moves through the interview process it's like one door opens another door opens another door. She reiterated that the interview process isn't just talking to somebody. The interview process includes a large report with the interviewees being anonymous. The results of conversations with each group she interviews get included in a detailed report. There will be highlights so you don't have to read all of the information, but if you want to get into the nitty gritty, it will be available. McKnight preps for the interview, conducts the interview, transcribes and codes it, and creates follow up questions with people and then writes the narrative summary. She said it is important to the community members that there is a broad range of information. She said she can discount that process to get more in there, but there are about 12-17 more people she feels she needs to talk to. Mostly, she wants to get people on the edges who are far right or far left and have very specific thoughts on MRA. She also wants more representation from Missoula's BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color) Community because it is important to talk about diversity. She was happy to answer any questions.

Buchanan asked where the process is in terms of timing. McKnight said she has been writing as she goes. She has all of the narratives done and coded, and, it shouldn't take much more time. She has been writing her recommendations as she goes, and it will depend on how many more people she talks to. If she doesn't talk to anyone else it will probably take a couple more weeks to complete. Englund asked what her anticipation is on timing if the Board approves today's request. McKnight said maybe another month or two. It depends on how quickly she can schedule people for interviews.

Buchanan said some Board members have called her to talk about this and asked how many people really need to be interviewed. She said she thinks that is up to the MRA. As she stated in her memo, the end product will be as good as the front-end input. If there are some missing segments that are germane to the recommendations then McKnight needs to get those for certain. McKnight said she has not gotten to the point yet where she has interviews where people are saying the same thing. She finds new insights in every person she talks to. Also, she is finding that the outreach itself is helpful. She said just the fact that she has asked someone to interview is changing perceptions, that they get to talk about it and feel like the MRA is really interested in what they have to say. She said even for no other reason than that, she can already tell it is having a huge effect.

Jones said if they were to stop the interviews now and get the report from 6PH, is that the deliverable that would fully expend the \$46,000 or is there still room within the estimate for other deliverables. McKnight said MRA will get a report and a Communications Plan with

recommendations about the website and other details. Reineking asked if implementing the Plan would be additional time or expense for staff, Board, or someone else. McKnight said there will be an additional cost for implementation. Right now, there is a question she is giving MRA options about. Many believe there needs to be someone who implements this, whether it's MRA or City staff. It is a giant discussion she is addressing. Some things are easier to do than others, and there will be time for someone to do it. She is also giving a list of things people talked about in terms of process for MRA to consider that is beyond communication. McKnight said she has mountains of information for MRA and is trying to distill it down and prioritize it. Reineking said she has talked to a couple of people who mentioned they were interviewed by McKnight about the MRA and how great it was and that they really appreciated it.

Englund said when MRA talked about this early on, it was as part of a City-wide effort from the administration to put more emphasis on public involvement and asked if City-wide effort was still ongoing. Buchanan said it is and MRA is the forerunner. The City still has some decisions to make, and the recommendations in this report will help inform those decisions about whether or not every department should have a communications person, which doesn't seem efficient, or whether to have a communications person who deals with small departments. Departments such as Police will have their own communications people, because it's a whole other animal. She said MRA is leading the way, but there is recognition that this is not just an MRA problem exclusively. In regards to that, Englund asked if it helps for MRA be as comprehensive as possible on this report. Buchanan said she thinks it does and MRA is being the leader here. It will provide a model that can be replicated and used for other departments for their specific needs.

Englund said it seems that this has been talked about for a while, it took a while to get started, and he is willing to say MRA needs to be as comprehensive as it can. However, at some point, if this is going to drag out for several more months he less certain. McKnight said there are layers of communications she is looking at. There is the base layer that things are messed up like the website case studies and things you have to have to do for basic communication. Then there's the thought of ongoing communication of how to update the website, how and whether to do social media, etc. Then there's the proactive layer of how to get out front. There is also a huge piece of how to increase community engagement. She said each of those will inform the City on how to do communications. McKnight said she is not looking for more work. She does think there are some important folks she still needs to talk to and feels she is still missing a few pieces. There are questions that have come up in interviews and things she wants to get another perspective on before she makes decisions.

Buchanan asked about the number of interviews to be conducted and how they would correlate with the timing of the finished product. McKnight said it depends on who she is talking to and what their availability is, but she could figure that out. Buchanan asked what it would be if the Board's parameter was that they wanted the report closed out by the middle of June. McKnight said she could figure that out. Englund said he is somewhere in between. He doesn't want to tell McKnight how to do her job, but at some point MRA has to move forward. They know they have a lot of data and a lot of information. He said he didn't want to set a hard deadline here if McKnight feels she needs to do more interviews.



Reineking said whether or not it's a model for the rest of the City, her impression is that the perspectives McKnight is aiming for are going to be valuable for MRA's own Communications Plan. To that extent she is inclined to agree with this proposal. It is something that will serve MRA well for the foreseeable future, whether or not it can be immediately put into action with the Scott Street Plan or not. She said it is important to get those perspectives to get the best Communications Plan possible within a relatively short period of time because most of the interviews have been completed.

Brock wanted to talk about the actual costs. She said the original way scope and contract was structured at \$1,000 per interview. That sat with her, and the next time MRA met with McKnight she was curious to ask how many hours per interview it takes. McKnight said it's usually one hour per interview when you interact with someone, and then the time for coding and transcribing. Brock said it sounds like they are no longer really on a \$1,000 per interview schedule with this because McKnight has not given an exact number of interviews for this \$10,000 request. She asked McKnight to shed some light on this. McKnight said for her each interview and report takes somewhere between 10-15 hours. It includes scheduling, interview preparation for each person because she does not give everyone the same questions, interview, transcription and summary, coding, and follow-up interviews if necessary. She pulls everything into the report which is a lot of work.

Jones thanked McKnight for everything she has done and said she enjoyed speaking with her. She looks forward to reading the report and recommendations. She said she is frustrated by the fact that some of the folks McKnight has reached out to who have voiced opposition to the program or the City or the procedures have rejected the invitation to engage. That is very disappointing to hear. One of the observations she has made publicly is that many times individuals who speak out publicly against MRA have never attended a single meeting. They appear not to have taken time to actually inform themselves as to what it is that the MRA does, and the scope and limitations of the program. Jones wanted to say that is frustrating for her because those individuals are refusing to engage in what could be a very productive process.

Jones said she is torn on this request because in the scope of what they have talked about today, this is not a big ask in some ways. However, she wondered if that extra money is better spent towards implementation because there will be some really valuable recommendations in the Plan. Jones said she is really on the fence on this request and apologized because she wants to do it right and it could be very helpful to MRA and other City departments.

McKnight said there are a few people she feels she needs to talk to whether MRA approves today's request or not. She said it would be a disservice to MRA not to reach out to certain members of the community. There is no way she would feel comfortable doing a plan where there is no BIPOC representation in the City at all. She said there are also a few community organizers who need to be reached out to. McKnight said she will do that no matter what the outcome of the request is. Reineking said she thinks McKnight deserves to be paid for that.

Englund asked Buchanan to comment on whether or not this money is better spent for implementation. Buchanan said the product will be as good as the front-end input. If there

are literally a handful of folks that McKnight feels strongly she needs to reach out and get input from then she agrees. Buchanan said that hasn't been her strong suit or MRA wouldn't be going through this process. Englund said it's obviously not something MRA has put an emphasis on. Jones said the Board will not allow her to take that because they've all experienced that a lot of the problems are generated from the outside, not the inside. Buchanan said MRA's priority is getting projects done and making this community better. MRA has not established communication as a high priority and will need to make it a higher priority than it is right now. Jones said engagement is a two-way street. There are a lot of things MRA can do to put information out there, but whether that information is received is outside of MRA's control. She has frustrations along those lines because there is a significant percentage of individuals who do not seem open to engaging. Englund concurred and said that as somebody who people do call because he is the Chair, he is frustrated that not only have some never attended a meeting, they have never called either.

**REINEKING: I MOVE THE MRA BOARD APPROVE AN INCREASE TO THE CONTRACT WITH SIX PONY HITCH IN THE AMOUNT OF \$10,000 WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT IF THE ENTIRE AMOUNT IS NOT NEEDED FOR ADDITIONAL INTERVIEWS, IT WILL NOT BE EXPENDED.**

**Brock seconded the motion.**

Reineking said there may indeed be additional expenses to implementing these recommendations and MRA needs to be open to that as well. Englund said MRA doesn't have a public information component and has reached the point in size, interest, etc. where it needs to start doing that. He said it's not about public relations, it's about making it so MRA communicates with people and they can easily communicate with MRA. If MRA does a good job of that then what MRA does will speak for itself.

**No further discussion. No public comment.**

**Motion passed unanimously (4 ayes, 0 nays).**

**URD II Inez, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Street Sidewalk Project – Request to Award Construction Contract (Gass)**

Gass showed a map of the project area. He said the request today is for authorization to award a construction contract for the URD II Inez, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Street Sidewalk Project. MRA started working with WGM Group in September 2020 for design, engineering and construction services related to this sidewalk project. It will bring pedestrian facilities to the south-central portion of URD II and provide important pedestrian connections to the Russell Street commercial corridor and also to the Downtown Riverfront Parks and Trails system. Gass highlighted a couple of areas on the map for this project including a cul-de-sac to the Bitterroot Trail and public access easements to construct public improvements along 2<sup>nd</sup> Street as it comes through along the irrigation ditch. Also, Gass said there was a large Douglas Fir tree in the ROW on the north side of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street that needs to be removed. He said it is a significant impact on the property owner. The Urban Forester and MRA worked a deal where MRA will pay to bring the tree down, which is a normal part of a sidewalk project, and the tree stem will be cut into 15-foot log lengths. The Urban Forester will then pay to

transport those logs to a milling site at the City Compost yard to be milled into beams and lumber. That material will be used to construct park benches, kiosks, and other park improvements. Gass said he relayed that information to the property owner and she really likes the idea. Her grandfather planted the Douglas Fir many years ago and she is pleased that material from the tree will go back into the community for good uses.

Gass said MRA received two bids on the project. The low bid was submitted by JAG Grading & Paving in the amount of \$468,000. WGM Group has reviewed the bid and found it to be responsive, correct and complete. The staff recommendation is to award the construction contract for this project to JAG Grading & Paving in an amount not to exceed \$468,000.

Reineking said she is glad to see that sometimes MRA gets bids that come in below the estimate. Gass said staff is pleased to get the bid. He said Cody Thorson & Steven McDaniel from WGM Group were present to speak to the project and current bidding environment. Thorson said a year ago almost to the day the MRA was awarding URD II and III phases. Right when COVID-19 hit they saw a shift in contractors looking for public work because they were concerned about what would happen in the private world. Thorson said they got excellent bids on URD III last year and this year they were lucky to get the two bids that came in on this. He said they didn't even have a contractor show up at the pre-bid meeting so they were a little concerned. Thorson said what they've seen happening in the bidding world with subdivisions and private development is that contractors are booked up all through 2021. Material prices are going crazy and WGM Group has projects that are bid-ready that they're thinking of bidding and will probably end up setting them on the shelf for 2022 because there is no contractor availability right now. He added that contractors are also struggling to find labor. Thorson said this project and the one for URD III are for some of the bigger sidewalk gaps identified in the Districts. They both involve major land owner coordination and easements. He said they didn't think they'd be able to get everything done, but they did and it's a big benefit.

**REINEKING: I MOVE THE MRA BOARD AWARD THE CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT FOR THE URD II INEZ, 1<sup>ST</sup> AND 2<sup>ND</sup> SIDEWALK PROJECT TO JAG GRADING & PAVING IN THE AMOUNT OF \$468,000, AUTHORIZE THE BOARD CHAIRMAN TO SIGN THE CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT, AND AUTHORIZE STAFF TO SIGN THE CONTRACT DOCUMENTS TO AWARD THE CONTRACT AND PROCEED TO CONSTRUCTION OF THE PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS.**

**Brock seconded the motion.**

Reineking said it's really neat having that connection to the trail at the end of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street. She said getting those easements was a good deal. Gass said Thorson and McDaniel did an excellent job obtaining ROW and easements.

**No further discussion. No public comment.**

**Motion passed unanimously (4 ayes, 0 nays).**

**URD III Northern Sidewalk Project, Phase 2 – Request to Award Construction Contract (Gass)**

Gass showed a map of the project area. Again, MRA worked with WGM Group on the URD III Northern Sidewalk Project, Phase 2. The project area is described in his memo, as well as the coordination with land owners to get to the final design. Gass highlighted Benton Avenue between Washburn and Russell Streets. They discovered there is only a 30' ROW on this section of Benton Avenue. The purple line on the map is the URD III boundary and the description for that boundary reads that the URD III boundary is the south ROW line of Benton Avenue. It runs right down the middle of the street, so half of it is on private property. Thorson and McDaniel worked with the property owner and secured a dedication of ROW and now there is 60' of ROW. It brings the City street within public ROW and the landowner won't be paying taxes on that square footage of land any longer.

Gass said they came up with a good design for the south half of Benton Avenue. There will be half a block of boulevard sidewalk. It will bend into the private property a little bit and the City has secured a perpetual curb & sidewalk easement for that. They will be constructing angled parking on-street to mitigate some of the parking that was lost on the private side. Gass said they will come out with the same number of parking spots that were originally there. The corner of Benton Avenue and Russell Street will be improved and brought up to current ADA standards.

MRA received two bids on this project. The low bid was from Shadow Asphalt, Inc. in the amount of \$473,145. This bid was slightly over the engineer's estimate by \$35,300. Through discussions, WGM felt this bid was acceptable. The staff recommendation is to award the construction contract to Shadow Asphalt, Inc. in an amount not to exceed \$473,145. Thorson said WGM Group submitted their engineering estimate with a 10% contingency, which is right where the bid came in. Looking through the bid prices, there is no major impact and they are happy with the bid.

**REINEKING: I MOVE THE MRA BOARD AWARD THE CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT FOR THE URD III NORTHERN SIDEWALK PROJECT, PHASE 2 TO SHADOW ASPHALT, INC. IN THE AMOUNT OF \$473,145 AND AUTHORIZE THE MRA BOARD CHAIR TO SIGN THE CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT, AND AUTHORIZE STAFF TO SIGN THE CONTRACT DOCUMENTS TO AWARD THE CONTRACT AND PROCEED TO CONSTRUCTION OF THE PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS.**

**Brock seconded the motion.**

**No further discussion. No public comment.**

**Motion passed unanimously (4 ayes, 0 nays).**

**NON-ACTION ITEMS** – The following items on the agenda were postponed until the next Board meeting.

**Envision West Broadway Master Plan Update (Marchesseault)**

[www.envisionwestbroadway.com](http://www.envisionwestbroadway.com)

**URD I Removal from Audit Report (Dunn)**

**Proceed Without Prejudice Policy (Buchanan)**

**STAFF REPORTS**

**Director's Report**

Buchanan announced the YWCA (Young Women's Christian Association) is holding their ribbon cutting for their new facility on 3<sup>rd</sup> Street on May 6<sup>th</sup>. Reineking said she will attend the ribbon cutting to represent the MRA Board.

**FY21 Budget Reports**

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**OTHER ITEMS**

**ADJOURNMENT**

Adjourned at 3:08 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Lesley Pugh