

**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
140 WEST PINE STREET
MISSOULA MONTANA
APRIL 9, 2012, 6:00 PM**

Members present: Marilyn Marler, President; Bob Jaffe, Vice President; Ed Childers, Caitlin Copple, Adam Hertz; Mike O'Herron; Dave Strohmaier; Alex Taft; Jason Wiener; Jon Wilkins and Cynthia Wolken

Members absent: Dick Haines

Others present: Marty Rehbein, Paul Bohan, Rod Austin, Linda McCarthy, Ellen Buchanan, Matt Ellis, Michael Tree

I. Administrative Business

Approve minutes dated the following:

- [February 15, 2012](#) Joint with BCC meeting
- [February 15, 2012](#)
- [March 5, 2012](#)
- [March 7, 2012 AM](#)
- [March 7, 2012 PM](#)
- [March 14, 2012](#)
- [March 21, 2012 Joint with BCC meeting](#)

Consideration of the minute was postponed.

II. Public Comment on items not listed on the agenda

There were none.

III. Regular Agenda

A. Downtown Master Plan Implementation Update. ([memo](#))—Regular Agenda (Ellen Buchanan) (Referred to committee: 03/19/12) (Remove from agenda)

Matt Ellis, Co chair of the Downtown Master Plan Implementation Committee, gave a presentation summarizing master plan accomplishments to date and plans for the future noting that city support is key to the plan's successful implementation. Topics covered include:

- BID activities—Accomplishments: successful renewal of the BID for 10 more years, establishment of the Clean Team and the downtown police beat officer, a survey of downtown properties. Future--They are exploring potential expansion of the district.
- Establishment of a tax exempt charitable foundation to raise funds for projects
- Cara Park—The pavilion was recently painted and efforts are ongoing to raise funds replace the roof and install side walls attached to the structure. The City has committed part of the funding for this project.
- Increasing residential uses downtown—exploring developing housing for students downtown
- Fox Site—Council approved exploring feasibility for a hotel development on the site which is in progress. St. Patrick Hospital is exploring options for property they own in the vicinity.
- Parking—New garage under construction on Pattee and Front Street.. A parking study underway for the area around St. Patrick Hospital. There is a new parking fine structure in place and changes have been made to the location of leased parking and 10 hour meters on the northern edge of downtown.

- Way finding system—A committee has formed to develop a way finding system downtown.
- Transportation and Street Improvements—The North Higgins Project is complete. They plan to focus next on converting Front and Main to two way streets. WGM recently completed an analysis of the street lighting districts downtown and there may be some opportunities to consolidate those districts and update fixtures. Mountain Line is studying its service delivery to focus on providing more service in the city's core. The study also includes considering a street trolley which would serve the downtown area. The MT Dept. of Transportation has a maintenance project for the Higgins Avenue Bridge in their plans. The Master Plan calls for increased bridge width to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians. Talks with MDOT are ongoing and funding may be required to facilitate expanding the bridge's width to provide more space for bikes and pedestrians. One project that needs to be addressed is to replace the stairway on the east side of the bridge north of the river.
- Kiwanis Park/Library area—The plan envisions this area the cultural hub of downtown. The library recently decided to maintain its presence downtown. The University has expressed interest in securing a location to display their collections. Conversations about using the former bank drive through property for additional culture center activities are underway.
- The Convention Visitor's Bureau located downtown and accounts for a marked increase in visits to the downtown area.

Mr. O'Herron commended the great work on the plan thus far.

Ms. Wolken indicated it's time to look at lighting districts in the downtown area and modernization of the fixtures. She also expressed interest in the street car project.

Mr. Taft encouraged the committee to avoid over-engineering the redesign of Front and Main Streets and focus on functional solutions particularly for bicyclists and pedestrians. He expressed interest in the concept of student housing in the downtown area.

Mr. Jaffe questioned what the plan calls for in the area around Kiwanis Park, the Library and the historic East Pine Street west of Madison. Is any of this area seen as ripe for redevelopment? He is interested in preserving the affordable housing there.

Ms. Buchanan responded that the Front St. Urban Renewal District Plan focuses on this area. There are opportunities for higher density housing on some of the vacant parcels, for example the former bank drive through. The plan identifies some infrastructure and safety challenges in the area around Kiwanis Park. It is a difficult area for emergency services to access. Any proposals for the area will be discussed with area property owners, residents and businesses as well as city staff. Currently, the urban renewal district is producing some revenue, but not at the levels of other districts in the city. She added that converting E Front and E. Main to a two way street will require engaging with residents in the area about any changes.

IV. Held in committee

1. Updates from Council representatives on the Health Board, Community Forum, Transportation Policy Coordinating Committee, other boards and commissions as necessary. – (Ongoing in Committee)
2. Joint meeting of the Mayor, City Council and County Commission; a facilitated quarterly OPG review as directed in the [Interlocal Agreement](#)—Ongoing (Mayor Engen)
3. Examination of Office Planning and Grants ([memo](#))—Regular Agenda (Lyn Hellegaard) (Referred to committee: 09/08/08)

4. Invite Dr. Barry Good, Dean of the UM College of Technology to update the committee on current plans and programs of the COT. ([memo](#))—Regular Agenda (Mike O'Herron) (Referred to committee: 02/13/12)
5. Discuss OPG reorganization proposal with Department Heads. ([memo](#))—Regular Agenda (Marilyn Marler) (Referred to committee: 02/06/12)
6. Downtown Master Plan Implementation Update. ([memo](#))—Regular Agenda (Ellen Buchanan) (Referred to committee: 03/19/12)
7. Propose the City Council be a member unit of the Missoula Chamber of Commerce. ([memo](#))—Regular Agenda (Dick Haines) (Referred to committee: 03/26/12)

V. Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,

Marty Rehbein
City Clerk