

**Community Development Authority
of the City of Onalaska**

Wednesday, February 13, 2019

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1 The meeting of the Community Development Authority of the City of Onalaska was called to
2 order at 3:30 p.m. on Wednesday, February 13, 2019. It was noted that the meeting had been
3 announced and a notice posted at City Hall.

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5 Roll call was taken with the following members present: Ald. Jim Binash, Ald. Jim Olson, John
6 Lyche, Ann Brandau, Mike Gargaro

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8 Also Present: City Administrator Eric Rindfleisch, Mayor Joe Chilsen, Planning Manager Katie
9 Aspenson, City Engineer Jarrod Holter, Bryan Harjes and Jeff Miller of Hoisington Koegler
10 Group, Inc., Room Tax Commission member Shawn McAlister, Dennis Aspenson of Traditional
11 Trades, LADCO Executive Director Jorge Beltran

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13 Excused Absences: Ron Johnson, Joe Bucheger

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15 **Item 2 – Approval of minutes from the previous meetings**

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17 Katie noted Dennis Aspenson had attended the January 9 CDA meeting and was not included in
18 the minutes as having been in attendance.

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20 Motion by Ald. Olson, second by John, to approve the minutes from the previous meeting as
21 printed and on file in the City Clerk’s Office.

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23 On voice vote, motion carried.

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25 **Item 3 – Public Input (limited to 3 minutes/individual)**

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27 Mike introduced Jorge Beltran as the new Executive Director of LADCO, noting Jorge has been
28 at his position for a little more than two weeks. Mike also noted Jorge is a Detroit native who
29 had moved to the area from San Antonio.

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31 Jorge said that prior to being named LADCO’s new Executive Director he had spent the last 10
32 years in San Antonio serving as the Assistant Director of Economic Development. Jorge told
33 CDA members he is happy to have returned to the Midwest, noting he had spent approximately
34 17 years practicing law in Michigan. Jorge said he has a good understanding of land use matters
35 and economic development, and he is attempting to become acquainted with the community
36 partners.

37
38 **Consideration and possible action on the following items:**

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40 **Item 4 – Review and Consideration of Onalaska Redevelopment Plans for the State Road**
41 **16 Corridor and Downtown Onalaska**

Reviewed 2/26/19 by Katie Aspenson

**Community Development Authority
of the City of Onalaska**

Wednesday, February 13, 2019

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Bryan first presented the draft copy of the Redevelopment Study for Downtown Onalaska, beginning with the table of contents, which is organized as follows:

- **Project Background:** Purpose, Approach, Prior Planning
- **Existing Conditions:** Zoning, Land Use, Transportation, Parks, Trails, and Open Space, Redevelopment Scoring, Market Summary
- **Stakeholder & Community Input:** Stakeholder & Community Input, Downtown Stakeholder Meetings, 2019 Community Public Meeting
- **Redevelopment Framework:** Downtown Districts, Potential Redevelopment Scenarios, Transportation, Parks, Trails, and Open Space
- **Implementation:** Keys to Implementation, Roles & Responsibilities, Downtown Development Guidance and Controls, Amend Zoning Regulations, Redevelopment Initiatives, Tools for Public Investments, Regional Resources, State Programs, Federal Programs, Achieving the Vision

Bryan addressed the Project Background chapter, which covers the city’s successes since the 1999 Downtown Onalaska Redevelopment Plan, the planning for the Great River Landing. Bryan next addressed the Existing Conditions chapter and said it has been organized as a precursor as to how the redevelopment is being established.

Mike pointed out the definitions for each of the downtown zones (Downtown Core, Great River Road Corridor, Riverfront, 3rd Avenue and North of King Street) are listed several pages – specifically, page 18 – after they are first identified on page 5.

Bryan admitted one must look ahead to understand that component.

Mike addressed Redevelopment Scoring on page 11 and asked for a definition of the red-colored parcels.

Bryan said the parcels colored red are opportunistic sites.

Mike said in his mind the color red means the opposite.

Jeff said the colors can be changed, with the opportunistic sites being colored green instead of red.

Mike asked that the following paragraph found on page 13 also be included in the Redevelopment Study for Downtown Onalaska: *“The city benefits from positive perceptions of the community as a desired place to live, strong schools, and a good location relative to La Crosse.”*

83
84 Jeff addressed the Redevelopment Framework chapter, which identifies each district and some of
85 the features that might be found in them:

86

87 **Downtown Core Mixed-Use**

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- 89 • **Land Uses:** Primarily retail, personal services and restaurants at street level facing Main
90 Street, Dash-Park and State Trunk Highway 35, Business services, Professional offices,
91 Civic, Apartments/condos, Walk-up townhouses/rowhouses, Vertical mixed-use
92 buildings
- 93 • **Parking:** On-street parking, Parking behind buildings, Underground parking, Municipal
94 parking (surface or ramp), Shared parking
- 95 • **Driveways:** Eliminate driveways on Main Street to maximize on-street parking, Limit
96 driveways on 3rd Avenue to maximize on-street parking
- 97 • **Building Design:** Multistory buildings desirable, Zero setback from the sidewalk,
98 Portion of building can be setback from sidewalk to provide useable open space (e.g.
99 outdoor dining/gathering spaces), Primary building entry faces street, Street and alley
100 facades are dominated by transparent windows, Buildings wider than a typical lot have an
101 articulated street façade.

102

103 **Riverfront Residential**

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- 105 • **Land Uses:** Apartments/condos, Walk-up townhouses/rowhouses, Limited retail,
106 personal services, and restaurants
- 107 • **Parking:** Parking under buildings using site grades, Limited surface parking, Surface
108 parking away from riverfront, accessed from Court Street
- 109 • **Driveways:** Enhance Court Street as a shared vehicle access and pedestrian-friendly
110 paseo, Publicly accessible path or parkway/street along terrace, Place driveways on east-
111 west streets whenever possible
- 112 • **Building Design:** Multistory buildings (3 or 4 stories) desirable, Building fronts face the
113 river, Useable open space and pedestrian access between building and riverfront,
114 Buildings wider than a typical lot have an articulated street façade

115

116 **Great River Road Business Corridor**

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- 118 • **Land Uses:** Retail, personal services and restaurants, Business services, Professional
119 offices
- 120 • **Parking:** Parking behind and between buildings, Shared parking
- 121 • **Driveways:** Place driveways on east-west streets whenever possible, Shared driveways
122 on STH 35

- 123 • **Building Design:** Buildings placed at block corners, Minimal setback from the sidewalk,
124 Larger setbacks allowed to provide useable open space (e.g. outdoor dining/gathering
125 spaces), Primary building entry faces STH 35, Street facades are dominated by
126 transparent windows

127

128 **Downtown Mixed Residential**

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- 130 • **Land Uses:** Apartments/condos, Walk-up townhouses/rowhouses
131 • **Parking:** Parking under buildings using site grades, On-street parking, Limited surface
132 parking
133 • **Driveways:** Use alleys as access, Place driveways on east-west streets whenever
134 possible, Limit driveways on 3rd Avenue to maximize on-street parking, Building
135 placement, Multistory buildings (3 or 4 stories) desirable, Small setbacks from sidewalk
136 to provide transition/buffer between residential and public sidewalk, Primary building
137 entries face street, Street and alley facades are dominated by transparent windows,
138 Buildings wider than a typical lot have an articulated street façade

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140 Transportation, Parks, Trails, and Open Space goals include the following:

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- 142 • Improve downtown’s walking environment with highly connected, convenient, and
143 attractive streetscapes.
144 • Expand downtown’s walking/biking environment to include Irvin Street and Elm Street
145 as key connections to a riverfront trail in the 1st Avenue right-of-way along the rail line.
146 • Enhance alleys (east side of STH 35) and Court Street as pedestrian-oriented paseos.
147 • Improve walking/biking crossings of STH 35.
148 • Potential new street connections to complete the street grid.
149 • Consider opportunities for additional parking and shared parking facilities in conjunction
150 with redevelopment.

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152 Bryan next addressed the Implementation chapter, which lists the following keys to
153 implementation:

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- 155 • Patience
156 • Commitment
157 • Public & Private Partnerships
158 • Financial Reality
159 • Strategic Investments

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161 The Downtown Development Guidance and Controls section suggests that the following actions
162 occur:

**Community Development Authority
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Wednesday, February 13, 2019

5

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- Approve the Downtown Redevelopment Plan

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- Amend the Comprehensive Plan

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- Amend zoning regulations

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The Redevelopment Initiatives section suggests that the following activities occur:

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- Focus on the momentum around downtown's new open space assets

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- Build high-quality development

172

- Build a high-quality public realm

173

- Finalize updated of the Zoning Code

174

- Broader redevelopment opportunities.

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CDA members suggested arranging the bullet point under "Focus on the momentum around downtown's new open space assets in the following order:

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- Explore opportunities to provide and manage parking conveniently and efficiently in downtown, including on-street, small lots behind buildings, public lot/ramp, shared parking lots.

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- Finalize street design standards for downtown streets and enhanced alleys/paseos.

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- City partnership and support for the proposed Great River Residences housing development.

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- Reconstruct Irvin Street (between 2nd and 3rd Avenues) and the enhanced alley/paseo (between Main Street and Irvin Street).

186

187

- Continued progress on completing the Great River Landing's waterfront project.

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- Pursue public acquisition of key properties or public/private partnerships to assemble adequate redevelopment sites, particularly in the Downtown Core.

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Bryan highlighted the following in the Tools for Public Investment section:

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- Tax Increment Financing

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- Special Assessments

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- General Property Taxes

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- Other City Funds (utility revenues, park dedication fees, state aid for roads)

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- Commercial Rehabilitation Loans and Grants

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- Other Revenue Sources (regional, state, federal)

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Jeff said the Community Development Investment Grant should be called out under the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation. Jeff said the Main Street Program also is another opportunity, noting the City of La Crosse participates in that program. Jeff also

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**Community Development Authority
of the City of Onalaska**

Wednesday, February 13, 2019

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203 mentioned the Transportation Alternatives Program as a possible opportunity.

204
205 Ald. Binash noted a pier will be installed at the Great River Landing and suggested perhaps it
206 could aid the Great River Residences, individuals who come to the Great River Landing, and the
207 City of Onalaska's Fire and Rescue. Ald. Binash also said it is possible the house located at the
208 waterfront could be razed and replaced with a different structure, and the city might explore
209 renting kayaks, canoes and camping materials.

210
211 Bryan asked if there is a concept of a sketch of that current proposal that should be included in
212 the plan, or if the plan should include a narrative the structure will be part of the plan.

213
214 Ald. Binash said it likely is just a narrative at this time.

215
216 Bryan and Jeff showed CDA members phasing-related slides that might be included in the final
217 report.

218
219 Mike suggested perhaps including the scenarios of potential developments and their locations
220 discussed at a past meeting and what Bryan and Jeff had just shown in the back of the report as
221 an appendix.

222
223 John suggested perhaps utilizing graphics from Marvin Wanders of Three Sixty Real Estate
224 Solutions, the developer of the Great River Residences, as part of the Downtown Residential
225 component.

226
227 Bryan next addressed the Redevelopment Study for State Road 16 and highlighted the following:

- 228
- 229 • The report articulates the study area and some of the unusual elements, including the La
 - 230 Crosse River Conservancy and the Valley View Mall.
 - 231 • The report highlights regional-based connectivity plans.
 - 232 • A map that highlights the interchanges, state roadways, Interstate 90, local road
 - 233 connectivity, and private roads.
 - 234 • The report mentions connections that could occur across the La Crosse River to the
 - 235 trailhead where the two state trails (Great River State Trail, La Crosse River State Trail)
 - 236 converge.

237
238 Mike referred to the "Parks, Trails, and Open Space" section and suggested documenting the
239 Onalaska Central Greenway Plan, the La Crosse River Conservancy Project, Holiday Heights
240 Park, and Crossing Interstate 90.

241
242 Ald. Binash noted that Holiday Heights Park consistently floods and said it might be necessary
243 "to do something different with that park."

**Community Development Authority
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Wednesday, February 13, 2019

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Highlights from the Redevelopment Framework chapter include the following:

- HKGi had queued up three redevelopment districts: East Gateway District, Theater Road/Braund Street Mixed Use District, and Braund Street/County Road PH Mixed Use District.
- The City of Onalaska controls both side of the frontage in the East Gateway District, presenting redevelopment opportunities.
- The East Gateway District likely will remain commercial.
- Either a Power Center (anchored by larger format retail tenants with a combination of supporting inline retail and commercial pad development) or a Lifestyle Center (higher-end shopping in a “Main Street,” or inside-out mall configuration) could be established on the western side of the district.
- Wal-Mart has embarked on a retrofit of the land within and adjacent to existing stores to create elements of “town centers” to create additional development and enliven and activate underutilized portions of the property. As discussed with stakeholders in the corridor, opportunities are present to add additional development in overparked surface parking lots. Wal-Mart Reimagined key elements include community connectivity, wellness, food and beverage, entertainment, recreation, essential services, mobility hub, and retail tenants.
- Recommendations for the Theater Road/Braund Street District include: maintaining commercial vitality on the site, an introduction of vertical mixed use and high density residential, creation of a more urban or village-like development pattern, explore options for structured parking integrated with development, enhanced connections across State Road 16 to Valley View Mall and the La Crosse River Conservancy, enhanced wayfinding, signage and district/development branding, activated park space to frame development and provide an amenity for businesses and residents.
- Recommendations for the Braund Street/County Road PH District include: maintaining commercial vitality on the site, an introduction of vertical mixed use and high density residential with sensitivity to surrounding land uses, creation of a more urban or village-like development pattern, explore options for structured parking integrated with development, enhanced connections across State Road 16 to Valley View Mall and the La Crosse River Conservancy, enhanced wayfinding, signage and district/development branding, activated park space to frame development and provide an amenity for businesses and residents, and establishing a coordinated effort with the City of La Crosse on access improvements on County Road PH and State Road 157, and upgrades to Jansen Place.

Katie noted Plan Commission members will receive copies of both plans at their February 26 meeting, and they will be given the opportunity to provide feedback.

Reviewed 2/26/19 by Katie Aspenson

**Community Development Authority
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Wednesday, February 13, 2019

8

285 **Item 5 – Review and Consideration of Onalaska Redevelopment Planning Invoice #018-**
286 **036-7 from HKGi**

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288 Motion by Ald. Olson, second by John, to approve Planning Invoice #018-036-7 from HKGi in
289 the amount of \$15,522.91.

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291 On voice vote, motion carried.

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293 **Adjournment**

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295 Motion by Ann to adjourn.

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297 The meeting was adjourned at 4:36 p.m.

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300 Recorded by:

301

302 Kirk Bey