



Roadmap to a Vital and Safe Anchorage

MEETING SUMMARY

Meeting Date: March 29, 2022

Meeting Summary: April 7, 2022

Facilitators

Michael Fredericks, SALT

Meeting Participants

Amanda Moser, Anchorage Downtown Partnership

Jim Huettl, The Anchorage Mushing District

Derrick Chang, Peach Investments

Schawna Thoma, Northern Compass Group

Gretchen Fauske, University of Alaska Center of Economic Development

Jack Bonney, Visit Anchorage

Codie Costello, Alaska Center for Performing Arts

Anne Velardi, Alaska Dept. of Labor & Workforce Development

Kevin Berry, UAA Dept of Economics, College of Business

Joe Lumpkin, Regal North Commercial

Laura Sterdevant Dean, Merrill Lynch and American Legion Post 1

Kirk Rose, Anchorage Community Land Trust

Kristine Bunnell, Municipality of Anchorage

Shanna Zuspan, Agnew::Beck

Holly Spoth-Torres, Huddle AK

Jon Bittner, Alaska Small Business Development Center

The purpose of the meeting was for the group to check in and receive updates from consultants and presentations on the Block 41 project and the Our Downtown plan.

Welcome

- Michael welcomed participants and gave an overview of the agenda and purpose of the meeting.

Block 41 Project Presentation – Derrick Chang, Peach Investments

- Located at 4th Avenue to the north, 5th Avenue to the south, F Street to the east, and G street to the west.

- Peach owns parcels 2 through 9. Parcel 9 is currently under retrofit and will be rebranded as 601 W. 5th into a new classic office building.
- The entire block has been granted a “deteriorated area” status giving incentives for tax deferment when the project is stabilized.
- The project location is near the Egan Center, Alaska Center for the Performing Arts, and Anchorage Police Department buildings. There is hope that one day there could be a skybridge linking some of these buildings together.
- The proposed concept:
 - Mixed use project
 - Glass atrium entrance
 - Garage from 5th Avenue through 4th Avenue, from west of office building to G Street
 - Accommodates about 425 cars
 - Hotel above 4th level of garage
 - Residential block
 - Galleria/concourse for drop off/pickup and a lobby
 - Space to attract retailers
 - Recreate facades
 - Repurpose interior spaces
 - Taking down the 4th Avenue façade to be recreated with much better acoustic windows, traps heat inside during winter, etc.
 - Great hall
- The details on the residential units are still being explored.
- Proposing to do 23 residential units, 2300 sq ft. or more
- The timeline is still under development. The following timeline is anticipated:
 - Demolition on the 4th Avenue side is slated to begin in a couple months
 - Demolition on the 5th Avenue side will take place next spring
 - Summer 2023 excavation
 - Garage will take 12 months
 - Office building to be complete by Fall 2022
 - Move tenants in by spring of 2023
- Deceleration lane on 5th Avenue gives an advantage by allowing cars to come into the project on that side
- Garage controlled by different lighting system with hope to sync with traffic lighting system
- Looking at lenders to attract
- Holding discussions with hotel groups (developers and investors) who understand the Alaska landscape and are from the Lower 48

Our Downtown Plan Presentation – Kristine Bunnell, Municipality of Anchorage

- Plan recommended for approval by Planning and Zoning Commission
- Several community meetings held
- Several letters of support given
- Population and job numbers are down compared to 2007, but economy picking up
- Plan items kept:
 - 2007 Overarching Goals
 - Some 2007 Plan Content
- Plan items updated:
 - Study Area Boundary Map

- 2007 Plan Vision
 - Planning Factors → Development Factors
 - 2007 Design Guidelines
 - 2007 Implementation Action
 - Incorporated information from the Ship Creek Framework Plan, 2040 Land Use Plan, Original Four Neighborhoods Historic Preservation Plan.
- Plan items added:
 - Early action and Chapter 8 action items
 - Oklahoma City and Smart Growth America strategies
- Strategies incorporated in the plan:
 - Strategy #1: Focus the Effort
 - Strategy #2: Build Great Housing
 - Strategy #3: Get Important Input from Women in the Community
 - Strategy #4: Lead by Example
 - Strategy #5: Make Connections to Surrounding Neighborhoods
 - Strategy #6: Make Downtown Safer
- Mixed use building renderings were shared; not possible with the downtown code, but the code has since been updated
- Housing is a focus, 1400 new market rate housing units recommended in the next 5-8 years (1400 by 2030)
 - Tax incentive amendments needed
 - GAP trust fund established
 - ACDA leads redevelopment in downtown
 - Capacity study estimated 4700 units in downtown
 - Missing moderately priced rental units
- Project financing gaps shared:

Project Financing GAPS: Key Findings				
3 Downtown Anchorage Examples				
GAP PER UNIT				
Project	NO INCENTIVE	12-YEAR TAX INCENTIVE	12-YEAR + \$2M Patient Capital + Land Write Down	25-YEAR + Some Land Write Down
Current DT Project	\$120,000	\$70,000	No Gap	No Gap
40 units on 1/2 acre. Surface parked at .50 spaces per unit. Density: 80 DUA. All Stick Built.				
Block 102 – 8 th & F	\$110,000	\$60,000	\$20,000	No Gap
150 Units on .96 acres: North Parcel Only. Parking = .05 per unit. 40% parking onsite surface and remaining in adjacent lots or garages. Density: 155 DUA. All Stick Built.				
Block 28 – 3 rd & H	\$90,000	\$50,000	\$20,000	No Gap
200 Units on .80 acres: North parcel only. Parking = .05 per unit. 40% parking onsite surface and remaining in				

UNIT SIZE - RENTS	
Studio – 450sf	\$1,150
1 Bedroom – 550sf	\$1,380
2 Bedroom – 800sf	\$1,725
3 Bedroom – 1100sf	\$1,800

- There are solutions to implement in the community.
- MOA and partners next steps:
 - Finalize GAP Housing Funding Study, present to Assembly
 - Finish downtown code update
 - Designate some blocks as a Reinvestment Focus Area (RFA) consistent with 2040 Land Use Plan
 - Secure funding for utility upgrades in RFA, begin utility coordination process
 - Fund GAP Housing Trust Fund to establish a low interest loan program
- How RVSA can help:
 - Carry the message on the next steps
 - Send emails of support to Anchorage2040@anchorageak.gov
 - Michael will send email of support on behalf of RVSA, will collect comments from group

- Resources shared:
 - Trends report [link](#)
 - www.ourdowntownanchorage.com

Consultant Updates

- Murals:
 - Located at 645 G Street building
 - Starting in late June
 - Planning group saw initial sketches, great visioning session on this led by APU
 - Project partners include APU and Anchorage Museum
 - Addresses the need to create more identity in downtown
 - Unveiling in early July
 - Revised sketches will be shared when ready
- Aerospace and innovation:
 - Department of Energy came to Anchorage and are interested in Alaska being known as innovation for aerospace science
 - Launch Alaska project at Merrill Field moving forward, developing hub for aerospace and innovation
- Highways and downtown streets:
 - Met with the AK DOT Commissioner and central region director on behalf of RVSA
 - Discussed transportation issues and how it is a barrier to downtown redevelopment and safety
 - RVSA comments on transportation issues being compiled to give to AMATS program with a goal to make downtown more cohesive
- Downtown dine out:
 - Goal is to activate space this summer to have outdoor dining
 - Mark Begich working on this
 - The city is interested in streamlining the permitting process to make it easier to activate downtown spaces.

Member Updates and Action Needed

- Department of Labor – Anna Velardi
 - Will do hospitality and life skills training for youth
 - Ages 18+
 - Located at AVTEC
 - Early part of summer
 - Looking for hospitality employers who would like to participate
 - Contact anne.velardi@alaska.gov if interested
- American Legion – Laura Sturdevant Dean
 - Heard RVSA needs support with veteran advocacy
 - Laura can help with leveraging 5,500 members statewide.
 - Vision of a veteran support building, wants to connect with RVSA on this to share their vision as it connects to RVSA's vision
 - Michael will contact Laura
- UA Center of Economic Development – Gretchen Fauske
 - Alaska's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is a plan that aims to grow and diversify the state economy.

- Businesses and stakeholders invited to give feedback on opportunities and challenges in Alaska's economy at this survey [link](#)
- Performing Arts Center – Codie Costello
 - Beginning discussions with UAA on developing a certificate program for Technical Theatre
 - UAA transitioning theatre spaces to community rentals, looking for business partnerships
 - Potential feeder program to stagehands/crews qualified upon certification to begin work at PAC
 - Contact Codie if you have experience with this type of workforce development

SALT

Prepared by Inmaly Inthaly, Project Assistant

cc: all attendees via Google Drive