

**SPECIAL STUDY SESSION NOTES
CITY OF WHEAT RIDGE, COLORADO**

May 13, 2013

Mayor DiTullio called the Study Session to order at 7:45 p.m. Council members present: Davis Reinhart, Bud Starker, Joyce Jay, Kristi Davis, Mike Stites, George Pond, Joseph DeMott, and Tracy Langworthy.

Also present: City Clerk, Janelle Shaver; Treasurer, Larry Schulz; City Manager, Patrick Goff; and Public Works Director, Tim Paranto.

Public Comment – none

1. Forward Jeffco Initiative ~ Fred Baker

Mr. Baker briefed the Council on the status of the Forward Jeffco Initiative by the Jefferson County Economic Development Corporation (Jeffco EDC) and made a formal request for an increase in funding.

His company has belonged to the EDC since the late 1990's. He has built about 120 office and industrial flex buildings, including 30 buildings within 2 blocks of 52nd & Ward Road.

The Forward Jeffco Initiative is an aggressive five-year, \$4 million program designed to create 7,500 new, well paying, primary jobs such as clean energy, high tech and biomedical businesses. The goal is to raise 70% of the \$4 million from the private sector and 30% from the public sector.

Mr. Baker detailed how existing office space in the County is inadequate for what they want to do. They need to start from the ground floor, find land that it ready to be zoned, get it designed, and proceed with vertical development. The Clear Creek area in Wheat Ridge will be one of the top two economic projects in the Denver area. They would like it to house 3 million square feet of office, residential and retail. It's probably going to be the most critical project in this part of the world in the next ten years.

Jeffco EDC has enough funding for administration; the Initiative funds will be used for advocacy of businesses in the county and cities, and for job growth, job training, and basic job creation efforts needed in the area. His request is for WR to increase its present donation by \$10,000. Our current donation of \$6,600 is used for administration. The additional \$10,000 would only be used to recruit new businesses.

During discussion Mr. Baker said the Jeffco EDC's current admin budget is \$850,000. Mr. Goff thought the request was for \$3,400, raising our donation up to \$10,000. Mr. Reinhart advocated for supporting the EDC but felt this forum was not the place to make a decision. Mrs. Jay mentioned the TOD area on Ward Rd. but Mr. Baker's opinion was that it was not a good location for primary jobs. Mr. Stites inquiry revealed that the

Jeffco EDC is the same organization as the former JEC (Jefferson Economic Council). The name was changed 4 years ago.

There was general agreement to discuss this at a budget discussion.

2. Improvement of City Hall Entry Plaza

Tim Paranto went through the drawings for proposed changes to the front of City Hall which include removal of the short brick wall, new concrete and landscaping, more covered space with tube lighting, changes to the building signage, more benches, no tables, the addition of a bike rack near the flagpoles, and more foliage. \$200,000 is in the budget for this project. The preliminary estimate for this particular concept is \$242,000.

Some councilmember felt uncomfortable spending this much money on cosmetics for City Hall. Discussion led to agreement to do *only* the concrete work (including removal of the brick wall) and the landscaping improvements, for a project total of about \$50,000. (Yes, the new bike rack should be included.) Council agreed to forego any structural work (the canopy) or signage changes at this time.

3. City Gateway Monument Signs

Tim Paranto noted the map of existing and proposed monument signs throughout the City and wanted to know if Council is interested in moving ahead with any of the proposed signs.

There was general discussion and questions. Several councilmembers expressed a preference for smaller monuments. Neighborhood identification monuments and the use of monument signs in neighborhood traffic calming were also discussed.

There was consensus for staff to bring back an approach for a residential street traffic calming program with scaled monument signs.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.



Janelle Shaver, City Clerk