

**STUDY SESSION NOTES
CITY OF WHEAT RIDGE, COLORADO
Hybrid - Virtual Meeting**

August 1, 2022

Mayor Bud Starker called the Study Session to order at 6:32 p.m.

This meeting was conducted both as a virtual meeting and hybrid, where some members of the Council or City staff were physically present at the Municipal building, and some members of the public attended in person as well. A quorum of members (eight) of Council were present in Council Chambers for this session.

Mayor Starker welcomed the Council, other elected officials, staff and interested citizens.

Mayor Starker also explained the virtual/hybrid meeting format, how citizens will have the opportunity to be heard, and the procedures and policies to be followed.

Council members present Scott Ohm, Amanda Weaver, Judy Hutchinson, Korey Stites, Rachel Hultin, Valerie Nosler Beck, Janeece Hoppe, and Leah Dozeman (virtually).

Also present: City Clerk, Steve Kirkpatrick; City Manager Patrick Goff; Renewal Wheat Ridge Executive Director, Steve Art; Renewal Wheat Ridge Legal Counsel, Corey Hoffmann; CC4CA Executive Director, Jacob Smith; interested citizens and guests.

Public's Right to Speak

No one came forward to speak this evening.

Note about Wheat Ridge Speaks:

Members of the public may visit the Wheat Ridge Speaks website and enter written comments of up to 1,000 words on any Council agenda item. The deadline for the public to submit comments is 12:00 Noon Mountain Time on the day of a Council session so that Council members, other elected officials and City Staff have time to review the comments before the meeting on Monday evening.

The City Clerk's Office transcribes those Wheat Ridge Speaks comments into these minutes, placing each comment along with the record for that agenda item.

No comments appeared in Wheat Ridge Speaks for this session of Council.

1. Colorado Communities for Climate Action Update

Issue

Colorado Communities for Climate Action (CC4CA) is a coalition of counties and municipalities, including Wheat Ridge, advocating for strong state and federal climate policy. Jacob Smith, CC4CA executive director, will be providing an update to City Council concerning CC4CA's activities and current policy priorities

Staff Reports

Mr. Goff spoke briefly on the issue and passed the baton to CM Hultin, who introduced Jacob Smith, Executive Director of CC4CA. He gave a detailed presentation focusing on CC4CA's mission, structure, activities and plans.

Councilmembers had questions and comments:

Councilmembers asked detailed questions about several topics, engaging in discussion among themselves and with staff, who answered their questions in detail:

- Several CM thanked the staff and the consultant for the report and more so for their hard work.
- CM asked numerous, detailed questions of Mr. Smith, who responded with specifics.
- CM Nosler Beck stated that when residents have a desire to listen to hearings at the state legislature those sessions are always available live, online.
- CM Hultin noted that because of the number of residents CC4CA represents, they have the ears of state legislators. She announced that CC4CA will hold a transportation planning forum on August 26th with CDOT. CM Hultin will be presenting at that meeting.
- CC4CA is focusing on not only environmental issues but also how to reach underserved locations and populations.
- Mayor Starker commented on the effort to inspire a local response to improving the qualities of recyclables represent an opportunity for more businesses to earn a profit from recycling. Mr. Smith gave a detailed reply.
- Is CC4CA working specifically on diesel emissions? Mr. Smith provided CM Hutchinson a detailed answer.
- Do you have a timeline in mind for next report to Council? Mr. Smith gave CM Dozeman a specific answer.
- What do you see coming forward in the next session of the legislature, following any possible changes resulting from the outcomes of the election in November? Again, Mr. Smith gave a specific answer.

2. Lutheran Legacy Campus Urban Renewal Plan Formation

Issue

The Lutheran Medical Campus is located in the heart of Wheat Ridge and has operated as a medical center since 1905. A new Lutheran hospital is currently being constructed at the Clear Creek Crossing development, and the hospital's move presents a rare opportunity to reimagine the future of the Lutheran Legacy Campus.

City Council adopted the Lutheran Legacy Campus Master Plan on October 25, 2021. The primary goal of the Master Plan was to establish a development framework to guide future planning and development of the Lutheran Legacy Campus. The development framework is intended to communicate key development parameters and considerations to ensure that any future redevelopment of the campus reflects the values and priorities expressed by the community throughout the planning process.

The Master Plan calls for the inclusion of community amenities that can support the redevelopment of the campus and the creation of a community gathering place. The ultimate redevelopment of the campus will necessitate significant capital infrastructure investments from both the future developer and the City to achieve the vision for the area. Urban Renewal and tax increment financing (TIF) are two tools the Master Plan recommends the City explore in concert with the redevelopment of the campus.

Staff Reports

Mr. Goff gave an overview of the status of the plan to date, with emphasis on various desires for redevelopment and potential tax revenues and other funding options for the development of the parcel.

Mr. Art and Counsel to Renewal Wheat Ridge (RWR) Corey Hoffman spoke on the issue including items:

1. A detailed review of how RWR was established by City Council in 1981 to accomplish the redevelopment and rehabilitation of blighted areas in the City to provide a safer and more useful environment for their users and inhabitants
2. These five urban renewal plans still exist today:
 - West End 38 Urban Renewal Plan, adopted 2015
 - I-70/Kipling Corridors Urban Renewal Plan, adopted 2009
 - Wadsworth Boulevard Corridor Redevelopment Plan, adopted 2001
 - 38th Avenue Corridor Redevelopment Plan, adopted 2001
 - West 44th Avenue & Ward Road Redevelopment Plan, adopted 2001
3. The use of tax increment financing (TIF)
4. Forming a new urban renewal plan area
5. Implications of forming a new urban renewal plan area

Councilmembers had questions and comments:

CM asked detailed questions about the negotiations that would be required to establish taxation policy. The City, the WR Urban Renewal Authority and each taxing entity (e.g., school district, sanitation districts, fire service districts...) would engage in a lengthy process prescribed in CRS. Mr. Hoffman emphasized the complexity and time-consuming nature of those negotiations.

CM had further questions about the possibility of taking new action on urban renewal, including:

- Who is eligible for urban renewal authority board membership?
- Would we have to expand the current Board if we undertake an urban renewal plan for the Lutheran Legacy Campus Plan?
- What steps might Council take that would later be potentially irreversible?
- How is community involvement ensured?
- When does the law require the City to re-create our Urban Renewal Authority? Mr. Art responded not until 2040.
- Where in our Code does the Authority board composition appear? Would it require revisions? Mr. Hoffman replied in detail, saying in part that new ordinances would in all likelihood be necessary.

Mayor Starker proposed a consensus to authorize Renewal Wheat Ridge to begin the process of creating a new urban renewal area and plan for the Lutheran Legacy Campus and to ask staff to return to Council with additional information and further recommendations.

Consensus attained.

3. Staff Report(s)

Mr. Goff reminded everyone that there is no Council session next Monday.

Tomorrow evening, Tuesday, August 2 is National Night Out. The WR Police Department will have officers and some of their equipment and vehicles at each of four City Parks, one in each District.

The staff is distributing a survey for CM and asked CM to complete their response by August 8th. The Study Session on August 15 will focus on affordable housing.

Mr. Goff reported that staff are doing a market analysis on compensation given the inflation that has hit. Staff will bring to Council a mid-year cost of living adjustment proposal for this year and build more compensation funds into the 2023 budget.

4. Elected Officials' Report(s)

City Clerk Steve Kirkpatrick proudly reported that CM Nosler Beck was recently honored as one of the 25 most influential young women in Colorado business! Her peers and the Mayor congratulated the CM and expressed our pride in her recognition and the strongly positive light it shines not only on CM Nosler Beck but also the City of Wheat Ridge.

CM Hultin reported that her District site for tomorrow's National Night Out is Randall Park. She also recently took rapid transit this morning, the first day of the August fare suspension for all RTD services. She challenged all to please, take at least three rides on RTC services sometime during the month of August. She also reminded the public that dogs must be on a leash; it's the law! She also said she will submit a formal request for improvements along Clear Creek Trail where it crosses Kipling Parkway because that area is hazardous to those enjoying the Greenbelt.

CM Hultin asked to add climate emergency action to a future Study Session.

CM Stites reminded us that Art of the Farm was a success last weekend. He and CM Weaver are looking forward to seeing everyone tomorrow evening at Discovery Park for National Night Out.

CM Ohm met with staff from Parks and Rec last week to ensure the safe use of a bouncy castle tomorrow evening for National Night Out. We also need to develop a farmers' market in Wheat Ridge, and there is a group beginning to study the possibility. CM Ohm thinks it would be important to have an LED sign in the City to announce special events, and between those displays, posting information about our Ozone level, and potentially our CO₂ parts per million in the air. This weekend he will discuss with the new principal at the school partnering opportunities for WR high school students to get business experience.

CM Weaver reminded everyone that there is a Pie Baking Contest included in this year's Festival, so get cracking on your best pie recipes and register for the event! She reminded us that one can take their bike along when riding free on RTD this month!

CM Hutchinson thanked Stephanie for all the work she did to help the Council. Come to the District I National Night Out tomorrow; we will have pizza and trinkets. Ours will be the best in the City!

CM Nosler Beck announced that the coach for Wheat Ridge Piranhas youth swimming program has left, and she was a great resource for children – they won their last meet! She announced that the coach has left because she could not afford workforce housing in Wheat Ridge.

CM Dozeman reminded all that the Carnation Festival is now a mere 12 days away! Please, consult the Carnation Festival website, or the City website, for the schedule of events August 12, 13 and 14. The Carnation Festival Parade will once again flow along 38th Avenue on Saturday morning, August 13 beginning about 9:00 a.m. The Festival still needs volunteers, so please, sign up. Tomorrow evening's District IV National Night Out will occur at Anderson Park. She also found one of the pieces of art the Cultural Commission provided during the Art Drop this past weekend, July 29-31.

The Mayor thanked everyone for a productive meeting. The Carnation Festival has superseded Coffee with the Mayor on August 13th. Please, drive carefully, and remain vigilant for children, cyclists and pedestrians.

ADJOURNMENT

The Study Session adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

APPROVED BY CITY COUNCIL ON August 22, 2022.

Steve Kirkpatrick, City Clerk


Rachel Hultin, Mayor Pro Tem