

# Longmont Downtown Development Authority

Wednesday, September 25, 2024 Board Meeting

4:15 pm - 320 Main St.

**downtown.**  
LONGMONT

**creative**  
DISTRICT

**Present:** John Creighton, Ex-officio Member: City of Longmont, Jim Golden, Chris McGilvray, Wes Parker, Kirsten Pellicer, Joe Perrotto, Jim Wardell

**Absent:** Shiquita Yarbrough

**Staff:** Executive Director, Kimberlee McKee; Del Rae Heiser; Colin Argys

**Guests:** Brandon Stam, Executive Director, Grand Junction DDA

## REGULAR MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AND SILENT ROLL TAKING

### 1. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
- b. APPROVAL OF AUGUST 28 BOARD MINUTES

**Motion:** Joe Perrotto moved to approve the consent agenda; Wes Parker seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

2. BOARD AND EX-OFFICIO MEMBER COMMENTS - none. Kirsten is happy to be back.

3. PUBLIC INVITED TO BE HEARD (5 MINUTE MAX PER SPEAKER) - none

### 4. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Retail Assessment Report - ITP Consulting

Molly Alexander presented her assessment which focused on how to grow our retail district. It was a 30 day assessment and she visited Downtown over 4 days.

Retailers concerned about sales numbers and moving into 2025; increases in minimum wage, higher property taxes, process to get permits to CO. Retailers are feeling exhausted with raising prices, changing regulations, etc.

Physical Assessment - streetscapes, parking, storefronts, and wayfinding. She noted we have spacious sidewalks, plants, banners, art, and seating, that contribute to a retail environment.

Parking infrastructure and connections are some of the best she has even seen. Great wayfinding and connectivity. Concentrate on either end of Main St. where you have wide open barren areas and traffic impediments (curb cuts).

Storefronts - have beautiful and engaging storefronts. And there are areas that need some help (dirty awnings, signs in disrepair, etc.)

Gateways/Wayfinding - was easy to find the parking in Downtown. The southern area could use some softening and gateway signage. Need district identity in this area. South end businesses concerned people don't know where they are.

Interviews - 16 interviews with stakeholders, retailers, partners, and board members. Discussed sales, regulations, events, brand & messaging.

Only way to increase sales for retailer is to increase foot traffic, increase average transaction, and lower fixed costs.

Retail Roadmap suggestion in 4<sup>th</sup> Q 2024 - increase foot traffic. Build up on the good foundations we have like Holiday Winter Passport. Try to get businesses to extend retail hours to 7 days a week and stay open until 7 pm. Integrate Creative District to create a more holiday focus.

Rethink holiday plaza lighting event. People come but they go home right after. Do something prior to event for people to walk around before the tree lighting. Having something every weekend through holidays. Call them non events. Some groups and younger generations want smaller gatherings for swaps and could collaborate with retailers.

2025 focus: Leadership; retail isn't mentioned in your mission and vision and need retail champions on your board. Advocate for business owner concerns around minimum wage, permitting process (hire professional permit expeditor), and reassess organizational structure to a retail centric approach.

Economic vitality - retail therapy, appreciate and help businesses with traffic/sales. What are their needs for store displays and storefront assistance. What's missing in your retail: men's clothing, nails, brunch places. Do a spring cleanup campaign and incentivize biz owners. Need a beautification team directed by City to keep Downtown clean. Look at simple gateway entrances that are uniquely yours. You have three distinct district areas and could establish sub districts (Slope-South, Historic Core-Central, Peak-North).

Creative District - combine creative class with the retail sector. Create street markets in "blank" areas of sidewalks without closing streets. Daytime or night markets feeding into lunch, dinner, and entertainment. Enhance marketing message. There's a National Ice Climbing event coming to Longmont in Feb. 2025. Ideal time to get people to shop.

Next steps: holidays, revisit vision, align events, identify retail.

Retail Committee meeting is Mon, 9/30 and Molly will do a presentation for this group.

5:45 pm John Creighton left the meeting.

- b. Marketing/Branding Investments - Kimberlee reviewed chart of marketing and branding focuses. Want to make things better. Things to note: branding has lost focus, create branding book, create rubric of elements that should be branded, events have sub-brands (especially if we do 3 districts), and update color palette.

The 2020 launched website we're using now has 3 tabs at top (Downtown, Creative District, DDA). Might be too confusing. Working with our web developer to do UX research and web design (stakeholder and user interviews). Work on in 2024 and hope to launch the new site in 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter 2025.

Working on new base map to use with kiosks, parking, and website.

Colin met with a company that does data dashboards and they'll create one for us using data we give them.

Create events schedule and a digital, social and print strategy, including placemaking. Looking at influencers. Kirsten said the Times Call Longmont Magazine was revamped and made larger so it stood out. Might be good ad opportunity. Do more media pitches. Updating gift card program and new website will refresh things.

## 5. OLD BUSINESS

- a. 600 Main Site Development Options - Kimberlee consulted with Stantec who created two renderings. They got community feedback during Rhythm at Roosevelt. She presented feedback to the Board. First design included an office building with DDA and other economic partner offices, ground murals, use parklets, outside flexible seating area, a few shipping pop up containers, and garage/roof top stage. The second rendering had no building, was more open, flexible seating, tiered decking, more shipping container pop ups, ground murals, and active play areas. People preferred first design better. Community response was positive about it. The existing building was tested and it does need remediation. Could apply for a Brownfield grant for it. Next steps are to explore first option and find architect to get up front costs.  
Our lease with Pinkard Construction ends 10/15. Looking into potential holiday tree lot, lighting exhibits, etc., during this winter/holidays. Surface needs to be filled in and leveled. Would like to get more community input on this. Maybe during the Halloween parade.

6. LONGMONT CREATIVE DISTRICT UPDATE - making progress and promoting arts and getting other arts organizations involved. New overhead crochet art in 300 W breezeway. High Plains Bank at 385 Main St. has a new mural on S side of building.

7. FINANCE REPORT - budgets are looking good.

## 8. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- a. Development Update - Boston Station Apts on 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. have submitted a 4<sup>th</sup> submittal. Will add more housing if built. Hotel is on track. Not seeing a lot of other development interest right now. Winchell's is moving along with utility inspections. Granary says they'll start by end of year.
- b. Microtransit- to launch 12/9/24 and signed with a company that does micro transit across the country. Service hours will be daily 7am - 8pm from Dec. 9 - New Years. Looking into extending it to midnight on Friday/Saturday? It's \$8,400/mo. to add a longer weekend service. Board

supported pursuing that. Cost is \$2 to ride, \$1 for students/seniors. Does the company have rules of who they would/would not transport?

- c. Spoke Parking - getting more people to park here given the special \$10/mo and 2 free months. Is Board Ok removing the 2 free months from the offer?

Motion: Joseph Perrotto moved to end the 2 free months from the offer, Wes Parker seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- d. Business Owner Meeting Update - at the Sept. meeting we discussed minimum wage and continue to keep an eye on discussions. They have many concerns and over 50% of people at the meeting were opposed to it.
- e. Holiday Update - sharpen up our holiday plans and who we can partner with. Goals: cleanup 600 Main lot and do something every weekend. Plaza lighting will have a mariachi band. The holiday parade is very well attended. The temporary new parade route on Kimbark locks in our public parking lots during that time.

- 9. ITEMS FROM STAFF - Del Rae said the large kiosks will be in this week. The small kiosks will go in after. Colin said the 9/25 Wine Walk is sold out.

- 10. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS - Joseph said Longmont office market is benefiting because Boulder is too expensive.

- 11. ADJOURN - 6:43

Jim Wardell moved to adjourn the meeting, Kirsten Pellicer seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.