



**Minutes
Economic Development Subcommittee (EDSC)
Colorado Springs Utilities Board
July 15, 2022
Microsoft Teams/Rosemont Conference Room**

Subcommittee members present via Microsoft Teams or Rosemont Conference Room:

Chair Wayne Williams, Bill Murray, Ramon Alvarez, Jariah Walker

Colorado Springs Utilities staff present via Microsoft Teams or Rosemont Conference

Room: Aram Benyamin, Andie Buhl, Bethany Schoemer, Matt Dudden, Jaime Fabos, Pattie Bengler, Travas Deal, Elena Nunez, Gary Barber, Natalie Watts, Bob Cope and Luann Wagar

City of Colorado Springs and Chamber staff present via Microsoft Teams or Rosemont

Conference Room: Bethany Burgess, Cecilia Harry and Vicky Classen

Ex-officio member present via Microsoft Teams or Rosemont Conference Room: None

Subcommittee members excused: None

Citizens present: None

Welcome

Chair Williams convened the meeting at 8:30 a.m. Committee members and guests introduced themselves.

Minutes Review

Minutes from the April 15, 2022, Economic Development Subcommittee meeting were reviewed and approved for posting.

Nixon Rail Line Extension Project

Ms. Bethany Burgess, Office of the City Attorney – Utilities Division Chief, introduced the Nixon Rail Line Extension Project that was originally brought to Colorado Springs Utilities in 2015 to extend and utilize portions of the city's existing rail spurs. Currently, only one rail spur is in use for coal transportation exclusively. Two key issues that Colorado Springs Utilities need to ensure on this project are that it does not interfere with utility infrastructure, and that rate payers are not being asked to subsidize the cost of the project because there is no direct benefit back to ratepayers.

Ms. Burgess introduced several maps of Colorado Springs. The first map detailed locations of the rail spurs and reflects how Fort Carson's location would benefit greatly from this project. The second map shows where many large utility lines and infrastructure are that interfere in areas of the project. A lot of other open issues on this project revolve around getting a Trackage Agreement, real property interests, easements and constraints in the city charter related to real property.

Chief Operations Officer, Mr. Travas Deal, addressed logistics of mobility in some areas and the security level that is needed to meet the scale of this project. Ms. Burgess further educated the committee on details of the city charter and the limitation on granting property interest. Easements, licenses, or other rights for city property cannot be granted past 25 years, however there is one exception that a 99-year lease can be granted for economic development purposes. The project is not interested in a 99-year lease, so there are logistics to work through regarding the legal issues of property.

In addition, there is a delay from Fort Carson where the rail line on their property needs to be expended but does not have a point to expand to. So, Colorado Springs Utilities will close communication gaps with Fort Carson and continue to work on the Rail Line project.

Economic Development Grant Funding Discussion

Mr. Matt Dudden, Interim Manager of Economic Development and Stakeholder Relations and Community Relations, introduced the current community investment budget and partner funding distribution that is found under Guideline 11 for 2022. He reviewed the current budget and confirmed spending is in compliance. Mr. Dudden detailed the criteria in the application process for community investment and partner funding. Economic Development Funding is often used as grants to nonprofit community organizations to help provide capital for business development, small business efficiency and conservation capital and nonprofit business organization program support.

Of the five applications we have received, two meet the criteria and have been recommended for awards. There is no objection by the subcommittee regarding the recommended awards this year and this item does not need to go in front of the Colorado Springs Utilities Board.

Current Economic Development Strategic Initiatives Update

Mr. Dudden introduced the work plan for the subcommittee which focuses on policies that drive economic development, compliance with Colorado Springs Utilities instructions and guidelines, and collaborative process with Economic Development Corporation/Chamber of Commerce as well as other community partners. Mr. Dudden highlighted work on small business services, conservation and Demand Side Management (DSM) programming.

The focus areas and goals for the Economic Development Subcommittee include focusing on business retention and expansion, certified sites, working on additional

certified sites, rate option initiatives, Utility Reliability Programs, and highlighting strategic partnerships. The strategic vision includes compliance with Excellence in Governance Policy, compliance reports and engagement with strategic partners.

Mr. Dudden highlighted the Economic Development Program Dashboard that tracks activity and results. On the dashboard the job reporting capital investments are reported out by industry and sector, there is a section for Business Retention Expansion activity, and other programs and services that the subcommittee is working on.

New Business

No new business was discussed.

Plan Future Meeting

The next meeting is October 14, 2022. Chair Williams mentioned a potential item on the redevelopment of Drake site, but maybe not for the October committee meeting.

Ms. Elena Nunez, Economic Development Sr., suggested the Colorado Springs Airport report on all of the upcoming developments they are working on.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:25 a.m.