

ARENA DISTRICT MASTER PLAN

STEERING COMMITTEE TECHNICAL MEMO NO. 3:

INCLUDES: TULSA HUB LEADERS ON BIKES CAMP + ARENA DISTRICT URBAN HIKES + STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING NO. 3 + TULSA DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY MEETING

TULSA HUB *LEADERS ON BIKES CAMP*

On Wednesday afternoon, June 13th, Chris Hermann from the Planning Team was a guest speaker at Tulsa Hub's Leaders on Bikes summer camp at the invitation of Arianna Harmon. Approximately 30 campers (ages 6-14) and camp leaders attended the one-hour discussion. Mr. Hermann provided an overview of the planning profession – what city planners do – as well as an overview of the Tulsa Arena District Master Plan. There was a lot of interactive discussion and questions and answers. The kids think safer streets and streets designed for people riding bikes are important considerations. They discussed how challenging it is to ride bikes in many parts of Tulsa and how this limits where and how often they ride. A group of the kids thought separated on-street bike lanes would be great. A majority of them have been to the BOK Center, but not many other places within the Arena District. Few have ever ridden there before this camp. There was a discussion about what the appropriate identity and name for this area should be, but the names and identities quickly turned to superheroes, bands, singers, and Hollywood movies.

TULSA ARENA DISTRICT URBAN HIKES

During the early evening of June 13th, the City of Tulsa in coordination with INCOG and the Tulsa Health Department facilitated “urban hikes” through the Arena District study area. Almost 30 people braved the hot, sunny weather and divided into three groups to navigate the ADMP project area on foot. Participants were asked to record the strengths and impediments to non-motorized travel. Each hike was approximately 20 minutes and began at the Central Library and concluded at the WXYZ lounge in the Aloft Hotel. Each group covered one of three unique routes: 1) “Civic Center Hike” (around the District), 2) “Cry Baby Hill Hike” (to the River and Back), 3) “Brady Theater Hike” (to the Tulsa Arts District and back). One of the most regular comments was noting how much better the walk was when there were street trees and other shade-producing areas that sheltered walkers from the direct sun. Comments included:

- “This part of town is not my favorite. Needs more green, lighting, shops.”
- Streets
 - » Better with street trees & shade
 - » Add street lights for pedestrians
 - » Some places with trees in lawn were dirt underneath because of so many people waiting under them
- 5th Street Plaza
 - » “It is embarrassing” and “needs to be knocked down”
 - » Activate with programming, create food court space, add shade and places to sit
 - » Water fountain is unattractive, maybe replace with splash park
 - » Rip it up – get rid of the concrete
- Plaza of Americas
 - » Improve, add green space
- Connect to River
 - » Add pedestrian/bike wayfinding
 - » Add bike lanes
 - » Make Southwest Boulevard green, improve experience from concrete, add bike lanes
 - » Better connect Route 66 Memorial

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- BOK Center
 - » Bike rack is in exactly the wrong place – travel path of main entrance
- Federal Building
 - » Unattractive
 - » Megablock – tear down or cut in half
 - » Add green space
- Transit Center
 - » Lots of trash in area
- Houston from 3rd to 7th
 - » “terrible experience”
 - » “truly needs help”
- Tulsa Arts District
 - » “Much closer than it seems”
 - » Denver is most direct route, but underpass and sidewalk too narrow

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING NO. 3 - JUNE 14, 11:30-1:30 PM

On Thursday June 14th, the Planning Team met with the Steering Committee for the third of five meetings. This was a lunch meeting held at the Cox Business Center in the Riverside West Meeting Room. Approximately twelve attendees heard Chris Hermann (MKSK), Kate Collignon (HR&A), Kyle Vangel (HR&A), and Joell Angel-Chumbley (Kolar Design) present, with the addition of Shagah Zakerion (Zakerion Strategies) and Scott Rodehaver (Wallace Engineering) for discussion. The agenda included the following:

- Project Overview
- What We Heard (at Public Workshop #1 & Steering Committee #2)
- Market & Economic Assessment (Peer Cities, Residential, Commercial, Hotel, & Retail)
- District Identity (Civic Identity, Positioning, Type of District, & Benchmarks)

The Steering Committee was interested in the market assessment and asked more detailed questions about the residential market – including price points, depth of the market, and what makes a downtown project successful and desirable to renters. There was general agreement with the commercial office market assessment and a lot of interest in the Convention Hotel case studies and what they might indicate for Tulsa. There was interest that all but one of the case studies showed an increase to all area hotels with the opening of a full-service convention center hotel. There was discussion of what it would take in addition to such a new hotel to be successful. One member expressed concern about new retail in the district stating that currently new downtown restaurants are taking away market share from existing ones, but that was not always the case. Attendees were interested in the physical components of district identity. In general, they supported the concept of the Arena District as the gateway to downtown.

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TULSA DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY MEETING

Following the Steering Committee Meeting, the Planning Team (MKSK, HR&A) and James McHendry met with Kian Kamas, Chief of Economic Development for the City, and O.C. Walker, Executive Director of the Tulsa Development Authority at City Hall. Mr. Walker and Ms. Kamas reviewed economic incentives and policies currently in place within the city and areas of focus for economic development efforts. Various tools and funding sources were discussed that have been used with past and present public and private efforts. This included discussion about:

- TIFs for Tulsa Arts District, Blue Dome, and the Technology District have been used for infrastructure improvements.
- The Arena District was intentionally left out of the TIF Districts pending the master plan identifying potential needs.
- For new TIF Districts, the Industrial Authority will be the administrator.
- Potential funding sources include: 1) TIF (but projects must exist to generate tax dollars), 2) Improve Our Tulsa bond package (Nov. 2019), 3) Economic Development Infrastructure Fund (for job creation) - but target downtown, 4) Strategic Property Acquisition Fund.
- TDA has revolving loan funds which are planning to be targeted toward affordable and workforce housing (help move the gap from \$1.70 sq. ft. to \$1.10-1.40 sq. ft.).
- All of downtown is in the Opportunity Fund.
- The Tulsa Parking Authority will have up to \$2M available within two years, but structure of bonds makes it difficult for new parking structures to include private spaces.
- Need to advocate and build support for projects in the Vision Plan/Go Funds like Gilcrease does.