

City of Tucson

Real Estate Advisory Council

Date: November 10, 2015 at 3:00 p.m.

Location: City Hall, First Floor Meeting Room

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1. The results of the County bond election were obviously disappointing. Have you heard anything that helps you understand why the vote was so overwhelmingly negative?
 - ◆ The Mayor commented that the community needs to look at why the bonds failed and that the City may need to move forward on their own to meet their need for revenue for roads, downtown facilities, and parks. He suggested that future efforts would require a focused strategy to win public support.
 - What might the City be considering as far as opportunities for increased future revenues?
 - Would the City entertain options other than bonding?

The City Manager and County Manager have discussed going back to the voters in 2016 for a much smaller, much more focused bond package that would likely be heavy on transportation.
2. It was reported that the City entered into an agreement with Service Line Warranties of America, allowing it to advertise on official-looking City paperwork.
 - ◆ Is this the first time the City has ever done this? Is the City considering other such public/private relationships?
 - ◆ What financial return does the City receive for this relationship and what will the revenue be used for?

This was approved by Mayor & Council in May. Service Line Warranties of America is endorsed by the National League of Cities. There is no cost to the City and they expect to receive about \$300k which will be put toward City Parks. The agreement is for three years with an option to renew.
3. It was announced that the Mayor's office is taking a look at an Albuquerque program called *There's a Better Way*. The program is supposed to help reduce homelessness.
 - ◆ Can you give us some background on the program and if the City has decided to implement it?

There has been no decision to implement, it is just being considered. In Albuquerque, it was privately funded, but the City does not want to be obligated to a program that they would be required to continue if private sector funding dried up in the future.
4. There has been some talk that the City is considering allowing 3rd party review of site (civil) plans which has not been allowed in the past.
 - ◆ Is that moving forward? If so, what is the expected time frame for implementation and how will it work?
 - ◆ Is self-certification being considered like some communities use? Have you looked into the "success" of these programs in other communities?
 - ◆ Are there other plan review changes in the future?

The City has already entered into an agreement with the private sector for some aspects of site review, but not sure that they need it immediately. The City's concern is about obligations on issues such as FEMA which could impact Insurance rates if there are problems in the future. The City is looking at self-certification but the same concerns apply. The City would like to make their process very similar to the County's (different code but similar process) so that there is less confusion for users.
5. There has been concern expressed about the interpretation of roof signs vs. wall signs in the sign ordinance. Can you fill us in on the controversy and what is being done about it?

The issue has been caused by different interpretation of the actual code. Staff, Code Committee and sign companies all have been interpreting it differently. There is an ongoing effort to provide training so that all groups interpret it the same to eliminate confusion.
6. Recently the City's zoning examiner resigned over what he suggested was an overreach by the Council into what he felt was his responsibility.
 - ◆ What is the process for filling this position?

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- ◆ How is the City handling tasks that require a Zoning Examiner in the interim?

The position is filled by appointment (from the City Manager). It may or may not be a full time position. They hope to have it filled prior to the current Examiner leaving on January 9th.

7. The Charter changes were approved as was hoped. The changes that were put on the ballot were a stripped down version of what the Charter Committee originally suggested, in hopes of approval.

- ◆ Now that we have a “yes” vote under our belt, will some of the other recommendations move forward?

- ◆ The Star recently ran an editorial stating that our at-large system of electing our City Council is flawed as it allows a majority to select the representation for the minority. Will this be considered for future changes?

The 9th Circuit ruled that the current system was unconstitutional. A Charter Change will have to be put in front of the voters. If the court’s decision is not challenged, it is likely that the voters would be asked to either approve Citywide primary with Citywide general election or a ward-only primary with a ward-only general election. [Subsequent to the REAC meeting, the City Council has decided to ask the U.S. Court of Appeals for a rehearing on the decision that the City’s election system is unconstitutional.]

8. Can you address the claims that due to the City of Tucson missing state-mandated deadlines to mail publiCity pamphlets about charter-change and red-light camera propositions there are questions as to whether or not the vote is legally binding?

The Council feels that everything is fine.

9. Real Estate

- ◆ What is the status of the City’s Block 175 property (parking area across from El Charro)?

- ◆ What is the status of the City’s Ronstadt Center RFP?

- ◆ Rio Nuevo has been discussing repurposing of their 30 acres which sits at the base of Sentinel Peak. How do their plans for this parcel fit with the City’s interest in selling/developing their land west of I-10?

- ◆ Now that the City has received a successful bid for the Civano parcel, what are the steps that must be taken prior to completing the sale?

Block 175 is privately owned and is in phase 2 of review process. Ronstadt will go to Mayor & Council on the 17th for approval. [They approved the Peach Properties proposal.] Civano property had a minimum bid of \$5 million. The high offer was from Mattamy Homes at \$8.2 million. There is a 90 day contingency period and the property should close escrow in March.

10. The City Attorney's office recently stated that they will dismiss thousands of criminal citations because of a heavy caseload.

- ◆ What types of cases are being dismissed?

- ◆ What is being done about the short staff situation?

The types of cases that were dismissed were driving on suspended licenses and fictitious plates. While the criminal charges were dropped due to overload of court cases, the civil penalty is still in place.