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Presenter:
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Downtown Transit Center Update

Presenter:
Craig Blewitt, Transit Services Manager

Summary:

The Transit Services Division is pursuing the construction of a new Downtown Transit Center. In 2016 and 2017 a study to identify Downtown locations appropriate for the center was completed and a Mayor-appointed steering committee prioritized the sites and offered further guidance on the transit center development. Staff will provide an update on the project, including progress on discussions with the preferred site property owner.

Previous Council Action:

September 26, 2017 City Council approved a resolution of support for the final Downtown Transit Steering Committee recommendation. July 25, 2016 Council received a presentation update on the Downtown Transit Station Relocation Study. November 24, 2015 Council approved the 2016 Budget, including \$100,000 to implement the Downtown Transit Station Relocation Study. May 27, 2014 Council approved Resolution 50-14 to authorize a funding transfer of \$38,000 into the Downtown Transit Station Relocation Study Project.

Background:

The City's transit system, operated as Mountain Metropolitan Transit, provides bus and complementary ADA paratransit service, and other transit services to the community. The current Downtown Transit Terminal is located on the ground floor of the parking structure at the southwest corner of Kiowa Street and Nevada Avenue, and has functioned in that capacity since 1976.

The existing transit terminal has shortcomings in terms of bus operations, safety, ADA compliance, and aesthetics. Eight studies have been conducted over the last 20 years to identify a new downtown transit station location.

Project Goals

The transit center relocation study process established the following goals for the study. These goals considered the goals stated in prior studies as well as new and emerging needs evidenced in current downtown policies.

Operational Enhancement

- Improve operational efficiency with independent bays and circulation
- Increase capacity for operations
- Improve integration of a modified-grid system with the existing hub-and-spoke system
- Provide improved multimodal access
- Provide efficient connectivity to downtown activity centers

Safety Improvements

- Reduce conflict with adjacent traffic
- Increase passenger safety

Rider Experience

- Provide more passenger amenities
- Improve transit system image and visibility
- Promote City identity
- Promote ridership

Economic Revitalization

- Enhance downtown redevelopment activities
- Promote joint use/development opportunity (on station property)
- Promote development (adjacent to station property)
- Provide a revenue stream or one-time payment to offset costs of developing the station

Project Approach

The Transit Center Relocation Study public involvement process included focus group meetings, a technical advisory group, a stakeholders group, a study website, and numerous public meetings. The study identified three locations that met the site selection criteria and the operational requirements for a new center.

The relocation study identified three sites that best meet the study goals. A Mayor-appointed steering committee was then tasked with prioritizing the three sites and offering additional project guidance.

The three prioritized sites are:

Priority #1: Site 8 (3/4 of block, bounded by Colorado Ave, Sahwatch St, Cucharras St, Sierra Madre St)

Priority #2: Site 12 (3/4 of block, bounded by Cucharras St, Weber St, Vermijo St, Nevada Ave)

Priority #3: Site 17 (Pueblo Avenue right-of-way between Nevada Avenue and Wahsatch Avenue)

Staff from several City Departments and Divisions, including Transit Services, Economic Development, Planning, Real Estate, and the City Attorneys' Office has met with the property owner of the preferred site and his team. The owner is interested in pursuing a joint development project and wishes to retain ownership. Under this approach, the City and the property owner would follow the Federal Transit Administration's (FTAs) joint development requirements.

The property owner and his team have submitted a development proposal concept for review. Under the proposal the City would financially participate in the development of a multi-story building and own, through condominium ownership, the portion of the building and grounds that house the transit center. Transit Services staff members are reviewing the proposal and are also in discussions with the Regional FTA Office in Denver.

At the same time, Transit Services staff members are working with a consulting firm to determine if the current Downtown Transit Terminal can be renovated to meet the goals of the Downtown Transit Center project and to ensure all viable options are explored.

Once an assessment is made of the property owner's joint development proposal and the consultant's review of the Downtown Transit Terminal is complete, Transit Staff will invite the mayor-appointed steering committee to reconvene to discuss next steps. Staff will then provide another update to City Council.

This project supports the City's strategic goal pertaining to *Investing in Infrastructure*. The project has engaged citizens regarding infrastructure needs and solutions, and invests in multi-use infrastructure incorporating smart growth solutions to maximize efficiency and improve the attractiveness of our infrastructure.

Financial Implications:

N/A

Board/Commission Recommendation:

N/A

Stakeholder Process:

The study process included a stakeholder working advisory group, focus groups and public meetings.

Alternatives:

N/A

Proposed Motion:

N/A

N/A