



Business Development Committee April 2022 Report

Meeting held on Thursday, March 24, 2022

**Members: Surnow (Chair), McKenzie (Co-Chair),
Hockman, Quintal**

Staff: Kammer

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Roll Call/Attendance:
Present: McKenzie, Hockman
Staff Present: Sean Kammer
Absent: Sam Surnow
Others Present: Cindy Ciura, Zachary Kay
3. There was no public comment
4. Pipeline report and retail attraction update provided by CC Consulting. CC Consulting is having conversations with a business potentially looking at 168 West Maple. Recruiter reported 'unfortunate' news about Amazon choosing to close all of their retail bookstore locations and are now no longer a prospect. Recruiter has been working with a developer about the construction of a restaurant, who has submitted an LOI. Recruiter reported that the restaurant has other locations in Phoenix, Los Angeles, and Dallas.
5. Executive Director updated the committee about Text My Gov, a text communication service which may be helpful during the scheduled construction on South Old Woodward. The contract has been reviewed by the City Attorney. The contract is currently being reviewed by the vendor. Committee asked how cell phone numbers would be collected and how the program would be used. Committee asked if this would be intended to converse with the public or downtown businesses. Executive Director indicated that it can be used for both and that phone numbers would be collected by the BSD.
6. Executive Director reported to the committee that the next business anniversary to be recognized will be Hunter House, which is celebrating 70 years in downtown Birmingham.
7. Executive Director provided an update regarding the employee attraction program. Kammer explained that a major component of the employee attraction program was something that could assist employees with public transit. Kammer met with SMART, who informed him that subsidizing transit for 100 workers for a year would be approximately \$84,000. Kammer is investigating other potential funding sources that could significantly reduce this number.
8. Executive Director presented an updated draft of the business mix analysis. Work is ongoing but BSD staff has catalogued over 1.5 million square feet of commercial space. Letters were sent out to business owners to provide us with additional information about their businesses by filling out a form. Kammer explained that because smaller stores that had been classified as furniture stores have closed since 2017, the number of storefronts selling furniture hasn't dramatically changed, including the recent announcements of CB2, RH, and Serena & Lily.

However, the new stores are significantly bigger and require a larger trade area to sustain themselves. So the question about share of the furniture market in downtown should include an analysis based on the square footage of the furniture stores.

9. The committee discussed the contract with CC Consulting. The contract is set to expire on March 31, 2022. The committee is recommending that the contract be renewed for one year with no changes to the agreement.

NEXT MEETING: Thursday, April 21, 2022 at 8:30 a.m.

2021-22 Budget: \$100,000

Remaining balance after April vouchers: \$3,725