

**Phoenix City Council
Economic Development and Housing (EDH) Subcommittee
Summary Minutes
Wednesday, March 26, 2025**

City Council Chambers
200 W. Jefferson Street
Phoenix, AZ

Subcommittee Members Present

Vice Mayor Ann O'Brien, Chair
Councilwoman Debra Stark (Phone)
Councilman Kevin Robinson
Councilwoman Kesha Hodge Washington

Subcommittee Members Absent

CALL TO ORDER

Chairwoman O'Brien called the Economic Development and Housing Subcommittee to order at 10:01 a.m. with Councilwoman Stark, Councilwoman Hodge Washington, and Councilman Robinson present.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC

None.

MINUTES OF MEETINGS

1. Minutes of the Economic Development and Housing Subcommittee Meeting

Councilwoman Hodge Washington made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 12, 2025, Economic Development and Housing Subcommittee meeting. Councilman Robinson seconded the motion which passed unanimously, 4-0.

CONSENT ACTION (ITEMS 2-5)

Items 2-5 were for consent action. No presentations were planned, but staff was available to answer questions.

2. Request Authorization to Issue Central and Broadway SEC RFP

Consent only. No councilmember requested additional information.

3. Request Authorization to Issue 7th Avenue and Washington Street RFP

Consent only. No councilmember requested additional information.

4. Authorization to Enter into a Membership Agreement with Downtown Phoenix Inc.

Consent only. No councilmember requested additional information.

5. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development: Five-Year Agency Plan and Annual Plans

Consent only. No councilmember requested additional information.

Councilwoman Stark made a motion to approve Items 2 through 5. Councilwoman Hodge Washington seconded the motion which passed unanimously, 4-0.

INFORMATION ONLY (ITEMS 6-7)

6. Head Start Birth to Five Monthly Report – January

Information only.

Councilwoman Stark requested staff to provide information on how the Head Start Program may be affected by the federal government in the next monthly report.

7. Downtown Redevelopment Plan Update

Information only. No councilmember requested additional information.

INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION (ITEMS 8)

8. Phoenix Bioscience Core Update

Community and Economic Development Director Christine Mackay and Program Manager Claudia Whitehead presented on the item.

Chairwoman O'Brien asked how much of the 30 acres that started of the Phoenix Bioscience Core (PBC) the City of Phoenix currently owns.

Ms. Mackay answered the City owns all land on the PBC and has leased it to participating universities for 30 years. She noted the land automatically transfers to the universities by the end of the lease.

Chairwoman O'Brien inquired if the City invested any funding to the PBC buildings or programs.

Ms. Mackay explained the City invested 90 million dollars in the initial acquisition of the land and used the Downtown Reinvestment Fund to invest in some buildings. The City also issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the Bioscience Garage on the land, which was built by the private developer.

Chairwoman O'Brien asked if other companies in PBC also have similar arrangements as the universities.

Ms. Mackay answered the only private company that is not partnering directly with a university is TGen. Ms. Mackay noted the company TGen is a long-term tenant located in a City owned building and has the option to purchase the building from the City should they want to do so.

Councilman Robinson asked for additional information regarding the paused construction by University of Arizona on PBC along with the impact of federal funding on the construction.

Ms. Mackay explained that the University of Arizona is heavily reliant on university research grants from the federal government and is working diligently to resume construction.

Councilwoman Hodge Washington asked if there is any indication of concerns moving forward for the private companies that are making decisions to invest in PBC due to uncertainty with federal grants.

Ms. Mackay answered that the Council's ability to showcase the City as an investment destination has led to the private sector looking to invest more and companies in the City.

Ms. Whitehead added Mayo Clinic's recent announcement on the expansion of their campus testifies to continued momentum in the private sector recognizing the opportunities in Phoenix and staff anticipates the interest in the City to continue to grow.

Ms. Mackay asked Ms. Whitehead to provide cumulative capital investment in the last few years.

Ms. Whitehead stated since 2019, 4.7 billion dollars have been invested in primary facilities in the City, which created 11,000 high quality jobs. She noted this amount does not include the 2 billion dollars investment by Mayo Clinic.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION (ITEM 9-13)

9. Consideration of a Possible Shopping Cart Restrictive Device Ordinance

Neighborhood Services Director Spencer Self and Deputy Neighborhood Services Director Anamaria Ortega presented on the item.

Ms. Lisa Bednar, President of the Arizona Food Market Alliance, thanked City staff and Council for engaging them as stakeholders on this agenda.

Councilwoman Stark asked if the Ordinance allows retail stores to have access to alternative measures outside of using locking wheel mechanisms for their shopping carts.

Mr. Self said yes.

Councilwoman Stark inquired whether retailers are given flexibility in addressing abandoned shopping carts.

Mr. Self confirmed that is correct.

Councilwoman Hodge Washington asked how many retail stores do not have any abandoned shopping carts.

Mr. Self answered that a majority of the retail stores have less than one abandoned shopping cart per store.

Councilwoman Hodge Washington inquired what the threshold for classifying large retail stores from smaller stores.

Mr. Self explained the abandoned cart policy is enforced at each store instead of at a larger level.

Councilwoman Hodge Washington asked how the number of abandoned carts are identified and compiled.

Mr. Self said a majority of the carts are reported by residents, and said staff was closely monitoring hot spots that have been identified and works with a contractor to collect the carts, which is used to generate the numbers.

Councilwoman Hodge Washington inquired whether the primary concern for stakeholders was the uniform approach of using restrictive device on shopping carts.

Mr. Self explained conversations with stakeholders led to consideration of alternative devices such as a Global Positioning System (GPS) tracking mechanism, which is new and there is uncertainty around its long-term efficacy.

Councilwoman Hodge Washington asked how many retailers currently have existing contract for shopping cart collection.

Mr. Self answered majority of the retail shops have their own shopping cart collection contracts with a third party.

Councilwoman Hodge Washington inquired if retail stores with higher number of shopping carts also have their own shopping cart collection contracts.

Mr. Self explained there is a mix of stores that may have separate shopping cart collection contracts.

Councilwoman Hodge Washington asked if there is any part of the Ordinance that needs to be a requirement for retail stores to comply with to ensure the effectiveness of the Ordinance.

Mr. Self answered the retail stores' shopping cart retrieval plans will be subject for review by City staff throughout multiple points of time including the time of submission, allowing staff to evaluate the effectiveness of the plan and provide a mandate on use of restrictive devices.

Councilwoman Hodge Washington expressed content that the Ordinance went through sufficient stakeholder engagement process.

Chairwoman O'Brien asked how the City approaches selection of contractors for shopping cart collection and if there is any requirement for contractors.

Mr. Self explained historically only one contractor was available for the contract, but there are new contractors which allows flexibility in the procurement process. He noted having new contractors allows for new dialogues and potential challenges, which led to identification of a need for a cart registry.

Chairwoman O'Brien inquired why staff requires registration at a store level instead of at the larger organizational level.

Mr. Self said that City Staff needs specific information about each store and establishing contact at each store to receive the information.

Chairwoman O'Brien encouraged staff to make the registration process as simple and easy as possible.

Councilman Hodge Washington made a motion to approve Item 9. Councilman Robinson seconded the motion which passed unanimously, 4-0.

10. Spark Area 2 Land Acquisition

Community and Economic Development Director Christine Mackay and Economic Development Program Manager Thomas Sawyer presented on the item.

Councilwoman Hodge Washington expressed her excitement as the item was a community driven initiative.

Councilman Robinson made a motion to approve Item 10. Councilwoman Hodge Washington seconded the motion which passed unanimously, 4-0.

11. Aviation Noise Land Disposal Located North of Interstate 17: Areas F, G, H, I, and J

Community and Economic Development Director Christine Mackay and Economic Development Program Manager Thomas Sawyer presented on the item.

Councilwoman Hodge Washington stated this item was moving in the right direction for revitalizing underutilized parcels.

Councilman Hodge Washington made a motion to approve Item 11. Councilman Robinson seconded the motion which passed unanimously, 4-0.

12. Development Agreement with Aardex LLC

Community and Economic Development Director Christine Mackay and Deputy Economic Development Director Xandon Keating presented on the item.

Councilman Hodge Washington made a motion to approve Item 12. Councilman Robinson seconded the motion which passed unanimously, 4-0.

13. Authorization to Enter into Development Agreement for Sale and Development of City-Owned Parcels at 1016 N. 2nd Street

Community and Economic Development Director Christine Mackay, Program Manager Jeff Stapleton, and Special Projects Administrator Gretchen Wolfe presented on the item.

Councilwoman Stark expressed excitement for more affordable housing coming to the downtown area.

Councilwoman Hodge Washington expressed similar sentiments.

Councilwoman Hodge Washington made a motion to approve Item 13. Councilwoman Stark seconded the motion which passed unanimously, 4-0.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Ms. Mandy E stressed the need to prevent eviction and asked the City to provide legal representation for tenants facing eviction and invest more in affordable housing.

Mr. Juniper Brafford asked for greater inclusiveness in society and access to economic resources for the unsheltered population.

Mr. Eric Mahaffey remarked on the importance of legal representation for tenants facing eviction.

Ms. Pamela Sylvis asked the City Council to put patients' rights to eviction legal services as an item on the April 9 EDH agenda.

Ms. Ruth Kentigian requested the City Council to add eviction legal services item on the April 9 EDH agenda.

Mr. Darren Jezick urged the EDH Subcommittee members to add eviction legal services to the agenda for April 9 EDH meeting.

Ms. Evelynne Castillo asked an Ordinance for eviction legal services be adopted at the April 9 EDH meeting.

Ms. Andre Luna Cervantes requested the Council to add an Ordinance for eviction legal services to the April 9 meeting agenda.

Mr. Sebastian Del Portillo urged the City to provide more affordable housing and take preventative measures to ensure people are not evicted and requested an Ordinance for eviction legal services be added on the April 9 meeting agenda.

Ms. Catherine Branch asked the City Council's support in ensuring housing security for residents in the City.

Ms. Michelle Ashton stated an Ordinance for eviction legal services will Benefit the City address its homeless crisis and creating more homes does not rehouse those that already have been evicted.

Chairwoman O'Brien thanked residents for their testimony and explained there is eviction legal services currently being provided by the City.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Councilwoman Hodge Washington requested an update on eviction legal services to be on the agenda for the next EDH meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairwoman O'Brien adjourned the meeting at 11:56 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Seo
Management Fellow