



**MURRAY CITY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

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The Murray City Council Committee of the Whole meeting was held on Tuesday, August 4, 2009, in the Murray City Center, Conference Room #107, 5025 South State Street, Murray, Utah.

**Members in Attendance:**

Robert D. Robertson	Council Member
Jim Brass	Council Vice Chairman
Patricia W. Griffiths	Council Member
Krista Dunn	Council Member

**Member Excused:**

Jeff Dredge	Council Chairman
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**Others in Attendance:**

Daniel Snarr	Mayor
Frank Nakamura	City Attorney
Michael D. Wagstaff	Council Executive Director
Jan Wells	Mayor's Chief of Staff
Elli Cosky	Salt Lake County Planning
Gary Merrill	Citizen
Tim Tingey	Community & Econ Dev Director
Gabe Epperson	Envision Utah
Ned Hacker	WFRC
Janet M. Lopez	Council Office Administrator

Vice Chairman Brass called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m. and welcomed those in attendance. Mr. Brass excused Mr. Dredge.

**Minutes:**

Mr. Brass asked for action on the minutes from the Committee of the Whole meeting held on July 7, 2009. Ms. Griffiths moved approval as corrected. Mr. Robertson seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0.

Mr. Brass inquired if the minutes dated July 21, 2009 from the Council Initiative Workshop (CIW) should be approved at the next CIW meeting. Mr. Nakamura stated that minutes have a time constraint by state law now that require approval promptly. Ms. Griffiths moved approval as written. Mr. Robertson seconded the motion and it carried 4-0.

**Business Item #1: 2040 Growth Principles - Wasatch Front Regional Council, Ned Hacker presenting.**

Mr. Hacker introduced himself, with the Wasatch Front Regional Council (WFRC), Gabe Epperson from Envision Utah, and Elli Cosky with Salt Lake County planning. Each of them would present information regarding population growth for the Wasatch Front region. He distributed materials to follow the slide presentation. His purpose was to present the *Vision* from the last Regional Transportation Plan showing the *Growth Principles* adopted by the WFRC in October of 2005. The WFRC has visited with all the 46 municipalities and planning commissions within this jurisdiction, which includes Salt Lake, Davis and Weber counties. The WFRC asked that Murray adopt these growth principles as they fit into the ordinances of the City.

Utah has become the fourth fastest growing state in the nation since the 2000 census. There is a fairly young population compared to the United States as a total. Baby boomers are aging. Utah's growth is 62% with only 38% of that from immigration. Statistics from the governor's office show that the population will double in the state over the next 30 years and the Wasatch Front will reach one million residents. This does not include Utah County. That would be equivalent to moving the entire current state population into Salt Lake County.

Mr. Hacker explained some survey questions showing that there is much concern about the environment, traffic and growth by residents. A comparison from 1996 indicates that people felt growth caused some issues, but considerably more respondents felt there were growth related issues in 2007. The 1997 survey was done by Dan Jones for Envision Utah, and the 2007 survey was completed by WFRC for the Vision project.

The *Wasatch Choices 2040 Process* partnered with Mountainland Association of Governments (MAG), the sister organization to WFRC in Utah County, Envision Utah, Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT), and Utah Transit Authority (UTA). The goal was to look at how the community thought it would grow over the next 30 years. Workshops, surveys, community outreach and deliberations were used to evaluate different development scenarios. A total of 15 workshops were held across the county with more than 1,000 participants. Those attendees gave input on how the region should grow according to land use, population and transportation matters.

Mr. Hacker indicated that through this process, nine growth principles were developed. Murray has already embraced many of the elements, including transit oriented development (TOD) ordinances. The purpose is to help the municipalities look to the future and plan smart. The framework may be utilized differently from city to city. What Murray has in place with three light rail stops, and commuter rail cross platform transfer is quite special; the only other place that occurs is in downtown Salt Lake.

The Growth Principles are as follows:

- Provide public infrastructure that is efficient and adequately maintained.
- Provide mobility regionally, with sufficient choices
- Integrate land use with transportation
- Provide housing for all stages of life
- Ensure public health and safety
- Enhance the regional economy
- Promote regional collaboration
- Strengthen sense of community
- Protect and enhance the environment

Mr. Hacker remarked that the handout contains some suggestions for implementation of each of the strategies.

Mr. Epperson stated that earlier he was leading a tour for some national planners showing how the Jordan River trail system and TRAX lines work into the system. These are the types of things that will also be embodied in the larger *Vision*. One of the key components of the *Vision* is a small but a significant shift in the pattern of growth that has been occurring. The primary focus is to look at the development of walkable centers that can absorb a good majority of future growth.

A pamphlet describing the *3% Strategy* was passed out. It essentially shows, through modeling and research completed, that one third of the future growth in housing and jobs can be accommodated in only 3% of land. Transit oriented developments can provide a great amount of housing, which would allow residents to make many of their trips via transit, helping to reduce congestion, and air pollution, regionally.

Mr. Brass commented that it is good to sell this concept to the communities, however, it needs to be grasped by the developers. The Murray Fireclay project has been in the works for a while and the downtown plan is just beginning. They are both walkable plans, however, the rejection from the building community is overwhelming. They insist it cannot be done and there is no market for it. Education of those folks would help the City tremendously.

Ms. Dunn expressed difficulty working with UTA. A request for an additional TRAX stop near residential and commercial development has been refused.

Mr. Epperson agreed that there are some ideas at UTA strictly focused on getting tracks down and parking lots constructed. Other groups see the vision and think more long term.

Mr. Robertson stated that Murray cannot construct the TOD districts without cooperation, and if UTA does not help, then the developers do not want to build.

Mr. Epperson is confident that the region is moving in the right direction and the cities can only lay the foundation for the growth. Midvale is having the same issues.

Mr. Brass stated that the comment by UTA was that if they stopped to let more people on the train, it would slow them down.

The State Street study is being conducted by UDOT. It is like a slow-moving iceberg, but it is moving in the right direction, commented Mr. Epperson. Many challenges have been encountered.

Mr. Epperson shared results from a Dan Jones survey describing the attributes of communities respondents would like to live in. These presentations have been given to the development community, as well. The majority of Utahns are identifying something different from the traditional suburban development. They would like to see a mix of single family homes and townhomes. A mix of ages and family stages has been requested with an assortment of housing that accommodates growing families and down sizing families. People want to stay in their communities with a variety of housing options.

Access to public transportation is desired as the area grows and becomes more urban. A desire has been expressed to have more of a village type development with amenities within walking distance. Murray is a more urban area, and this should not be a surprise here. Open space with parks, trails and nature preserves nearby were requested, and diversity of architectural construction and design was identified as preferable.

Mr. Epperson showed a graphic of the ideal community spatial map. It indicates that people would like parks, recreation, retail, gas stations, library, and hospitals within five to ten miles of home. Then moving away from residential, entertainment, restaurants, doctors, dentists, work, and senior centers are requested within fifteen miles of home. Further still are locations of universities and performing arts centers.

Mr. Epperson proceeded to show some images of growth principles with elements of the *Vision*. Walkable centers include Gardner Village. A development in Las Vegas shows a mix of apartments, shops, and offices. The Riverwoods in Provo includes apartments and townhomes with retail on the ground floor. Sandy is building a diversity of housing with community open space. The Gateway project and others are the type of development that can absorb a lot of growth in the future. Outside the state there were images in Colorado, which is similar to Murray's TOD areas.

Another important aspect of the *Vision* is protection of critical land. Off setting development through mixed use centers address that aspect, and preserves green corridors while providing amenities along those corridors. Increased opportunities for walking, biking, and relaxing is emphasized. Jordan Parkway in Murray was pictured, and City Creek in downtown. Alternative forms of transportation, recreation, healthy living, and quality of life going into the future was recognized.

Balancing different forms of transportation is a key aspect of the *Vision*. Recognizing the importance of the automobile in the future, facilitating and encouraging transit use, walking and biking, are all important in the plan. Murray is the most strategically located city for long range planning in public transportation, with the mid-Jordan line, commuter rail, light rail and the State Street corridor all emerging here. These provide great opportunities for the future.

Mr. Epperson pointed out that the *3% Strategy* and mixed use development near transit benefits in anticipated 18% reduction in traffic congestion, 12% more transit ridership, and 23% fewer square miles of land consumption region wide. The process modeled several different alternatives and infrastructure changes, and none of these models effectively reduced traffic congestion long term relative to improvements in changing land use. Encouraging housing nearer to transit and jobs, by strategically changing land use, will produce dramatic results in regional transportation.

Some implementation strategies have been identified as things to consider, these include:

- Develop a local land reuse strategy in older areas to revitalize, such as Fireclay
- Provide incentives for contiguous growth and infill
- Preserve future transportation and utility corridors
- Create walkable commercial and mixed-use districts
- Plan for Transit Oriented Development, as Murray has created
- Plan and build neighborhood friendly schools
- Plan for workforce housing, including affordable housing study (Ms. Dunn stated that a study has been completed and issues are being addressed.)
- Interconnect roadways and pedestrian paths
- Plan job centers and economic development
- Minimize development and maximize critical land conservation

Mr. Epperson showed some before and after images with growth strategy designs superimposed over areas to indicate how development can be transformed. Changes to the land use and rights of way areas are shown in the illustrations. The developers do need to be on board to lay the foundation. The images include South Salt Lake, Colorado, Virginia and Tennessee showing nice transformations. In West Valley there is planning for a new transit line along 5600 West, where bus rapid transit (BRT) is being considered including a dedicated lane.

Mr. Brass stated that the City has found that until the retail is ready, the residential suffers, such as at Birkhill, where the retail is vacant. For the first business, that problem will exist until more people are convinced that this is the way of the future. Mr. Epperson agreed that the current recession has not helped the development. At the same time, he commented that this slowing allows for more time to reassess planning efforts that have not been a priority during such fast growth over the last 15 years.

Mr. Hacker concluded that the considerable growth of the future and how the region will look in 2040 is fairly uncertain at this point in time. It is incumbent on the jurisdictions to do the land use planning. The WFRC is promoting growth principles in the sense that these strategies will help the municipalities think about the future growth. The goal of this presentation was to ask the City to consider adopting the Growth Principles the way the Council sees fit in Murray, and to implement them through long range plans by looking at different neighborhoods as they develop. He stated that Murray is the hub of the county and it will take the different cities working together incorporating the principles to absorb all the growth that is anticipated along the Wasatch Front.

Ms. Cosky mentioned that she is involved in a program through Salt Lake County called the Cooperative County Plan that has been meeting over the last year. The County has met with city planners and directors within Salt Lake County on a quarterly basis to discuss some of the regional issues facing each municipality. One focus issue will be selected each year, and this first year the focus has been on bicycle, pedestrian and transit routes. All the data from each city has been collected and put into a physical map and an on-line version. Everyone can see the connections in Murray, and also, between adjacent cities this way. It has been very effective in seeing available routes, and proposed future routes in terms of regional usage. She added that her group is working with UDOT, UTA, and WFRC in exploring the opportunities. Maps are available for residents and citizens, and by 2010, plans are to have the map on-line with an interactive feature to input origin and destination, and see the route, how long it would take, and possibly, show the emission reduction by using mass transit, walking or bicycling.

Mr. Brass stated that the City of Murray is a great supporter of all the principles, with TOD ordinances in place. The need to plan ahead was forced on the City when the Intermountain Medical Center was built across State Street. It does drive many planning efforts and just allowing it to happen was not Murray's choice. The forward thinking and planning for walkable communities in both downtown and Fireclay are equivalent to the desire for sustainable building. Giving incentives for energy efficient development and walkable communities is something this Council is very much in support of.

Mr. Hacker distributed the WFRC Regional Transportation Plan with a highway map on one side and transit on the other. He also gave out a DVD called Wasatch Choices 2040 Visual Library, which is a planning tool with montage visioning illustrations like Mr. Epperson showed as design possibilities. There are images showing what five residents per acre look like, and twenty units per acre, and fifty units per acre. It helps the staff and elected officials with references about planning. For those who like the internet, the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget (GOPB) website has a huge library of references with ordinances included. It is extremely useful.

Mr. Tingey added that he had a similar meeting that very day with three

individuals representing the development community. His experience was quite similar in that they state that mixed use does not work in Utah. Builders insist they have never seen an example where it has been successful. There was a very vigorous disagreement between the parties on that topic, and the need to plan for future growth. Some people look at today's market only, without taking into account where the region is headed in the future. The mind set is very common, however, he confirmed that there are some builders that do agree and see the vision.

Mr. Robertson stated that some builders who were enthusiastic to work with Murray have changed, due to the economy.

Mr. Brass confirmed that government entities are probably more likely to agree with the future direction than the development community. The RDA or Council pass the ordinances, although the builders say they cannot build it. Then, as owners of the property, the meetings are a battle between parties.

Ms. Dunn noted that the City officials have stayed with the original plans for mixed use and TOD zones, and it is evident that development has nearly come to a standstill now. Part of it is due to the economy, however, it feels that the developers are out to prove that it will not work. Every compromise with developers has been in their direction.

Mr. Brass stressed that it is the retail/commercial component that has been difficult, as well as the green space, interconnected trails and village community, using the transit oriented approach. The builders will develop residential as densely as they are allowed, but oppose the other elements. It is necessary to constantly remind builders that the view from the TRAX station is as important as the view from Main Street. Mr. Brass added that the City needs the WFRC and Envision Utah to convert others. Murray would love to be a success story.

Mr. Epperson commented that Hamlet Homes, and other builders, have specialized in developing a certain type of home and they simply duplicate it around the valley. They are good at it, it is easy, and they make money. A small handful of developers in Utah will do the mixed use developments, and numerous builders outside the state do these types of projects. The process of identifying developers to work with and being able to select them is important.

Ms. Dunn stated that Hamlet has been willing to work with the City, until recently, and now changes are requested to match what other builders are doing.

Mr. Brass observed that the economy has hurt Hamlet. Had the recession not happened, the City would be further along. Developers and consultants have been sought outside the state in areas where huge projects such as this have been successful. Gerding Edlen from Portland, and GBD architects are leaders west of the Mississippi in Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certified

development. They are very good at integrating historical and new buildings in walkable communities. People to carry out the plans will still be needed.

Ms. Dunn clarified that Hamlet has been willing to work with the City, but now no one else is making commitments. Hamlet is in a difficult position with a floundering development. Other builders say the City must change the ordinances, zones and everything to make it work.

Mr. Brass stressed that the last thing the City wants to do is drive a developer into bankruptcy. Murray is in a difficult spot.

**Staff Report**

**Mike Wagstaff**

Mr. Wagstaff mentioned that he has sent out the first Council Member Communication as a printed document. He indicated that it can be sent by email if preferred, just let him know. Ms. Dunn said email works well.

Mr. Brass adjourned the meeting at 6:24 p.m.

Janet M. Lopez  
Council Office Administrator