



Colorado Springs Downtown Development Authority  
Board of Directors Meeting  
8:00 a.m. November 12, 2024  
111 S Tejon St Ste 703, Colorado Springs, CO

## Meeting minutes

**Board members present:** Chris Lieber, Jeff Finn, Patrick Stephens, Troy Coats, Carrie Bartow (R), Jeremy Shirley (R), Michelle Talarico, Laura Neumann, Jordan Empey, Sam Clark

**Board members absent:** Jim Smith

**Staff members present:** Chelsea Gondeck, Carrie Simison, Ana Valdez, Austin Wilson-Bradley, Kim Oroszi

**Guests:** Ryan Tefertiller (City Planning), Westin Thomas (Westbrook Properties), Ethan Jacobs (Professional Engineer)

At 8:04 a.m., Chris called the meeting to order.

Chelsea welcomed Sam Clark to the Board and provided an update on the Executive Team's efforts to develop both an interim plan and a long-term strategy for selecting a permanent CEO. Laura Neumann expressed her strong support for conducting a national search to expand the pool of potential candidates and attract a wider range of talent.

Jordan arrived at 8:17am

## Minutes

The board reviewed minutes from the October 8, 2024, board meeting. On a motion by Jeff, seconded by Laura, the minutes were unanimously approved.

## Financials

The board reviewed financials dated October 31, 2024. On a motion by Laura, seconded by Patrick, the financials were unanimously approved.

## Governance

### Banking Resolution

Chelsea sought a motion to allow Chris Lieber to be a signatory for the DDA's COLOTRUST account and remove Susan from US Bank and COLOTRUST.

On a motion by Jeff, seconded by Laura, the motion to allow Chris Lieber to be a signatory for the DDA's COLOTRUST account and remove Susan from US Bank and COLOTRUST was unanimously approved. Chris abstained from the vote.

## Grants

### Building Enhancement: Nevada and Boulder Retail Center

Austin introduced Westin Thomas, on behalf of Niebur Development, who is seeking a \$50,000 Building Enhancement Grant for exterior renovations at 326-334 N. Nevada Avenue and 117-125 E. Boulder Street, home to several retail tenants and art galleries. The project will focus on updating the building's

exterior, including replacing windows and glass doors, upgrading signage, and installing new entrance canopies, energy-efficient lighting, and a more visible monument sign. Additional improvements will address stormwater and drainage issues in the parking lot and repurpose the space for tenant use and outdoor events. The property, built in 1950, covers 11,800 square feet and will also see landscaping upgrades and improved fencing. These renovations aim to revitalize the property, enhancing its appeal to tenants and customers.

Staff recommends a total of \$50,000 to be granted to 5085 List Drive LLC (Joe Niebur, manager) for the proposed improvements to 326-334 N Nevada Avenue and 117-125 E Boulder Street, representing approximately 7.1% of total project costs and 16.5% of eligible exterior costs.

On a motion by Carrie, seconded by Jordan, the motion to award the grant to Niebur Development was unanimously approved. Troy abstained from the vote.

#### Job Incentive: Project Kiwi

Austin introduced Project Kiwi, an existing business established in 1963, considering relocating its headquarters to Downtown Colorado Springs. While new to the area, it plans to co-locate with an existing downtown business. The move will create 52 full-time jobs with an average salary of \$105,000 Downtown, contributing 85 new jobs to the broader Colorado Springs area with an average salary of \$97,235. Additionally, Project Kiwi is expected to attract 54,600 visitors and generate 70,700 new hotel room nights annually. The project will also host events at a large downtown venue. Due to confidentiality, further details and the full incentive application are not publicly available. However, Downtown Partnership staff has reviewed the application under an NDA. The DDA's job incentive program is part of a broader incentive package, including land and facility contributions, totaling over \$150 million over 30 years. The incentive is most impactful when provided upfront upon lease execution and job relocation confirmation, with funds disbursed only once these conditions are met. The DDA has not reviewed a new job incentive application recently, as the Chamber & EDC are typically better positioned to handle such requests. However, when Downtown benefits directly, the DDA should consider applications.

Staff recommends a \$104,000 job incentive grant, paid upfront, contingent upon signing a multi-year lease and confirming the relocation of 52 jobs within 12 months.

On a motion by Ryan, seconded by Troy, the motion to award the grant to Project Kiwi was unanimously approved. Jeff abstained from the vote.

#### Emergency Relief: Solar Roast

Austin introduced an Emergency relief Grant (ERG) request from Michael Hartkop, owner of Solar Roast at 134 N Tejon Street, for \$10,000 to support the business after a fire at neighboring Bingo Burger caused severe smoke damage. The fire resulted in a total loss of inventory and required significant restoration, keeping Solar Roast closed for 5-6 months until at least February or March 2025. The damage, including furniture, fixtures, and equipment, exceeds \$140,000, with clean-up costs estimated at \$25,484 to \$75,000. Insurance covers up to \$90,000 but does not cover clean-up costs. Hartkop plans to reopen Solar Roast with a new bistro/bar concept, incorporating elements from his other business, Analogue Books, Records, and Bar. He seeks the grant to cover costs not covered by insurance and expedite the restoration process.

Staff recommends a \$10,000 grant to Solar Roast Coffee, similar to the relief funding provided to Mediterranean Café and businesses in the Majestic Building after recent fires. This grant will help Solar Roast reopen quickly and enhance its business model, making it more appealing to future customers.

On a motion by Laura, seconded by Sam, the motion to award the grant to Solar Roast Coffee was unanimously approved.

## **Old business**

### 3 E's Comedy Club Loan

The DDA provided a loan to 3E's Comedy Club, from which we have received a single payment. The business subsequently closed its downtown location and relocated to North Colorado Springs.. The outstanding loan balance is approximately \$17,000. Despite several attempts to contact the owner via email, phone, and in person, no response has been received. Chris suggested making a final, concerted effort to collect the debt before considering the possibility of writing it off.

### Experience Downtown Plan update

A committee that included staff, the city's Urban Planning Manager, DDA board members, and council member Michelle Talarico reviewed four highly qualified proposals for the Master Plan update and conducted interviews with three consultants. The review committee has decided to move forward with one of the selected consultants and is working on updating the scheduling and executing a contract. The selected consultant offers a robust implementation strategy and community engagement process.

### Environmental Sustainability Plan update

Due to upcoming projects, staff have decided to pause work on the finalization of the Environmental Sustainability Plan. Chris noted that the plan is in a solid position and can either stand alone or be integrated into the Master Plan moving forward.

## **Final notes**

A reminder that the Budget Hearing is scheduled for December 10, 2024, at 8:00 AM. Chris emphasized the importance of having a quorum and encouraged everyone to make every effort to attend.

Laura Neumann provided an update on Pike Ride's current financial situation. Jeff emphasized that the board's purview is to focus on operations within the DDA boundaries. The board requested that PikeRide submit a formal request at the next Board Meeting.

The board meeting was adjourned at 9:24 a.m.