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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT - REQUEST FOR AGENCY COMMENT

DEPARTMENT: CBJ Engineering & Public Works

STAFF PERSON/TITLE: Scott Gray, Superintendent; Bridget LaPenter, Chief Engineer; Rich Ross, Superintendent

DATE: April 2, 2024

APPLICANT:

TYPE OF APPLICATION: AME 18-07 Blueprint Downtown Area Plan

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The draft Blueprint Downtown Area Plan, as submitted by the Steering Committee, is scheduled for a public hearing by the Planning Commission on Tuesday, April 23. If adopted, this area plan will be used by decision-making bodies to make informed decisions about development projects and priorities, directly impacting your department.

LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

PARCEL NUMBER(S):

PHYSICAL ADDRESS:

SPECIFIC QUESTIONS FROM PLANNER:

The Planning Commission (PC) will provide a recommendation to the Assembly on the adoption/amendment of the Blueprint Downtown area plan. This plan touches many CBJ departments and does not belong to any one agency. Your input on priorities, corrections, and other feedback will aide the PC in making an informed recommendation, and increase your agency's understanding of your role in implementing various action items outlined in the plan.

E&PW is integral to the plan's Visions for pedestrian experience, movement, and street improvements as outlined in Chapter 1. Because the plan is so large, we are asking you to focus on Chapter 7: Transportation, Pedestrians and Streetscape. Note the Action Chart at the end of the chapter outlines anticipated implementing partners for the plan Goals and Actions, including E&PW. Please provide updates on your current policies and projects that are relevant to action items in the Blueprint plan.

AGENCY COMMENTS:

Chapter 7 "Safe Routes to Schools" needs to be updated to reflect the realignment of the JSD (i.e. Marie Drake won't be a school next year and JDHS will be more crowded).

Chapter 7 Electric Vehicle Updates:

- There are now EV charging at the Rock Dump, in the City Lot at the Basin Road/8th Street intersection, and at Harris Harbor, funded through a CIP for "Areawide EV Charging Stations."
- Intend to apply for a federal Charging and Fueling Infrastructure grant that will include developing an area-wide charging plan (we were not awarded this grant last year).
- Goal to implement an EV charging permit program (p. 248) should be listed as "long term" rather than "near." At this point, the systems required to charge for the electricity would cost CBJ more than the revenue that we would gain.

AGENCY COMMENTS (CONTINUED):

Chapter 7 Transit Updates:

- The Transit section recommends leasing the concession space at DTC. That's been leased and should open this summer.
- CBJ paid for a Juneau Circulator Study Plan that was discussed at a Special Assembly COW on Feb 12. The Assembly chose not to implement a downtown circulator, but did support a "Tripper" service. Transit will increase summer service to the Valley (using Marine Passenger Fees) as part of a "Tripper" service that seeks to alleviate the crowding caused by cruise ship passengers trying to get to the Glacier. We're also taking actions to better advertise the free downtown loop.
- Electric Transit Buses – We currently have one Proterra electric bus. Despite Transit's best efforts, it hasn't run in over a year (and Proterra is in Chapter 11). Transit has ordered 7 new electric Gillig buses that we expect to receive in Fall 2024.
- Valley Transit Center is now in operation with a parking lot for "Park and Ride" (although the parking lot is seldom used).