

Sustainability and Economic Vitality

Council Committee Meeting Minutes
Virtual and In-Person Meeting in City Council Chambers
31 East 5th Street
January 11th, 2023
3:00 pm

1. **CALL TO ORDER/ ROLL CALL**

Meeting called to order by VM Adams at 3:00 pm with both members present.

2. **REVIEW MEETING MINUTES**

A. December 12, 2022 meeting minutes.

December 12, 2022 meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

3. **PUBLIC COMMENTS** - The committee welcomes public comment. According to the Arizona Open Meeting Law, the Committee may only discuss matters listed on the agenda. Matters brought up by the public under public appearances that are not listed on the agenda cannot be discussed by the Committee. A 3-minute limit per person will be in effect.

A. Comment Cards Submitted

Nancy Schwartz submitted a card on 01/05/2023 and joined via Webex to read:

Like so many other Arizonans, I am familiar with SRP's history and story going back to Roosevelt dam and the early 1900's. SRP has a long and proud tradition when it comes to the Valley's economic development and prosperity. On the local front, SRP has been a force for good – supporting non-profits, arts & culture, community events and local education.

That said, when it comes to SRP's commitment to distributed generation / rooftop solar, I am deeply troubled. Like other customers & ratepayers I am disappointed that my good faith investment in solar is so severely undermined by SRP policies and rate plans which seem designed to punish rather than reward. Investments in renewable energy technology and deployment continue to skyrocket everywhere (especially in Arizona), driving drive down real costs to business and consumers. Yet, in SRP territory, these investments are disincentivized.

Presently, I now find myself with a solar system that cannot become economically viable even with generous federal and state tax credits. Taken collectively, SRP's charges, rates and pricing structure are onerous. I regret the decision of installing solar on Oct 12, 2022. My SRP bills are higher than they were in previous years before solar was installed. I live alone and am not running central heat in my house. I'm worried about summer affordability when air conditioning will be necessary. The way SRP has structured on-peak hours and rates, I see no way families of median income with children could afford SRP bills where rooftop solar is installed.

The Councilmembers on the Sustainability committee should be aware of SRPs' cost prohibitive solar rate plans which inhibit Tempe's progress toward a sustainable future. I hope the Councilmembers will use any influence they may have to course-correct this obstruction of progress toward clean energy solutions.

David Sokolowski submitted a card on 01/10/2023 and joined via Webex to read:
I conduct ADA compliance checks for Valley Metro and FTA circular 4710 requires bus drivers to stop at bus stops that have more than one route. federal law requires bus drivers to stop and signal the passengers, sometimes it's confusing because Tempe was backwards for many years but passengers are not required to wave at buses.

That means our buses will be required to stop at every living room, even if nobody is riding the bus. you're going to disrupt drivers, bus riders and bikers all at the same time.

Instead of removing the bus stops, the city needs to remove on street parking. we need bus bays that can handle 2-4 buses at a time. we need a location where bus drivers can safely deploy ADA ramps. we need to separate the people who are sitting in a living room from the people who are waiting for the bus, so bus drivers can tell the difference.

Tempe has what is called "the last mile" which means that transit riders are expect to walk up to a mile to the bus stop. Tempe has 16,000 public parking spots with in half a mile of mill avenue. (not counting private lots or ASU parking) we're suppose to create a balanced transportation system, it seems fair that if transit riders can walk 1 mile, that drivers can walk at least half a mile. it's not fair to transit riders to remove bus stops while preserving on street parking, that is not a balanced transportation system.

Homeless people can costs tax payers \$40,000 a year, so Tempe is probably spending 16 million per year and will probably spend at least 160 million by 2030. (basically the same cost to remediate 46 acres of land.) our city needs to build 20,000 low income units to prevent our city from becoming like San Francisco and we would need to build 2,000 units per year to prevent an even worse crisis by 2030. at current rates Tempe needs 20,000 units at \$200,000 a unit but by 2030 Tempe could need 30,000 or 40,000 units that cost \$400,000 a unit.

When I say we literally can't afford to wait, the housing crisis could cost our city 30 million per year, while redeveloping 0 properties for affordable housing. if that's the case, Tempe's costs would skyrocket to 460 million by 2040. it would be worth it in the long term if Tempe is able to put 10 or 15 million per year into redevelopment. we need to try and stabilize our affordable housing inventory before it's completely wiped out.

4. COMMITTEE SESSION ITEMS

A. Current Items and Updates

1. City of Tempe Property Acquisition and Redevelopment Strategy

Chad Schleicher from the Tempe Economic Development Department presented on the Redevelopment Fund, intended to prevent blight and assist existing cultural/historical sites in revitalization efforts. Chad listed several example properties in need of acquisition for various uses and revitalization. The request includes an annual CIP allocation of \$5 million over 5 years to fund redevelopment efforts in Tempe starting in 2024. Vice Mayor Adams said she thinks the proposal looks great and it is a great idea and requested a map of the suggested properties for residents. Councilmember Chin asked how they will determine which projects to invest in. Chad said it would depend on when seller/buyer markets are optimal. Maria Laughner said the amount of the request was provided by Mark Day from the Municipal Budget Office, and said it is still theoretical. Chin asked if the \$5M over 5 years was \$5M each year for a total cost of \$25M, or \$1M each year for a total cost of \$5M. Chad

said it was \$5M each year for a total cost of \$25M.

2. **Downtown Tempe Refresh**

Marilyn DeRosa, Director of the Tempe Transportation & Engineering Department introduced Kris Baxter (Tempe Communication and Marketing Office) and Julian Dresang (Transportation & Engineering) to discuss efforts being made downtown. Kris discussed signage, storefront treatments, and other promotional materials projected to be used to promote the Downtown Refresh. Julian spoke about string light replacement on the Mill Avenue bridges, installation of downtown festoon lighting on 4th and 6th streets, the 5th Street Streetscape plan, and the Mill Avenue streetscape and infrastructure project. Marilyn finished the presentation by summarizing different departments' plans for downtown and Mill Avenue, as well as mention of adaptive streets project and smaller initiatives happening now in Downtown Tempe. Councilmember Chin asked if this is something that has been prioritized by the Mayor and Council, and Marilyn said yes. Chin asked for a better idea of the time frame, reiterating that the Downtown Tempe Authority has been doing a lot to put on events and promote the area, but it needs to coincide with these efforts. Chin said moving forward she would like to see definitive dates on when things are happening, and to see if we can accelerate the timeline. Marilyn responded that irrigation and electrical are the most important element as those systems are very old, but those results are often not seen. She said that her staff would meet with the City Manager and Deputy City Manager next to see if there is a way to accelerate the project, and then would get back to the committee with those dates. She reiterated said she could not promise anything in terms of acceleration because it might not be feasible. Vice Mayor Adams expressed concern over the Summer 2024 timeline being too far off and inquired what the specific timelines and phases look like. Both members requested an update on the Downtown Tempe Refresh project at the February SEV Committee meeting.

B. New Items for Consideration

1. *Vice Mayor Adams requested an update on the Cool Pavement project and the development of the County Island, both at the February 2023 SEV Committee meeting. She also requested a presentation from the Sustainability Department at the March SEV Committee meeting on Tucson field trip regarding Green Stormwater program.*

C. Announcements

1. **Earth & Sky Exhibition at Tempe Center for the Arts**
Councilmember Chin talked about the new Earth and Sky Exhibition that will be on display at the Tempe Center for the Arts from January 14th through April 22nd.

5. **NEXT MEETING DATE: Wednesday February 15th, 2023, 3:00 PM**

6. **ADJOURN**

Meeting was adjourned at 3:54 PM by Vice Mayor Adams.

