

**AGENDA MINUTES  
CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF ARCADIA  
ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION STRATEGIC PLAN PUBLIC INPUT SESSION  
TUESDAY, MARCH 20, 2018  
4:00 P.M.**

*The following minutes reflect action items of the City Council of the City of Arcadia. For a verbatim copy of the minutes, you may contact City Administration to obtain a copy of the recorded meeting.*

**INVOCATION, PLEDGE CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

Deputy Mayor Simons gave the invocation which was followed by the pledge of allegiance. The Mayor called the meeting to order at approximately 4:10 p.m. and the following members and staff were present:

**Arcadia City Council**

Mayor Judy Wertz-Strickland  
Deputy Mayor Jaccarie D. Simons

Councilmember Keith Keene  
Councilmember Robert W. Heine, Jr.

Councilmember Jerry B. Alexander – not in attendance

**Arcadia City Staff**

City Administrator Terry Stewart  
City Clerk Penny Delaney

City Planner Jennifer Codo-Salisbury  
City Planner Jeff Schmucker

**OVERVIEW OF PROJECT**

Jennifer Codo-Salisbury of the Central Florida Regional Planning Council advised she and Jeff Schmucker were excited to discuss an economic development strategy for the City of Arcadia. She stated that the effort was funded through a grant through the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity. She explained there were three (3) steps to the process with the first being the current public meeting to gain input regarding the City's opportunities, strengths and challenges. At this time, she turned the meeting over to Mr. Schmucker.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COORDINATION**

Jeff Schmucker of the Central Florida Regional Planning Council shared that this would be completed by June of the current year and he provided a power point overview which included the following: the economic development partners; a map illustrating that the City of Arcadia was 4.3 square miles, the only municipality in DeSoto County and was located at the crossroads of US 17 and SR 70 (major freight and travel corridors that cross the state); he pointed out that the population was just under eight thousand (8,000) people, the median age was

thirty-two (32), the average household was 2.8 persons and the median household income was just under Twenty-Eight Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$28,000.00); he reviewed a housing profile; a map illustrating average daily traffic counts; and businesses that the City has and does not have. A copy of the power point is on file in the office of the City Clerk.

## DISCUSSION

At this time, Mr. Schmucker then opened the floor for discussion and asked for input regarding some of the assets of the City. Those listed included the following: the airport (which could include industry and employment), the location of Arcadia (being at the crossroads of US 17 and SR 70), the Peace River (possible development along the river, i.e. restaurant or boardwalk etc.), the golf course, the South Florida State College and programs offered.

When asked what was needed within the City, the following suggestions were made: bringing businesses back to the downtown (improvements to utilities in the downtown area could support such), rentals for the workforce, possible development of the surrounding area of the golf course to include recreational opportunities, renovation of the old armory for children's recreation, development or revamping of the City Mobile Home Park, recreational opportunity at the Smith-Brown Gym complex, marketing to possibly attract bigger industries which will create a waterfall effect for the City, TDRs (Transfer Development Rights), entertainment opportunities, CRAs (Community Redevelopment Agencies (areas)), ways to encourage building owners to maintain the character and architecture of the buildings.

Discussion included the importance of infrastructure (roads and utilities) in relation to the encouragement of housing and business development. Another item discussed was education and how it encompasses housing for educators and the effect of the grading of our local schools in regards to attracting new residents. Discussion took place regarding the importance of codes and the clarification of codes when it comes to interested parties wanting to develop within the City. As a follow up, Mr. Schmucker stated the City could be more creative when it addresses the amendments to the Future Land Use Element as it relates to such. Brownfield opportunities/grants and demographics were other subjects discussed.

Mr. Schmucker asked for comments regarding challenges or things that were inhibiting the City and the responses were as follows: lack of a landscaping code, infrastructure and its relation to road repair.

Ms. Codo-Salisbury asked what were some key qualities that they would like to preserve in relation to future growth down the line and the following responses were discussed: the historic downtown area, murals, more diversification in the downtown area to pull in the residents, the airport, the Peace River and the small town atmosphere (which included discussion on City Codes and the International Property Maintenance Code) and the older homes within the City.

She then asked if there were any other groups that should be added to the partnerships previously discussed and the following suggestions were made: possible other business owners, Main Street, the Black community and Hispanic community or minorities in general, the Historic Preservation Commission and the Economic Development Committee.

### NEXT STEPS

Mr. Schmucker advised survey boards would be created and placed at City Hall for public input. He also advised a draft of a preliminary economic diversification strategic plan and comprehensive plan amendments would be created, along with scheduling a series of hearings to present the plans and amendments for the City Council's consideration for adoption.

### ADJOURN

Having no further business at this time, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 5:20 P.M.

ADOPTED THIS 3<sup>rd</sup> DAY OF April, 2018.

By: Judy Wertz Strickland  
Judy Wertz-Strickland, Mayor

ATTEST:

Penny Delaney  
Penny Delaney, City Clerk

