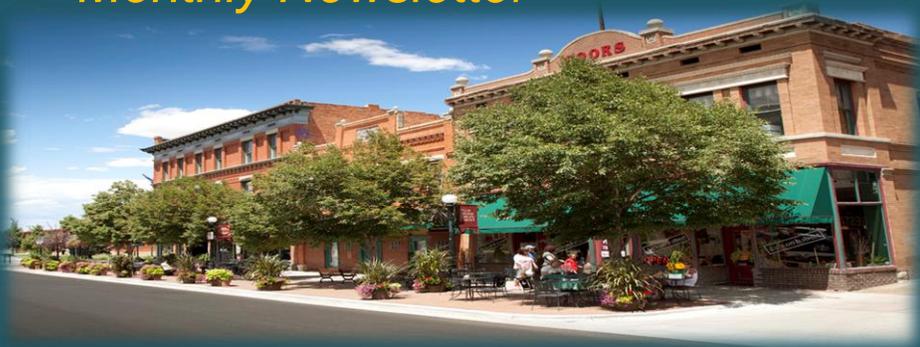




PURA POST

Monthly Newsletter



From the Executive Director

Welcome to our first edition of the PURA Post, the Pueblo Urban Renewal Authority's monthly e-newsletter!

We're excited at the prospect of bringing all the great news about PURA to you on a regular basis, and we're sure you'll find our projects and initiatives to be positive impacts upon our community as a whole.

Few tasks are more challenging than redevelopment—the economics of real estate development dictate that it is nearly always more cost effective to build new structures on raw land versus rehabilitating existing structures within existing urban areas. In addition, the aging infrastructure of all cities makes attracting new economic activity to some areas a challenge. This is the purpose and role of urban renewal:

- to make improvements to our civic infrastructure and revitalize our community; and,
- to close the cost gap of redevelopment, making investments in our urban core a viable option for the private sector to pursue.

PURA accomplishes these goals through a variety of means, including major capital improvement projects such as financing the \$11 million renovation of Historic Memorial Hall, the construction of the Main Street Parking Garage or the streetscape, roadway and drainage improvements of the Lake Avenue Corridor Project. We also work with small businesses to improve their properties with below market-rate loans and grants for building facades, life/safety code improvements, or Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance requirements.

As part of our Pueblo community, PURA also sponsors events and activities that add to the economic vitality and quality of life within our project areas. Our downtown summer events make Pueblo's city center an exciting place to be and create the pedestrian traffic necessary for vibrant economic activity. PURA is proud to be a long-time supporter of these events.

Finally, a critical piece of what PURA does for Pueblo is looking to the future. Our long-term master planning initiatives, whether they are on the scale of regional tourism projects or alleyway improvements, seek to build consensus on a shared vision of our community's future. Explore our first PURA post and join us in rebuilding our city.

Yours, **John R. Batey, AICP-PURA Executive Director**

From the Board Chairman



The Pueblo Urban Renewal Authority is proud to issue our first newsletter to the interested citizens of Pueblo. The effort is to insure that the ongoing projects of PURA are highlighted in a timely basis to the public. Our citywide projects will be discussed in the newsletter, which will provide information

on timelines, progress reports and results.

One example of such a project within our lower downtown is the Regional Tourism Act application (RTA). Since 2009 PURA has spearheaded the application to the state which would utilize Colorado State Sales Tax (TIF) from out of state visitors. This new legislation allows for two projects a year to be funded by this mechanism.

A team representing the City of Pueblo, PURA, Greater Pueblo Chamber, Convention Center, and PEDCO has diligently been assembling and promoting our application to the state. Endorsements have come from organizations throughout the city. There is a strong belief that our hard work will be rewarded on May 18th and Pueblo will be one of the successful applications. Thank you to everyone who has been a part of this process.

Gary Trujillo, PURA Board Chairman

PURA Host ICSC Roadshow

The International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC) is the global trade association of the shopping center industry. Members include shopping center owners, developers, managers, marketing specialists, investors, lenders, retailers and other professionals as well as academics and public officials in more than 80 countries.

The purpose of the ICSC event was to provide a mini-assessment for the City of Pueblo relating to retail development/redevelopment and bring creative strategies that can assist the community.

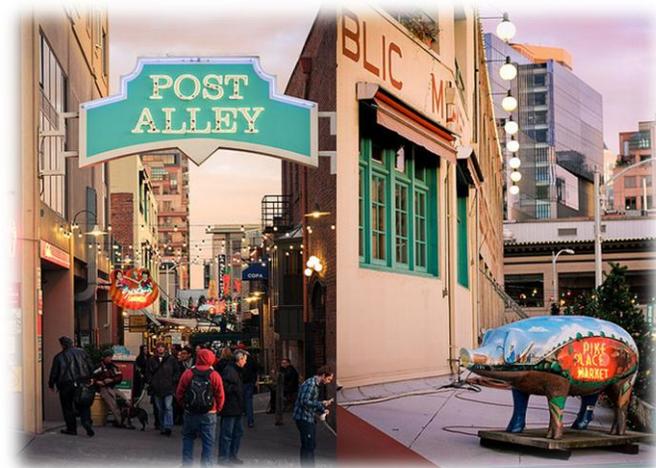
Creating jobs, generating revenue and providing services to the communities they serve; shopping centers and other forms of retail, are undergoing rapid and dramatic change. Likewise, communities are facing similar concerns as shifting consumer demographics and eroding tax revenues challenge public officials to reevaluate the climate for development in their communities. ICSC has developed the Alliance Program to bring about a greater understanding of the retail industry and its economic impact on communities across the country.

To further this effort, the ICSC Colorado/Wyoming Alliance Committee piloted a “Road Show” focused on individual communities. These meetings serve as a forum to introduce the intricacies of retail development and redevelopment to local governments and community-based organizations. A panel of public and private sector representatives was selected to provide an overview specific to the City of Pueblo.

The panelist for the Pueblo ICSC Road show event were: Mac Cummins, Planning Manager, City of Westminster; Alan Matlosz, Senior Vice President, George K. Baum & Co.; Jim Munch, HARP; Don Brandes, President, Design Studios West; David Zucker, Principal, Zocalo Community Development.

Exploring Pedestrian Alleyway

PURA is exploring the potential benefits of enhancements to downtown alleys, in hopes of making them more pedestrian friendly and promote increased use of under-utilized rear lot areas by businesses. Three Public Open House meetings were held to engage the community as well as the business owners who align the alley. Presentations were given highlighting Alternative Design ideas in the study of the three blocks of alley between Union Avenue and Victoria Avenue.



The goal of the Pedestrian Alleyways Plan is to create pedestrian friendly spaces that promote increased foot traffic circulating in and between the Riverwalk, Union Avenue and Victoria Avenue areas while maintaining vehicular traffic for parking and deliveries in the alley.

Topics that have been discussed during two public meetings include: Trash enclosures & recycling receptacles, transitions to patio spaces fronting the alley, improvements to underground utility lines, creative storm water drainage techniques, increasing parking opportunities, and relocation and/or burying of overhead utility lines. A third meeting was held to present the preferred master plan of the project. This plan provided a collective insight to the direction the community and business owners would like to take. PURA is reviewing the Preferred Master Plan and will decide if the proposed project will be funded at the May Board meeting.

Lake Ave. Corridor Phase II

In hopes of restoring the once bustling Lake Avenue business corridor, Phase II construction of the Redevelopment Plan will begin Summer of 2012. PURA hosted a public Open House, Wednesday, April 11, to readdress concerns from business owners along the corridor. A community discussion pertaining to new changes to the Avenue's Phase I and II proposed renovations were addressed.



By means of feedback collected at the initial Phase II Public Open House, held on March 15, Matrix Design Group and Design Studios West (DSW), worked towards a new design to address concerns of the community and business owners within this project area. "The project team has identified modifications to the Phase I, Indiana Street intersection that will better accommodate the 1 to 3 percent of Lake Avenue traffic large trucks represent", said Bob Eck, Vice President of DSW, "we have also carefully studied construction period traffic control and construction phasing to provide measures to lessen impacts to businesses", said Eck.

The redeveloped plan was inspired from the opinions of community, residential and business stakeholders present at the March meeting.



Many people within the Project area and the Pueblo Community are in favor of the Lake Avenue Corridor Redevelopment plan. Megan Murillo, a Lake Avenue Project supporter stated, "the Lake Avenue Project turned out amazingly well. After attending many of the early public meetings several years ago, I was so excited

to see all the design elements come into place. The way the street curves, sidewalks setback, tree line and landscape areas, really make this area ready to be revitalized”, says Murillo. “As a member of P.A.C.E. (Pueblo Active Community Environments), I believe this type of redevelopment makes the Lake Avenue area walkable and bikeable, and ultimately, encourages a healthier lifestyle. Pueblo can use the Lake Avenue Corridor as a model for how to retro fit older streets, like Northern Avenue.”

Pueblo City Council approved the Lake Minnequa project area in 2008 in hopes of revitalizing the once vibrant community. Residents can still fondly recall the crowds brought by the original Colorado State Fairgrounds, jet-skiing on Lake Avenue, and dining and shopping on Lake Avenue. Many identify the neighborhood's decline after the Colorado State Transportation created the I-25 corridor in the 1960s, diverting traffic and potential customers away from the community.

Phase II restoration of the Lake Avenue Business Corridor is the longest segment of the project and will extend from south of Highland Ave. to Elko Ave., Construction for this Phase is anticipated to be completed by Fall 2012.

[PURA Launches New Web Site](#)

While the physical transformation of the Pueblo Urban Renewal Authority is apparent to guests who have visited their new home in the newly constructed Eco Walk Building, located on the Historic Arkansas Riverwalk, visitors to PURA's website may not have gotten the same impression until now. PURA unveiled a new web site, www.pueblourbanrenewal.org, last month to reflect a new image of the Authority, as well as Pueblo's dynamic and vibrant community.

The launch of the redesigned website offers quick and easy access to essential information about PURA, in support of the organization's ongoing efforts to enhance the quality, availability and transparency of information provided to the Community of Pueblo and potential developers.

“PURA's new website is all about providing the public and our redevelopment partners with the latest news and information about urban renewal in Pueblo.” says urban renewal authority, Executive Director, John Batey. “We share our successes and challenges, our partnerships and projects, our history and our future; all in a spirit of transparency and accountability. As stewards of the public trust, it is incumbent upon us to share the story of urban renewal with our community.”

The website boasts a modern, colorful design and is divided into four maneuverable sections. The new site highlights a Citizens Guide to Urban Renewal, information pertaining to the Authority's nine project areas, community and business owner program opportunities and an area of information for prospective developers.

The website's user-friendly nature provides a search engine feature for users resulting in more efficient access to the Authority's resources. Other functions include a news feed and photo gallery, information pertaining to PURA's Commissioners and a customer service section highlighting what the Authority can do for the Pueblo Community. PURA feels the new site will act as an education forum and be of tremendous value to community members, small business owners, developers and partners.

[Pueblo East Side Update](#)

Pueblo's East Side has been very busy this spring, with projects tailored to continue the positive work that has been ongoing for the last three years. The City of Pueblo and PURA have partnered on several initiatives aimed at improving the commercial, residential, and recreational aspects of the East Side. Many of the projects are born organically from the East Side Task Force meetings, which are held the third Friday of every month. Task Force Members and interested citizens unite monthly to discuss ongoing projects and brainstorm new techniques intended to foster positive change and enhance the existing culture.

PURA and the City of Pueblo have been exploring the idea of a “Model Block,” in which a residential block is spruced up through various means in order to create a

positive synergy in revitalizing adjacent residential blocks. Both entities have been contemplating designating the 800 block of East 5th as the possible “Model Block.” Currently East 5th Street is home to the La Familia Community Garden, a property owned by Housing and Citizen Services, and other residential properties that have great revitalization potential. Measures which may be undertaken as part of this program include introducing western water-wise street-tree plantings, infill housing, and historic preservation measures for structures with integrity and significance.

The City of Pueblo, with the support of PURA, has submitted a Transportation Enhancement Grant to the Colorado Department of Transportation, to provide planning and construction documents for safety and aesthetic improvements along East 4th Street. The project spans four blocks, beginning at the intersection of Erie and East 4th and continuing east to Hudson Avenue. The City intends to apply for additional federal funding for safety enhancements and additional Transportation Enhancement funds next year for sidewalk replacement and site furnishings.

Recreational projects for the East Side include the City’s Plaza Verde Master Planning Project and the Great Outdoors Colorado River Initiative. Several projects located adjacent to Fountain Creek and along the Front Range Trail were generated from a partnership between the City of Pueblo, Colorado Springs, Fountain, and El Paso County. The City was awarded a Great Outdoors Colorado Mini-Grant last year for the construction of a Trailhead within the park. The City has reached out to residents living in the vicinity of the park to identify amenities that citizens prefer as part of an overall master plan that will include the proposed Trailhead.

The Fountain Creek River Initiative Project includes reconstruction of 3,250-feet of the Front Range Trail within Pueblo’s Historic East Side Neighborhood, East 8th Street and East 4th Street Bridge Underpass Improvements, an Access and Activity Area that will include a new access from El Centro Quinto Del Sol to Fountain Creek, an Interactive Water Feature, Plaza and Skateboard Park. We will receive notification for grant funding in June 2012.

Undergraduate students from the CU-Boulder School of Architecture and Design, in conjunction with the City of Pueblo have been working on a Praxis Program in which students were tasked with creating a revitalization plan for Pueblo’s East Side Neighborhood. The students spent the entire semester researching Pueblo and Pueblo’s East Side to create a plan that incorporates, civic, recreational, residential and commercial redevelopment strategies. The students presented the plan on April 28th at the Rawlings Library. They received comments from City of Pueblo Department Heads, City Staff, and citizens. All comments will be addressed in the final draft of the document which will be posted on the PURA website and City’s website in June.

Colorado Creative Industry

PURA, Pueblo Performing Arts Guild (PPAG) and the City of Pueblo recently partnered on a grant submission from Colorado Creative Industries. Gov. John Hickenlooper announced Pueblo as a prospective Colorado Creative District this past month. The City of Pueblo is one of five prospective Creative Districts within the State who will each receive an \$8,000 grant and assistance to attract artists, creative entrepreneurs and visitors as a strategy to infuse new energy and innovation and enhancing the economic and civic capital of the community. The program is administered by the Office of Economic Development and International Trade through the Colorado Creative Industries division.



A representative from PURA, PPAG and City of Pueblo attended the inaugural two day Creative Industry

Summit in Breckenridge, CO. This summit was an opportunity for artist-entrepreneurs, owners of creative sector businesses, nonprofit cultural workers and emerging “creatives” coming together to explore the central theme, Cultivating Common Ground. The Colorado Creative Industry focuses on promotion, support and expanding the creative industries in our communities to drive our City’s as well as Colorado’s economy by growing jobs and enhancing our quality of life.

“Colorado is filled with vibrant centers of commerce, culture and creativity, and is a magnet for creative workers,” Hickenlooper said. “The formation of Creative Districts provides visitors and residents with an opportunity to participate and invest in the arts, while contributing to the economic vitality of the region and attracting creative entrepreneurs and artists.”

PURA and PPAG suggested the boundaries for the Creative Arts District are based on the footprint of Pueblo's First Friday Art Walk which began 22 years ago as a grassroots endeavor among artists in Pueblo. This area includes key arts & culture anchors, the Sangre de Cristo Arts Center, El Pueblo History Museum, Historic Federal Building, Rawlings Library, Union Avenue Historic District, Historic Union Depot, Riverwalk, and Buell Children's Museum. These anchors are woven together by private and co-op art galleries, Art & Soul Street Gallery, creative industries, bookstores, cafes, restaurants, and artist work/live space. Additionally, this area provides numerous public gathering spaces accented by sculpture and fountains by local artists.