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DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICES

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COUNCIL TRANSMITTAL

TO: Rocky J. Fluhart *RF* **DATE:** October 12, 2004
Chief Administrative Officer

FROM: Rick Graham, Director *RG*
Public Services Department

SUBJECT: Unity Center Progress Update

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DOCUMENT TYPE: Briefing

RECOMMENDATION: None at this time

BUDGET IMPACT: None

BACKGROUND/ DISCUSSION: The Mayor asked me to direct the Unity Center Project. I have been assisted in this effort by Janet Wolf, Kay Christensen, Sam Guevara, and Rosanita Cespedes (the City Unity Team).

In December 2002, the Mayor announced a proposal to resolve the Main Street Plaza controversy. That proposal resulted in the donation by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints ("The Church") of 2.17 acres of land adjacent to the Sorenson Center and a commitment by the Alliance for Unity to donate \$4 million in funds to build the Unity Center on the land. (James Sorenson also donated 2.37 acres of land near the existing Sorenson Center and \$500,000 to assist with the building of the Unity Center.) In return, the City agreed to relinquish to the Church the easement over the Main Street Plaza. On June 10, 2003 the City Council voted to accept the proposal by abandoning the easement and the City received a donation of \$4,500,329 to design, build and furnish the Unity Center. Those funds were placed in an interest bearing City trust account (interest earned to September 30, \$102,000). On September 16, 2003 the Council voted to authorize the expenditure of \$300,000 of that amount for the purpose of beginning the planning and design of the project.

Subsequently, the City conducted a comprehensive public process to determine what types of facilities, programs and services should be part of the new Unity Center. Through that process, the following activities and facilities (listed in order of importance) were identified as priorities for the Unity Center:

1. Health and Fitness
2. Cultural Exchange
3. Education and Training
4. Medical, Dental and Mental Health Services
5. Resource Center (*e.g.* legal clinic, business consulting, job assistance)

Armed with this information, the City published a Public Notice in January 2004 soliciting organizations that might be interested in becoming a participant at the Unity Center. An Advisory Group was organized to interview and evaluate the potential partners and make recommendations to the City. (A list of the advisory group members is attached.)

Members of the Advisory Group were divided into sub-groups for each of the above-listed categories. Interviews and meetings were held in the late winter and spring of 2004. Following these meetings, the sub-groups reported to the full Advisory Group, which then held several meetings to discuss the proposals and consider what mix of facilities, programs and services would best serve the identified interests of the community. The following organizations have expressed some interest in participating at the Unity Center:

Salt Lake County
Salt Lake Community College
YMCA
Guadalupe Schools
Applied Technology Center
Children's Theatre of Utah
University of Utah
 School of Music
 Department of Modern Dance
 Children's Dance Theatre
 School of Dance (Preparatory Division)
 Theatre Department
 College of Fine Arts
 College of Social Work
 U. of U. Career Services
 Academic Outreach and Continuing Education
 Department of Psychology
 Pediatrics
 Counseling Center
 Department of Education

Law School
Business School
College of Architecture
University Neighbors Partners
Salt Lake City School District
Donated Dental Services
Utah Minority Community Information and Education Center
Intermountain Health Care
Valley Mental Health
The Salt Lake Civic Institute
Wasatch Community Gardens
Utah Youth Village
CAP/Head Start
Easter Seals
Bad Dog Rediscovered America
Utah Arts Alliance

Participation by most of the above-listed organizations would involve only programming in shared space. A few need significant amounts of dedicated space to participate. In every discussion, the City has made it clear that all costs of operation and maintenance will be the responsibility of participants and not the City.

At the present time, three organizations requiring significant amounts of dedicated space want to partner with the City. Those organizations are the Salt Lake Community College, the Applied Technology Center, and Guadalupe Schools. We have sought to increase the space available for development by working with organizations that have the capacity to contribute funds for capital and to attract those organizations by leveraging part of the \$4.5 million in Unity funds. Instead of constructing one building costing \$4.5 million, without enough space to accommodate all the potential programming, we can build two or more major facilities and create an extraordinary Unity Center campus.

\$4.5 million will allow us to build a facility of approximately 30,000 square feet. Our architect, Niels Valentiner, has developed tentative plans for that space, which includes a health and fitness center, black box theatre with an adjoining outdoor amphitheatre, classrooms, a technology center, kitchen, drop-in day care, and flexible space for various community uses. This space would be sufficient for the dedicated space needs of the Community College and the Applied Technology Center and for the shared space programming.

Guadalupe Schools needs 30,000 to 40,000 square feet of dedicated space. We have proposed that we contribute \$750,000 to Guadalupe Schools and enter into a 99-year land lease with them if they will build a facility on the Unity Center campus. This would serve as seed money for their capital campaign (they will need to raise several million dollars for the facility) and would be held for their later use as long as they continue to make good progress in meeting benchmarks that are mutually agreed upon for final

completion. If these funds are used for leverage, the square footage of the Unity Center will be adjusted.

We discussed a similar proposal with the YMCA. We suggested contributing \$750,000 to the YMCA as seed money for a capital campaign they would conduct to build a separate health and fitness facility on the Unity Campus. They eventually decided to conduct a feasibility study on the project, to be followed by a feasibility study on the fundraising potential. We could not wait to obtain a firm commitment from a partner willing to provide the health and fitness component of the Unity Center. We had already had discussions with park and recreation officials in Salt Lake County government, but at that point we began more serious discussions. Commissioner Randy Horiuchi expressed the opinion that the Glendale area was deserving of a County facility. He recommends the use of ZAP funds, but does not rule out other options. The Mayor will continue to be involved as discussions continue. We are determined to have a first-class health and fitness facility on the Unity Center Campus and we will work vigorously with the County to bring them on board.

We will proceed with the Unity Center facility described above and intend to have that building open by the end of December 2005. If we are successful in our negotiations with the County, we will not need the health and fitness space in the Unity Center. That square footage will be used for additional community meeting space, office space and technology space.

If we are successful in leveraging our existing funds and Guadalupe Schools agrees to build a facility on the Unity campus, they will need time to raise capital. Also, the County will need additional time to construct the health and fitness facility. Therefore, the Unity Center facility we plan to dedicate in December of 2005 will be phase one in the creation of a beautiful and dynamic campus.

In addition to the negotiations with Guadalupe Schools and Salt Lake County, our team is exploring all of the potential programming listed previously, developing a business plan, and considering zoning (we have submitted the necessary zoning amendment to have all zoning in the campus area changed to "public land"), legal and all other related issues.

We are continuing to involve the Advisory Board and have also met a few times with the Alliance for Unity. We will keep the City Council informed as well. This project will be a tremendous benefit to our community and we are determined to make the most of this incredible opportunity.

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