

Sierra Vista City Council  
Work Session Minutes  
December 12, 2023

1. Mayor McCaa called the December 12, 2023, City Council Work Session to order at 3:00 p.m., Council Chambers, City Hall, 1011 N. Coronado Drive, Sierra Vista, Arizona.

Mayor Clea McCaa – present  
Mayor Pro Tem Carolyn Umphrey – present  
Council Member William Benning – absent  
Council Member Gregory Johnson – present (telephonically)  
Council Member Angelica Landry – present  
Council Member Marta Messmer - present  
Council Member Mark Rodriguez – present

Others Present:

Chuck Potucek, City Manager  
Victoria Yarbrough, Assistant City Manager  
Chris Hiser, Police Chief  
Brian Jones, Fire Chief  
Laura Wilson, Leisure, Parks, and Library Director  
Sharon Flissar, Public Works Director  
Irene Zuniga, Capital Improvements and Development Manager  
Bryce Kirkpatrick, Civil Engineer II  
Emily Duchon, Library, Recreation, and Cultural Services Manager  
Matt McLachlan, Community Development Director  
Jeff Pregler, Planner  
Jennifer Dillaha, Budget Officer  
Adam Curtis, Marketing and Communications Manager  
Tony Boone, Economic Development Manager  
Dianna Cameron, Economic Development Business Liaison  
Lauren Healy, Tourism Management Analyst  
Jill Adams, City Clerk  
Mike Cline, Human Resources Management Analyst

1. Presentation and Discussion:
  - A. December 14, 2023 Council Meeting Agenda Items ([agenda attached](#))

Mayor McCaa stated that the agenda starts with the call to order, roll call, invocation led by Pastor Justin McPeak, Thunder Mountain Church, the Pledge of Allegiance led by Council Member Landry, and certificates of appreciation to outgoing commissioners.

In response to Mayor McCaa, Mr. Potucek reported on the December 7, 2023, Joint Powers Authority Board for SEACOM Meeting, where their main item of business was to approve a contract for Tammi-Jo Wilkins who has taken over as Director. However, SEACOM is still faced with staffing issues that they are trying to address. He also reported that the City received the

America the Beautiful Grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, just over \$1,000,000 that will be beneficial to the City. Lastly, he reported that the water situation is heating up once again as well with the SPRNCA Gila River Adjudication decision announced in August, and a recent decision on Fort Huachuca's water conservation easements announced by the Ninth Circuit. He and staff are working with the attorneys to interpret both decisions, and he expects to have more information on both of those in the coming months to report to Council.

Consent Agenda Items 2.1 through 2.10 were not discussed.

Item 2.1 Discussion and Possible Action of the Work Session Meeting Minutes of November 7, 2023

Item 2.2 Discussion and Possible Action of the Regular City Council Meeting Minutes of November 9, 2023

Item 2.3 Discussion and Possible Action of Resolution 2023-092, Reappointment of Barbara Fleming, Neil Gago, and Ron York to the Employee Benefit Trust, said terms to expire December 31, 2026

Item 2.4 Discussion and Possible Action of Resolution 2023-093, Accepting the Resignation of Barbara Fleming, and Appointment of Victoria Yarbrough to the Fire Pension Board and Police Pension Board, said term to expire August 1, 2024

Item 2.5 Discussion and Possible Action of Resolution 2023-094, Reappointment of Wesley Hewitt, Berlynda Schaaf and John Moreno to the Park and Recreation Commission, said terms to expire December 31, 2025

Item 2.6 Discussion and Possible Action of Resolution 2023-095, Appointment of Bruno Talerico to the Environmental Stewardship Commission, said term to expire April 30, 2025

Item 2.7 Discussion and Possible Action of Resolution 2023-096, Appointment of Lexi Prickett to the Youth Commission, said term to expire April 30, 2025

Item 2.8 Discussion and Possible Action of Resolution 2023-097, reappointment of Bradley Snyder, appointment of Rachel Gray and Tait Wilcox to the Planning and Zoning Commission, said terms to expire December 31, 2025

Item 2.9 Discussion and Possible Action of Resolution 2023-098, Accepting the Resignation of Stephen Peterson, and Appointment of Kierra D. Wright to the Industrial Development Authority, said term to expire December 31 2029

Item 2.10 Discussion and Possible Action of Resolution 2023-103, Appointment of Keith Landry to the Transportation Commission, said term to expire April 30, 2024.

Public Hearing Item 3 Discussion and Possible Action of Resolution 2023-099, Amendments to Development Code, Definitions Section 151.02.004, Supplementary District Regulations Section 151.04.007, Yards and Setbacks, Special Regulations for Particular Uses Section 151.06.013, Outdoor Storage, Walls and Screening Devices Section 151.15.005, Standards of Design, Matrix of Use Permissions by Zoning District Section 151.22.006, Use Permissions, and Request for 30-day public comment period - Mr. McLachlan stated that the proposed amendments were developed in close collaboration with the Planning and Zoning Commission,

who unanimously voted to recommend their approval at their meeting on November 15, 2023. The Department is now seeking to place the proposed amendments into the 30-day public record for comment.

The amendments involve changing the zoning regulations to allow warehousing related uses in the general commercial zoning district and some recommended adjustments to the outdoor storage and screening requirements.

- Section 151.02.004, Definitions

Currently, “warehouse” and “distribution centers” are defined and treated as separate use classifications. Distribution centers are “a use where goods are received and/or stored for delivery to the ultimate customer at remote locations.” Warehouse is “an establishment where the primary use is the storage of merchandise, products, or materials in bulk for a fee or charge or for distribution to other establishments operated by the same business enterprise.”

The proposed amendment combines these functions under a single definition that is more flexible and straightforward to administer.

- Section 151.22.006

A slide was shown depicting the matrix of use of permissions by zoning district. The City’s Development Code restricts warehouse and distribution centers to industrial zoning districts. The proposed amendment would allow warehouse, storage and distribution as a principal or accessory use in the General Commercial Zone provided: (1) any storage use is deemed low or moderate hazard risk category as defined by the City’s Building Code; (2) the use does not require more than occasional heavy trucking activity as determined by the City based on its evaluation of information or studies provided by the Applicant; and (3) the property does not front Fry Boulevard.

The District Regulations are proposed to be amended to allow outdoor storage as an accessory use in the General Commercial zoning district subject to the performance standards being proposed.

- Section 151.15.005, Walls, and Screening Devices

The amendments under this section remove the standards for mechanical equipment and screening of outdoor storage areas that are being relocated.

A requirement for permanent dumpsters to comply with the applicable City of Sierra Vista Standard Detail for dumpster size as published by the Public Works Department, Engineering Division, has been added.

The screening requirement for roof mounted mechanical equipment has been removed to eliminate roof penetrations that can cause leaks and the need for a separate building permit. The use of a parapet wall for flat roofs on new commercial buildings can be encouraged as part of the architectural design review process to screen roof mounted mechanical equipment.

- Article 151.04, Supplementary District Regulations

Section 151.04.007 currently restricts the placement of compressor units, condensing unit,

cooling tower, evaporative condenser, or similar device on the ground from being located closer to any interior lot line than the minimum setback required for the main building. All such devices shall discharge air in a direction other than toward any lot line within 25 feet of such device. Moreover, satellite antennas shall not be erected in the required front or side yards.

This provision conflicts with Section 151.04.006 which allows ground-mounted air conditioning units and evaporative coolers to project over or onto any required side or rear yard provided they are not closer than two feet to any lot line when installed. The proposed amendment removes this inconsistency.

- Section 151.06.013, Outdoor Storage (Special Regulations for Particular Uses)

The Development Code defines outdoor storage as “the storing or displaying in any open area of any goods, equipment, material, or vehicles”.

The proposed amendment adds a new section under Article 151.06 that establishes use permissions and screening requirements for outdoor storage that align with current practice.

The City placed an ad in the newspaper which described the amendments and provided the date and time of the Planning and Zoning public hearing. One public concern was received regarding the amendments but has since been addressed.

Public Hearing Item 4 Discussion and Possible Action of Resolution 2023-100, Consideration of the Sierra Vista Roadway Design Manual, and associated Development Code Amendments to 151.04.008-Clear Vision Area, 151.08.002-General Regulations, 151.08.003-Street Improvements Criteria, 151.08.004-Street Design Standards, 151.08.005-Street Access Standards, 151.17-Access Standards, and 151.19-Subdivision Regulations

Mr. Pregler stated that the Community Development Department regularly reviews current code provisions and procedures to identify ways in which the staff and the City can improve efficiencies, clarify requirements, and help residents, business owners, and developers move through the system more easily. This practice is consistent with previous City Council Strategic Plan initiatives which have mandated the reduction of obsolete or unnecessary code provisions in expectation of making city government accountable, collaborative, and efficient.

The adoption of the Sierra Vista Roadway Design Manual will consolidate codes and standards into one document, provide design flexibility, be consistent with state and national traffic and construction standards, and will be more user friendly to developers and contractors, therefore meeting the goals of the City Council.

The history and impetus of a roadway design manual began in 2019 with the Traffic Circulation Plan update. During this update the Planning & Zoning Commission discussed access management and asked staff to create flexible standards that addressed access for commercial properties. More recently, the Sierra Vista Metropolitan Planning Organization (SVMPO) included funds in their Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) for the creation of a Complete Streets ordinance. In addition, a City Council Strategic Objective also identified Complete Streets and access as a priority. The Design Manual does contain elements of Complete Streets such as the requirement of multi-use paths, wider bicycle lanes, and reduced roadway widths.

The Design Manual was developed from the Maricopa County Roadway Design Manual and modified to include local standards and practices. The advantages of using the Maricopa County Design Manual are that many of the locally adopted construction details originate from the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG), the document has been codified and used in practice for several years and includes roadway classifications that are consistent with federal roadway classifications.

The Roadway Design Manual includes construction standards for roads, sidewalks, curb and gutter, access management, revised road classifications, revised street profiles, sight distance requirements, landscaping, irrigation standards in the right-of-way, and minimum standards for drive-thru vehicle storage. Also, several Development Code Articles and Sections were either removed or amended.

Slides were shown depicting existing and proposed standards for street classification that require revision to the Traffic Circulation Plan.

Mr. Kirkpatrick displayed slides and explained existing and proposed standards for principal arterials, minor arterials, and collectors.

Ms. Zuniga displayed a slide and explained current and proposed local standards. Mr. Pregler noted that for the number of accesses for commercial/industrial, the existing standard is to generally limit to one unrestricted access, but proposed is one access per site. The existing considerations such as type of use, size of site, location, safety, and other site considerations were used to evaluate access location; however, the proposed standard for additional driveways is the daily volume of one driveway exceeding 1,500 vehicles, traffic using one driveway exceeding the capacity of a stop sign controlled intersection during peak traffic hour, and if a TIA recommends additional driveways.

The standard for number of accesses for multi-family is one access for the first 50 units, two accesses for sites over 50 units, but proposed for a single-family is that during construction, the second access be completed prior to the construction of 30 homes. Completed means all-weather access with drainage improvements and pedestrian facilities.

Proposed distance of access from intersections is proposed as follows:

Arterial ft	Collector ft	Distance
360	250	Distance downstream from intersection to a fully directional access.
180	125	Distance upstream from intersection to a right in/right-out access.
360	250	Distance upstream from intersection to a fully directional access.
360	250	Distance downstream from intersection to a right-in/right-out access. <sup>75</sup>
75	75	Offset distance from a median break to a right-in/right-out access.

Also, the distance between accesses is proposed for principal arterials to be 360, for minor arterials, 360; collectors, 250; and for local, none.

Mr. Kirkpatrick displayed slides of the current and proposed sight distance and criteria.

Mr. Pregler displayed a slide with vehicle storage requirements and explained that a maximum of 30 spaces will be required for banks with more than 5 drive up windows. He also noted that measured from the pick-up window, a shorter stacking distance may be permitted by the City Engineer at the recommendations of the development's TIA as well as measured from point of service to the right of way line for incoming traffic. However, drive through facilities shall be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. A TIA may be required by the City to decide on the stacking distance.

The Community Development Department is recommending amendments to Development Code Sections:

- 151.04.008-Clear Vision Area-including proposed language within Design Manual for enforcement purposes.
- 151.08.003-Street Improvements Criteria-Removed
- 151.08.004-Street Design Standards-Removed
- 151.08.005-Street Access Standards-Removed
- 151.17-Access Standards-Removed
- 151.19-Subdivision Regulations-Relocating language relating to Non-Vehicular Access Easements and Pedestrian Connectivity

Key takeaways are:

- Roadway Design Manual will consolidate Street Design Standards, Access, and Landscape/Irrigation Standards into one document.
- The design flexibility allows for elements of complete streets, and encourages all modes of transportation such as reduced roadway widths, wider bicycle lanes, and 10-foot-wide multi-use paths; and
- The SVMPO and City Council created strategic objectives to develop a complete streets ordinance. This would satisfy the requirement.

Council Member Rodriguez thanked staff for their work and commented on establishments that would be grandfathered in and asked how the new standards would apply. Ms. Zuniga stated that a lot of the examples that were mentioned are on private property; therefore, the City is limited. City staff does make recommendations, but roadways are the City's responsibility.

Item 5 Discussion and Possible Action of Resolution 2023-101, Amendment to Intergovernmental Agreement between Cochise County Sheriff's Office, Sierra Vista Police Department, and Cochise College Community College District

Police Chief Hiser stated that Cochise County Community College District, the Sierra Vista Police Department, and the Cochise County Sheriff's Office are continuing a partnership to operate the Southeastern Arizona Law Enforcement Training Academy (SEALETA) on Cochise College campuses. The City Council previously authorized this intergovernmental agreement; however, Cochise College required changes to sections 3, 6, 8 and 9 of the intergovernmental agreement due to a change in campus location, housing, and training site locations:

- Section 3, The spring academy shall begin on January 16, 2024, and end on May 30, 2024.

- Section 6, For the spring academy, the COLLEGE shall provide facilities for instruction and training of participants on the Sierra Vista Campus, at 901 Colombo Ave, Sierra Vista, Arizona 85635. Facilities include one office with multiple workstations, one classroom, a defensive tactics space, locker rooms with showers, and an outdoor training course.
- Section 8, For the spring academy, COLLEGE shall provide access to housing at a local hotel for up to 24 participants at a rate of \$2,460 based on double occupancy, or \$4,920 for single occupancy, for the period of January 15, 2024 (check in), through May 30, 2024. Housing shall be available Sunday through Thursday each week, except weeks where a college holiday falls on a Monday. For those weeks, the check in day shall be Monday and check out on Friday. A meal plan fee of \$760 that includes lunch only on academy session days. The housing and meal plan fees shall be charged to the recruit's account through the college's business office.
- Section 9, COLLEGE, in partnership with the CITY, constructed a driving track for driving skills development portion of the curriculum.

The Cochise College Governing Board requests re-authorization from the City Council; however, all other aspects of the intergovernmental agreement remain in effect.

Item 6 Discussion and Possible Action of Resolution 2023-102, Support for Tohono O'odham Grant Application to assist with Renovations to the Henry F. Hauser Museum

Ms. Duchon stated that the City submitted a proposal for \$65,000 to the Tohono O'odham Nation to assist with updates and renovations needed at the Henry F. Hauser Museum. The funds are conveyed as a portion of the Nation's 12 percent local revenue-sharing contribution and requires no local match. The funds will be utilized in addition to the generous donation received last year from the Sierra Vista Historical Society to update lighting, replace flooring, replace display cabinets, paint, create a children's discovery room, and to explore technology options that will share facts and history to future generations in modern ways.

The resolution is a requirement by the Nation to accept the awarded funds and will demonstrate the Mayor and Council's support of the City's application.

Council Member Rodriguez thanked staff for putting in for grants.

#### B. Sierra Vista Chamber of Commerce [Rebranding](#)

Ms. Edwards-Barton stated that the Chamber will be 65 years old in July, introduced the members, and their strategic and legislative partners. The Chamber reaches out to New York, Florida, Colorado, Virginia, California, and Washington.

A visual of the Chamber's reach was displayed depicting the southeastern Arizona Sky Islands being partly made up of the Mule, Chiricahua, and Huachuca mountains. The Sky Island reach is Arizona, New Mexico, and Mexico.

The rebranding/name was voted on by the Board of Directors in October and unanimously approved. It is already in the Chamber's strategic plan, and they are moving slightly ahead of scheduled. They are collaborating with other cities and towns, working with the Governor's Office for the State of the State in February, and it is their hope to have all in place prior to

elections to help represent all southeastern Arizona. They will be the regional chamber working in partnership on elections with the cities and towns in southeastern Arizona. They will also be working with the Cochise County Supervisors on three forums/debates, one for each district, and on potential debates for the Senate, House, and Congressional seats.

The rebranding/name is Sky Islands Regional Partnership, Business without boundaries.

Council Member Rodriguez thanked Ms. Edwards-Barton and commented on their work.

In response to Mayor Pro Tem Umphrey, Ms. Edwards-Barton stated that there are other chambers that when going regional have rebranded and went with partnerships as opposed to Chamber of Commerce. A lot of people do not know what a Chamber of Commerce does, but by changing the name to regional partnership helps people more.

Mayor McCaa congratulated Ms. Edwards-Barton. Ms. Edwards-Barton stated that the ribbon cutting is scheduled for February 6, 2024.

### C. [Council Executive Report](#)

Mr. Potucek stated that going into the New Year, the Council will be having meetings on water, the new State and Legislative sessions. He reported that last year the City lost \$500,000 in revenue due to the residential tax and this year it may be the food tax, about \$3,500,000 of General Fund Revenue that has significant consequences. Staff are paying close attention to all funds, but enterprise funds are showing strain as staffing, fuel, and parts costs rose significantly over the past couple years. It may be necessary to increase refuse rates again, in addition to expected sewer rate increases after the new sewer master plan concludes. If the state legislature is successful in eliminating food tax at its upcoming session, a sales tax increase may also be necessary. Therefore, the budget preparation process will start.

He pointed out that Admin is having attention from the media regarding the receipt of the America the Beautiful Grant. The Chair, Brenda Mallory, of the White House Council on Environmental Quality was present, who was thanked for the grant. He also thanked Ms. Flissar for her contribution to the team writing and putting the application together to get the grant. He reported that staff is currently working with the Federal Aviation Administration on an update to the City's Airport Master Plan that is in conjunction with Fort Huachuca. Lastly, he announced that he received a call from the Office of Congressman Juan Ciscomani regarding the City's application for \$4 million funding for BST, which seems to be moving forward through Congress and the number that they are working with was about \$3.7 million.

In closing he invited Council to the City's Christmas staff lunch on December 13 from 11:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. at the Ethel Berger Center.

Council Member Rodriguez encouraged everyone to read the report because it contains a lot of valuable information. He voiced his appreciation at the report about the City's partnership with Cananea, Sonora, the tourism video to share with Cananea, Vista Transit Ride Guide and Paratransit Riders' Guide in English and Spanish, the report on the City's You Tube streaming, the Parks, Recreation and Special events, the staff spotlight on Matthew Ojerio, wastewater issues/repairs, and the moonshot for 2024. Lastly, Council Member Rodriguez encouraged everyone to read the section on taxes in the report where they are broken down.



In response to Council Member Rodriguez, Mr. McLachlan explained the projects that were reviewed by the Department.

In response to Council Member Rodriguez, Fire Chief York talked about the process on calls for snakes and Animal Control.

Council Member Landry commented on the staff spotlight, the bird ads, and Building Enforcement.

Council Member Rodriguez referenced page 42, noting that the SVFMS has responded to 8,005 calls for 2023, a 9.2 percent increase in call volume over 2022. The SVFMS is running an average of 2.63 calls/day for 2023, and if the current call volume continues, the Department will run 9,600 calls for 2023.

D. Report on Recent Trips, Meetings and Future Meetings

Council Member Landry reported on the Transportation Commission Meeting.

Mr. Potucek announced the December 15, 2023, Arizona State Transportation Board Meeting in Yuma.

Council Member Rodriguez reported on the Youth Commission Meeting and his presentations to Fort Huachuca Schools and PEPTEC.

E. Future Discussion Items and Council Requests

Ms. Yarbrough stated that she does not have any items forthcoming.

3. Adjourn

Mayor McCaa adjourned the December 12, 2023, work session of the Sierra Vista City Council at 4:13 p.m.

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Clea McCaa, Mayor

Minutes prepared by:

Attest:

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Maria G. Marsh, Deputy Clerk

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Jill Adams, City Clerk