MINUTES
City Council Downtown Master Plan Implementation and Downtown Advisory Committee

Wednesday, September 9, 2026 – 3:30pm
City Hall Council Chambers

Members Present:	Gary Daniel, Chair Council Member Lauren Wise, Vice Chair, Council Member Nicole Bentley, Heart of Brevard Executive Director Dee Dee Perkins, Heart of Brevard Representative Dakota Chapman, Citizen Member Parker Platt, Citizen Member
Members Absent:	Mayor Maureen Copelof, Ex-Officio Member
Staff Present:	Wilson Hooper, City Manager David Todd, Assistant City Manager Paul Ray, Planning Director Shawnee Cummings, Assistant to the City Manager
Guests:	Abby Steel
Media:	Jonathan Rich

A. Welcome & Call to Order

Chairman Gary Daniel called the meeting to order at 3:30pm.

B. Certification of Quorum

Assistant to the City Manager Shawnee Cummings certified that a quorum was present.

C. Approval of Agenda

Mr. Wise moved, seconded by Ms. Perkins to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

D. Approval of Minutes

Ms. Perkins moved, seconded by Ms. Bentley to approve the minutes of the August 12, 2026 meeting as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

E. Update on Co-Ed Theater

Mr. Hooper said since the last update, the outlook has gotten more challenging. Remediation for the Co-Ed Theater is complete, but remediation alone is going to cap out the insurance policy. Therefore, the Department of Commerce grant and potential donations the City hopes to raise will be needed for the first phase of repairs, as opposed to the second phase. Now that the building is "down to the studs," an additional complicating factor is that the repair may require that the building be brought up to code and there are some deficiencies to the building that cannot be overlooked, regardless of what the code says. Staff also met with the Fire Marshal and Building Inspector, who recommended the City put out a solicitation for a third-party architect to advise the City on what code standard the building needs to meet and provide a cost estimate. The architect's assessment will inform the City's fundraising target and indicate whether repairs should be done in phases or all at once. Mr. Hooper said he thinks the repairs will likely be substantial enough that we need to do them all at once and we may be looking at a prolonged closure. The solicitation is out, will need to be posted for a month, and then the City will choose its architect soon after. Mr. Hooper added that he does not know how long their work will take, but the goal is to have the architect's work by the end of the calendar year so that Ms. Bentley can use it to inform the grant application with NC Department of Commerce and the City can know what its fundraising target is.

Mr. Todd added that during remediation, there were some deficiencies in the building that were discovered and now that we know they are there, we need to address them. He added that the solicitation deadline is October 9th and the solicitation includes (1) identification of the minimum we need to do to reopen the theater, (2) evaluation of what level of change the minimum will fall under (renovation, alteration, or reconstruction) with the associated cost estimates, and (3) the architect's proposal and construction drawings. Mr. Todd said we may also have the architect complete the first 2 items until we decide what we are going to do and then proceed with the third item once we have a plan. Ms. Steel said everyone is on the same page about where things are going, although there is still uncertainty.

Mr. Platt asked if there is a threshold below which the City does not need to do a competitive solicitation. Mr. Todd said with architectural and engineering services, it is a qualification-based selection that follows the Mini Brooks Law and there is an exception to the Mini Brooks Law for work less than $50,000. He assumes that even the assessment is likely to exceed $50,000, so that is why there was a solicitation.

Ms. Perkins asked what the grant timeline is. Ms. Bentley said the next grant cycle ends in mid-January and we would be notified of any award the following month. She added that as long as we fill out the application and have the matching funds, we meet all of the criteria. The funding awarded is based on the number of full-time employees on the block, which includes City Hall's employees in this case, and each employee is valued at $12,500 up to $850,000. It will require a 5% local match.

Mr. Todd said the timeline is ambitious, as the solicitation is posted through October 9, and then we will have to choose firms to interview, interview, select, negotiate a proposal, and give them time to put their work together. It will be a challenge to get full cost estimates by December. Ms. Bentley said the grant itself is reimbursement and the award will be based on the number of employees on the block.

Mr. Wise asked if the grant is offered annually. Ms. Bentley said no, the last cycle ended in August, but we are only eligible once per fiscal year for the same project.

Committee Comments

Mr. Daniel said the Committee discussed how the Downtown Master Plan will only be able to be implemented with grant funding and he would like for Staff to regularly report on how that is progressing. He added that he would like some assurance that Staff are actively pursuing grants. Mr. Hooper said it will be added to the next agenda and he will find a format to discuss it regularly and constructively. Ms. Perkins agreed and said if grants are the only option, then we need to know grant possibilities, timelines, and the cost of a grant writer. Mr. Daniel said there was a budget request for a grant writer and it would be helpful to see how that need evolves. Mr. Hooper said Council will likely see that request again in the next budget year, as the need for a grant writer has grown beyond this Committee and is becoming more important to the organization as a whole.

Mr. Hooper said the Parking Study will be presented to Council at the next meeting and he will probably ask Council to refer the study and its list of alternatives to this Committee for discussion. It will be presented publicly before the Committee gets into the details of the study. The study gives a handful of options to improve parking downtown, so this Committee would be the one to evaluate those options.

Mr. Platt asked if the Committee has discussed the Circulation Study or what the Committee's relationship to the study is. He would like to discuss it as a Committee because the traffic pattern discussion is impactful to downtown. Mr. Ray said they have one more public engagement session left and a survey will also be put on the City's website, so they will be waiting for feedback and collecting data. Mr. Hooper said McAdams is conducting the study for the state and would probably give us a briefing if we ask. Mr. Ray added that the City is a client, the County is a client, and the State is funding most of it. Mr. Hooper said we can add it to a future agenda and ask them to give us a briefing after they finish gathering data.

Ms. Perkins said she talked with McAdams at one of the engagement sessions and stated that it seems like the number 1 option, based on the way it was presented, is the one-way pair. She added that the impacts are substantial to economic development and the viability of downtown, and the one-way pair does not seem to meet any of the goals of the study. She asked McAdams what would be required to remove the one-way pair option from consideration and direct any funding for that option to research other possibilities to improve safety and traffic movement.

McAdams advised that they are the consultant in the study, so the request would have to come from the client and the client specifically requested that the one-way pair be considered alongside other options. Ms. Perkins further emphasized the impacts to small businesses downtown and future growth.

Mr. Ray said without completing the public engagement sessions and seeing the data, we cannot rule that option out yet. Mr. Daniel said the City is a client and the City could say that. Mr. Ray asked without seeing the data? Mr. Daniel said yes, we could. Mr. Hooper said out of fairness, the State should have a say since they paid for the majority of the study and the one-way pair does perform well on one criteria, which is moving traffic. Mr. Platt said the State is not the only client and each client gets to have their say. He added that the Downtown Master Plan in its current form would be seriously impacted by any change to traffic patterns, and he does not know why it is not coming directly to this Committee, as they are to advise Council on issues affecting Downtown and Council will look to this Committee for direction.

Mr. Platt moved, seconded by Ms. Perkins to send a recommendation to Council that, as a client, the City recommend that one-way streets be removed from the options.

Mr. Daniel noted that at the engagement sessions he attended, it was presented that McAdams was tasked with looking at one-way pairs and that it was their primary intent, which he finds disconcerting. He said the data presented about how well one-way pairs work have nothing to do with the situation in Brevard.

Mr. Hooper said he discourages the Committee from taking this action, primarily because studies should be allowed to conclude and this is a meritorious enough idea to at least find its way to the end of the study. He added that the data has shown that the current configuration has deficiencies that need to be addressed and this is one of the options being evaluated and he thinks we need to hear them out. Data has shown the intersections back up and people make unsafe decisions due to the length of the signals. A one-way pair could make the roads more pedestrian-friendly and still move traffic through town. While not published yet, one of the parking study findings is that spots near City Hall are significantly less utilized because people do not want to cross Caldwell St. in its current configuration. He added that any prospective solution that could improve pedestrian accessibility is at least worth hearing, so to arbitrarily remove it before the study has completed is premature. Mr. Daniel said he personally thinks the study should have never taken place.

Ms. Bentley said it may be arbitrary to our case, but there are plenty of cases and studies nationwide that show that the one-way pair is going to affect visitation, so we will not have to worry about pedestrians because visitation is going to decrease. She added that the City should consider what that looks like in terms of property taxes and sales tax revenue, as they are important to the City's budget. She does not think the one-way pair will be good for existing businesses, economic growth, or future investment. Mr. Hooper said that may be true, and he would like to read those studies because they are cited often. He added that he'll bet that every one of those

cities where the studies were performed have another option for traffic, and we do not. Brevard does not have a bypass or a ring road, and the two main roads have to be the City's thoroughfares. He added that if they are not addressed somehow, they will continue to be dangerous crossings and barriers to this end of Main St. Ms. Bentley said she feels that it will either be a band-aid solution, do nothing, or a one-way pair, but she does not feel that the options being considered are beneficial to us. Mr. Hooper said that is just not true, there were 4 options presented in great detail at that meeting. Ms. Bentley said at the public engagement meeting, very little was presented and it tasked people with interpreting it themselves. Ms. Perkins emphasized the impact of tourism in Brevard as one of our biggest industries and said if you are not careful, you are going to see higher turnover of businesses.

Mr. Wise said he has not seen the results of public engagement, but he has talked to a lot of people and no officials are in favor of the one-way pair. He said everyone is in favor of looking at circulation comprehensively. He added that this may be a good solution for other places, but not for Brevard. Mr. Wise said he talked to Vicki Eastland and Land of Sky and was told that if there is enough public outcry, they will not pursue the one-way pair, but he is not comfortable leaving it up to that. He said it is better to nip this in the bud now before we get further down the road, and we need to have our voice heard. He is sympathetic to Mr. Hooper's concerns, but he also knows it takes him 90 seconds to turn at the lights, so when people say they are not able to turn left at the lights, he does not think it is a real problem.

Mr. Daniel said if we say it now, it allows McAdams to more thoroughly vet the other options and figure something else out, as opposed to doing all the work focusing on the one-way pair and not having a fully developed back-up plan.

Mr. Platt said no one contests that we have a challenge and have had a challenge, as there are two highways running through our town. He added that while the City did not pay the majority of the cost of the study, they will bear the majority of the impact and it will become a divisive issue that we do not need to be dealing with.

Mr. Platt called the question. All members voted in favor and the motion carried unanimously.

F. Public Comment

No members of the public spoke during public comment.

G. Set Date for Next Meeting – Wednesday, October 14, 2026 at 3:30pm

The next meeting, a joint meeting with the Parks, Trails, and Recreation Committee, was scheduled for Wednesday, October 14, 2026 at 3:30pm.

H. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:08pm.

Minutes Approved: October 14, 2026

X _____
Gary Daniel, Committee Chair
Lauren Wise, Committee Vice Chair

X Shawnee A. Cummings
Shawnee Cummings
Assistant to the City Manager