

**Cuyahoga Falls City Council**  
**Minutes of the Public & Industrial Improvements Committee**

**March 20, 2017**

**Members:** Jeff Iula, Chair  
Adam Miller  
Mary Nichols-Rhodes

Mr. Iula called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. All members were present.

The minutes from the March 6, 2017, Public Improvements meeting were approved as written.

Mr. Miller made a motion to amend Temp. Ord. B-23; second by Ms. Nichols-Rhodes. Motion passed (3-0).

**Legislation Discussed:**

Temp. Ord. B-23 (Sub. Dated 3-20-17)

**Discussion:**

**Temp. Ord. B-23 (Sub. Dated 3-20-17)**

An ordinance authorizing the Director of Public Service to enter into a contract or contracts, according to law, for the Downtown Transformation Design-Build Project, and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Iula stated that Mayor Walters would like to speak about the ordinance. Mayor Walters stated that it's taken 40 years to get to this chapter of resurrecting Cuyahoga Falls' downtown, but the downtown concept was established long before anyone was born. Two hundred and five years ago, when Cuyahoga Falls was founded, the Front Street corridor was the epicenter from which the city grew. Way back in 1812, the downtown live, work and play concept was alive and well. Ironically, in 2017, the fascination still exists. The downtown transformation project before Council today has been the quintessential example of collaboration in the city. The research, planning and dialogue has been immense. The City is laying the groundwork to turn a collective vision for downtown into a reality by forging partnerships between the public sector and private investors involved in the transformation process. Mayor Walters stated that he wanted to recognize the efforts of the Development Department, Diane Sheridan, Sarah Ledum, Fred Guerra and Carrie Snyder for all their late nights and weekends working on planning the project meetings and presentations. Special thanks to Kelli Crawford-Smith for her outstanding work; Finance Director, Bryan Hoffman, for making this affordable while maintaining the City's high credit rating; Russ Balthis and Janet Ciotola, from the Law Department, for their legal research on all the contracts and agreements; Anthony Zumbo and Tony Demasi for their vast experience in engineering, review and oversight for all the proposals; the Historic Design and Review Board for allowing the City to capture State and Federal grant dollars; the festival promoters for their valuable input on project planning to best fit their needs; the property owners Joel and Paul Testa, John Chlebina, Brent VanFossen, the Saffles family, Don Dietrich, Steve Krutowsky, Tom Bartelbaugh, Rick Krochka, Bob Sullivan, among many others, for their help through this process,

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as well; also Congressman Tim Ryan and Congressman David Joyce for their support of the project. Mayor Walters stated he further wants to recognize the Council members that went on the fact-finding bus trip, Council President Mary Ellen Pyke, Councilor Vic Pallotta, Councilor Mary Nichols-Rhodes, Councilor Paul Colavecchio and Councilor Mike Brillhart. Also, the Council members who have attended public meetings and offered their valuable insight include Councilor Jerry James, Councilor Vince Rubino, Councilor Jeff Iula, Councilor Adam Miller, Councilor Carol Klinger, Councilor Russ Iona. Special note and thanks to Councilor Russ Iona and Councilor Mary Nichols-Rhodes for serving on the bid review and selection committee, and, most importantly, the public. There have been many hundreds, if not thousands of people involved in planning this project through numerous community meetings, booths at the Natatorium, Acme, Giant Eagle, personal visits, comment cards, electronic surveys and other personal interactions. This project is to capitalize on the opportunity for increased property values, job creation, attraction of outside dollars and to, once again, like 200 years ago, have a vibrant downtown Cuyahoga Falls everyone can be proud of. If a thriving downtown which will benefit all residents is important, then opening to street to traffic is what must be done.

Mr. Guerra thanked Mayor Walters for his leadership. He stated that tonight's meeting is an overview of everything that has been worked on since the beginning of this project. When they went to Oak Park, Valparaiso and South Bend, they videotaped the business community and the government officials who went there. It is on the City's website. Mr. Guerra played the video for Council and the audience. Mr. Guerra stated that, in 2015, they started the process knowing that they had to open the mall. They had seen what has happened to downtown over the last 40 years and something had to be done. They went out for Request for Proposal and looked at three things: One was converting the pedestrian mall to a two-way street with parking; to take the one-way connectors that are north of the downtown, Second Street and Front Street, and turn those into two-way streets and Route 8 had to be configured. Mr. Guerra stated that they started looking at making downtown the heart of Cuyahoga Falls. It's the central business district. They also wanted to improve economic development in the city. They wanted to take advantage of the Cuyahoga River asset. There is a highway that has 85,000 to 90,000 cars whizzing by Monday through Friday. Portage Trail gets about 20,000 cars a day and Broad Boulevard gets between 10,000 to 12,000 cars a day. There is all this traffic, but it doesn't slow for the downtown. The problem is a pedestrian mall that doesn't allow the downtown area to be seen or easily accessed. When the process was started, they wanted to accommodate multiple users: Pedestrians, bikes, cars. They wanted to accommodate social interaction by continuing to have festivals and having people meet downtown to go out to eat and do other things. They wanted to improve the hardscape and the landscape, to capitalize on building-scale architecture and to build something that will support retail growth.

In the 1970's and early 1980's, with urban renewal, it was decided that Cuyahoga Falls needed to compete with Chapel Hill Mall and with other malls by making a pedestrian area that people will come to and shop. A mall was created. Parking decks were built. There were vacancies. People were only coming down for festivals. Retailers couldn't stay open. There were some key things that had to be done: Historic preservation by creating historic districts, improving the decks by

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upgrading the lighting and installing elevators. Starting in 2015, the goal was to get to this place. Public meetings were held where experts were brought in. There were open houses. There are only 11 retail businesses in the central business district and there is about 200,000 square feet. Different designs were reviewed and traffic studies were performed. They looked at other cities that did an excellent job. After going through everything, they ended up coming up with a hybrid plan that took the best of each of these studies and put them into the plan. The City owned the Falls Theater.

Mr. Guerra stated that Mr. Robert Gibbs talked about marketing for downtown. He showed the findings in a market study that said that the City could absorb about 215,000 square feet of retail in their market and create 50 to 80 new businesses generating about \$68 million in sales every year. There was an inventory of the historic buildings in downtown, and a local historic district was created. The first thing that was done was the circulation plan. They did a retail market analysis and a residential market analysis. They did a historic survey report. These reports are on the City's website. They did a condition survey so they knew what the cost is to do these decks. They did a fountain evaluation. Osborne did the 40-percent design-build engineering. When the circulation plan was done, the costs were estimated. To do what is being done today is about \$11 million. Osborne came in close at \$10,900,000. It's a design-build project, which means 40 percent of the engineering is done and people bid on finishing the engineering and, also, building the project, opening the pedestrian mall and converting the one-way streets.

Mr. Guerra stated that they advertised on December 11, December 18th and the 25th. They were due March 1st. On March 3rd, the Technical Review Advisory Committee met to review the technical portion. The bids were a sealed price bid and technical proposals and graded on both. On March 7th, the City opened the price proposals and selected the best proposal. They had five companies bid on the project: Cavanaugh, H.R. Gray, Karvo, Kenmore and Burke. The one that received the highest technical score and the second highest price was H.R. Gray at 98.52. The H.R. Gray proposal had a good personnel team. They had Hammontree, which is an established engineering firm, that will finish up the drawing. They had an established traffic engineering team that was assembled well. They had an independent quality manager, Lou Ciraldo, and the Dale Bennett Company that does public relations and works on a lot of ODOT projects. There are two landscaping firms that were going to do the landscaping. Their technical proposal also included four phases. Phase I was they were going to start on the architectural and engineering design first. They were going to start on the Front Street-Second Street one-way to two-way street configuration in Phase II. Phase III is the North Mall conversion. Phase IV is the South Mall conversion. Their community relations include business outreach, resident outreach and media relations, webcams, banners, social media. The highlight of their project is they are going to complete this project in 9 months; 5 to 6 months quicker than anybody else. They had the only definitive plan for commemorative bricks, a spray fountain, the green parking deck and north fountain. Their plan is to use the commemorative bricks at the new spray fountain, so people could stand and look at the bricks in a prominent location. This team had an independent manager, Lou Ciraldo, who would be available throughout the project to independently look at the project. The construction manager and the work zone traffic managers were available 100 percent of the

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time. They have vast experience in design-build construction and the construction management at risk. They met or exceeded all design criteria. They're the only ones that have an alternate plan for the deck. They have a more architecturally-satisfying new entry to the green deck, doing some work to the front of the deck and potentially having a beacon of light coming out of it. They recreated the north fountain so that it looks like a lot like the existing fountain. They have a comprehensive pedestrian access plan during construction. They have an experienced construction communications manager. They are going to install temporary lights, because, once this project starts, the electricity on the street is off. They are starting at the end of March, early April, and it will be completed December 31st. The official ribbon cutting will be in spring. Mr. Guerra stated that the project, as it is done today, the street, including the deck renovation is about 2 to 1 benefits over cost. With the first two developments, the hotel and theater, the benefits outweigh the cost 3 to 1. Looking at job creation, the market studies indicated there is available about 215,000 square feet of retail. Based on common multipliers from the San Diego Association of Governments, if everything is built out again, they will have about 1,000 employees downtown.

Mr. Robert Gibbs stated that he appreciates having the opportunity to work with the City and the community. They did a market analysis and found an overwhelming demand for at least 200,000 square feet of additional retail. That's a conservative model, generating over \$65 million a year in new additional retail sales and restaurant sales. The pent-up demand is because it's a pedestrian mall. The mall concept of driving, parking and spending an hour or two shopping has gone away. That's why the enclosed malls are dying. The shoppers today are very time stressed. They're single parents. They're two-income families. They like to be able to drive down the street and shop in an environment where they can see the store from their car, park nearby and get in and out of the store. They also like the experience of being in an urban area, rather than shopping online or going to a strip center. Historic downtowns are exactly what they like. The City is seeing a hint of that already with South Front Street, where there are several restaurants that have emerged there because there's a street and there's on-street parking. He stated he would be happy to answer questions and encourages the City to move ahead.

Mrs. Pyke asked if they took the development on South Front Street into consideration when they looked at the mall area. Mr. Gibbs stated that they factored in all the existing businesses and businesses that had been proposed that hadn't opened yet, including the Japanese steak house and bistro. Mrs. Pyke asked how many eateries are in the plan presented to the City. Mr. Gibbs stated that 65,000 square feet of the 215,000 square feet are restaurants and food and beverage, bakeries, coffee shops and brew pubs. They found a demand for an outfitter sporting goods store and several clothing and shoe stores. They found a strong demand for a pharmacy and for gift shops. Stewart Zall, who is doing business recruitment for the City, has confirmed the number. They interviewed a lot of businesses in the area that expressed interest in coming into Front Street if it were a street. Mrs. Pyke asked if they found businesses that felt that they would be able to stay through all the construction. Mr. Gibbs stated that there were several businesses that said they were looking forward to the street opening. They're concerned about the nine months of construction, but they feel very positive about it.

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Mr. Brillhart asked if there was potential for soft goods like a TJ Maxx or Marshall's. Mr. Gibbs stated that it is plausible they can get four to five strong national retailers to come here. It may take a year or two for that to happen, but the market is very strong here for that. Mostly, it would be regional and local retailers, but they will find several national retailers liking this market. Mrs. Pyke asked if they have found that some of these larger retailers that are closing in the area, for example, Macy's, are moving into these smaller urban buildings. Mr. Gibbs stated the larger department stores are not, because, in their business model, the mall owner must give them \$10 million cash to go into the mall, and downtowns can't afford to do that. There are newer versions of these; Target has a new and urban model that's the size of a large drug store and they're opening in downtowns. The smaller, new department stores like it. The vast trend is for the new retailers to only locate in either new town centers, like First & Main, or historic downtowns. It's unusual that Cuyahoga Falls has three parking garages. Usually, they have to go to downtowns that have serious parking crises. The City has a real trump card in the fact it has historic buildings, a new street, parks and squares and a lot of free parking in garages. That's highly unusual and highly desirable.

Mr. Colavecchio asked, as far as traffic patterns, did they factor in that the Menards is going in. Mr. Gibbs stated that they were aware of that. They assumed about 7,000 or 8,000 cars per day on Front Street. He thinks they will have nine or ten thousand cars per day. They set a primary and secondary trade area. In the Cuyahoga Falls total trade area, they found over 300,000 people that could be attracted to come to this downtown. It's a very large market of underserved people for retail. Mr. Iula asked if Mr. Gibbs sees Chapel Hill even being open in five years and everything coming their way. Mr. Gibbs stated that he doesn't know enough about Chapel Hill to comment on it, but there's about 2,000 malls like Chapel Hill in the United States, and it's forecast that at least 50 percent of them will be closed in five years.

Mr. Brillhart asked if they will be dependent on anchor stores. Mr. Gibbs stated that the City's downtown doesn't have to have anchors. Restaurants will be the first businesses to open here and those will serve as the anchor. The brilliance of the old Main Street is that people can drive through it and see the small business's storefront and display window. That small business doesn't have to advertise, because there is traffic going by the front. In a pedestrian mall, every business had to advertise, and small businesses don't have the capital to do that. He would like to see the theater get restored. That would be a fabulous anchor. The urbanism and the historic buildings that the City has will be a draw. Mr. Brillhart asked if there is the possibility for a Trader Joe's or a high quality, organic food type market. Mr. Gibbs stated they ran four studies to see if they could get a grocery store. He couldn't find statistical demand, because the City is so well served by the fine grocery stores here. There is something called the whole foods effect, where if people can walk to a grocery store and a coffee shop, they pay 15 to 20 percent more for their apartments. Houses that are within a 5-minute walk of a grocery store or whole food store are worth 12 percent more. Having a vibrant downtown will help the surrounding neighborhoods and it will be a magnet for major employers. The employers, to attract the 20-year-olds, like to be in downtowns, because 20-year-olds don't like working in an urban office park where they have to walk to a chain

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restaurant. If the City is going to build this, it would be a big attraction for major employers that would want to locate on or near your Front Street.

Mr. Timothy Parkinson, 2038 7th Street, stated that, in the 1960's, he marched in the Falls High Band down Front Street on Memorial Day. He thinks it would be the great to have that possibility again. As far as historic aspects of the downtown, he is all in favor of that. Some of the buildings, since the mall was built, have gotten bland looking and have been covered over. One of the best places that still exists is the popcorn shop. The second-floor window there is just wonderful. It needs restoration, but he hopes that wouldn't be gotten rid of. Mr. Guerra stated that there is a Design Review Board now. Any exterior remodeling must go through the Board. The goal is to bring back the historic aspects of the downtown.

Ms. Laura Petrella, 2422 Northland Street, and the CEO of the Chamber of Commerce, stated she would like to express how important this is to move forward as a community. She was fortunate enough to go on the bus trip that visited three different communities. The one thing, over and over, that they kept hearing was Cuyahoga Falls has two assets. The first asset is to have a river running through the downtown. The second thing is the City has a historical downtown that's just charming, with so much potential. It really starts with leadership, the Mayor and the vision of Council as well as the community. The Chamber of Commerce is very pro-business. There's so much excitement. There isn't a day that goes by in their office that they aren't having somebody walk in or a phone call saying tell me what space is available, what's going on downtown, or they are getting direct communication through instant message on social media. It is all positive. People are so excited about this. If nothing is done, it's really going to hurt the city. People will move out of here, because the young professionals want to be in a downtown area. They want to be able to shop, eat, work, play and not really have to leave. Cuyahoga Falls has the potential for that. It has the visibility and the accessibility and the connectors. South Front Street, which has really taken off, is the first piece. Falls River Square, the downtown, is just sort of there. North Front Street is starting to take off. There is the connector piece of Portage Trail with a couple retail shops going in there. When she was at Oak Park, the downtown area, like Cuyahoga Falls, had all these quaint businesses. Around the corner, they had their version of Portage Crossing, that full retail, kind of big-box retail. The City has that just around the corner with Portage Crossing.

Ms. Cathy Romito, 262 Morrison Avenue, stated she is the Chamber Board President. She stated the time has come to open the current Front Street pedestrian mall. The area is full of potential and the current use of that prime real estate simply does not meet market demand. Visibility, accessibility and connectedness will be possible with the allowance of automotive traffic. The City has the ingredients to make an amazing public space that can equally cater to retail, service, professional offices, as well as providing for a safe and inviting public use and leisure area for residents and visitors. She is a relatively-new resident of Cuyahoga Falls, but a long-time traveler down to the Front Street Mall. Cuyahoga Falls has a chance to be on the map with this. People are excited. Regionalism is alive and well in Northeastern Ohio and Cuyahoga Falls can certainly set the tone.

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Mr. Brent VanFossen, 2372 Providence Boulevard, owner of Metropolitan Popcorn and Desserts, located at 2165 Front Street, stated that his store is at the center of the pedestrian mall, so they get a great cross section of people that are either residents here or visitors here. Two questions he always gets are where do people park and what else is there to do while they're there. He has tried to handle the parking issue as best as he can and as by the books as he can by guiding people to the parking decks, but he tells people to park in front of his store. The other issue is people asking what else there is to do here. There's Flury's, a great little place to get breakfast or lunch, the Art Center and a couple of retail stores on Portage in between the Chamber office and Flury's. There's not a whole heck of a lot to do in the immediate River Front area. With this project, there has been a lot more interest. They can tell people what there is in store going forward and that there is going to be a lot of options to literally spend the entire day here. They had plans on moving out of the Riverfront area, but they're going to stay here, because they are excited about what is in store in 2017. An accelerated project timeframe convinced them to stay and be part of this transformation.

Mr. Denny Stoiber stated that he is on the Board of Trustees at the Cuyahoga Valley Art Center. Firstly, he would like to commend the Economic Department, Planning Department for the very thorough approach they've taken to this project. On social media, there are plenty of comments about what are they doing and what's going on and this is stupid, they ought to take that money and fix potholes and do all the rest of the stuff. He believes that a lot of the people think this is just an idea that popped into somebody's head and now they're going forward with it. If they had seen Mr. Guerra's presentation tonight to see the very comprehensive approach to figuring out what can be done, how market studies, how traffic studies, how all those things were taken into consideration they might have a better idea about what they're dealing with. The Art Center is very excited about this project. He knows the recommended design build team, H.R. Gray, to be a company that has great credentials, very professional and has done a lot of previous work in municipal infrastructure-type projects. They've assembled a good team along with them. He had the opportunity, at the pre-presentation conference, to offer all of them an opportunity to come up to the Center and see what issues were going to directly impact their operation and building, and H.R. Gray was the very first group that came up. He has a lot of confidence that they are going to really take care of the present businesses and building owners on Front Street and would really encourage Council to award this contract.

Ms. Theresa Scoff, 3315 Brookside Lane, stated that she and her husband, Richard, are pastors at Grace & Glory Fellowship. 2128 Front Street, right in the center mall area. They are a two-story building, so people can get into their building from Old Town Loop or from the Front Street Mall area. It is very difficult for anybody that is handicapped to get there. She is excited and hopes the City opens the street, because they have been over there 18 years, and, in 18 years, they may have had 5 people that have come in and walked through the entrance on the Front Street Mall area and hundreds coming through the Old Town Loop area. She doesn't know how people in business make it. Because they are a church, they are a destination, but she has had first-time visitors say they couldn't find their church. There is no parking down there, so they can't get there. As a business owner, she and her husband encourage the City to open the street. They are not going to

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be staying there as a church. They have decided to be a part of the group of people that will be leasing their facility to a retail business, so that the community can continue to move forward into the area. They live in Cuyahoga Falls and the City needs to take it to the next level to really be nice. To take the City to the next level, the street must be opened.

Mr. Richard Scoff, 3315 Brookside Lane, stated he was born on 8th Street, in 1946, in Cuyahoga Falls and has been here almost all his life. In the 1950's, he hung out at Woolworth's and O'Neil's. The history of Cuyahoga Falls is amazing. First, it could have been the county seat instead of Akron. In the 1950's, they had three traffic stops. History repeats itself. They have three traffic stops: One at Portage Trail, one at Broad Boulevard and one at the library coming over here in the evenings just to handle the traffic. There was a Leroy's. There was a Standard Drug. It had an awesome fountain. He could see this happening again. They had a street dance every Halloween, free cider and donuts, and it was jammed. You just couldn't get around downtown. With Chapel Hill closing, he believes it's an opportunity for this thing to explode and to happen again.

Mr. Jason Rice, Adventis Development, 2251 Front Street, the Fountain Point Building, stated that he is also representing Steve Krutowsky, who owns the Power House building where Burntwood is, the Fountain Point Building and the Richards Building. They have two buildings where Burntwood is that are full and two buildings that are 90 percent empty. They are excited, not just for the hotel development that they're doing, but for their buildings to be able to drive some tenants in there. They really want this thing to move forward and to move forward fast.

Ms. Linda Hardy, 2453 Second Street, stated that she doesn't want to talk about downtown, because she thinks that it's a great idea. She grew up with it two ways back in the 1950's. She is worried about having 43 years backing up out of her driveway in one direction and, at some point, she is going to forget that she can't back out into the nearest lane into to her house because she will be facing oncoming traffic. She is probably not the only one that's been there many years that is going to have trouble with that when they change it, so please think of some way to help them remember that it's two ways.

Ms. Lauren Burge, Chambers, Murphy & Burge, stated that she is an historic preservation architect. A year ago, she and her husband formed Coming Attractions LLC and put forth a proposal to rehabilitate the Falls Theater, which is a very beloved building in Cuyahoga Falls. Bravo to the City, to the Mayor, to Council, to the Planning Division and to the wonderful team that has put together this design, this marketing plan and this terrific strategy. They are excited about being the developers of the Falls Theater, but one of the things that they put in their proposal was that it was contingent on the street being open again. They felt very strongly that they could not be successful unless the street were open. Their estimate for their investment is \$1.2 million as an example of what that street opening will generate in terms of people investing in property. They strongly encourage Council to please move forward with this.

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Mr. Richard Levitz stated that his relevance here is that he worked on the first Master Plan that Mr. Guerra showed. He was a coordinator with Bob Stark. It was a grandiose plan and it absolutely required that the street be opened to traffic. He also wrote the design guideline and signage for Portage Crossing, which is now obviously working. For 17 years, he has been working on Crocker Park. When they started working on that, he would always tell everybody just remember that this greenery with nothing on it is a historic district in the making. What is interesting about Cuyahoga Falls is it has it all here. It has the infrastructure, the river and the historic district. It doesn't have to do all these things.

Mr. Tom Sullivan, 447 Tallmadge Road, stated he is an artist in residence at Studio 2091 Mothersbaugh Gallery. He used to be a regular attendee of City Council meetings. He has never seen a plan as comprehensive as this. Everyone has done their homework. This has been up front with public meetings. Everybody has had a chance to say what needs said. Everybody has had a chance to say what's on their mind. He commends the Development Department and Mayor's office for keeping this open the way it is. This has been so comprehensive, any questions any Council member could possibly have could be answered. Studies and forecasts and projections as far as how much the area could absorb are great. The consultants have done a superb job. Joel Testa has done it for them. What's happening on the south end of Front Street, people are willing to come into that side of town. They don't all hang up there at Portage Trail, but it's there. Connect both sides of Front Street because it's successful on the other end, as well, with Darby's, Moe's and some of the others. This is Council's chance to give back. This is what Council ran for office for, to do something good for the community.

Mr. Keith Saffles, 6376 Riverview Rd, stated that he is a person that's investing. Right now, he is putting together his application for the Historic Tax credits. If that comes through, he is going to start construction in June. He has a budget of \$650,000. He owns two buildings, the old Whistle Stop and the one next to it. In one of the buildings, he is going to put in one, possibly two businesses, a candy store his mom will operate. He grew up in the Falls. He loves the idea of selling candy here and then possibly an ice cream franchise next door. They are going to make two other retail spaces, some office space upstairs, four apartments upstairs. He has had lots of people ask him about the spaces and everyone is excited about the street opening. There's little people out here that are willing to put their money into it and believe in the vision.

Mr. John Chlebina stated that he has owned couple of buildings on the Front Street Mall that's between Broad and Portage Trail for 17 years. He has multiple commercial tenants. It's just been a struggle for them, all the 17 years, trying to keep their buildings occupied, primarily because it's so isolated and people can't find it. Retail, forget it. He knows that this is going to be such a benefit for the area, in general, and not just their section, but on the north side of Portage Trail, real estate values are going to go up. They already have. Council heard what kind of investment Mr. Saffles is going to put in his properties. He is going to do the same. The front of the Alhambra building, he has hated ever since he has owned it, but he was reluctant to spend money on not such a great investment. He plans on spending money making it the best he can.

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Mr. Guerra introduced the team from Osborne and H.R. Gray. Bonnie Teeuween spearheaded the 40-percent design-build engineering and will spearhead the oversight. Osborne is not finished. They will take the City through the project. Michelle Bandy-Zalatoris was a resident of Cuyahoga Falls. She's a City architect. She did all the streetscape work. Jim Weber, from H.R. Gray, Roger Grimm, from Hammontree, Tim Briggs, from Hammontree, are present, as well as David Bennett, D.L. Bennett Company, and Lou Ciraldo, independent quality manager.

Mrs. Pyke asked if the nine eighty-nine one ninety-nine includes everything from Broad Boulevard to the expressway entrances. Mr. Guerra stated that it starts at Broad Boulevard and it ends at the Bailey Road basic interchange on Front Street, and then it starts on Northland on Second Street. Mrs. Pyke asked if there is no needed construction for the reconfiguration of the entrance and exit ramp. Mr. Guerra stated there is a little bit of work that is included in the cost. Mr. Demasi, City Engineer, stated that it is a little bit of the concrete work by the Acme where the relocated Second Street veers off from Front Street, but, other than that, it's just resurfacing. Mrs. Pyke asked Mr. Hoffman if he could get to her, before Friday, the monies that have been spent on this project prior to this, which would include the \$3.755 million for the parking decks and any monies that they have put into engineering or any costs for a total of what they're looking at for this. Mr. Hoffman said he would be happy to. Mrs. Pyke stated that she wanted to thank them for their very thorough presentation. She believes that the street needs to be open. As Council members, they have a responsibility to ask the financial questions. Anyone who's a lifetime resident of Cuyahoga Falls that is around her age remembers that mall being opened and how important it was. She was never fond of the fact that mall closed. She is glad to see it opening, but Council has a responsibility to all the residents to look at this closely.

Mrs. Klinger asked what retailers that match the City's demographics are doing brick and mortar growth in 2017 and 2018. Mr. Gibbs stated that all of them are. They haven't crossed-filed those with the City's demographics. All the retailers are expanding in 2017, except the ones that have announced they're closing. There are a lot of junior department stores, fashion, sporting goods and outfitting stores that are expanding. Mrs. Klinger asked if they have an opportunity or a match for a Uniglow, Fabletics; those type of retailers. Mr. Gibbs stated that Uniglow likes larger cities. There are a lot of retailers that match their profile. The dilemma right now is that they're used to calling national brokers and looking at malls. To come into a downtown, they must work with individual property owners and they haven't figured out yet how to do it. That's why they need a business recruiter, because retailers are used to a really streamlined process. Downtown does match the demographics for a lot of them. And they're all expanding. They're all leaving malls as quickly as they can and coming to downtowns. In driving the area for five miles around Cuyahoga Falls, just within 25 miles, there are enough stores that would like to open a duplicative store in Cuyahoga Falls. Mr. Guerra stated that is the reason they hired the Zall Company, so as a benefit to the businesses, they have a broker that is working for the City going out there and talking to regional, local and national retailers and then bringing them back to the businesses. When the market study came out, there was a good demand.

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Mr. Gibbs stated that he wanted to caution them that a lot of the retailers are, right now, planning for 2020 for store openings. They plan two years in advance. A lot of them really want to see the street. They want to see the construction before they're going to believe it. There might be a lag time between the time of the grand opening and the time that a lot of the stores come in. That's just part of the real estate business. Mrs. Klinger stated that she completely understands. She does the same thing, and it takes her 36 months to get something off the ground from the time they find the dirt. She stated that this is very comprehensive. She doesn't know how they can go backwards from this point. They know what doesn't work; they've looked at it for the last 40 years. It's time to look forward to something else. She is 100 percent on board with this. It will be a transformation for them. It's going to take several years. She applauds those business owners who are jumping in now and have the start at the front of this, because that's the hardest part.

Ms. Nichols-Rhodes stated that she is lucky enough to be the Ward 4 Councilwoman, so the development is in her ward, but Front Street is important to the whole city. The business people are on board, the property owners are on board, the people who live here on board, and she hopes Council is on board. It's such a wise investment and the time is right. So many people, including her, want to spend their money in Cuyahoga Falls. The difference between the success on South Front Street and the north side is that a street that goes through. She has no doubt that they also will experience the same thing on the north side of the mall. Retail is booming in areas where people have an experience. The homework that the City has done, particularly Community Development, is just incredible and unmatched. This project means jobs downtown. This project means private investment downtown. With the historic overlay, lots of investors are going to come down. They're been incentivized. That was a very positive and strategic move. It doesn't cost the City any money, but will bring business downtown. As the property downtown increases in value, residential properties will increase in value and all boats will rise. To put this into perspective, the Natatorium project was \$29 million of City investment; Portage Crossing was \$20 million, and they're looking at approximately \$10 million for the downtown development and then, additionally, the parking decks.

Ms. Nichols-Rhodes stated that she has fond memories of her first job working at State Road at Jewel Mart and then her second job at Montgomery Ward. Most of the City Council members have talked about experiences and great memories they have down at Front Street, whether it be at Kippy's or at the movie theater or wherever. There will be new generations coming down and having those first jobs and wonderful experiences hanging out with their friends. The time is right. The City is retiring debt now and its financial rating is excellent. The residents and businesses are on board. The Cuyahoga Falls downtown has been without traffic for 37 years and it's time to move forward, invest in downtown and make it a place where our residents will gather and make new memories. That vision of this community, the Mayor and Council is all going to translate into making history as everyone moves forward together to make downtown Cuyahoga Falls a vibrant gathering place for future generations. This project is way bigger than the sum of all its parts. She thanks everybody wholeheartedly for their cooperation, their collaboration and their effort, and she wholeheartedly supports Substitute Temporary Ordinance B-23.

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Mr. Brillhart stated that when his family moved to Cuyahoga Falls, Time magazine had just named Cuyahoga Falls as one of the 24 nicest places to live in the United States. He thinks its back on the road to being one of the 24 nicest places, if not the nicest place to live in United States. Mr. Iula stated that opening Front Street, getting a new hotel, renovating the movie theater and getting a candy store is great. The City made a big investment in the Natatorium back in 2004 and made another big investment with Portage Crossing in 2014. This is another big investment, but not nearly as big as the other two, and it's going to prosper more than those two are. There's 84,000 cars that go through Route 8 each day. There has to be new businesses to get them to stop and shop. That's the goal here and he is all for it. Mr. Pallotta stated that he has tried for three years to get Trader Joe's in Cuyahoga Falls, so, if Mr. Gibbs has any influence, help the City out.

Mr. Miller moved to bring out Temp. Ord. B-23 (Sub. Dated 3-20-17) with a favorable recommendation, second by Ms. Nichols-Rhodes. Motion passed (3-0).

The meeting adjourned at 9:39 p.m.