

LA JUNTA URBAN RENEWAL AUTHORITY

CALL TO ORDER: The La Junta Urban Renewal Authority Board of Commissioners held a Regular Meeting on Thursday, January 22, 2025 at 4:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers. The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Bennett.

Board Members Present	Absent
Joe Ayala – arrived 4:05 p.m.	Zach Miner
Nancy Bennett	
Marty Fleischacker	
Carly Johnson – via Zoom	
Cheryl Lindner	
Toni Madrid	
Ben Mason	
Angel Saucedo	

**Subject to approval at the
February 26, 2026
Urban Renewal Meeting**

Also present: Michael Hart, City Manager
Melanie Scofield, City Clerk/URA Director
Cristian Estrada, Deputy City Clerk
Michael Perez, Elks Lodge/La Junta
Damon Ramirez, La Junta

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Damon Ramirez, City Council Ward 1/La Junta, came to the board to inquire about the TIF district, when it originated, how it was devised, and what is included there. In 2000, the TIF was expanded to include Walmart near city limits. Would like to know the time span on how long it took to extend the TIF district. Would like to see the TIF district be extended to South San Juan Ave. to include up to the bowling alley, but also anyone in that corridor. Ark Valley Vision is currently remodeling a building in this area, and they are invested in this community. The expansion would also include Ark Valley Vision. Would like the option of expansion visited.

- Melanie Scofield has all of the information from past TIF district expansions.
- Toni Madrid – The board has visited and has been in discussion with this topic; have had meetings/discussions with the lawyer, Paul Benedetti, as this process is new to this current board.
- Nancy Bennett – To establish a new TIF district, the fire district, school district, and county would all have to be invited to join the URA in those efforts. The tax dollars earned from the new TIF district would have to be split four ways amongst the districts. One of the constraints is that there would not be enough money to do anybody any good if it were split amongst the four groups.
 - Ben Mason – The URA is grandfathered under the old rules; if a TIF district expansion were to occur, then the new rules would have to be adapted. In 2032, these new laws will need to be adapted regardless. If the URA decides to “jump the gun” and add/expand the current TIF districts, and it would require us to invite

these districts in, and possibly adding more seats for the URA board, to give chance to each agency to place a person on a seat on the URA board.

- Melanie Scofield – All of this is true – it is state statute why there has to be certain amount of board members and certain number of districts. When URA was originally created, it only included the downtown as the TIF district. A plan has to be made, and it is good for only a certain number of years. Then it was redone to expand the plan to include 5th Street, and all along HWY 50 to each city limit, that is how Walmart was included. The current plan expires in 2032 and the process has to be redone. The URA can extend the districts at any given time, but that opens up the new law to include other entities; this includes hiring surveyors and canvassers, which is a lot of steps that can be quite time consuming. It is on the board's radar to have this done.

The discussion continued discussion regarding the expansion of a TIF district and the processes for such. Facts regarding the expansion process were presented, as well as clarifying what the city limits include regarding TIF districts.

FUNDING APPLICATION (Perez)

Michael Perez – presented the Elks Lodge proposal for funds from the URA. The application is attached to the minutes. The upstairs lodge room lighting is becoming increasingly poor, possibly due to faulty wiring. Could present a fire hazard. There are also several spots of water damage throughout the lodge room ceiling. That is a concern, even though the roof has been repaired. Repairing the lodge room would help it become safer for the public when events are hosted there.

- The request was for a grant for the amount of \$16,836.66.
- Only one bid has been returned for consideration (SBT Electrical and Mechanical, LLC – a locally-based company), even though two buyers were contacted.
 - Through SBT, they are charging a tax amount of \$264.13. If the Elks Lodge is a non-profit organization, then they should not be taxed. This will also be addressed by the Elks Lodge. If that is the case, then \$264.13 would be subtracted from the grant request.
 - Carly Johnson would like to see another bid request.
 - Marty Flieschacker agreed that finding another bid request would be helpful for comparison purposes.
- No pictures were provided, but can be provided upon request, especially for evaluation purposes.
- Historic Preservation may be able to assist with some of the funds for this project, or other possible projects, as the building that the Elks Lodge is in is historic.

The funding application consideration has been tabled until another bid is secured.

MINUTES: December 16, 2025

Chairperson Bennett asked if there were any corrections or additions to be made to the December 16, 2025 minutes. There being none, the board moved to a motion.

MOTION TO APPROVE DECEMBER 16, 2025 MINUTES AS PUBLISHED: Mason

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SECOND: Lindner

AYE: Ayala, Bennett, Fleischacker, Johnson, Lindner, Madrid, Mason, Saucedo

ABSENT: Miner

OPPOSED: None

The motion carries.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS – December

Melanie Scofield presented the December financial statement. In December, the URA earned interest of \$1,410.01. Welcome to La Junta sign expense was for \$41.71. The Rikhofs were paid the loan amount of \$92,289.77. Unless Aliza has to do some year-end stuff, the URA will end the year of 2025 with \$536,799.61.

MOTION TO APPROVE DECEMBER FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AS PRESENTED: Mason

SECOND: Fleischacker

AYE: Ayala, Bennett, Fleischacker, Johnson, Lindner, Madrid, Mason, Saucedo

ABSENT: Miner

OPPOSED: None

The motion carries

REPORTS:

A. Plaza Building (Bennett/Mason)

- SECCP has received the loan
- Fire inspection was supposed to be conducted on Jan. 8th; it did not happen; it was not on the fire chief's radar. Not sure if CO fire was giving the wrong date, not sure what was going on there.
- Plumbing inspection was supposed to happen last week – said it was supposed to happen Jan. 15th. It will be done now on Tuesday, Jan. 27th.
- Electrician has been one of the hold ups, brought in another electrician to assist. The east room light fixtures are almost finished.
- Hard surfaces have been installed; countertops and cabinets in the public restrooms and the pottery room.
- It has been difficult to get in contact with Summit Sealants; there are a lot of subs on the premises, but not Summit.
- Appliances have been delivered and installed in the apartments, which makes the apts. complete.
- Another hold up has been orders; when the companies order a certain supply item, the end up getting the wrong items sent in. This causes delays due to the fact that these wrong items need to be returned and reordered. This may be the biggest challenge.
 - Toni Madrid – Regarding insurance for the building, what is the status of that?

- Melanie Scofield – the building has no insurance. When the underwriters did the walkthrough inspection to get the comprehensive insurance, they were upset that the building only has a temporary C/O for the apartments, and for the individuals that are not actually living in the apartments. The downstairs is not ready and a potential fire hazard for the upstairs apartments. Leon tried to look other places and is not having any luck. It can be insured if either the upstairs apts. are rented out and actually living in them, or if the downstairs is finished.
- Toni Madrid – the URA has a building that is currently under construction, and if anything happens to that building, it is not covered. That is very concerning.
 - Melanie Scofield – reached out to CIRSA, which is the city’s insurance agency; because the URA has its own FEIN and is considered its own entity and is not directly tied to the city like there rest of the boards, CIRSA will not cover the building either. The URA would have to apply as its own member. The suggestion was that typically when a building is under construction, the GC takes care of the insurance as well as the interest payments, etc. until the building is finished.

Discussions continued regarding options for insurance, reaching out to Summit Sealants for inquiries regarding any and all insurance/bonds that the company itself is providing. Copies of any such documentation is requested to be turned into Melanie Scofield.

B. Thyme Square (Sisroy/Scofield)

- The roof is complete has passed inspection. Next week, the certificate will be signed for Martin Montoya in Engineering.
- The roofers came out of Denver. The reason for the delay was that the roofers, Sharon, and Martin couldn’t get lined up for the inspection due to the type of roof it is.
- The roof has a 20-year warranty.

C. T.O.’S Building (Madrid/Johnson)

- Has received two bids for the window coverings for beautification
- In addition, there was going to be a mockup done of the façade of the building to repair it
- Presenting the proposed SPARK grant to the current owner of the building may be of interest to them for further assistance
- The soffit has begun to fall apart and fall off of the building
- It was clarified that the newly proposed SPARK grant is to help existing businesses that are currently active and open
 - i. Angel Saucedo - More work is needed than what is being pursued for the building.
 - ii. Melanie Scofield – Will reach out to the owner to see if they would prefer to apply for a grant/loan rather than just focusing on the façade, since it sounds like it is needing more improvement.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Election of Officers for 2026

- Chairman

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MOTION TO NOMINATE BEN MASON AS CHAIRMAN OF THE CITY OF LA JUNTA URBAN RENEWAL AUTHORITY: Ayala

SECOND: Madrid

AYE: Ayala, Bennett, Fleischacker, Johnson, Lindner, Madrid, Saucedo

ABSENT: Miner

OPPOSED: None

The nomination is agreed upon, therefore motion carries.

- Vice Chairman

MOTION TO NOMINATE TONI MADRID AS VICE CHAIRPERSON OF THE CITY OF LA JUNTA URBAN RENEWAL AUTHORITY: Mason

SECOND: Johnson

AYE: Ayala, Bennett, Fleischacker, Johnson, Lindner, Mason, Saucedo

ABSENT: Miner

OPPOSED: None

The nomination is agreed upon, therefore motion carries.

- Treasurer

MOTION TO NOMINATE MARTY FLEISCHACKER AS TREASURER OF THE CITY OF LA JUNTA URBAN RENEWAL AUTHORITY: Ayala

SECOND: Madrid

AYE: Ayala, Bennett, Johnson, Lindner, Madrid, Mason, Saucedo

ABSENT: Miner

OPPOSED: None

The nomination is agreed upon, therefore motion carries.

B. Spark Grant Program

- Joe Ayala – brought up the idea for the Spark Grant Program after working on the Sears Building windows for smaller beautification projects. Previously, the URA used to provide funding for active business's awnings. With the spark grant awarding \$5,000 per applicant for 10 applicants per year, active businesses can utilize the funds for whatever would help improve their business – whether it be for awnings or not. When awnings were funded by URA previously, if a business does not own the building they are occupying, then they would need written permission from the building owner to be allowed to install an awning. This should still be held true today.
 - Nancy Bennett – If the URA is going to pursue allowance of funds for awnings, then there should be a rule for those who don't own the building, that they cannot

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- place a name of the business on the awning itself or if they want it on the awning, they should take the awning with them when they move.
- Cheryl Lindner – If they are not the building owner, then it is up to the building owner what can go on the awning. It can be done in a manner where the names/logos can easily be removed. Awnings can last a long period of time. Usually if they want to change an awning, it is because they want to change the look or color of it.
 - Toni Madrid – Believes that if they are applying for an awning specifically, the current awning needs to be in rough shape/falling apart/tattered.
 - Ben Mason – As long as businesses are improving their storefronts, then they can use the funds for whatever they would like within city code.

Conversations continued regarding the goals for the Spark Grant, separate application processes that would include a plan (or “dream”) for what businesses are going to use the funds; bids or a breakdown of what will be spent for the project. Moneys would not be paid out until the work is done. The board would have an ultimate say/decision for which applications would be approved or denied. It was also mentioned that, even though the La Junta URA has chosen to focus on blight and safety as its covered areas, but generally URAs include economic vitality. Allowing businesses to reach out and choose the URA’s Spark Grant as a source of funding for storefront improvements aides with economic vitality.

- Cheryl Lindner – With regards to bids/quotes, are there parameters of things within the quotes that the board would like to see so the board would know what those dollars are going toward?
 - Angel Saucedo – Would like to comment regarding this, looking back at the SBT quote for the Elks Lodge, would definitely like a breakdown regarding the labor. The cost of \$9,600 seems a bit egregious; if that is what SBT is charging, then that’s fine. Would just like a breakdown of what that cost is going towards. Companies are allowed to charge whatever they deem as fair for their labor. In regards to the Spark Grant, on the application, could there be an area where the material(s) used would be broken down with cost, as well.

MOTION TO MOVE FORWARD WITH THE SPARK GRANT PROGRAM: Madrid

SECOND: Saucedo

AYE: Ayala, Bennett, Fleischacker, Johnson, Lindner, Madrid, Mason, Saucedo

ABSENT: Miner

OPPOSED: None

The motion carries.

C. Director Comments - none

D. Governing Body’s Comments – none

The next Urban Renewal Authority meeting will be held February 26, 2026 at 4:00 p.m.

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There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:14 p.m.

Cristian Estrada, Deputy City Clerk

Nancy Bennett, Chairperson