

On March 20, 2020, City Manager Gregory Rose declared a State of Emergency for the City of University City due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Due to the ongoing efforts to limit the spread of the COVID-19 virus, the May 24, 2021 meeting will be conducted via videoconference.

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**NOTICE OF STUDY SESSION – RPA 2 Steering Committee Discussion**  
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE  
May 24, 2021 at 5:30 p.m.

**AGENDA**

Requested by Councilmembers Bwayne Smotherson and Stacy Clay

1. Meeting called to order
2. Changes to Regular Agenda
3. RPA 2 Steering Committee Discussion
4. Adjournment

**Members of the public can view the meeting by one of the following:**

**Webinar** via the link below:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83020242311?pwd=MGRjUzhDR1d6SUlyQUsvOEMvVnhSdz09>

Passcode: 278995

**Live Stream via YouTube:**

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCyN1EJ\\_-Q22918E9EZimWoQ](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCyN1EJ_-Q22918E9EZimWoQ)

**Audio Only Call**

Or One tap mobile:

US: +13126266799,,83020242311# or +19292056099,,83020242311#

Or Telephone:

1 312 626 6799 or +1 929 205 6099 or +1 301 715 8592 or +1 346 248 7799 or  
888 788 0099 (Toll Free) or 877 853 5247 (Toll Free)

Webinar ID: 830 2024 2311

International numbers available: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83020242311>

Posted this 21<sup>st</sup> day of May, 2021.

LaRette Reese  
City Clerk

# Study Session Agenda Item

**May 24, 2021**

**Requested by Councilmembers Stacy Clay and Bwayne Smotherson**

RE: Proposal to Establish the *RPA 2 Steering Committee* to prepare a Third Ward Housing Action Plan and to govern the Use/Leverage of \$10 Million Generated from the I-170/Olive Project (RPA 1)

**Proposal to Establish the *RPA 2 Steering Committee* to prepare a Third Ward Housing Action Plan and to govern the Use/Leverage of \$10 Million Generated from the I-170/ Olive Project (RPA 1)**

University City has been provided with a great economic development opportunity to not only redevelop a low-performing commercial portion of the Olive Corridor at I-170, but also to provide funds to help reverse the decline of the adjacent residential areas, substantially the Third Ward.

Over the last 20 – 30 years, Third Ward neighborhoods have changed from vibrant enclaves of African-America home ownership to a place where homes are losing value and quality of life is diminishing. University City’s philosophy of providing equal resources throughout the City, has not shielded the residents of the Third Ward from racist State and Federal policies that affected these neighborhoods differently. In reality, many of the City’s past policies toward the areas of the city north of Olive Boulevard have actually contributed to segregation and decline in the Third Ward.

Equitable, not equal, treatment by the City is now required. Now is the time to address the needs of the Third Ward through the successful implementation of the RPA 2 Redevelopment project in an effort to stabilize the Third Ward. The actions needed by the City to address these conditions involve interventions in the housing market.

The primary purpose for inviting a commercial redevelopment project of the magnitude of Olive/ I-170 (RPA1), was to promote the revitalization of the Third Ward housing stock by providing seed money for its improvement.

The following redevelopment projects are listed in “*Olive Boulevard Commercial Corridor & Residential Conservation Area Redevelopment Plan*” for RPA 2 (primarily the 3<sup>rd</sup> Ward):

“*RPA 2: Redevelopment activities intended to promote residential conservation, including:*

- *Residential property grant and loan program to fund various renovation and rehabilitation activities, including without limitation:*
  - *Improvements necessary to satisfy current building and safety code requirement;*
  - *Façade rehabilitation;*
  - *Repair/replacement of electrical, plumbing, heating, and cooling systems*
  - *Installation of a sprinkler, fire, and smoke alarm system; and*
  - *Parking lot paving and property landscaping.*
- *Completion of public improvements intended to encourage redevelopment of adjacent properties;*
- *Acquisition of vacant parcels and parcels with dilapidated structures in need of renovation or demolition and clearance; and*
- *Demolition, renovation and/or construction of new residential and neighborhood-level commercial buildings;” (09/04/2018, pg. 15)*

As outlined above, residential conservation is the primary goal of the RPA 2- Redevelopment Plan. Therefore, most of the \$10 million should be dedicated exclusively to housing programs and projects. Although money from the TIF alone will not solve all the housing issues, it is the only source of unencumbered funding available to the City to create programs and strategies that will stop declining values and deteriorating housing conditions on the scale in which they exist in the Third Ward. It can be used to leverage other resources from banks, foundations, private and public investments over several years to stabilize the project neighborhoods. Non-housing related neighborhood infrastructure, amenities, and safety needs should be funded from existing tax revenues and additional tax revenue generated by the Olive/I-170 TIF Project. [\[1\]](#)

Considering the unique history of discrimination and disinvestment in RPA 2, Third Ward councilmen Clay and Smotherson believe that the City Council should embrace a more equitable approach to citizen engagement by forming the **RPA 2 Steering Committee**. The Committee will guide the preparation and use of a Third Ward Housing Action Plan, which will determine how the \$3 million now (\$7 million later) would be best utilized for the exclusive benefit of RPA 2 redevelopment project. The membership should represent the interest of the various stakeholders from the Third Ward, but most importantly, neighborhood residents from different parts of the Ward.

Therefore, members of the Steering Committee would be named by the Third Ward councilmen and approved by the city council. The plan making process would be guided by the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee would continue to function through the Housing Action Plan implementation, including monitoring the appropriate use of the \$10 million fund. Improvement of the Third Ward neighborhoods will be a complicated and immense undertaking that will require careful planning and collaboration with a number of stakeholders.

The Steering Committee would consist of a variety of stakeholders. The number of steering committee members would be nine and they would be appointed to a three-year term with the option of one renewal term.

2 – Third Ward council members

5 – Third ward residents

1 – From an active community development organization

1 – Plan Commission chairperson or designee

The RPA 2 Steering Committee should be created immediately to start the planning process and to address the I-170/Olive Redevelopment Agreement obligations that benefit Third Ward residents and hopefully contribute to the successful revitalization of the Third Ward.

Respectfully yours

Third Ward Councilmen, Stacy Clay and Bwayne Smotherson