



PRESS PACKET  
OCTOBER, 2006



The City of  
**OKLAHOMA CITY**

# **Press Release**

## **PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE**

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October 5, 2006

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## **Planning begins for I-40 realignment area: Core to Shore**

A steering committee led by Oklahoma City Mayor Mick Cornett will meet for the first time on October 5 to kick off planning sessions for the area impacted by the realignment of Interstate 40, south of downtown.

The steering committee, made up of 35 stakeholders and community leaders, will meet eight times over the next nine months. Their role is to develop a vision and plan of action for a 590-acre area between downtown and the river.

The plan, dubbed Core to Shore, covers the area from the core of downtown to the shore of the Oklahoma River. Core to Shore will be planned in two phases, each phase taking approximately nine months.

Phase I will focus on the 590-acres from Reno to South 10th and much of the area east and west between Interstate 235 and Shartel. A major aspect of Phase I is the planning of a world-class Boulevard, hoped to be a venue for more major economic development and provide an attractive gateway into downtown. The boulevard will extend from Walker to Oklahoma, where the current Interstate 40 will be brought to grade.

Phase II expands the territory an additional 785-acres from Agnew to I-235 and from the Oklahoma River to the current Interstate 40.

"Opportunities to redevelop large areas close to downtown are rare. The results of this public/private redevelopment will include a new at-grade boulevard and a major expansion of the central business district. This planning process will ensure that this redevelopment will lead to new jobs and a higher quality of life for the citizens of Oklahoma City," Mayor Cornett said.

The City anticipates the redevelopment will include dense and inclusive housing, parks, live-work units, retail, office, and commercial space that will complement the Downtown core and its recent renaissance of new development.

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The first of two public meetings will take place on December 13 at 6:30 p.m. at Cox Business Services Convention Center on Sheridan Avenue and Robinson in downtown Oklahoma City.

The estimated completion date for the Interstate 40 realignment is the Fall of 2008. Work is hoped to begin on the Boulevard shortly after the realignment is completed.

The goals of the steering committee are as follows:

- ✓ Ensure new developments are complementary to, not competitive with existing downtown development
- ✓ Create a world-class boulevard
- ✓ Create a dense, urban live-work community
- ✓ Improve access to downtown destinations
- ✓ Connect the Oklahoma River to downtown
- ✓ Mitigate the impacts of the Interstate 40 realignment, focusing on improved traffic flow, neighborhood revitalization, complimentary land use and enhanced pedestrian mobility.
- ✓ Consider alternate modes of transit
- ✓ Research and recommend financing options
- ✓ Address issues related to services for homeless residents

Colorado Springs-based URS Corporation has been contracted by the City to lead the redevelopment project. URS partnered with RDG Planning from Omaha, EPS of Denver and TAP Architecture and Smith Roberts Baldischwiler, both from Oklahoma City. The team is multi-disciplinary and includes expertise land use, planning, architecture, development, streetscape, redevelopment financing, real estate and more.

Members of the steering and project leadership committee include the Mayor and City Council, City Manager's Office, Planning Commission, Downtown OKC, Inc., Greater Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce, City Department Directors, County and State of Oklahoma and area stakeholders including property owners, businesses, residents, local agencies, non-profit organizations and community-based organizations.

For more information, contact Russell Claus at 297-1628.

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## **Core to Shore: FAQs**

October 2006

### **Why is the City of Oklahoma City doing the Core to Shore Planning Study?**

Core to Shore will provide a plan for the changes and growth that will result from the upcoming I-40/Crosstown Realignment. The Oklahoma Department of Transportation has already started re-routing the existing I-40 freeway to approximately South 7<sup>th</sup> Street between I-35 and May Avenue.

Soon after the new freeway is built, the overhead lanes of the current I-40 between Oklahoma and Walker Avenues will be replaced with a new boulevard at ground level. This new street will be the gateway to downtown and encourage new development to compliment recent downtown investments. Completion for the new freeway is targeted for 2008. Construction of the new street will take about 18 months and is targeted to start in 2009.

The new I-40 realignment and boulevard will bring significant changes to Oklahoma City, especially to the area between downtown (the “core”) and the Oklahoma River (the “shore”). This will open up new interests for development opportunities and provide better access to neighborhoods and businesses throughout the area between downtown and the river.

### **Who is participating in the Core to Shore Planning Study?**

The City of Oklahoma City is facilitating this study in conjunction with a Steering Committee led by Mayor Mick Cornett and a multidisciplinary consultant team from URS Corporation, Colorado Springs. Leadership for the Core to Shore Project includes broad participation from private citizens and the public sector. The Steering Committee will establish task forces to include a range of interests and encourage participation with the public, such as neighborhoods, services for homeless persons, culture, arts, open space, business development, and land use.

The Steering Committee is scheduled to meet monthly through April 2007. Meetings for the general public are scheduled for December 2006 and March 2007.

### **How will the Core to Shore Planning Study work?**

The Core to Shore Planning Study will examine the how the I-40 realignment will affect the areas between downtown Oklahoma City and the Oklahoma River in two phases.

- Phase I: July 2006 – April 2007. Phase I will focus on the 590 acres between downtown and the Oklahoma River, roughly between Shartel Avenue and I-35/235. It includes analysis of existing transportation, economic, social, and environmental conditions; opportunities for redevelopment, design of the new boulevard, and an implementation strategy.

- Phase II: estimated May 2007-March 2008. Phase II will focus on implementation and include design guidelines and refined redevelopment plans for the entire study area of 1375 acres. The entire study area includes the 590 acres in Phase I plus an additional 785 acres, covering I-35/235 to Villa Avenue between Reno Avenue to the river.

Throughout the process, the consultant team will meet with City staff, the Steering Committee, and the public to present results of analysis and recommendations. The study will follow these steps:

- Analyze the current conditions and expected changes from the new freeways
- Discuss the opportunities that will arise from the changes
- Identify several visions and planning approaches for the area's future
- Select one or more preferred plans for the combination of desired developments
- Identify strategies to facilitating the area's private development

### **Will the public have an opportunity to participate?**

Yes. Two public meetings are scheduled as a part of the planning process. Those meetings are set for December 2006 and March 2007. Additionally, the Steering Committee will have task forces led by members who will connect with a range of stakeholders throughout the study.

### **How will existing homes and businesses be affected by the recommendations of this study?**

The study is intended to facilitate private development in areas where the market is favorable. Private parties who wish to acquire property have already approached several property owners in the area and it is likely that this interest will continue. The plan recommendations could include putting in new sidewalks, parks, and other public amenities. If the land needed to complete these amenities were in private ownership, it would likely be acquired by negotiated sale.

### **What type of development can we expect and when will it happen?**

The purpose of the Core to Shore Planning Study is to identify the right types of development opportunities and timing. One of the goals is to ensure the area south of downtown is developed to be complimentary to, not competitive with investments in downtown. In addition to development, the study will focus on mobility and flow, how people move around, and neighborhood quality. The plan that comes out of this study will address the following goals:

- World class design for a new boulevard where original I-40 is brought to street level between Oklahoma and Walker Avenues
- New places for economic development in areas previously disconnected by the railroad and overhead freeway
- Dense, urban live-work community to promote the vitality for a 24/7 environment
- Assess alternatives and advantages for locating services to homeless persons
- Quality connections and improved access to places in the Core to Shore Planning Study area, highlighting the corridors and landmarks, linking the area internally and to its surroundings
- More effective traffic flow in and out of downtown
- Fewer impacts to neighborhoods from the freeway
- Good balance of complimentary land uses
- Increase the opportunities to walk safely throughout the area
- Create a transportation system that is friendly and safe for all modes of transit, such as people, bikes, and buses
- Create project strategies that are linked to viable funding mechanisms

The plan that comes out of this study will be a long-term plan with phases. Part of the study's intent is to identify "catalyst" developments that come first, drawing interest to the area and spurring additional development. Many locations for development will be in the path of reconstruction until 2011.

**Where can I find more in-depth information?**

Visit the City's website at [www.okc.gov](http://www.okc.gov). The City's Project Manager for Core to Shore can be reached at 297-1628 and [Russell.claus@okc.gov](mailto:Russell.claus@okc.gov)

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## **Core to Shore Team Bios**

October 2006

### **Hans Butzer, TAParchitecture**

Hans serves as TAParchitecture's Principal of Design. He holds a Bachelor of Architecture from the University of Texas, Austin and a Masters of Architecture from Harvard University. Butzer's work involves issues ranging in scale from urban planning/public policy to urban design, buildings, landscape and art. His award-winning designs cover a wide range of typologies such as civic, educational, commercial and residential. He lectures extensively throughout the United States, speaking on topics pertaining to the integration of architecture, landscape, art and communities.

While at TAP, Hans has worked on a number of planning and urban design projects, including: The Triangle Mixed Use Development, Oakerhater Episcopal Mission, Chandler Armory Route 66 Interpretive Center, the Maywood Park Brownstones, and I-40 Relocation Area Planning Study (Core to Shore).

His designs have been reviewed in hundreds of journals, newspapers, books, television and radio interviews and on-line publications both in the United States and Europe. As co-designers of the Oklahoma City National Memorial, Hans and wife Torrey also won national and international accolades.

Hans is committed to our state's future and to teaching its young people to succeed in a globalizing society, see the world then return to Oklahoma to make our community even better. To this end, Butzer is a tenured professor of architecture and urban design at the University of Oklahoma's College of Architecture.

### **Russell Claus, Oklahoma City Planning Office**

Russell holds a Masters in City Planning (MIT 1994) and a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Studies from Griffith University (Brisbane, Australia). Russell has worked for the City of Oklahoma City since 1996. He currently manages the Urban Redevelopment Division with the Oklahoma City Planning Department. The Division is focused on facilitating redevelopment within downtown and the inner city. He is currently managing several major planning studies and programs that will lay the groundwork for the next phase of downtown development. These include the I-40 planning area (Core to Shore), downtown streetscape master plan, the Medical Business District in Midtown, and the Health Science Center expansion area. Russell has worked on numerous large scale, large impact planning projects during his career. Russell currently serves as the project manager for the I-40 project.

The Urban Redevelopment Division also addresses Brownfield redevelopment, the Empowerment Zone, and projects driven by various EPA and HUD grants, including the American Indian Cultural

Center. Russell started his career in Oklahoma overseeing recovery efforts in the area affected by the 1995 Murrah Building bombing.

Prior to emigrating to the U.S. from Australia in 1992, Russell worked for the Queensland National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Brisbane City Council. Prior to moving to Oklahoma, Russell worked for the Nature Conservancy in New York, and for Pierce County Planning in Washington State.

### **Sara Jane MacLennan, URS Corporation**

Sara Jane MacLennan has 20 years of experience in urban design and transportation/land use planning, landscape architecture, master and small area planning, downtown revitalization, transit station area planning, and public facilitation. She specializes in Framework planning for downtowns, streetscape design, comprehensive planning, and corridor planning. Sara Jane is a Senior Associate with the Colorado Springs URS' Community Planning Unit.

Sara Jane has spent most of her career working on large projects from the beginning stages to construction. She was a team member working with environmental and engineering professionals on many CDOT projects over the last 12 years including Powers Boulevard, the Colorado Avenue Bridge Project, and the Woodmen Corridor, all in Colorado Springs. Sara Jane also was a key member of the environmental and design teams for the US550/160 Feasibility Study in Durango and the Gaming Corridor Study focused on 119 in Blackhawk, and Central City, Colorado. Most recently, Sara Jane was the senior advisor for the landscape architecture and aesthetics team for the Northwest Parkway which included the design of a featured bridge as well as landscape at key intersections and the toll plaza. These projects were designed to be practical, sustainable, and attractive.

Sara Jane has had the privilege of working with hundreds of local leaders, practice leaders, citizens and governments to create special places and improve transportation systems that make the community a better place to live.

Her education includes a Bachelor of Science in Geography from the University of Massachusetts/Salem State College, a Master of Landscape Architecture and Urban Design from the University of Colorado and post graduate studies in real estate development and financial analysis at Harvard University.

### **Anthony McDermid, TAParchitecture**

As a founding principal of TAParchitecture, Anthony's main focus areas are the pursuit of excellence in design, client service and technical virtuosity. He holds a Bachelor of Architecture from the University of Manchester in England.

Anthony's built projects comprise new complexes, additions, renovations, and restorations, and all phases of services including feasibility, programming, and master planning for a variety of building types. He has designed over 200 projects including the new Oklahoma Judicial Center, the Oklahoma State University College of Veterinary Medicine and Bethany First Church of the Nazarene. Anthony has extensive experience working with client groups to achieve well-designed projects that exceed expectations.



Anthony's professional career has included many successful fundraising and financing efforts for capital projects, including City Rescue Mission, The Center for Design Arts and numerous city, state, university, school, and church projects.

Anthony's professional depth and diversity has also resulted in opportunities to provide urban design, development and planning services including the 1999 I-40 Land Use Plan and Mitigation Study, State of Oklahoma Lincoln Renaissance Project, Downtown Edmond Streetscape, Oklahoma City Galleria Redevelopment Study and the Triangle Development in Oklahoma City.