



# Economic Development Advisory Board

Regular Business Meeting  
Thursday, March 25, 2021, 8:00 AM  
Zoom Online Meeting Platform

**Voting Members**  
Allan Dye; Bridgette Tuttle;  
Jacob Walker; John Whims;  
Katy Woods; Liz Nugent;  
Sally King  
Ad-hoc Member  
Janelle Drews

Page

## 1. CALL TO ORDER

### 1.1. Virtual Participation Information:

The City Council meeting will be held virtually via Zoom Meeting. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and [Proclamation 20-28.14](#) issued by Governor Jay Inslee, in-person attendance is not permitted at this time.

Join Zoom Meeting:

- [Click link](#)
- Dial in: (253) 215-8782
- Passcode: 414796
- Meeting ID: 874 6608 2901

## 2. ROLL CALL

## 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- 3.1. Minutes from the March 11, 2021 EDAB Meeting 3 - 7  
[Approval of Minutes](#)

## 4. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- 4.1. Soofa Digital Signs - Brad Feilberg 8 - 17  
[Soofa Digital Signs Intro](#)
- 4.2. Imagine Monroe Update - Deborah Knight 18 - 31  
[Imagine Monroe Update](#)

## 5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- 5.1. American Rescue Plan Funding Priorities - Rich Huebner 32 - 34  
[American Rescue Plan Funding Priorities](#)

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES WILL BE PROVIDED UPON REQUEST.  
For assistance, please contact the City Clerk's Office at 360-794-7400 in advance of the meeting.  
THE CITY COUNCIL MAY ADD AND TAKE ACTION ON OTHER ITEMS NOT LISTED ON THIS AGENDA

## **6. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS**

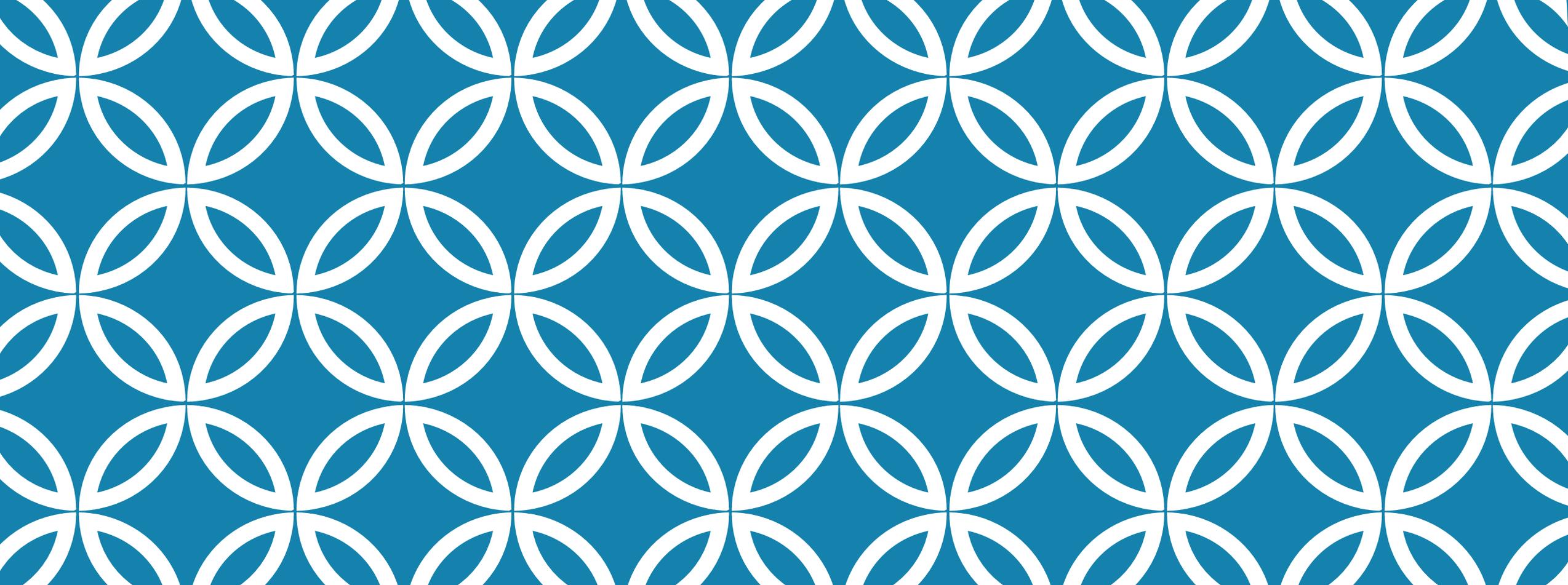
- 6.1. Board Member Comments and Updates 35 - 36  
[Board Member Reports](#)

## **7. CITY / STAFF REPORTS**

- 7.1. City / Staff Reports 37  
[City Staff Reports](#)

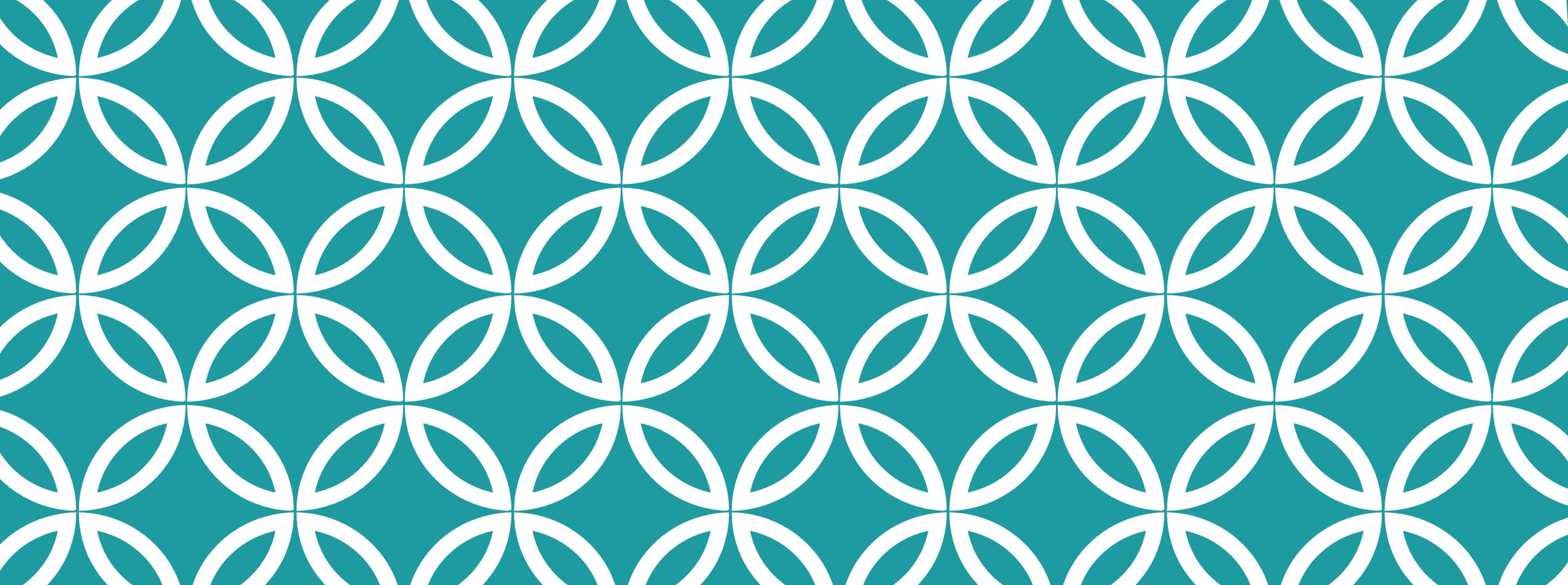
## **8. ADJOURNMENT**

- 8.1. Next Meeting - April 8, 2021 at 8:00 a.m. 38  
[Adjournment](#)



**WELCOME**

Economic Development Advisory  
Board  
March 25, 2021



# APPROVE MEETING MINUTES

March 11, 2021

Economic Development Advisory  
Board

March 25, 2021

**CALL TO ORDER**

The March 11, 2021 Monroe Economic Development Advisory Board Meeting was called to order at 8:05 a.m.; Zoom Meeting Platform.

**ROLL CALL**

Voting Members present: Allan Dye, Bridgette Tuttle, Jacob Walker, John Whims, Katy Woods, Liz Nugent<sup>1</sup>, and Sally King

Ad-hoc Member present: Janelle Drews<sup>2</sup>

Staff present: Deborah Knight, Rich Huebner, and Mike Farrell

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

Board Member Katy Woods made motion to approve the minutes of the February 25, 2021 meeting. The motion was seconded by Board Member Jacob Walker. Motion carried 6-0.

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

A. City of Monroe Demographic Analysis

Ms. Knight detailed the recently completed demographic analysis for the City of Monroe. The goal of the analysis was the synthesize the demographics of the non-Correctional Complex population of Monroe.

According to the Washington State Office of Financial Management and the Washington State Department of Corrections, the Correctional Complex population remains fairly steady; since 2009, the population has remained between 2,410 and 2,530. The overall population of Monroe in the same timeframe has increased from 16,710 to 19,800, indicating a residential population growth of just over 3,000, from 14,230 to 17,270. Monroe's combined population is projected to continue to increase, reaching 24,300 in 2043.

Ms. Knight commented that the City tends to grow at a larger rate in times of economic growth, and at a lower rate in times of economic contraction, with an average growth rate of approximately 1%. Board Member Whims asked if the City had a slide that compared Monroe's projected growth to that of the overall Sky Valley; Ms. Knight commented that such a graphic was included in the recently completed Socioeconomic Baseline and Regional Demand Analysis Report, and Mr. Huebner shared the slide on-screen.

Ms. Knight detailed the estimated non-inmate demographics by age and by race. The age demographics show that Monroe has a higher than County average population

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<sup>1</sup> Joined the meeting at 8:13 a.m.

<sup>2</sup> Joined the meeting at 8:26 a.m.

under the age of 20, demonstrating Monroe's status as a community of families. The racial demographic analysis shows that Monroe's population of residents identifying as Black Alone is higher (approximately 3%) when including the Correctional Complex population, and lower in the non-inmate population (approximately 0.8%). Board Member Woods asked if the under 20 population was persons living in their familial home or on their own; Ms. Knight commented that it's a combination of both, as this data is a census count.

Income and Employment data shows that the Real Household Median Income in Monroe (\$85,900) is nearly on-par with that of Snohomish County (\$86,700), and higher than both Washington State (\$73,800) and the overall United States (\$68,700). Ms. Knight also shared the median income of Monroe as broken down by US Postal Service carrier route.

Ms. Knight detailed the Building Permits and Housing Units data. Discussion ensued pertaining to comprehensive and population planning, and annexation areas, and how those impact the City's budget. Board Member Tuttle commented that this is an example of information that needs to be effectively communicated to the community: not simply to "shop here" and "support local", but that it's primarily the sales tax collected here that keeps the City running and providing services that make Monroe an attractive community in which to live. Board Member King concurred with Board Member Tuttle's comments, and suggested a mailing campaign and/or an advertisement in the Choose Monroe magazine of "reasons to Shop Monroe".

Board Member Walker asked if this information will be used in future planning, or was simply a form of "digging in" to data; Ms. Knight commented that it's a bit of both, and that the report will be included as an appendix in the upcoming Comprehensive and PROS Plans.

#### B. American Rescue Plan Funding Priorities

Mr. Huebner detailed what is currently known about the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), which was passed by the federal House of Representatives and Senate in February and March, respectively. Under the plan, the City of Monroe is anticipating receiving \$3.5 million in federal assistance funds, with an additional \$800,000 anticipated to be invested in the immediate area outside the Monroe city limits; the overall \$1.9 trillion in legislation provides for COVID-19 mitigation, reopening of schools, support for unemployed workers, and state and local governments.

Specific guidelines on usage of APRA funds have not yet been released. Allowed uses currently known are:

- Response to the COVID-19 pandemic
- Costs incurred as a result of the public health emergency
- Replacement of lost, delayed, or decreased revenues
- Address negative economic impacts

Half of the dedicated funds are anticipated to be disbursed to the City within 60-90 days of the bill signing date of March 12, 2021; the remaining half is anticipated to be disbursed approximately one year later.

Discussion ensued regarding suggested priority uses of the funds, once received. Suggested uses include:

- Board Member King: additional rent and mortgage assistance
- Board Member Tuttle:
  - Targeted utility forgiveness: under the 2020 forgiveness programs, landlords that collected utility fees from tenants, but did not in turn pay their utility bills to the City, were both paid and forgiven.
  - A need-based grant: 2020 grant programs required businesses to demonstrate either a minimum percentage revenue loss, or be actually behind on rent or mortgage. These programs did not address needs of businesses that had revenue losses less than the required percentage, or business owners who had used personal funds, credit cards, or taken out loans to remain current on rent/mortgage payments and other bills.
- Board Member Woods:
  - Matching funds, with the recipient investing a portion of the overall project cost; such a program would demonstrate that the owner has ‘skin in the game’.
  - Grants that provide assistance to businesses that did not receive any City, County, state or federal assistance in 2020. An example are sole proprietors that show no profit, and were thus ineligible for most assistance programs.

Board Member Walker suggested continued conversation at the next meeting, and commented that he would like to see heavy use of funds for grant programs benefitting businesses, service providers, and residents.

Mr. Huebner shared a graphical breakdown of the City’s use of the \$866,250 received in 2020 under the CARES Act.

## **BOARD MEMBER REPORTS**

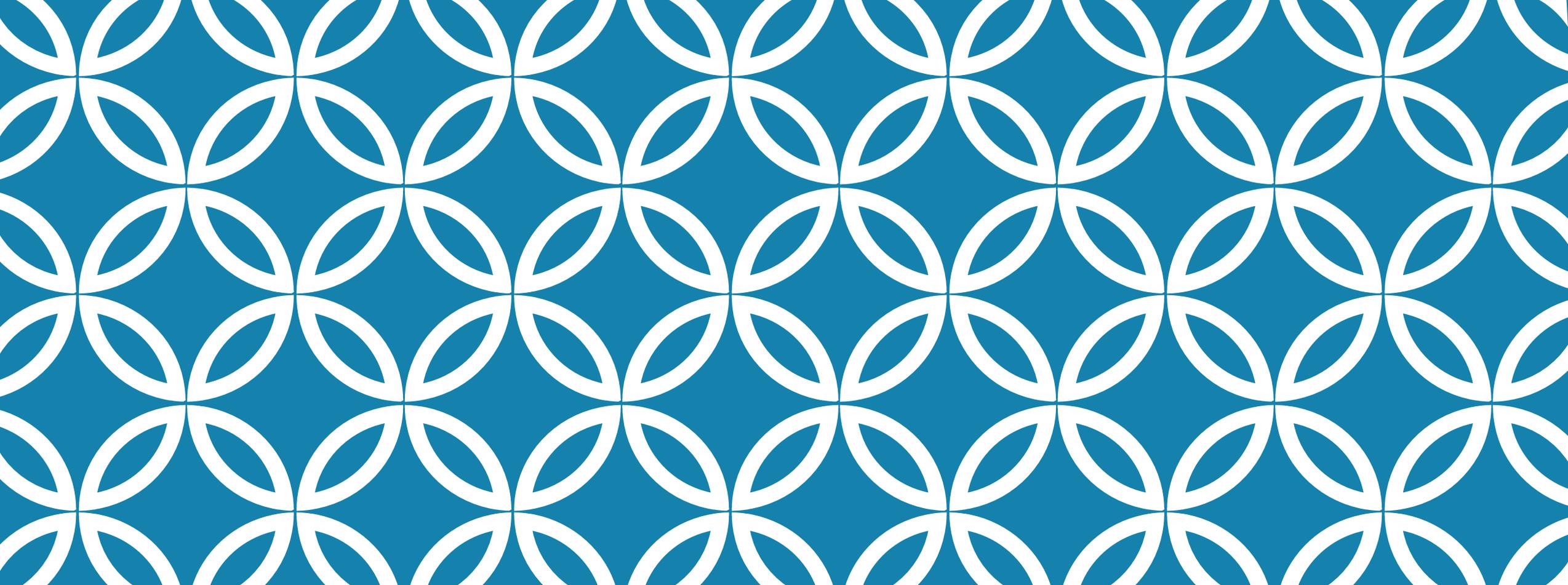
Dispensed with to facilitate American Rescue Plan Funding Priorities discussion.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 a.m.

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Deborah Knight, City Administrator



# SOOFA DIGITAL SIGNS

Economic Development Advisory  
Board  
March 25, 2021

# soofa sign

## Overview

Shelley Price, AICP  
Government Affairs Manager  
[shelley@soofa.co](mailto:shelley@soofa.co)  
702.630.8176



The Soofa Sign is a sustainable and tech-forward communication platform.



100% Sustainable



Sensor Technology



Engaging Content



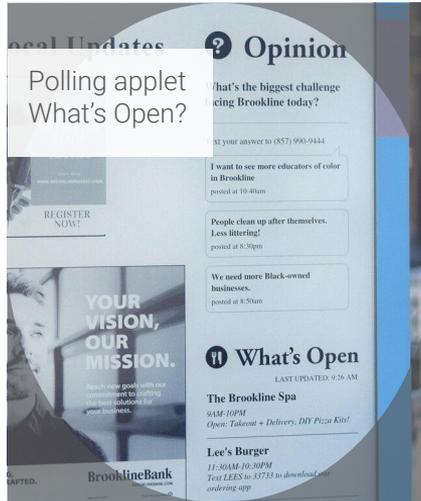
Instantly communicate city news & PSAs in the real world.

Soofa is a trusted source of information for residents on health guidelines, upcoming events, public works, and general city updates.



## Cities Choose Screen Applets

Cities can choose which applets they want to display on the Sign, depending on the Sign's location and the city's objectives and priorities.



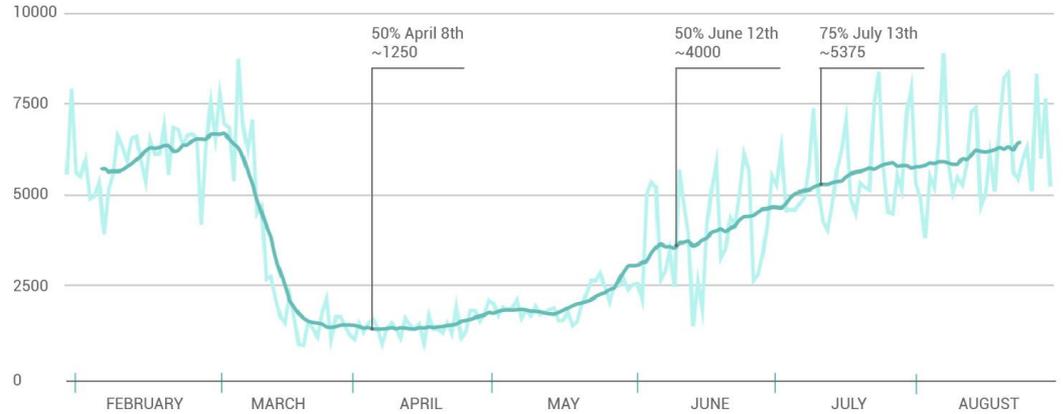
Timely and relevant updates in just a few clicks.

Our platform, SoofaTalk, allows cities to post to Signs across different neighborhoods.



Our sensor  
measures pedestrian  
traffic in real time.

Soofa's sensor technology provides the you with real-time data on pedestrian footfall, creating new insights on usage of public space.



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## Vinyl decal customized to your city.

We work with cities to design an eye-catching vinyl sticker that fits the city's needs and matches the character of each neighborhood.



## Standard Operating Agreement

In exchange for 4 square feet of sidewalk space and a co-investment of \$9,500 per Sign, cities receive:

- 20% share of net revenue annually
- 100% airtime in city content block
- Custom vinyl decal
- Pedestrian data
- Real-time transit updates for additional annual fee

Soofa takes care of:

- Weekly cleaning and maintenance
- Installation
- Content management

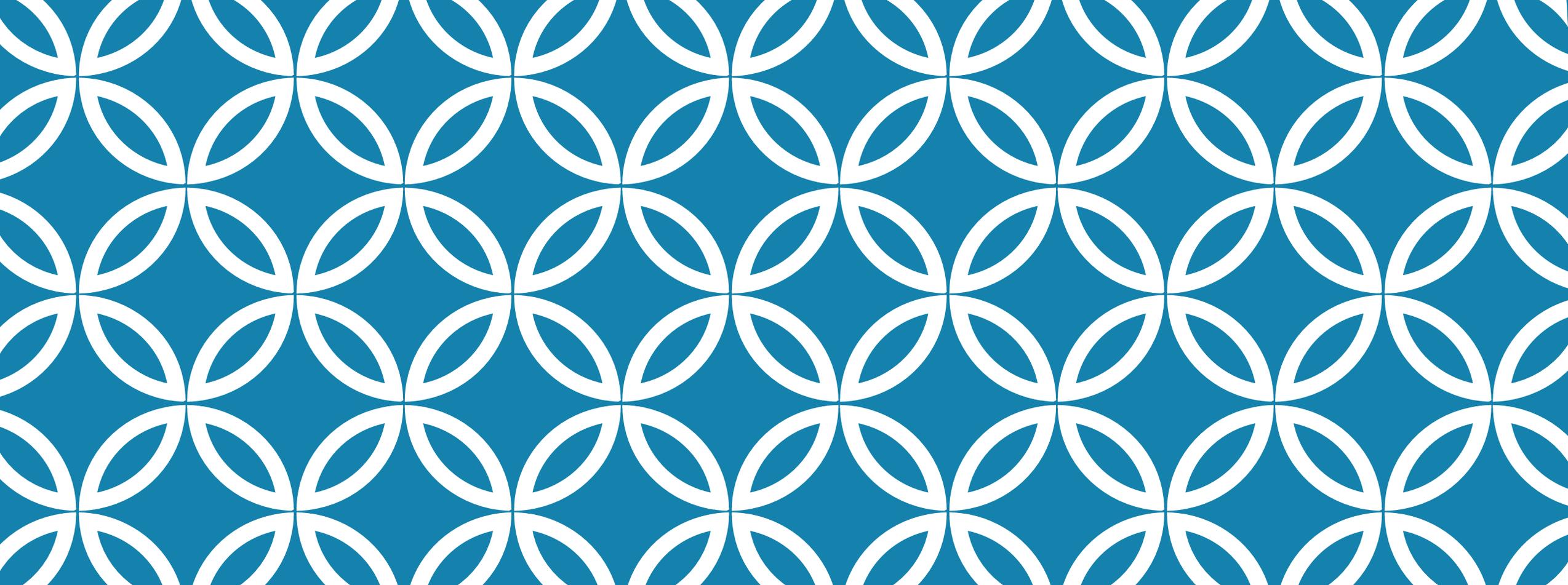


**Thank you!**

Shelley Price, AICP  
Government Affairs Manager  
[shelley@soofa.co](mailto:shelley@soofa.co)  
702.630.8176

[www.soofa.co](http://www.soofa.co)





# IMAGINE MONROE UPDATE

Economic Development Advisory  
Board  
March 25, 2021

# CITY OF MONROE VISIONING PROCESS

*“IMAGINE MONROE”*

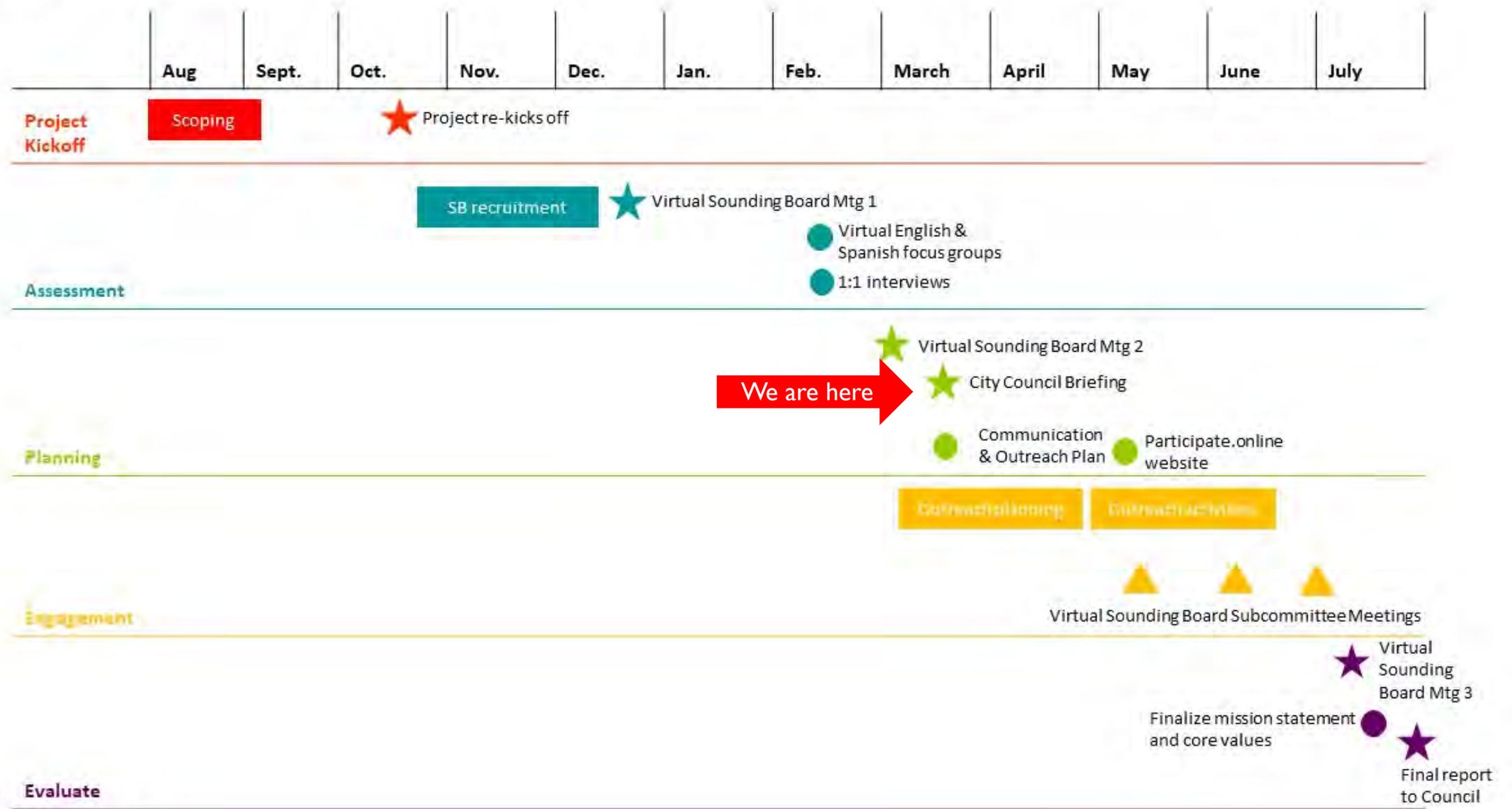
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY

BOARD (EDAB) UPDATE

THURSDAY, MARCH 25, 2021



# Imagine Monroe updated project schedule (3/8/21)



# MEETING SCHEDULE

Phase	Full Sounding Board	Subcommittee	Meeting topics
Assessment	December 2020	--	Welcome, review charter, feedback on project name
Planning	March 2021	--	Communication and outreach strategy
Engagement	--	May 2021	Outreach check-in
Engagement	--	June 2021	Outreach check-in
Engagement	--	July 2021	Outreach check-in
Evaluation	July 2021	--	Finalize mission statement, vision statement and core values documents



# **VISION, MISSION, AND CORE VALUES**

## **DISCUSSION**



## ASSESSMENT PHASE KEY FINDINGS

- Monroe has transitioned from a smaller center surrounded by mostly agricultural land in the 1980's to a small center surrounded by mostly commercial areas in 2020.
- Construction of SR522 in 1972 and the two-lane expressway on US 2 east of Snohomish in 1983 brought a lot more traffic into the area.
- As more businesses were built along US 2 investment in businesses downtown was reduced and fewer people were incentivized to go there.
- Since the last vision statement was adopted in 2015:
  - Economic downturn prevented some of the ideas discussed during the last comprehensive planning process from being implemented
  - Despite the downturn the City was able to implement critical infrastructure projects that helped improve historic downtown Monroe

# ASSESSMENT PHASE KEY FINDINGS

## Current challenges

- Traffic on US 2 and SR 522
- Need to improve the walkability of some key locations
- Safety and noise concerns with 4th of July fireworks
- Support for small businesses who are struggling due to the COVID-19 pandemic
- More support for youth – Need for more in-person constructive activities
- Cost of living has been affordable but is increasing
- Increasing population of people without homes and safety concerns
- There's a need for a central place to find information about what's happening in the City

# ASSESSMENT PHASE KEY FINDINGS

## Why people like Monroe

- Affordable cost of living
- Location – proximity to other cities, community resources (e.g. grocery stores, jobs, good police department, etc.), access to natural resources (e.g. Mountains, riverfront, etc.)
- Friendly community
- Size – small relative to other cities in the area
- Good support for families (e.g. schools, supportive neighbors, etc.)

# ASSESSMENT PHASE KEY FINDINGS

## 2015 vision statement feedback

- Focus group members liked phrases like: Walkability, small town, improving 522, improving navigation, wayfinding, diversifying small businesses, welcoming place to live
- Concern with language about:
  - Monroe as a community transitioning from a “small rural town” to a “city of regional significance” – want to maintain the City’s small-town feel
  - Using the Skykomish river for recreation, economic and tourist opportunities – area needs to be cleaned up before it can be used
- Felt the vision statement was too lengthy
- Desire to see more language directed towards the support of youth and incentivizing more volunteering in the community

## DISCUSSION

- Like the vision to keep characteristics of a “small town” as the north star for statements
- Small town identity is part of core values – Can Monroe be a small town and City of regional significance at the same time – described small town characterized by tight relationships and programs that support youth
- “Small town” has different meanings for different groups. Language should be welcoming to all demographics
- Vision statement should focus on Monroe’s identity – what Monroe wants to be
- Keep vision statement short and succinct, understandable, inclusive, focused, and memorable
- Statements should highlight the need to hear and respect everyone’s voices, responsiveness of city government to the needs of organizations and the community

# POTENTIAL PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES

## Interactive activities

- Participate.online website (online open house) with online survey
- Pop-up events
- Community kits
- Virtual briefings with community groups
- Partnering with existing neighborhood groups and networks
- Social media campaign / ads
- Community art board
- Project email updates
- Articles in Mayor's weekly e-newsletter
- Project website updates
- Press releases

# POTENTIAL PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES

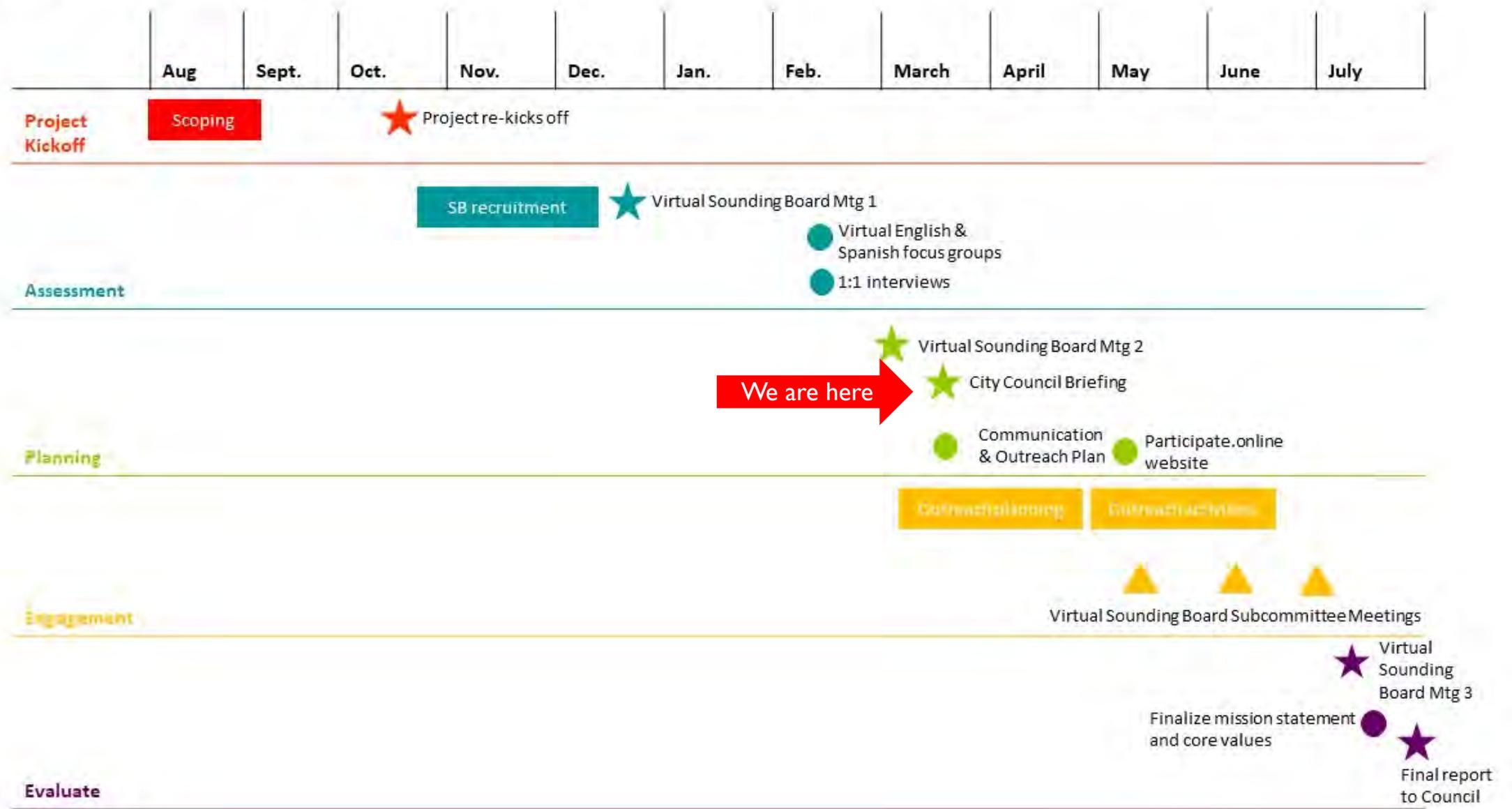
## **Printed materials**

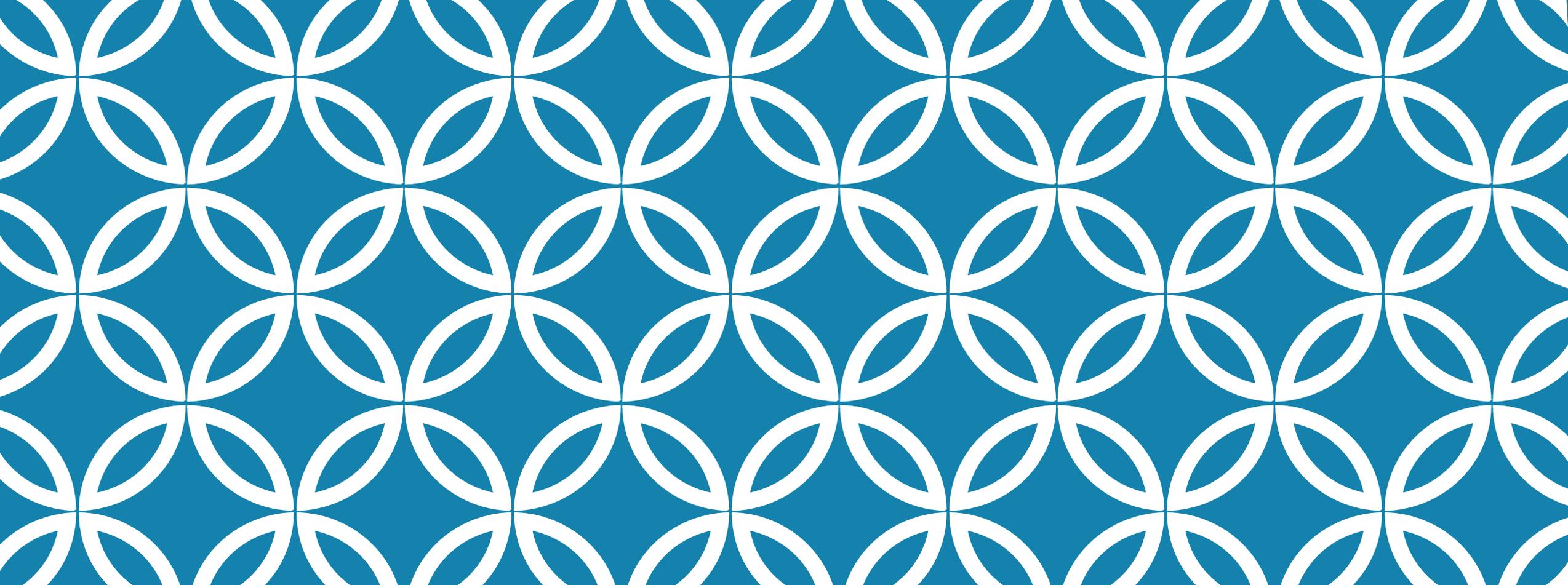
- Direct mail postcard
- Print advertisements – Choose Monroe
- Informational Factsheet
- Paper survey
- Coloring Pages

# DISCUSSION

- Need to recognize resource limitations– what tools will give us the most “bang for the buck”
- Paper survey – Easier to fill out right when you receive it, put it back in the mail
- Community kits – very versatile and useful for sharing with organizations (Boys & Girls club, YMCA, partnering with teachers)
- Pop-up events – Many opportunities to participate in existing community events to reach people where they are already going (Lake Tye events, Farmer’s Markets, Frylands events, Night Out Against Crime)
- Coloring pages – Getting youth in Monroe involved will get their parents involved
- List of survey questions that could connect with people and ask them directly – important to make connections through phone calls/in-person
- Web materials/social media – Better for high-school aged youth/Korean families

# Imagine Monroe updated project schedule (3/8/21)





# AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN FUNDING PRIORITIES

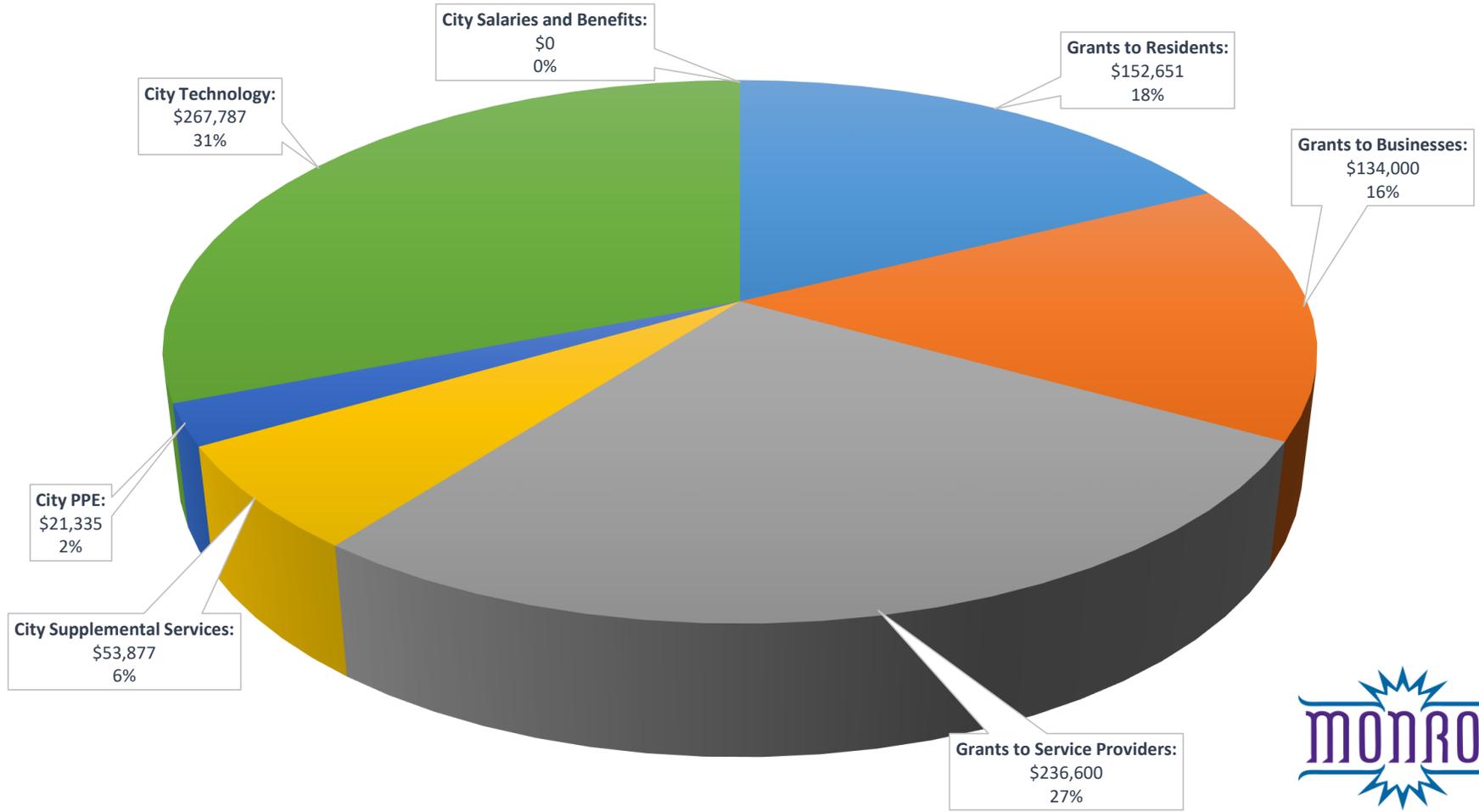
Economic Development Advisory  
Board

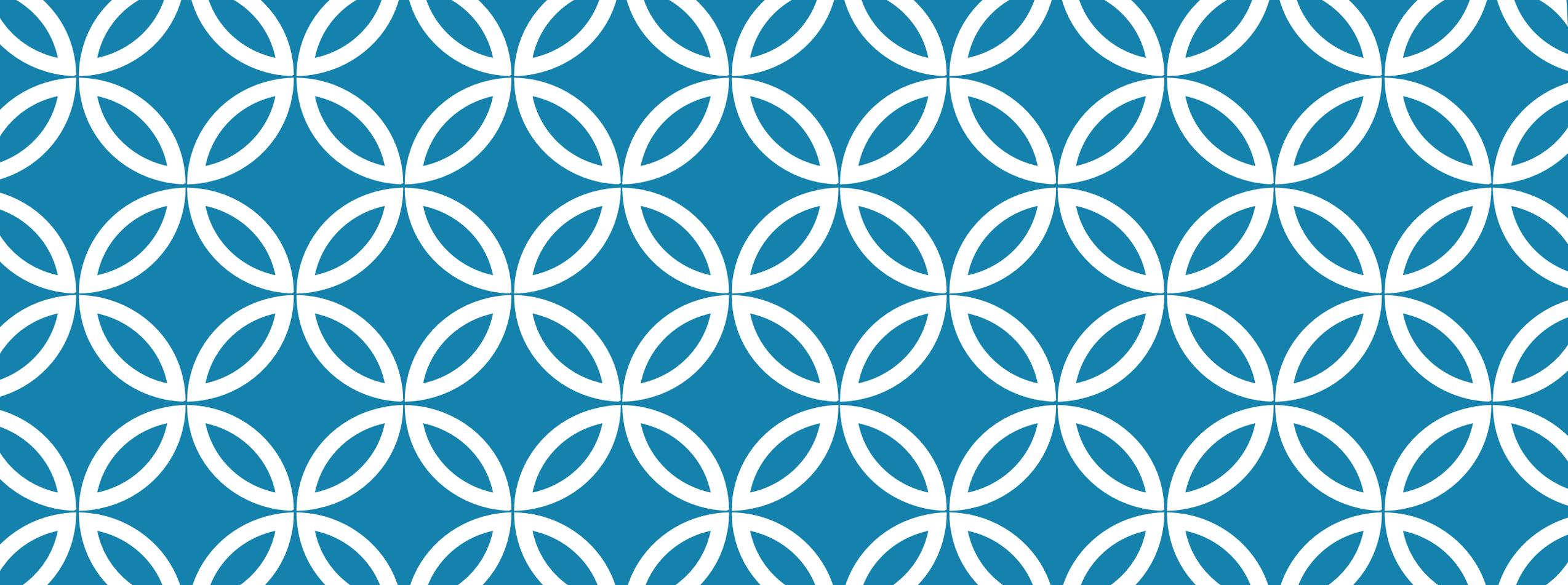
March 25, 2021

# AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN FUNDING PRIORITIES

- ❑ Passed by federal House and Senate in February and March, respectively.
- ❑ Provides \$1.9 trillion for COVID-19 mitigation, reopening schools, support for unemployed workers, and state and local governments.
- ❑ City of Monroe anticipating \$3.5 million; Monroe-area anticipating \$4.3 million
- ❑ First half distributed within 60-90 days of bill signing, second half one year later.
- ❑ Allowed uses:
  - ❑ Respond to COVID-19 pandemic
  - ❑ Costs incurred as a result of the public health emergency
  - ❑ Replacement of lost, delayed or decreased revenues
  - ❑ Address negative economic impacts
- ❑ EDAB Suggestions:
  - ❑ A grant program to assist business owners not eligible for 2020 City grants
    - ❑ Example: business owners that did not record at least a 25% revenue loss - or were not behind on lease/rent payments - due to dipping into personal savings, using credit cards, or taking out loans.
  - ❑ A grant program to support building owners to make capital improvements by providing funds to match the owner's investment.
  - ❑ A grant program for businesses that received no prior assistance, such as sole proprietors that recorded no income.

# City of Monroe CARES Act Funds Usage Breakdown





# BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

Economic Development Advisory  
Board  
March 25, 2021

# EDAB SUBCOMMITTEES AND WORK PLANS



Bridgette Tuttle  
Liz Nugent  
Sally King



Allen Dye  
John Whims  
Katy Woods



Bridgette Tuttle  
Jacob Walker  
John Whims

## Tourism

### Meeting Date

3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday

8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.

### Work Plan

Lodging Needs Assessment  
Wayfinding/Gateway Signs

## Business Recruitment

### Meeting Date

3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday

9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

### Work Plan

Annual Report  
Business Survey  
Recruitment & Retention Strategies  
North Kelsey (Tjerne Place)  
Economic Development Webpage

## Growth & Development

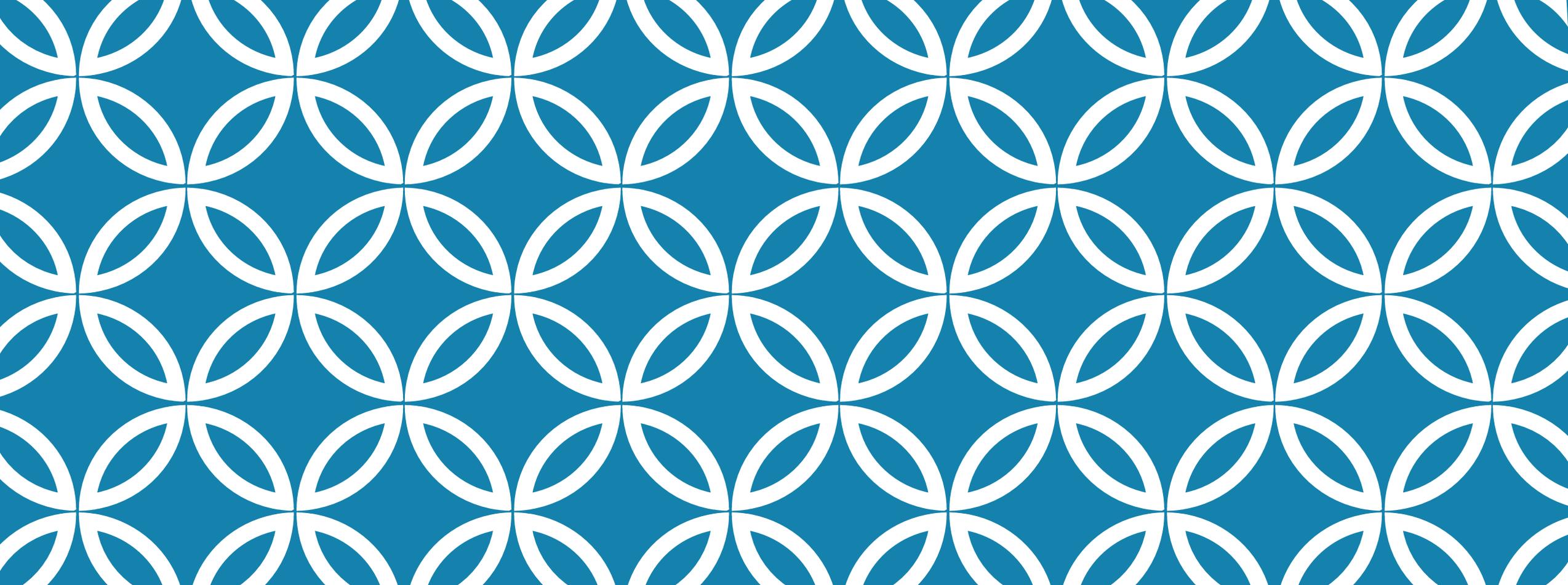
### Meeting Date

1<sup>st</sup> Thursday

8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.

### Work Plan

Masterplan Riverfront Park  
Connect Downtown to Riverfront  
Develop Community Hub Space  
Underground Utilities



# CITY / STAFF REPORTS

Economic Development Advisory  
Board  
March 25, 2021

# NEXT MEETING THURSDAY, APRIL 8, 2021

8:00AM-9:30AM

Zoom Meeting

