

# Developer Agrees To Change City Plan

By CANDACE J. SAMOLINSKI [csamolinski@tampatrib.com](mailto:csamolinski@tampatrib.com)

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TEMPLE - TERRACE -- The city's redevelopment effort is moving forward after a developer agreed to proposed changes in the project's scope.

Unicorp National Developments of Orlando was given 30 days from a Sept. 27 city council vote to agree to a scaled-down version of the initial \$300 million project. It took the company 10 days to decide it's onboard, City Manager Kim Leinbach said.

"I think we're getting close to rocking on," he told the city council at its Tuesday meeting.

Unicorp representatives are retooling the original project to meet 21 guidelines set out by the council in September. The new plan is to include two phases completed within six years.

The first phase of the project would stretch from Bullard Parkway and 56th Street south to Chicago Avenue and would include mixed-use buildings for shopping and residences, said Ralph Bosek, community services director. A second phase would stretch from Chicago Avenue south to the Hillsborough River and could include condo-style residences along the waterway.

"There are still a lot of hurdles," Bosek said. "We are going to get a plan, run it by Torti Gallas [an urban planning firm] and [real estate adviser] John Stainback to make sure it fits."

The proposal then goes back to the council for contractual decisions, Leinbach said.

The project's layout will incorporate "New Urbanism" principles and Mediterranean design styles, allow buildings up to six stories tall and limit commercial tenants to retail operations. The council wants to calm traffic on 56th Street and negotiate for a Regions Bank and Kash n' Karry/Sweetbay store in the district.

"We just received \$2.4 million in federal funds to fix 56th Street, and we are hoping to get \$1.5 million more from the federal government through the state," Bosek said. "We want to build up a war chest so we can go into this redevelopment with a transportation plan that will work with the project."

The council voted 3-2 in September to set aside land in the second phase to build a city hall and to allow the Masque Community Theatre, which operates from a building in the heart of the redevelopment district, to remain there up to five years. By then, the city is expected to have decided whether to include a performing arts center in the district. A new police department also would be built in the surrounding area.

Many residents say they remain unconvinced that municipal buildings belong there because the buildings won't generate property taxes.

In other Florida cities where New Urbanism projects have been successful, governments have opted to sell land to the developer, which constructs the buildings and leases the buildings to the city in order to maintain a tax base.