



WonderBlock



WonderBlock Redevelopment Project – Questions and Answers

1. Why is the redevelopment project called *WonderBlock*?

- The name *WonderBlock* is rooted in Ogden’s past – it’s connected to the city’s historic 25th Street and gets its name from the Wonder Bread factory that was downtown for decades, located at the now vacant lot planned for the new development. It’s also a catalytic project that will boldly lead the way for the thriving downtown Ogden of tomorrow.
- The city’s rich and colorful past has set the stage for *WonderBlock*, and now *WonderBlock* will help to set the stage for the city’s rich and colorful future.
- The *WonderBlock* name speaks to the spirit of Ogden’s past – and the start of Ogden’s future!

2. What is included in the *WonderBlock* development?

- At a high-level, *WonderBlock* will provide homes, offices, stores (including a grocery store) and unique public spaces. But that’s not all that will be built. *WonderBlock* will also be a place where ideas and people come together. Where the heart of Ogden’s past meets the best of Ogden’s future. *WonderBlock* will help to continue building and strengthening Ogden!
- *WonderBlock* will be a highly visible new development in the heart of downtown – meaning it must represent the best that our community can offer!
- Specific elements of *WonderBlock* include:
 - 354 residential units featuring high quality amenities and walkable access to Ogden’s Arts, Culture and Events.
 - Additional residences downtown also tend to support lower levels of crime in adjacent business areas.
 - 100,000 square feet of Class “A” commercial office space
 - 50,000 square feet of street level retail store space
 - 20,000 square foot grocery store
 - Boutique hotel
 - Pedestrian pathways and public outdoor amenity spaces
 - Convenient covered parking structures

3. Why did the City Redevelopment Agency purchase the former Hostess/Wonder Bread property – now referred to as *WonderBlock*?

- In order to ensure that the important former Wonder Bread factory property in the heart of downtown (along 26th Street between Grant and Lincoln Avenues) was redeveloped in a way that would enhance and benefit downtown Ogden, the site was purchased by the City

Redevelopment Agency (RDA) in December 2016 and the old building was demolished and the site cleaned up during 2017-19.

- As owner of the property, the City RDA planned to deliver the property to a developer willing to invest in the site in order to achieve its highest and best use to benefit the community.

4. What is the *Make Ogden Downtown Master Plan*, and how does *WonderBlock* help achieve the plan objectives?

- After several years of planning, including extensive public input, Ogden City's *Make Ogden Downtown Master Plan* was adopted in 2020 – establishing a 25-year vision to guide growth and development of downtown Ogden. The primary purposes of the *Make Ogden Downtown Master Plan* are to increase the City's capacity to build sustainable economic vitality going forward, and to enhance the attractiveness of downtown by increasing the number of jobs, housing options, pedestrian activity, public transportation, one-of-a-kind stores/restaurants/venues, and the overall downtown experience – all powerful economic factors that will improve the lives of residents and bolster the City's financial health and prosperity.

- The six tenets of the *Make Ogden Downtown Master Plan* include:

- Real Estate and Land Use
- Historic and Cultural Assets
- Transportation and Mobility
- Parks and Open Space
- Social Equity
- Essential Services

These tenets will be addressed through an orchestrated effort to promote the infill of the downtown core, attract employment, improve access to social services and amenities, coordinate public transit and open space systems, and provide variety and equity in housing opportunity.

- The *WonderBlock* development was planned to help achieve the *Make Ogden* objectives. The unique development proposes a mixed-use, lifestyle centric, experience led project in the heart of downtown Ogden, connecting directly to Historic 25th Street. The project will be a combination of residential dwellings, retail, office services, grocery, food and beverage, as well as hospitality.
- All of the project elements will be connected via attractive public spaces that will support special events – creating a unique sense of place that will draw people throughout the region to our awesome downtown.

5. Why is the City Redevelopment Agency proposing to partner with a private developer to facilitate the *WonderBlock* development?

- Based on the *Make Ogden Downtown Master Plan* that envisioned a significant high-quality mixed-use development at the site – providing new residencies, retail, office, grocery and hospitality – the City Redevelopment Agency (RDA) was contacted by several potential private developers that were interested in the site.
- Initial proposals fell short of meeting the type of development envisioned at such a high level.

- Private development investment alone was not sufficient to achieve the vision and maximum impact of the site.
- Therefore, the RDA decided to negotiate with a private developer that was willing to partner in a joint venture with the City RDA in order to accomplish all of the objectives – maximizing the potential of the highly visible site adjacent to the historic downtown district, including:
 - Reducing existing surface parking (not the highest/best use of downtown property),
 - Increasing business, job and residential activities in the downtown core – all benefitting existing businesses,
 - Increasing effective parking infrastructure that also serves adjacent areas,
 - Complimenting the existing historical and cultural assets – and the overall attractiveness of downtown Ogden as the place to live, work and visit.

6. What process did the City RDA use to determine what developer to work with for the development?

- As authorized by Utah State Code 17-C, and by the Ogden City Redevelopment Policy, the city RDA has the option to perform potential developer engagement utilizing one of three different processes:
 - Public Solicitation
 - Direct Negotiation
 - Unsolicited Proposals
- For *WonderBlock*, the RDA considered concepts from several potential developers and decided to “directly negotiate” a potential project with a developer that offered the highest level of competency and ability to deliver according to the RDA’s vision/objectives for the site – J. Fisher Companies.

7. What would happen if the City Redevelopment Agency (RDA) did not actively pursue and engage in developing the empty site proposed for the *WonderBlock* project?

- At some point in the near or far future, the land might be transferred to a developer, and based on current market trends, a lower-end apartment complex with surface parking lots (or similar) would likely be the outcome.
- Such a development would fall way short of the enhanced market value and attractive asset envisioned as the catalytic project known as *WonderBlock*. Therefore, an alternative project to *WonderBlock*, without City engagement, would likely **NOT include**:
 - Retail or commercial space – including a grocery store – and the associated jobs.
 - Multi-level parking infrastructures to maximize land use and support adjacent judicial courts and downtown retail.
 - Enhanced “back-of-house” access for south-side 25th Street businesses (200 block).
 - Public outdoor amenities to enhance the attractiveness of downtown Ogden and facilitate special events.
 - Higher property values as the new/higher standard for downtown land values in order to drive sustainable economic vitality for the community.

8. Who will own the *WonderBlock* development?

- The *WonderBlock* development would be a private/public partnership between the developer, J. Fisher Companies, and Ogden City Redevelopment Agency (RDA).
- J. Fisher Companies and the City RDA will own the *WonderBlock* development, and J. Fisher Companies will operate the associated residential, retail, commercial, grocery and hospitality spaces.
- If the *WonderBlock* development is sold in the future, the City RDA will receive an agreed upon portion of the sale proceeds that can be used to satisfy some/all of the outstanding initial investment, as determined by the project’s performance.
- The parking structures located at *WonderBlock* will be owned and operated by the Ogden City Municipal Building Authority (MBA).

9. How much will *WonderBlock* cost to build and who is paying for it?

- The *WonderBlock* development residential/retail/commercial/grocery/hospitality elements represent a \$188,000,000 total investment.
- The proposed project would be a joint venture between a developer (J. Fisher Companies) and the city RDA.
 - Therefore, both parties are investing in the project according to the following table.
- The RDA’s investment contribution will not require an increase in property or sales taxes.

WonderBlock Development Capital Contribution Sources (estimates):

J. Fisher Companies Investment	\$124 M	
Ogden City RDA Investment	64 M*	(max. par bond not to exceed \$75 M**)
Total Development Investment	\$188 M	

** PAR bond values, includes both project construction costs and financing costs – which may vary depending on market interest rates.

* Ogden City RDA Principal Repayment Sources (estimates)

Federal/State Grants	\$ 6.5 M	
Retained Tax Increment (TIF)	21.5 M	(<i>WonderBlock</i> new tax revenue)
Bus. Depot Ogden Lease Rev. Contrib.	36 M	(return from previous City investment)
Total Ogden RDA Capital Invest.	\$64M***	(max. par bond not to exceed \$75 M**)

** PAR bond values, includes both project construction costs and financing costs – which may vary depending on market interest rates.

*** Per partnership agreement, the City RDA will be due a portion of property sales proceeds after 10 years up to 100% of investment contribution.

- Impact on City’s General Fund or Property Owner Taxes: None
- Additional information about the *WonderBlock* development is available for review at www.ogdencity.com/WonderBlock.

10. How much will the public parking system improvements downtown and the new parking structures at *WonderBlock* cost and how will it all be paid for?

- The public paid parking system improvements across downtown and the two new parking structures proposed at *WonderBlock* will be built and owned/operated as public parking by the City Municipal Building Authority (MBA) and represent about a \$53,500,000 investment.
- The table below shows additional detail.

Public Parking Structures at *WonderBlock* and Parking System Throughout Downtown (estimates):

Ogden City MBA Investment: \$ 53.5 M (*max. par bond not to exceed \$85 M**)

* PAR bond values, includes both project construction costs and financing costs – which may vary depending on market interest rates.

- Ogden City MBA Capital Investment Source will be a Revenue Bond paid with downtown paid parking revenue. Annual paid parking revenue (less costs) are projected to satisfy the estimated annual revenue bond payments.
- MBA’s investment contribution will not require an increase in property or sales taxes.
- Additional information about Ogden’s proposed downtown parking plan, including the complete parking study and answers to various typical questions and the opportunity to provide feedback, is available at www.ogdencity.com/GoParkOgden.

11. Will property taxes for citizens/property owners go up because the City is spending money on the *WonderBlock* development?

- No – property taxes for property owners will not increase due to the City Redevelopment Agency’s investment into the *WonderBlock* development.
- The bonds associated with the City RDA’s investment in the residential/retail/commercial/hospitality elements of *WonderBlock* will be paid via the increase in taxable value of the *WonderBlock* development (Tax Increment Financing or TIF), along with some funds from lease revenues from the City’s previous development investment at Business Depot Ogden (BDO).
- The revenue bonds associated with the City Municipal Building Authority’s investment in the new parking structures located at *WonderBlock* and parking management system downtown, will be paid via the revenue generated from the paid parking system.

12. What will be some of the advantages of being a resident living at *WonderBlock*?

- The high-quality residential apartments at *WonderBlock* will be just south of Historic 25th Street and unique downtown, one of Ogden’s most interesting and culturally rich areas. One minute you could be biking along the river, and the next minute be meeting friends under the neon dragon on 25th Street. Connected to the heart of the city, *WonderBlock* is a place where mountain and urban living become one.

13. How will *WonderBlock* help attract visitors to Ogden?

- Ogden’s colorful history has shaped our vibrant community and downtown arts and entertainment district, and it has always been known for its access to nearby outdoor assets.

WonderBlock will add even more options and further support Ogden's offerings as the place with the best dining, shopping and entertainment. And where there's always something new to explore.

14. How does *WonderBlock* support downtown retail?

- Historic 25th Street has long been the center of the city's downtown experience. And now, there is an opportunity for retailers to become part of Ogden's next chapter and expand the treasured center of influence in Ogden – and for existing retailers to benefit from the exposure to more visitors, as well as new employees/residents.
- Here, visitors will experience authentic downtown Ogden while also being surprised by a host of places to shop, dine, and explore – making downtown Ogden even more attractive as top destination for visitors.
- "*Make Ogden*" is gaining more and more momentum, and *WonderBlock* is right at the forefront!

15. Why is the *WonderBlock* development considered a better/more resilient project than some previous or potential projects?

- *WonderBlock* is a mixed-use project, not just one product type (like a shopping mall). The mix of uses (residential, retail, office, hospitality) helps to ensure its long-term success and useful life.
- Additionally, the project will add 354 new housing units, helping to respond to the housing shortage in Ogden and across the Wasatch Front. The region's housing demand is forecast to remain strong, in spite of potential future economic changes.

16. With all of the new residential and commercial development bringing more people to downtown Ogden, where is everyone going to park their vehicles?

- During peak parking, about mid-day, the parking occupancy for all Downtown parking is about 50% currently. However, there are some facilities or blocks where parking reaches or exceeds the effective capacity threshold (more than 85% -- which negatively impacts accessibility, and some businesses believe the congested parking is hurting their business).
- The City's positive upcoming *Make Ogden* developments – including the *WonderBlock* development, will dramatically add residences/businesses/employees and enhance our overall economic vitality, and will also overwhelm existing parking capacity.
- The redevelopment initiatives associated with the *Make Ogden* Plan will:
 - Reduce existing surface parking,
 - Increase business and residential activities,
 - Increase the existing problem of limited prime retail spaces on 25th Street, and
 - Increase the overall parking demand and need for related new parking structures.Therefore, the city is developing a parking management strategy that will support planned development downtown and enhance transportation access for visitors, residents and businesses.
- Additional parking structures and investments to improve existing parking facilities are indeed planned as part of the *WonderBlock* development and in support of other downtown developments. Supportive parking structures as recommended in the recent parking study

completed by the city, with easy access to pedestrians and residential/commercial/retail areas, are significant investments in the future development of downtown Ogden.

- Structured parking will support a greater density and quality of development throughout downtown, replacing many of the current surface parking lots that consume a significant amount of property with better utilized space that benefits the whole community.
- The web page, www.ogdencity.com/GoParkOgden provides a summary of the work that has been done thus far regarding parking plans, including the recently completed Parking Study, the *Make Ogden* Downtown Master Plan, and a list of Frequently Asked Questions. The site also provides a feedback link for ideas and comments.

17. Where do I find out more information about *WonderBlock*?

- Additional information about *WonderBlock* and *Make Ogden* is available at the web page: www.ogdencity.com/Wonderblock.
- The “Provided Feedback” link on the web page is an easy way to ask questions and provide input regarding the project.

