



SLC's downtown transformation is now in the hands of a little-known state committee. Here's what you need to know.

The committee includes four state legislators and one member appointed by Gov. Spencer Cox.



(Smith Entertainment Group) A site plan for a proposed downtown sports and entertainment district.

By Jordan Miller | July 15, 2024, 6:02 a.m.

Utah Jazz owner Ryan Smith's proposal to transform three downtown Salt Lake City blocks into a new sports, entertainment, culture and convention district cleared a major hurdle last week when the City Council approved a key component of the project.

The council's [July 9 endorsement of an agreement](#) between the city and Smith Entertainment Group means the massive project can move closer toward becoming a reality.

Now, the fate of [that agreement](#) rests in the hands of a newly created legislative committee. Here is everything you need to know about the panel:

What's the committee's job?

SB272 authorized negotiations for the sports district this spring, setting a Sept. 1 deadline for the city to hammer out the details of the project in an agreement with SEG.

As a check on the city, the legislation also created the Revitalization Zone Committee. The panel will review the agreement to ensure it is in line with the SB272's requirements.

The committee must either approve or reject the pact within 30 days of the council's initial endorsement.

If the committee rejects the agreement, it will send comments back to city officials, who then would continue negotiations. Ultimately, the council will have until Oct. 1 to cast its final vote authorizing the pact, according to bill sponsor and committee member Rep. Jon Hawkins, R-Pleasant Grove.

And after the accord receives its final approval, the city must still report to the committee with updates on construction and accounting

Who is on the committee?

The panel consists of four state legislators — two from the House and two from the Senate — and one member appointed by Gov. Spencer Cox.

Two of the members are SB272's sponsors, Hawkins and [Sen. Daniel McCay](#), R-Riverton. The other two legislators are Rep. [Jefferson Moss](#), R-Saratoga Springs, and Sen. [Kirk Cullimore](#), R-Sandy.

Moss and Cullimore were selected by House and Senate leadership, Hawkins said.

Cox's chief of staff, Jon Pierpont, [serves as the committee's final member](#).

What happens next?

The committee will hold a public meeting to either approve or reject the city's agreement with SEG. That meeting has yet to be scheduled.

Ahead of the public meeting, committee members will internally analyze the accord, Hawkins explained, and ask questions to ensure they "fully understand" what the pact is trying to accomplish.

"We're not really making a decision," Hawkins said. "It's more of an oversight committee than a decision-making committee that we created. Now, that could change if we feel like we need more decision-making [power]. But all we're doing is making sure that it sticks to what's in the parameters of the bill."

If approved, the agreement will come back to the City Council for a final vote. Council members would then get to vote on a proposed half-a-percentage-point sales tax increase that would funnel \$900 million of public money into the district.

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