PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES STAFF REPORT

For Planning Commission Meeting of October 1, 2019

SUBJECT: 616 East Washington Planned Project Site Plan
(616 East Washington Street)
Project No. SP19-010

PROPOSED CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MOTION
The Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby recommends that the Mayor and City Council approve 616 East Washington Planned Project Site Plan and Development Agreement, which allows a taller building with a varied front setback while providing solar and energy conserving design, subject to providing easements for private stormwater, private reciprocal access/egress, and solid waste prior to the issuance of the first permit.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends **approval** of the planned project site plan because it complies with all applicable, local, state, and federal ordinances, standards and regulations; it will not cause a public or private nuisance; and it will not have a detrimental effect on public health, safety or welfare.

Staff further recommends **approval** of the planned project modifications because the project is consistent with the standards of approval for planned project in the Unified Development Code, Planned Project Site Plan Modification (Section 5.30).

LOCATION

This site is located on the south side of E. Washington Street, west of S. State Street, and is in the Downtown Development Authority district and the Allen Creek watershed.

DESCRIPTION OF PETITION

General Information – The site contains four older residential buildings and one older commercial building fronting E. Washington Street, is zoned D1 (Downtown Core), is within the State Street Character Overlay District and is on a Secondary street. The petitioner is seeking approval to demolish the five buildings and wrap the new building around the 1-story screening room of the Michigan Theater. The petitioner proposes to construct a 19-story, 255,216-square foot apartment building containing 240 dwelling units (466 bedrooms) with 144 vehicle parking spaces including 3 shared spaces for electric vehicles and 15 DDA leased spaces as well as 246 bicycle parking spaces. A 5,438 square foot ground floor retail space at the northeast corner of the building is proposed to be provided. The second and third floor of the building is proposed to consist of a parking deck for the exclusive use by residents.

The unit types will include: 51 studios, 90 one-bedroom apartments, 39 two-bedroom apartments, 14 three-bedroom apartments, 25 four-bedroom apartments, and 21 five-bedroom apartments. On-site amenities include a health and fitness center, business center, and a club room on the 18th floor with TV viewing area, gaming area with an outdoor rooftop patio with pool/spa feature.

Residential floor area premiums have been applied to earn an additional 298% of floor area. An affordable housing premium has also be proposed to provide an additional 200% of floor area. A total floor area ratio of 898% is proposed (900% allowed with residential and affordable housing premiums). The petitioner is proposing that 19 dwelling units be permanently available for individuals making 80% or less of the average local median income.

The developers are also proposing to develop 212 S. State Street as a separate residential project on a separate parcel with a separate site plan. 212 S. State Street will direct its stormwater to 616 E. Washington. 616 E. Washington will also provide residents of 212 S. State access to its basement bicycle parking room as well as provide an pedestrian access easement to the 212 building from E. Washington Street. The developers acquired the land on which the Michigan Theater screening room sits through a land division. The Michigan Theater will continue to own the screening room through condominium ownership. As part of this arrangement, the developer has agreed to construct new bathrooms for the Michigan Theater that will be within the 212 S. State Street building.

Building Height – The petitioner is proposing a 208-foot tall building, which is 28 feet taller than is permitted in the D1 zoning district. The petitioner is proposing a planned project modification for the height requirement and has provided an explanation on how they believe the project is consistent with the planned project standards (see Planned Project Modification section below). The petitioner is proposing a project that meets LEED Silver standards and is proposing solar panels on much of the roof area. They are proposing to address the standard for approval regarding solar orientation and energy efficient design.

Parking – The project proposes to provide 117 private vehicle parking spaces, in a 2nd and 3rd floor parking deck. The developers are also proposing to secure leases for 15 additional DDA spaces. Three spaces within the deck are proposed to be shared spaces, each with access to an electric vehicle charging station, 5 spaces are proposed to be barrier free, and 28 spaces are proposed to be compact. The shared-use vehicle spaces will be addressed in the development agreement. The Unified Development Code allows each of the three shared spaces to count as 4 parking spaces for the purposes of meeting the parking requirement which means that the petitioner receives credit for 12 spaces. The developer proposes a loading and delivery area on E. Washington Street, in front of the project, which may result in some parking spaces being removed. The petitioner is working with the DDA on the location and compensation for the loss of the space(s).

Bicycle Parking – 246 bicycle parking spaces are proposed which will include 232 Class A spaces in a secured, dedicated bike storage room in the basement level, 10 Class B spaces that are proposed outside, on the east side of the site, and 4 exterior Class C (hoop style) spaces along E. Washington Street in between the sidewalk and the street. 616 E. Washington is providing 7 Class A spaces in the basement bicycle parking room to accommodate required Class A parking for 212 S. State as permitted by the Unified Development Code (Special Parking Districts). An access easement will need to be recorded to accommodate these spaces.

Pedestrian Access – Pedestrians will be able to access the building from a primary entrance on East Washington Street. Separate entrances will be provided for the retail spaces. Approximately 16 feet of pedestrian space is proposed to exist between the face of the building and the back of the curb along E. Washington Street. An outdoor patio area is proposed at the northeast corner of the site to provide outdoor seating or dining opportunities. A midblock

pedestrian pathway is also proposed to be provided from E. Washington to E. Liberty Streets along the east side of the site that can accommodate pedestrian access to 212 S. State. Five street trees are proposed to be installed along E. Washington Street.

Natural Features – No regulated natural features exist on the site. A Brownfield application will not be part of this petition.

Solid Waste – Solid waste is proposed to be handled within the building. Access to the parking deck and solid waste storage area is proposed to be from a two-way drive on the west side of the E. Washington frontage. This drive will lead to a ramp that will allow vehicles to park on floors 2 and 3. The drive also leads to a solid waste and recycling area in the southwest corner of the building that will be served by solid waste trucks. Trucks will then back out and exit on E. Washington.

Traffic Impact Study – A traffic study was conducted by Fleis & Vandenbrink. No mitigation measures are required. The conclusion of the study is as follows:

1. The existing conditions analysis for vehicular and non-motorized traffic indicates that all study intersections operate acceptably, with a LOS D or better during both AM and PM peak periods. Additionally, a review of network simulations indicates acceptable traffic operations.
2. The background conditions analysis indicates all study intersections will operate in a manner similar to existing conditions. The existing Levels of Service have been maintained, with negligible increases in vehicle delays experienced.
3. The proposed development will include apartments and ground floor retail space. The existing building currently has ground floor retail; therefore, only the apartment units were assumed to generate new trips and the proposed retail trips will replace the retail existing trips.
4. The future conditions analysis indicates that all study intersections will operate similar to existing and background conditions. Negligible increases in vehicle delay are experienced, with no changes to LOS.
5. The results of the crash analysis show that all study intersections have crash frequencies below the SEMCOG averages. Additionally, all study intersections, with the exception of State Street and Liberty Street have crash rates below the SEMCOG averages. Further crash analyses performed for each of the study intersection and indicates that there are no significant crash patterns that would necessitate improvements.
6. An additional pedestrian LOS evaluation was performed for the sidewalk segments adjacent to the proposed development. The results of the analysis indicate that both blocks (E. Washington Street & State Street) will operate at a LOS A during future conditions with the addition of the site generated pedestrian traffic.
7. The existing mid-block crossing, located west of the proposed development, was evaluated to determine what treatment (if any) is necessary to accommodate the site generated pedestrian traffic. The results of the analysis indicate that additional signage is recommended in accordance with the City of Ann Arbor's Crosswalk guidelines.
8. The proposed development is located just east of two bus stop locations along E. Washington Street, with accessibility to several transit routes (Routes 3, 4, 21, 23, 65, 91, & 92) operated by *The Ride* transit service. Through discussions with *The Ride*, there is

available capacity on the existing routes to accommodate the additional ridership anticipated with this development.

Storm Water Detention – Storm water is proposed to be primarily handled by a storm water detention vault in the basement level near the northeast corner of the site. The detention system is proposed to be a vault sized in accordance with Washtenaw County Water Resources Commission standards to accommodate the 100-year storm event. Along with providing the required detention and infiltration for the 616 E. Washington site, the design accommodates a 100-year storm event from the 212 S. State Street site (as identified in the 212 S. State Street site plan). Outlet flow restriction will be provided via an outlet control structure.

Landscaping – Five street trees are proposed along E. Washington Street.

Open Space - The proposed ground floor patio at the northeast corner of the site is 927 square feet while the pedestrian connection to 212 S. State Street is 1,664 square feet. These pedestrian areas total approximately 9% of the ground floor of the site. No landscaping is proposed in these hardscape areas. Additional open spaces includes a 4,114 square foot terrace on the 5th floor and a 2,762 square deck on the 18th floor. No open space is required in the D1 zoning district.

Park Contribution – The petitioner has agreed to provide a $150,625 park contribution in-lieu of a park dedication, as outlined in the Parks & Recreation Open Space Plan based on 240 residential units. The contribution will be used for improvements to nearby parks.

Sanitary Sewer – The City's hydraulic model was used to analyze the impacts to the downstream sanitary sewer system from the proposed development. Results from the hydraulic modeling indicate sufficient capacity exists in the downstream local sanitary sewer system to support the proposed development. Capacity constraints during wet weather events have been identified in the trunkline sewers downstream from this development. As a result, the proposed development will need to comply with the City's Developer Offset-Mitigation Program. The developer will be required to mitigate 184.4 gallons per minute for sanitary sewer offset mitigation.

Building Materials – The petitioner proposes a combination of brick, cast stone, metal panels, and glass as primary exterior building materials. The petitioner provided color renderings of the building elevations (attached).

Citizen Participation – The petitioner held a Citizen's Participation meeting prior to submitting the site plan. The meeting took place on February 13, 2019 at the Graduate Hotel, at 615 E. Huron Street in downtown Ann Arbor. 2,780 post card invitations were mailed. Approximately 34 individuals were in attendance.

In general, the discussion included:

- Amount of parking
- Height
- Visual impact
- Vehicular access to the site
- Traffic
- Parking in surrounding areas

- Details on the type of units – size, number of bedrooms

Development Agreement – A development agreement has been drafted to address the park contribution, LEED Silver standards verification, shared car spaces, sanitary sewer mitigation, easements, and other issues. It will be finalized prior to City Council approval.

Ownership Structure - The Michigan Theater Foundation will maintain a condominium interest in the Screening Room building (as well as its amenities), as part of the 616 E. Washington condominium project, as well as rights of ingress and egress across various portions of the 616 E Washington Condominium parcel.

DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

The petitioner presented the project to the Design Review Board on January 16, 2019 (staff report and DRB recommendations) and again on February 13, 2019 (staff report and DRB recommendations).

In summary, the Board expressed concern about the proposed scale and height of the project indicating that the height would impact the pedestrian experience and shadow the memorial garden of the church across E. Washington Street. The Board and staff also expressed concern between the high contrast of the red/brown brick and the white (or off-white) masonry material. The DRB summary indicated that this contrast was jarring and out of context with surrounding older buildings. The Board recommended that one color should be dominant instead of giving both colors equal distribution.

SURROUNDING LAND USES AND ZONING

	LAND USE	ZONING
NORTH	Church	D1 (Downtown Core), East Huron 2 (Character Overlay)
EAST	University of Michigan	PL (Public Land)
SOUTH	Commercial, Theater	D1 (Downtown Core), State Street (Character Overlay)
WEST	Parking Structure	PUD, State Street (Character Overlay)

COMPARISION CHART

	EXISTING	**PROPOSED**	**REQUIRED/PERMITTED**
Base Zoning	**D1 (Downtown Core)**	**D1 (Downtown Core)**	**D1 (Downtown Core)**
Gross Lot Area	28,401 sq ft	28,401 sq ft	No minimum
Max. Usable Floor Area in % of Lot Area	Approximately 95%	898% (255,216 sq ft)	400% MAX normal (113,604 sq ft MAX) Up to 700% MAX with residential premiums (198,807 sq ft MAX) Up to 900% MAX with affordable housing premium (255,609 sq ft MAX)

Character Overlay District	**State Street**	**State Street**	**State Street**
Streetwall Height	1 story	3 stories	2 stories MIN 3 stories MAX
Offset at Top of Streetwall	Not applicable	5 ft	5 ft MIN
Building Height	2 stories (20 ft)	19 stories (208 feet) MAX (1)	24 ft; 2 stories MIN 180 ft MAX
Side, Rear Setbacks	0-2 ft side 0 ft rear	0-12.7 ft side 0-3.5 rear	None
Building Frontages	**Secondary Street**	**Secondary Street**	**Secondary Street**
East Washington Street	0-10 ft	1 ft (floors 2-3) (1)	Secondary Street: 0 ft MIN, 10ft MAX at streetwall
Parking	**Special Parking District**	**Special Parking District**	**Special Parking District**
Parking – Automobiles	8 spaces	117 spaces (on levels 2-3), plus credit for 3 shared spaces (12 spaces), plus 15 spaces with DDA agreement for a total of 144 spaces	142 spaces MIN for premium floor area
Parking – Bicycles	0	232 Class A 10 Class B 4 Class C	99 Class A spaces MIN

(1) Planned Project approval required; detailed below.

HISTORY

The 4 houses and one commercial building were constructed around the early part of the 20th century. Current uses include residential and commercial uses. The site was rezoned as part of the A2D2 Zoning Initiative. The current base and character overlay zoning districts and building frontage standards became effective in December 2009.

PLANNING BACKGROUND

The *Downtown Plan* is based upon several guiding values which articulate the most fundamental elements of the downtown. These values include providing a diversity of uses and accommodating a diversity of users, and providing a viable economy, a "green" and energy-efficient built environment and transportation network and social and cultural opportunities. Dense land use and development patterns which draw people downtown and foster an active street life, contribute to its function as an urban neighborhood and support a sustainable transportation system is a goal expressed in the *Plan* as well as encouraging a diversity of new downtown housing opportunities and expansion of the downtown resident population to

strengthen downtown's role as an urban neighborhood, continuing to seek a range of age groups and income levels in the downtown.

Ann Arbor Discovering Downtown (A2D2) – The site has been in the DDA since the DDA was established in 1983. In 2009, as part of the A2D2 planning effort, City Council approved the rezoning of land in the DDA from a variety of zoning districts to two primary districts: D1 and D2. At that time, this site was rezoned from C2B (Business Service) to D2 (Downtown Interface).

The Non-Motorized Transportation Plan recommends sidewalks and shared transportation facilities within E. Washington Street.

PLANNED PROJECT MODIFICATION

Modification Request

The petitioner is requesting planned project approval to a) increase the height of the building from the 180 feet maximum in the D1 zoning district to 208 feet and b) to allow portions of the front setback to be farther from the property line than the maximum of 10 feet. The proposed building setback along the northern property line (E Washington Street Frontage) varies from a minimum of one foot to a maximum of 45'-6" at the first floor. The required setback is 0 ft minimum and 10 ft maximum with 20% of the width of the building being allowed to exceed the specified maximum front setback. The project has 41% of the street frontage set back further than 10 feet at the first floor (5.6% has a 45.5 foot setback, 21.2% has a setback of 17.5 feet and 14.2% has a 16.9 foot setback).

The first floor setback provides at least 16 feet between the face of the first floor of the building and the back of the curb along E. Washington Street, which provides adequate space for pedestrian access and sidewalk amenities.

(Petitioner statements are in plain type)

Based upon compliance with the following standards, the Planning Commission may recommend approval, and City Council may approve modifications of the area, height and placement regulations of the Zoning Chapter in the form of a planned project site plan:

1. **The lot(s) included in the planned project must meet the minimum gross lot size requirement of the zoning district in which they are located.**

   The project meets the minimum gross lot size of the D1 zoning district. No maximum exists.

2. **The proposed modifications of zoning requirements must provide one or more of the following:**

   a) **Usable open space in excess of the minimum requirement for the zoning district.**

      The minimum open space requirement is 0%. The proposed project provides 33.16% open space.

No open space requirement exists in the D1 zoning district. The proposed ground floor patio at the northeast corner of the site is 927 square feet while the pedestrian connection to 212 S. State Street is 1,664 square feet. These pedestrian areas total approximately 9% of the ground floor of the site. No landscaping is proposed in these hardscape areas. Additional open space includes a 4,114 square foot terrace on the 5th floor and a 2,762 square deck on the 18th floor.

b) Building or parking setback(s) in excess of the minimum requirement for the zoning district.

The required min front setback along Washington St. is 0 ft. & the max. is 10 ft. The project proposes a front setback along Washington St. at the first floor that varies between a min of 3 ft from the main building façade at the first floor and a max of 45.5 ft creating a more varied and interesting streetscape/façade, leaving ample room for pedestrians while enhancing the pedestrian experience along Washington St. and also allowing for covered exterior patio/sidewalk dining at the retail portion of the mixed-use project (without interfering with normal pedestrian traffic patterns). The required Eastern side set-back is 0 ft and the proposed project provides a grade level min setback of 12'-7" and a max of 51'-10" ft to allow the inclusion of a mid-block pedestrian connection and a min of 12'-7" ft at upper floors. The setbacks of the western façade at the residential levels is 10-5.5" though the zoning only requires 0 feet.

c) Preservation of natural features that exceeds ordinance requirements, especially for those existing features prioritized in the land development regulations as being of highest and mid-level concern.

The existing site has no on-site stormwater management systems for any of the impervious area. The proposed project removes a significant amount of stormwater run-off from the city storm system during major rain events which currently exits the property in a swift and uncontrolled manner. The project's on-site stormwater detention will reduce stormwater run-off and erosion downstream in the Huron River and its floodplains as well as other deleterious effects in/on downstream natural features & wildlife such as an increase in sedimentation and pollutants.

d) Preservation of historical or architectural features.

The existing two-story residential buildings on the site will be offered to those who would wish to move them off-site prior to start of construction. The project owners will also allow local historians on-site to document all the existing buildings prior to removal.

e) Solar orientation or energy conserving design.

The building as designed will include a photovoltaic solar array on the roof of at least 60 KW generating capacity and the building will be designed and built to LEED Silver standards though no LEED certification will be sought.

The language requiring the developer to meet LEED Silver standards will be included in the development agreement.

f) An arrangement of buildings which provides a public benefit, such as transit access, pedestrian orientation, or a reduced need for infrastructure or impervious surface.

The project/building arrangement provides many public benefits including: Removing environmental contaminants and functionally obsolete (and energy inefficient) buildings from the city. The project is pedestrian oriented (downtown, markets, restaurants, coffee shops, bus/transit station, parks, employment, educational & entertainment opportunities, and other amenities, are within walking distance); A public mid-block pedestrian connection between Washington & Liberty Streets is proposed enhancing the pedestrian experience in the area; Reduced need for individual motor vehicle ownership due to transit access (the AAATA Blake transit hub, greyhound bus station, and university bus system are within walkable distance), the site is on major AAATA bus routes resulting in reduced carbon emissions since occupants are not dependent on individual vehicular use.: Shared motor vehicles will be located on the site also reducing the need for individual car ownership and thus resulting in reduced carbon emissions. The project will support electric vehicle. On-site bike parking is well in excess of the min. required amount further reducing the dependence on motor vehicles. On-site stormwater detention is created resulting in reduced stormwater flow off-site and thus a reduction in off-site pollution, erosion, flooding, etc.; local, neighborhood, retail uses are included in the project that are walkable from the surrounding neighborhoods resulting in reduced carbon emissions.

g) Affordable housing for lower income households.

The project will include 19 permanently affordable units.

The project will provide housing units for individuals whose incomes are at or below 80% of the Area Median Income.

h) Permanent open spaces of 20 percent or more in any low-density residential district.

N/A

3. The planned project shall be designed in such a manner that traffic to and from the site will not be hazardous to adjacent properties.

The proposed project has been designed to minimize traffic impacts to the adjacent properties. Motor vehicle access will be from E Washington at the western end of the site – a single curb cut is proposed in order two minimize pedestrian vehicle conflicts (although the project is eligible for two curb cuts based upon street frontage) A traffic study has been submitted.

4. The proposed modifications shall be consistent with the proper development and use of adjacent land and buildings.

The site contains, in part, functionally obsolete buildings which will be removed and/or razed. The project and proposed modifications are consistent with the intent of D1 Zoning to provide uses such as high-density housing opportunities in the urban core. Several high-rises with high density housing are located within a block of the project site. The project and proposed modifications are consistent with current development patterns and trends bringing more housing to the urban core of the city thus reducing the pressure for suburban sprawl and reducing the need for increased infrastructure while making more efficient use of existing infrastructure. This project, as proposed, removes existing single and two story, inefficient land uses on-site in favor of more efficient land uses while incorporating affordable dwellings units that are sorely lacking. A similar deviation from the max. front setback was granted to The Varsity just a few doors west along E Washington so this request is consistent with other buildings in the area (it should also be noted that many of the other buildings in the block were built with setbacks exceeding 10 feet).

5. Required off-street parking and landscaping must be provided in accordance with the provisions of Chapters 59 and 62.

Off street parking and landscaping have been provided as shown on the submitted plans in accordance with Chapter 59 and Chapter 62. Parking provided meets all requirements for vehicular spaces and significantly exceeds bike parking requirements. Shared vehicles will be included in the mix of provided parking reducing the need for individual car ownership as will the inclusion of abundant bike-parking on-site.

6. The standards of density, allowable floor area and required usable open space for the zoning district(s) in which the project is located must be met.

The proposed project meets the standards as indicated on the submitted plans. The requested planned project modifications do not result in more floor area being constructed than permitted by the zoning ordinance but rather permits construction of the permitted floor area without encroaching on Michigan Theater buildings.

7. There shall be no uses within the proposed project which are not permitted uses in the zoning district(s) in which the proposed project is to be located.

All the proposed uses within the proposed mixed-use project, including residential and retail uses are allowed in the existing D1 zoning.

The petitioner is proposing to meet the following standards of Planned Project approval:

- Solar Orientation and Energy conserving design

SERVICE UNIT COMMENTS

Planning – Staff supports the proposed planned project site plan. The petitioner agreed to construct a building that meets LEED Silver energy efficiency standards including solar panels on the roof, which allows them to meet one of the Planned Project standards for approval: solar orientation and energy efficient design. The project also proposes to provide stormwater

detention for the first time along with infiltration, provide new housing units near downtown and campus, improve pedestrian access along E. Washington Street, provide parking spaces vertically, provide a 2-space car share facility with an electric vehicle charging station, provide some retail uses with outdoor seating, and proposes to create an alley/walkway connection on the east side of the site from E. Washington to E. Liberty Streets.

Public Services (Sanitary Capacity) – Booster pumps may be required for fire and domestic services.

Prepared by Jeff Kahan
Reviewed by Brett Lenart
3/31/16

Attachments: Parcel and Zoning Map
Aerial Photo
Site Plan
Elevations
Citizen Participation Report
Design Review Board Report
Draft Development Agreement

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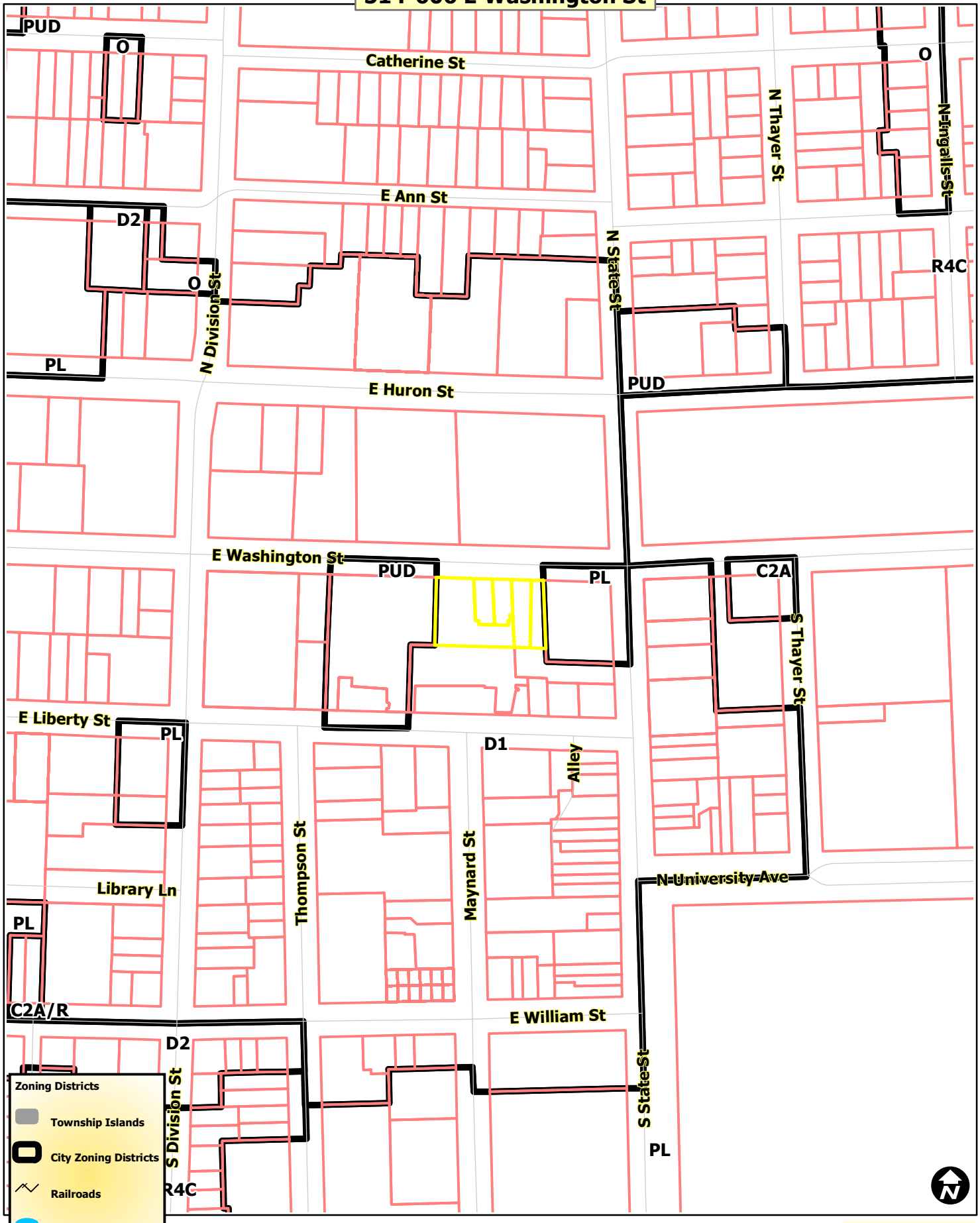
Systems Planning
Project Management
Project No. SP19-010

514-606 E Washington St



Map date: 12/4/2018

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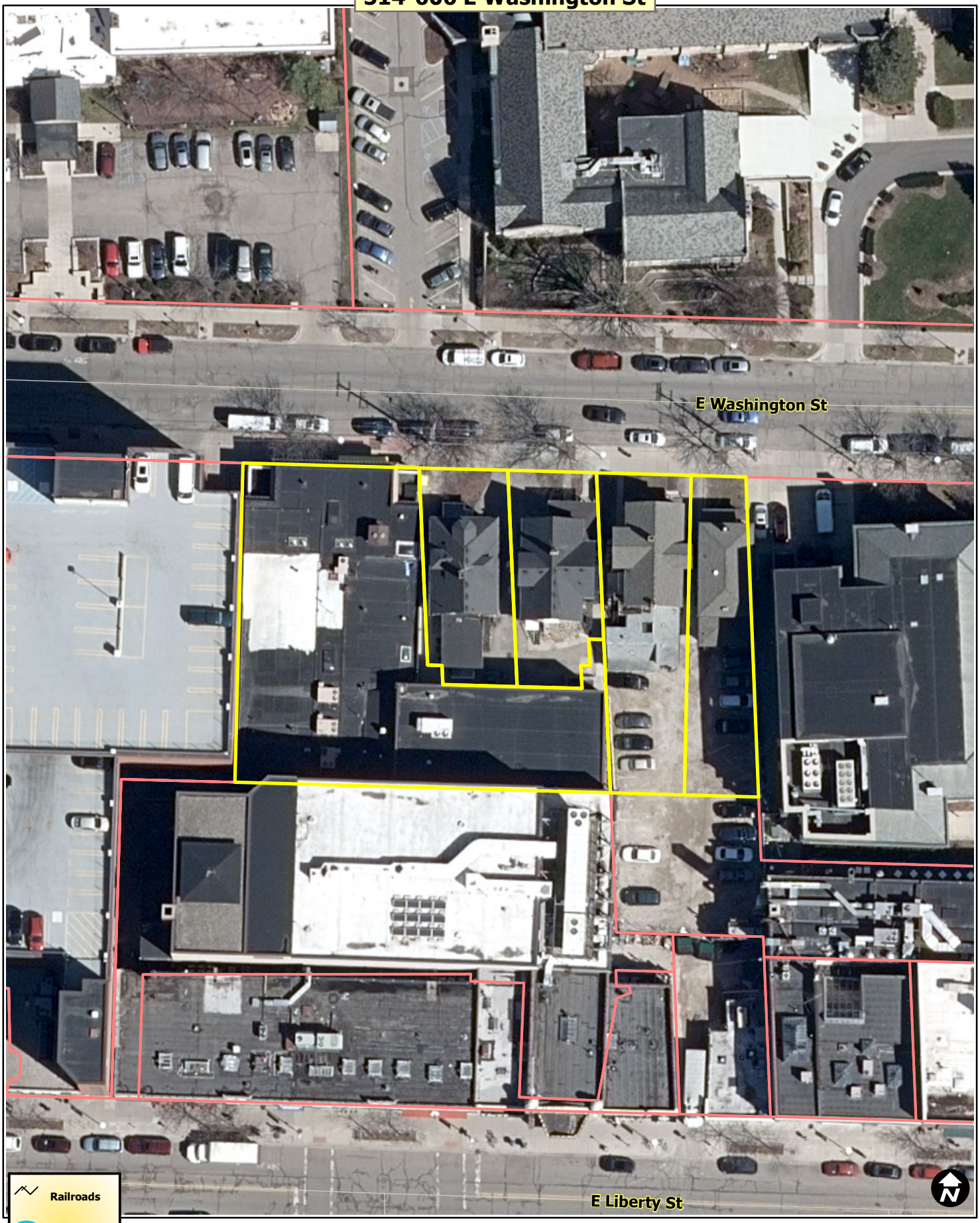
514-606 E Washington St



Railroads

Huron River

Tax Parcels

CITY OF ANN ARBOR MICHIGAN

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