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DDA Resolution of Support for the Ann Arbor District Library Plan to Redevelop its Downtown Facility
The Ann Arbor District Library recently received its *Twenty Year Feasibility Study of the Downtown Library* which estimated future program growth and examined the condition of the downtown library building. In August the AADL Library Director, Josie Parker, reported to the DDA/City Partnerships Committee on the strategic plan being formulated by the AADL Board based on the findings of this study. This strategic plan would recommit the Library to its downtown location, and it would demolish and replace much of the existing building with a new building that would house additional and larger meeting spaces to meet the growing demand for this purpose. It is our understanding that the AADL Board will distribute an RFQ in the coming weeks to locate a design team to develop the plan design so that a community conversation can be held before a bond issue is presented for voter approval perhaps as soon as 2010.

The DDA recognizes the importance of downtown continuing to be seen as the center for educational, governmental, social, and business services for the larger community. These services draw millions to the core area each year and are critical to assuring the ongoing vitality of the downtown. The library is one of the key downtown anchors, with more than 600,000 public visits annually.

At its September 2007 meeting the DDA voted to approve a resolution of support for the Library's planning efforts. As part of this resolution the DDA extended its thanks to the AADL board for its commitment to downtown and for its many contributions to our community. The DDA also stated its interest in partnering with the AADL to help make this new project a reality. As a first step towards this long-term project, the DDA will begin a more thorough analysis of the City's South Fifth Avenue parking lot to determine ways it can support the Library's vision, including the potential for a new underground parking structure, a new mid-block connection between Division and Fifth through the lot to facilitate access to the new Library building, as well as the potential for attractive public open space activated by retail and other commercial uses.

Submitted by: Susan Pollay, DDA Executive Director

