



Legislation Text

File #: 14-0959, **Version:** 2

Liberty Plaza Improvement Resolution

Whereas, Liberty Plaza is a highly visible park located in Central downtown Ann Arbor;

Whereas, Liberty Plaza has benefited from the generous support and maintenance provided by the First Martin Corporation and other volunteer groups;

Whereas, Liberty Plaza has seen a slight increase in programming and activities as a result of the rental fee waiver implemented by Council in June 2013;

Whereas, Despite such efforts, Liberty Plaza continues to be underutilized and is often perceived to facilitate negative behavior;

Whereas, The FY15 Budget funds two additional, sworn community engagement officers to help patrol the downtown, an activity that will help improve Liberty Plaza although more needs to be done;

Whereas, Liberty Plaza could benefit from design improvements and increased programming to facilitate positive behavior and a public downtown space the Ann Arbor residents can be proud of and enjoy;

Whereas, The Parks Advisory Commission ("PAC") downtown subcommittee report recommends that significant capital/structural improvements to Liberty Plaza should be made in concert with the adjacent property owner;

Whereas, The PAC downtown subcommittee report recommends that any future improvements should also work to create a permanent and highly visible connection between the Library Lot and Liberty Plaza;

Whereas, It is understood that a successful programmed urban park requires significant staff support and on-going funding to sustain activities, security, and high maintenance standards;

Whereas, City Council increased the Parks & Recreation Services FY2015 budget by \$23,577 as a result of the Parks Millage Administrative Policy, the so-called Parks Fairness Resolution;

Whereas, These funds were not earmarked for a specific project or purpose;

Whereas, The residents of Ann Arbor wish to have a clean, safe, and successful park in the downtown; and

Whereas, Liberty Plaza does not currently meet these community expectations;

RESOLVED, That City Council directs the City Administrator to work collaboratively with the property

owners adjacent to and near Liberty Plaza, the general public, PAC, the Ann Arbor District Library, and the DDA to develop a conceptual design for an improved Liberty Plaza;

RESOLVED, That the conceptual design for an improved Liberty Plaza recognize and account for open space on the west boundary of the Library Lot;

RESOLVED, That the collaborative effort be funded by the Parks & Recreation Services FY2015 budget's \$23,577.00 from the Parks Millage Administrative Policy;

RESOLVED, That multiple opportunities for public input and participation be provided to help shape a vision for a re-imagined Liberty Plaza;

RESOLVED, That staff provide PAC and Council funding scenarios and options for the capital construction costs;

RESOLVED, That staff provides PAC and Council a detailed estimated annual operating budget, along with funding scenarios, for the maintenance, security, and programming costs required to run a successful urban park at Liberty Plaza; and

RESOLVED, That the conceptual design, construction cost estimates, and estimated annual operating budget be shared with PAC by December 2014 and Council in January 2015.

Sponsored: Councilmember Taylor, Briere, Teall and Mayor Hieftje