



Legislation Text

File #: 19-2281, **Version:** 1

Resolution to Support Center of the City Interim Use and Long Term Planning for the Center of the City/Library Lot Property

Whereas, On November 6, 2018, electors approved Proposal A to amend the City Charter, which, in relevant part, states that City-owned land bounded by Fifth Avenue, and William, Division and Liberty Streets, including Liberty Plaza, the surface of the Library Lane parking structure and Library Lane itself, “shall be retained in public ownership, in perpetuity, and developed as an urban central park and civic center commons known as the ‘Center of the City’”;

Whereas, On April 1, 2019, City Council approved R-19-135 establishing the Center of the City Task Force requesting that the City Administrator include in his budget proposal the funding adequate to pay for the costs of the Center of the City Task Force public engagement process and that the City Administrator acquire additional support from the Downtown Development Authority as appropriate to the specific elements of the project;

Whereas, On June 3, 2019, City Council approved R-19-263 directing the City Administrator to work collaboratively with the Downtown Development Authority, the Ann Arbor Downtown Library, City staff, the Library Green Conservancy, and the Center of the City Task Force to identify a process for regular scheduling of the Library Lot; development of a public-private partnership with the Library Green Conservancy, and the financial impacts of transitioning the site away from its current primary use for surface parking;

Whereas, On September 23, 2019, the City Administrator provided City Council with a memorandum detailing options for interim steps toward implementation of the Center of the City Charter Amendment with recommendations related to the funding of planning and design, management and maintenance, scheduling and programming, and immediate physical improvements; and

Whereas, City Council authorized the establishment of the Ann Arbor Downtown Development Authority in 1982 with the mission to “undertake public improvements that have the greatest impact in strengthening the downtown area and attracting new private investments,” and City Council views the creation of a successful, flagship public park and civic center as consistent with the DDA’s mission;

RESOVLED, That the City and the Downtown Development Authority will coordinate to implement the Center of the City Charter Amendment with a focus on interim changes to the use of the street level surface of the Library Lane parking structure and Liberty Plaza to occur beginning July 1, 2020, as well as steps toward the long term development of the site;

RESOLVED, That the revenue from the Library Lane surface parking will help to fund the Center of the City improvements. The City Administrator will work with the Downtown Development Authority to recover or replace the revenue for this purpose starting on November 6, 2018. The value of the

Library Lane surface parking will be based on the Downtown Development Authority's announced per diem value of \$875.00, six days per week;

RESOLVED, That the City Council direct the City Administrator to maintain a separating for the applicable revenues from the Library Lot surface parking operations to provide for the initial planning costs based upon the recommendations received from the Center of the City Task Force. The City Administrator will also collaborate with the Downtown Development Authority to seek capital funding for planning and design efforts;

RESOLVED, That the City Council direct the City Administrator to seek to obtain easements to create pedestrian pathways within the Library Block to connect William Street and Liberty Street with the Library Lane site. The City will also seek to negotiate an easement to connect Liberty Plaza with the Library Lane site;

RESOLVED, That the City Council direct the City Administrator to include funding for the implementation of the Center of the City Charter Amendment in the FY2021 budget proposal and to evaluate the use of all potential funding sources to support pedestrian connectivity, landscaping, maintenance, security, and programming to and among all Center of the City sites as defined in the Charter Amendment, including the Library Lot and Library Lane, Liberty Plaza, and the Kempf House Museum;

RESOLVED, That the City Council direct the City Administrator to recommend a plan for city oversight and proactive support of public and public-private partnership events at all included locations. Such planning and programming should include guidance from two City Council actions in 2014: the Liberty Plaza Improvement Resolution (File #14-0959) and the resulting Park Advisory Commission Recommendation for Redevelopment of Liberty Plaza and Development of the Library Lot (File #14-1326) which proposed the creation of a staff position to oversee programming for the park;

RESOLVED, That the City Council authorize the Downtown Development Authority to continue contracting for landscaping and grounds maintenance as well as security on the Library Lane street level. The City Council further authorizes the DDA to expand its maintenance and security coverage to additional elements of the Center of the City, such as the proposed pedestrian pathways;

RESOLVED, That the City Council encourages the Downtown Development Authority to increase support for the annual Blooms Day event to include landscape improvements and activities on the various parts of the Center of the City, such as Library Lane street level, Liberty Plaza, and the Kempf House Museum, and to proactively support new public events at all the Center of the City sites; and

RESOLVED, That the City Council direct the City Administrator to collaborate with the Downtown Development Authority to plan and fund improvements to the Center of the City site, that may include the following:

- Internet connectivity at both Library Lane and Liberty Plaza

- Utilities services (electricity, water, and wastewater) on site
- Public restrooms
- Performance space, temporary and fixed
- Passive use furniture (tables, benches, et al)
- Play and game areas for all ages and barrier free
- Bicycle parking
- Generation of solar electricity to be incorporated into the design elements; and

RESOLVED, That the City Council direct the City Administrator to report on his progress on implementing these steps monthly and to include a presentation of the proposed plan as part of the budget development.

Sponsored by: Councilmembers Eaton and Bannister