



DOWNTOWN TASK FORCE COMMITTEE

MEETING AGENDA

CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS

109 EAST OLIVE STREET; BLOOMINGTON, IL 61701

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2017 AT 12:00 PM

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Public Comment

(Each regular Task Force meeting shall have a public comment period not to exceed 30 minutes. Every speaker is entitled to speak for up to 3 minutes. To be considered for public comment, complete a public comment card at least 5 minutes prior to the start of the meeting. The Chairperson will randomly draw from the cards submitted. Public comment is a time to give comment. It is not a question and answer period, and the Task Force Committee does not respond to public comments. Speakers who engage in threatening or disorderly behavior will have their time ceased.)

4. Consideration, review and approval of Minutes from the September 26, 2017 meeting
5. Downtown Task Force Committee discussion of draft recommendations
6. Adjourn

DOWNTOWN TASK FORCE COMMITTEE MEETING
SUMMARY MINUTES
CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS

109 EAST OLIVE STREET; BLOOMINGTON, IL 61701
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2017 AT 4:30 PM

1. **Call to Order**

Chairman Buragas called the meeting to order at 4:38 PM and asked Ms. Hon to call the Roll.

2. **Roll Call**

List who was present of the Task Force:

Committee Member Kim Bray, Committee Member Jamie Mathy, Committee Member Carlo Robustelli, Committee Member Justin Boyd, Committee Member Tricia Stiller, Committee Member Joe Haney, and Chairperson Amelia Buragas

Staff Present:

Melissa Hon, Assistant to the City Manager; Tom Dabareiner, Community Development Director; David Hales, City Manager; Jim Karch, Public Works Director; Katie Simpson, City Planner; Jeanne Hamilton, Library Director; David Sage, Alderman Ward 2; and Diana Hauman, Alderman Ward 8

3. **Public Comment:** Phyllis Halt; Kiasha Henry; Dave Halt

4. **Minutes:** The Committee reviewed the September 5, 2017 minutes, and two corrections were made by Committee Member Bray. Committee Member Bray moved to approve the minutes with corrections; Committee Member Mathy seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously by a voice vote.

5. **Items for discussion**

- **Presentation on downtown infrastructure (Presentation by Jim Karch, Public Works Director)** - Mr. Karch stated that not only do the catalysts projects matter, but what is underneath the surface and the surface of the pavement also matter. He thanked the elected officials for the action taken last night at the Council. The sewer rate increases will allow us to do some needed improvements in the downtown in the upcoming years. As we look at some of these catalysts projects, we have to understand what type of infrastructure costs are associated with it. He then gave the presentation on downtown infrastructure.
- Committee Member Bray stated that she understood that Jefferson is teed up to get some pretty quick repairs and wanted to know if that section of Jefferson that is slated for the resurfacing potentially part of the area that had been talked about to go green or be made into a courtyard.

- Mr. Karch responded that we absolutely could make something like that happen, and what we are looking at is from Madison to East in that area. He also stated that now would be the time.
- Committee Member Mathy stated he felt that we needed to talk Bob Yale and the Water Department at some point, too. He asked if the Jefferson Street corridor that you want to do, has the Water Department signed off on that and said there are no water mains that we need to worry about in that area?
- Mr. Karch stated that every time that we look at doing resurfacing, we always try to coordinate with every utility company. What Director Yale probably will say is, they are trying to get to the point where they are able to be proactive in the nature they need to be. We give them our list ahead of time; they look at every one they can but in the downtown, that is one I believe he has looked at.
- Committee Member Mathy stated he was having some conversations with Nicor last Friday about timetables and what was going to be dug up and buried when and where and stuff through the downtown, and one of the things that they said was being a particularly challenge for them was the new appearance of all the different fiber optic cable companies that were digging through the downtown because they are not going in 90-degree angles. I know that one of the situations we have had with sidewalks is, they look very mismatched as they have been pulled out in order for fiber optics to be buried into businesses. Is there a way to be proactive to put some of that in place to start with so they can use that and not dig the streets up after we fix them all?
- Mr. Karch responded sure, but it is not as easy as it sounds, and part of that is cost.
- Committee Member Mathy stated that he understood that they are all regulated by the state, and therefore, they really do not have to ask us for permission to dig anywhere in Bloomington, which is good and bad at the same time. It is bad in the fact that we can just get done resurfacing a street, and they could come in three months later and dig a trench in order to put the fibers through there.
- Mr. Karch stated that the Illinois Commerce Commission does regulate them, but they have the ability to just come into the community and work with what they need. There is little ability for us to regulate that.
- Committee Member Boyd stated it sounds like there is a timetable for both sewers and some of the streets and asked how flexible those plans were.
- Mr. Karch stated there was quite a bit of flexibility up until we start going down the bidding process. That is why we want to try to bring this to this body and our Council now because it is much easier for us to plan appropriately. There were a lot of proactive measures that went into that so we were planning sometimes for a couple of years to be able to build up to that. The more timeframe the better, but we can try, especially in the downtown because of the priority our Council has placed on the downtown, we will be placing as many resources as we can to accomplish that.

- Committee Member Boyd stated that it will be important for us to, at some point, talk with the downtown signage committee and you about the streetscape plan so that we can make sure that we are all on the same page at some point because it seems like there are a lot of timetables; everybody has their own deadline. I think it is important that we follow through with that. He stated that we have talked about and someone mentioned even removing one lane down Main Street and possibly Center Street and asked what effects that would have.
- Mr. Karch stated there is actually quite a bit of flexibility whenever you talk about shutting down Jefferson or shutting down lanes or redirecting traffic two way. All of those are possible and we just have to make sure we look at what types of impacts they are from an intersection perspective or parking perspective.
- Committee Member Boyd asked Mr. Karch if he knew how wide the lanes are on Main St.?
- Jim Karch responded that he did not and did not want to speculate and be wrong
- Committee Member Boyd stated that he wanted Mr. Karch's input on adding loading zones or something along the streets as well as it has been mentioned the alleys behind some of these buildings. He stated he had spoken with some people and they said that they may not be large enough for certain vehicles and asked is it possible for the city to plow those alleys in the wintertime.
- Mr. Karch replied that there are some of them that are very substandard that we cannot even get our plows down them and we back our trucks up as far back as we can and turn the spreader on as hard as we can to get the salt back up in them as far as we can.
- Chairperson Buragas asked about the draft downtown streetscape master plan and stated that she believes that it predates our Bringing on Bloomington master plan and assumes there has not been an opportunity yet to check for consistency with the master plan.
- Mr. Karch commented that staff would recommend that it is revisited, that there probably are some updates that need to be made to it. We do not think it is in its final format.
- Chairperson Buragas asked Mr. Karch if he knew when this plan was drafted and assumed that getting it fully ratified might be something that provides you with necessary guidance in your department.
- Mr. Karch stated he did not remember but would figure it out. Staff always likes to see those master plans passed so we have clear direction and that is always very helpful. If they are passed, we would like to ensure that the funding is there, as well, so that we make sure that we can complete what direction and policy direction we have been given.
- Chairperson Buragas asked Mr. Karch if he could give his perspective on the current Front Street Transfer Station and your professional evaluation of whether or not that is appropriate or more accurately, can you tell us what

issues are there that we should be taking into consideration so we can prioritize that.

- Mr. Karch replied that staff would ask you to have a priority on that. If you look in the downtown and where it currently is along Front Street, staff is in agreement with Connect Transit about the placement of it. It is not appropriate for a modern downtown to be able to be an open greeting facility. This is just from Connect Transit's standpoint. From a Public Work's standpoint, the traffic flow and the issues with busses coming in and out and how that is done, it provides for downtown congestion and potential concerns with sight distance for the heavy pedestrian flow that is there. Staff is very supportive of making sure that is relocated somewhere.
- Chairperson Buragas asked Mr. Karch if he could give a quick summary of what the Main Street Corridor Plan is and the recent activities within the last year on that proposal.
- Mr. Karch stated that it was exciting and that the Illinois Department of Transportation has a very good plan out there for the redevelopment of the Business-51 corridor.
- Committee Member Boyd stated he had a follow-up question regarding Connect Transit and asked if he was correct in assuming that these ruts (in the street) were caused by busses.
- Mr. Karch replied that any time that you see heavy vehicles like busses that make frequent stops and starts, you will have rutting. He went on to comment that one of the things that we can do and we talked about in the future, is to resurface Front, as well, in that corridor. It really would be intelligent for us to have a plan at that point for the Connect Transit and the hub that way we know how we are going to really place the concrete, and what are we doing with that road.
- Committee Member Robustelli added regarding infrastructure and barriers to redevelopment, over the years he had heard from people, but did not know if it was true or not, that there may not be the capacity to redevelop areas of downtown because the sewer has not been designed for it or anything like that. He asked if there were any barriers to redevelopment in areas of the downtown that you know of in terms of sewer capacity or other issues that should be on our radar.
- Mr Karch stated that within reason, with any knowledge that I have right now, I am not aware of any barriers that would prevent development within the downtown.
- Committee Member Bray asked that following up in regards to Connect Transit, have we ever studied bringing the Connect Transit busses down closer to the library, or have any studies ever been done in that regard, using more of a southern location rather than a location that is heavily trafficked.
- Mr. Karch replied that he would be happy to reach out to general manager, Isaac Thorne, to ask him to maybe provide some feedback to this body either in written form so that you can get an update on that Connect Transit hub.

- Chairperson Buragas stated that Connect Transit was sorry they could not make it here today, but they had their own board meeting. They do plan on attending our next meeting again because they are very interested in partnering in some way. I can tell you at the last library board meeting, they were there talking to the library board and that question came up; would a transfer station work in that area? Their answer was that that was a much less appealing option because they still need to move busses through downtown and they are much more interested in a core location, but we can explore that further when they are here next time.
- Committee Member Bray stated that this could be discussed further with Connect Transit and to find out their perspective and needs.
- Committee Member Robustelli asked about the current library space and the space around it and wanted to know if Public Works intended to move out of that area. The packing district building has now been taken over for staging for Public Works because it was much needed space. Are there plans to consolidate some other area?
- Jim Karch stated the Public Works garage was built in 1964. Again, it is an over 50-year-old building and it shows. Our community has grown in 50 years and so we are busting at the seams. We realize something needs to be done, but we want to make sure once again we are really opportunistic in what happens with the library. There is not an active plan currently. We are actually looking at what other options we can present to Council once the decision has been made and once we have some kind of idea for the final plan for the library. As soon as that happens, we need to be purchasing some ground for Public Works and where we are going to go and start the planning process.
- Committee Member Boyd asked at the current location for Public Works, given money for new facilities, do you have enough room to be there, physically enough room to expand?
- Mr. Karch responded that if the library did not expand to the south, we would be able to realign some of our existing buildings. I have looked at it, we probably would tear down some of the different buildings, put up some different Morton-style buildings, utilize the area where the old bacon factory was at. It would take some work, but it would be able to accommodate us.
- Committee Member Haney commented that regarding the Public Works building, being downtown is really convenient, but as far as going anywhere in the Bloomington area, he asked if the warehouse district had been considered and is it large enough.
- Jim Karch stated that one of the things that is important for Public Works is access. Access is really important because if you are deploying employees and crews all over the community, coming from the core out, you have to consider costs; the further away from the core you go and the further off the beaten path, the more you have to make sure that things are really accommodated and the warehouse district is one of them.
- Committee Member Mathy asked what the staff's perspective on the Market Street garage was and what does that look like right now for you guys.

- Mr. Karch replied that in speaking with Russ Waller, the feeling was there is still life left in it. It really just depends on how much maintenance you want to pour into it as it needs a lot of work.
- Committee Member Mathy commented that one of the things that we talked about in an earlier meeting and is one of the suggestions in the comprehensive plan is to extend the Constitution Trail into downtown. He asked if an evaluation of how that might possibly work had been done.
- Jim Karch stated that is actually one of the key important facets of the bike master plan, so that is why Washington Street as a major corridor is important.
- Committee Member Mathy stated that he had a conversation with a resident a couple of weeks ago and they proposed an idea that he had not really thought of before which was to turn the old warehouse district into an entertainment district. To connect the coliseum and incentivize or somehow try to start moving bars and maybe restaurants into a corridor leading from there down into the warehouse district and maybe under the bridge. They were even high in the sky on the idea of creating an amphitheater actually under the bridge, because it is always dry, into an actual public amphitheater where live music could be played.
- Mr. Karch stated that he loved that idea and added that it was possible.
- Committee Member Bray asked a question as a follow-up to Joe's question, in regards to when you think about city planning and you think about where you place your Public Works vehicle housing areas or your staging areas, kind of a two-part question. Number one, does all of it need to be together? Is that preferred, or is setting it in various locations around the city advisable or desirable? Second, if you are starting at the beginning and wondering where is a spot where we can put our Public Works, what might that look like for us?
- Mr. Karch stated that the most important facet is the fleet. Fleet needs to be in the core downtown where police is. Our mechanics need to be by the people they serve. We do not want them to be out on the periphery and people going out to them. Solid waste that would make sense to be closer to the transfer station closer to where bulk waste or others are being housed. You can do some of that. Streets and sewers is intelligent for them to be where they mostly area. More in that core to be able to deploy in different spots. A lot of times it is beneficial to be together from an overall just economy as a scale, so a 10-acre site, something like that, would be intelligent from a long-term design perspective for us, but again, it is important to think about location.
- Chairperson Buragas asked in following up on the cost of moving Public Works, how is that connected to the cost of an operation center that we have talked about because that is a pretty substantial number in our potential CIP.
- Jim Karch stated that was correct. That does have the substantially higher cost and it harder to find some spots to be able to place that, but again you have to look at significantly greater than a 10-acre site.
- Chairperson Buragas stated she had not heard those numbers broken down and had seen some estimates of the bigger number for the operation center which is a very big number, but the estimate right now is that in order to move Public

Works from its current location, anywhere from \$5 to \$15 million, and wanted to know if that was still a rough estimate.

- Jim Karch replied that it was. We use that, being a few years ago, but is a rough ballpark number of some of the ways that they have accommodated that and then it is a matter of land, it is a matter of finding the land, acquiring the land, and what is there, can you reuse buildings. This is why we say the \$5 to \$15 million. It just depends on where you end up going, how you split that out, are there facilities you can reuse or not.
- Committee Member Haney asked about the old rail yards and stated it would be big enough to house everything.
- Jim Karch stated it is 40 acres actually fairly substantial. One of the issues Public Works has to struggle with is commercial redevelopment. There are a lot of sites that we have looked at. We do not make any money off ourselves. There are no property taxes from a Public Works facility so one of the last things we want to do is place ourselves in an area that takes away from the potential for sales taxes, property taxes and the like. The railyard is a unique property, even though it has not sold in a while, it is a unique property adjacent to a rail spur and we want to be careful with that site.
- Chairperson Buragas stated she would like to set the stage for beginning to make some decisions in terms of what our recommendations will be and hoping to maybe focus right now on additional areas we would like to discuss or have considered as a group. Kim earlier discussed the need for additional identification for potential catalyst projects.
- Committee Member Bray stated two things she had heard in our meetings, and Tom Dabareiner's presentation of the last meeting is one and it had to do with the idea about the residential population of the core of the city and how many people you need in a core to sustain it. What I heard from Tom was that you need, for the kind of core we are talking about, the kind of downtown that we are talking about, you need about 4,000 people, or 3900. That needs to be robust. I took away a higher-end residential development. For instance, people with money to spend kind of support the businesses that would surround them to service them. Currently we have 1,900 people from what I heard in his presentation. To me, it seems, I hate to use his phrase low-hanging fruit, but to me it seems like we are low-hanging fruit for a recommendation from this particular group to Council to encourage some incentives or some kind of residential development of good and better residential development to pick up our numbers of downtown residents to support the core. I would see that as one possible idea coming out.
- Chairperson Buragas added that she was also intrigued about Tom's comments about what our capacity is. I am curious as he was saying, that is our capacity as a fully revitalized downtown and I am wondering if the market demand is there now or if we need to do additional activities in terms of revitalization to create the demand.
- Committee Member Boyd stated he was on board. I think you have to take care of the people that live downtown, but asked if we got the number on vacant apartments or condos downtown.

- Chairperson Buragas stated that she had asked him and if she remembered, the vacancy rates are relatively low, but we can get that number from him.
- Committee Member Boyd stated that he wanted to be careful incentivizing new developers for coming in and creating new living spaces when we have people that own property already downtown that we need to do a better job of attracting people that live in those spaces. He agreed that more people are needed downtown.
- Committee Member Haney stated as a downtown business owner, we have several residential spaces. They are good, solid spaces. We have no vacancies. Normally we have people who are in line to move into our units but our taxes keep increasing. All of these other revenues being generated, for instance, the impact fees on sewer, water, and all these sort of things and for small business, it is a big deal. For downtown, it is going to be a struggle.
- Committee Member Bray asked about thoughts on potentially adding more residential space to have more customers that would potentially come into businesses or customers who then would generate a need for and draw businesses to fill those commercial spaces to start the economic engine.
- Committee Member Haney stated that to actually go into some of these older buildings and retrofit them now and meet the codes because when the City of Bloomington adopted the 2012 National Code, it become more restrictive to develop; the cost has gone up probably 30%. If you sit back and start looking at these older buildings and compliance, it is very costly. There is a lot of people out there who want to move downtown; they like it, they enjoy it, but it has to be affordable. As far as coming into the older buildings downtown, parking is an issue
- Chairperson Buragas stated Committee Member Bray had mentioned another idea last night. I was not sure if that was something you wanted this body to consider.
- Committee Member Bray stated that ice – ice makes money, ice pays for itself, and it draws people in. I am interested in everyone talking this through and consensing about it, but as I have looked at some of the plans that have been laid out for a big campus here, it just seems like right in the middle you could stick some ice. You can draw in people and you have families coming to the library anyway and then they go ice skating and then they spend money and they stay and have fun. When we looked at those numbers last night that Patti-Lynn presented and anecdotally everyone talks about how ice pays for itself but when you look at the numbers, it pays for itself and makes money.
- Chairperson Buragas confirmed that Committee Member Bray was talking about the Pepsi Ice Center and asked would you be envisioning something like that - like an extension of the current coliseum or a new facility?
- Committee Member Bray stated that what came to her mind was the current plans that Farnsworth has put out there in regards to the library campus with including kind of a city hall concept and I think the last time the library board and the City Council met, they gave some direction to keep the library at the current location and then explore I think three different options. One of the

options was more of an extended campus feel and so within that campus or maybe near to that campus, perhaps there is an ability to incorporate some ice.

- Chairperson Buragas stated that if anyone has questions about Pepsi Ice Center and its financial performance, she could provide those numbers, but did not have them in front of her. I previously sent around the draft of the different proposals we have been talking about, specifically focusing on those easier to achieve items. We have some additional ones we received this evening.
- Committee Member Mathy stated that he agreed with Committee Member Bray. We have heard so many times from so many people to get another sheet of ice somewhere in the city as it is booked solid from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m. at night. I think they are hitting all of us at the same time when they make those requests. It is an interesting idea to talk about it near the library but the City Hall and the library are not part of the downtown. Is there some place where it makes sense to put it actually in the downtown for our Task Force to talk about? We just got a bunch of property over near Douglas Street with all those areas over there and that can be a possible place to talk about ice and then you have a BCPA cultural campus and the same family area you are talking about.
- Chairperson Buragas stated that she thought it was consistent with what we have been hearing when it comes to revitalization of that really core downtown area. We really need to start in the center and then move outward, even though I think that many people would say this is in the extended downtown area, but it has different needs than that real core of the community.
- Committee Member Robustelli stated that from the very start of the work we have done, everything has been rooted in the downtown strategy and the comprehensive plan, so I just had some reservations about entering in a new idea that is not rooted in something that the Council has passed, the community has had time to give input. I think that is really important.
- Committee Member Stiller stated that she agreed that we need to be maximizing our current assets. We are abundant in so many things and we just need to take advantage of that.
- Chairperson Buragas commented about scheduling and stated she would very much would like to accelerate our final product. There is plenty of time for Council to vet those ideas, if necessary, and hopefully come up with ones the Council wants to take up, they can work it into the budgeting process. We have a lot of things we have been talking about that are really easy to achieve and a really high impact. My goal is to try to get a final recommendation by the end of October. We currently only have one meeting scheduled in October, so I am going to suggest we change that and have at least two meetings and maybe three if necessary. Are there any objections or concerns with that timeline? The budgeting process starts now so if we can get it done earlier, I would really like to. Our next meeting is scheduled for October 17. I was going to suggest that we instead schedule October 10 and October 24?
- Committee Member Bray stated that she had some scheduling conflicts for the month of October and asked about November because we have our final deliverables due in December.

- Committee Member Haney stated that he would be in Ireland and will not be here for the 17th but thought that the 24th would work.
- Committee Member Boyd and Bray – Cannot attend October 24th.
- Chairperson Buragas stated that October 24th, assuming we can meet that timeline, we want to get as many people here for any final ratification as possible. We can go ahead and tentatively say our next meeting will be October 10th and then Melissa can help me look for a date that works for everyone for what could be our final meeting. If we need more time, we will take it but if we set a goal, we might just reach it. On the next meeting October 10th, we will look at if there are any more presentations that need to be done, but then I would like to go from that working draft that we have started. I will put that on the agenda so it will be available to the public and we can start going through it and saying where do we have a consensus, and we will do the final vote at a later meeting.
- Committee Member Robustelli stated he thought it would be helpful to either get a report from or invite in the head of Facilities to talk about the life of the Market Street Garage and what would need to go into it over the next several years, just so we have a perspective on that and we can provide that information in our report.
- Committee Member Bray stated that she thought we need to consider potentially inviting Farnsworth to speak to us about the all the plans that they have developed in regards to the current library campus. If it is really a thread that this downtown Task Force thinks that they are actually considering recommending moving the library up to Market Street garage location and I think that we need to have some engineers tell us about that because it is my understanding, structural loads are incredibly tough when you think about the weight of transit busses and then you think about the weight of vehicles and then you think about the weight of the library. If you have the money to pour into it, you can build anything but it just sounds like structurally that could be a no go, so I do not know if it is Farnsworth to discuss that or exactly who that would be, but again I do not know if folks are interested in that. It would not be appropriate for us to take on a recommendation to upend the work that has been done so far without a true basis to make that kind of recommendation. I think we would have to take that off the table.
- Chairperson Buragas added that we have no authority as a Task Force to spend any money, so that is somewhat limiting. I would anticipate that when it comes to the catalyst project, anything we would recommend, no matter what it would be, a lot of vetting would have to be done.
- Committee Member Stiller stated she wanted to follow up on Committee Member Bray's suggestion of having Farnsworth come in, and I believe Farnsworth has also been working on the plans for the development of the Creativity Center and those have been shelved for quite some time. It would be advantageous for them to come and speak to both items.
- Chairperson Buragas stated she thought that we are going to have to get into a difficult discussion about scope, because again our scope is relatively limited in terms of what we are doing. We are pulling from the planning documents

but I certainly can see if it would require an expenditure of money which we cannot do and then go from there.

- Committee Member Boyd stated that what we were commissioned with was to look at the downtown strategy and the comprehensive plan, prioritize, and help advise on what would be the most beneficial to downtown. I do not think it is our job to decide first, how to pay for it, but I think it is important to stick to what we were supposed to do, which is look at the downtown strategy, look at the comprehensive plan, and suggest things from that that we think would make the largest impact in perhaps the shortest amount of time.
- Committee Member Robustelli made a comment on not having enough information. We are not going to have enough information to make any firm recommendation. What we are doing is basing our recommendations on planning documents that thousands of people and the Council have adopted. We are an advisory group. We have no authority over the policy makers.
- Committee Member Bray stated she was thinking about the authority and the due diligence that is the efforts and all of the good work that is coming out of the Task Force and what I am focusing on here today on this piece is the idea that yes, while this group was commissioned to prioritize, we cannot forget that things happened in the interim. There is an important piece that has not been slid in here and it is the work that was already done, the half million in investments was already done by this community based on the work that the library board did with Farnsworth and the weigh-in the City Council did back in June and the direction that went forward. Even though this was a period of years, things happened. Actually my piece here is that I do not think that the Task Force should pursue this idea of moving a library wherein there has already been money expended without giving due diligence, and I do not think that that idea should go forward as a recommendation if we have not done some due diligence so that would be incredibly lacking. There are so many good ideas that we have talked about, there are so many good things that could come out of this Task Force and things that you do have due diligence around but the Market Street move is not one of them, and I appreciate direction from the City Council that we have received because I think that is why we exist. They asked for us to prioritize what was happening and we have to remember that you cannot look back to documents from five years ago and say well nothing else happened in this space. I think we have to be cognizant of all the things that happened and cognizant of our role; why recommend something that upends the work of many when you really do not have a solid basis to do so.
- Chairperson Buragas added that the solid basis is planning documents which I think we need to not understate how much work went into them; these are not people who are untrained or unexperienced or unaware of the many needs of the city and they were called to look into that. Is it unfortunate this conversation has not happened earlier? I think it is. However, this body has not existed previously to look at the bigger picture and to specifically focus on downtown. It is entirely possible that what is best for downtown is not the same as what is best in the bigger picture or what is best from the library's perspective, and I think that is a conversation that I continue to get feedback

on and I am very interested in hearing more on, and I think we are going to continue probably to have a very robust conversation at our next meeting.

- Committee Member Boyd stated he appreciated what the Council has done. I agree with you and I think we need to take that into consideration. As we brought up at our last meeting, there is a very real possibility that none of this gets funded. So we can look at what we want the Council to look at this to see what is going to make the most sense financially both immediately as well as economic development sense for downtown - I do not think that is going against Council's wishes. I think it is asking them to look at our work that we have done here reviewing the plans and rethink some things, and they could do a study or something that says this is not possible and that would be fine. My argument here today is we should not stop discussing this because it is in the plan and our job is to review the plan and find ideas that would impact downtown and if we ignore this again, I think it is irresponsible of us as a Task Force.
- Chairperson Buragas stated that when we talked about changing information at the June meeting, we did not know that there was \$220 million worth of unfunded projects in our CIP. That is something we are going to have to grapple with. I think we, as a Task Force, want to make sure anything we recommend has a chance of actually becoming a reality.
- Committee Member Mathy commented that we do not have to send just one recommendation; we have talked about multiple good ideas and there is no reason to say, hey, we talked about A, B, and C and any one of these are acceptable things. Every one of them has their pros and cons. We do not have to send just one option when we are talking about a catalyst project. There could be, these are the things we discussed and let Council do with that information what they want from there at that point. Whatever we do and however we do it, it is going to be over multiple years, there are going to be a lot of discussions before anything happens, but there are some things with that and before we do anything, before we spend \$30 to \$40 million, this is a generational decision. The last time a major decision was made like this, we ended up having buildings that is going to be there for 40 years. None of us is probably going to be still participating in downtown Task Force and things like that in 40 years so whatever happens, I do not want to see just because we spent some money on ones that override every consideration of it, but I think we can send multiple recommendations.
- Committee Member Bray stated she agreed with that concept that we want to send out multiple recommendations but at the same time, I think we have to have due diligence around whatever we recommend. I would submit at this juncture that we do not have due diligence around changing the direction of the library location and unless this Task Force actually gets some due diligence around that other than just chit chat and the like, then I do not find that as part of the scope of what we were called to do.

7. Adjourn

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Public Places / Walkability

- Partner with McLean County to clean up and enhance the public spaces currently located in front of the Law & Justice Center and around the McLean County History Museum. Prioritize maintenance, cleanliness, and installation of drought-resistant and native plantings. Make these spaces available for city programming (ex. lawn games during farmer's market, public seating, live music during First Fridays, etc.)
- Transition from a streets/sidewalks model to a "shared space" model in the Downtown core. This allows full use of the public right-of-way by all users, creates a unique environment, and honors our historic past.
- Install brick or stamped concrete crosswalks.
- Remove permitting requirement for outside seating and sidewalk retail. Replace with ordinance that simply prohibits blocking pedestrian movement.

Beautification / Public Art

- Designate the entire core of Downtown as a "public park" to empower the Parks & Recreation Department to actively maintain public spaces in a way that maximizes aesthetic appeal. Focus on additional shade trees as well as perennial, drought-tolerant, and native plantings. Use private sponsorships to increase number of plantings in the Downtown area. Phase out the adopt-a-pot program.
- Select and make available to business owners self-watering planters that are uniform in appearance to be purchased by, placed in front of, and maintained by Downtown businesses.
- Engage in additional public art projects, such as painted crosswalks under the oversight of the Downtown design committee. Commission artists to paint sidewalk art with seasonal themes.
- Install additional decorative lighting downtown (ex. canopy lighting across the street or between façade and trees/light poles).

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Parking

- Move all city and county owned vehicles into covered parking garages to make surface lot spaces available for Downtown visitors.
- Include one “short term” parking spot on each block of Main Street and Center Street (ex. 15 minute parking).
- Remove one lane of traffic on both Main and Center Streets within the core of Downtown Bloomington. Change parallel parking spots along Main and Center to slant parking spots to increase the number of on-street spots. Install loading zones to prevent vehicle congestion.
- Lengthen enforcement of on-street parking time limits to 7 p.m. Escalate enforcement (multiple violations are more expensive). Make parking in decks free / discounted for Downtown employees.

Other

- Partner with IDOT, Town of Normal, and McLean County Economic Development Council to pursue federal funding for the Main Street Corridor Plan.
- Install public restrooms.
- Add permanent public recycling bins.
- Encourage businesses to use alleys by plowing in the winter.
- Partner with Uptown Normal for programming on events that have a large regional draw (ex. Sugar Creek Arts Festival).
- Empower Historic Preservation Commission to recommend buildings in the Downtown core to receive S-4 overlay to ensure preservation.
- Incentivize ground floor retail development through zoning modifications.

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Catalyst Projects

- Focus on re-development of the Market Street parking deck into a multi-use facility.

Potential partners: Public library, City parking deck, Connect Transit transfer station, Private developer (housing)

Convert Monroe Street between Center and Madison into a public plaza / fountain / main entrance to the public library.

Explore feasibility of ground floor retail along Center Street to create a city streetscape, encourage business incubation, and generate revenue.

Explore opportunities for partnerships with IWU / ISU / Heartland.

- Continue to explore opportunities to rehabilitate the Front and Center block as a hotel/convention center or other commercial use. Encourage council to take more aggressive action to return this building to productive use.
- Encourage developers to engage in multi-use development of surface parking lots within the core of the city to increase retail and housing.

From: Amelia Buragas/Cityblm
To: Melissa Hon/Cityblm@Cityblm
Cc: Steve Rasmussen/Cityblm@Cityblm, Tom Dabareiner/Cityblm@Cityblm

Date: Friday, September 29, 2017 03:48PM
Subject: Market Street Garage Information

Hi all,

Below is information I received from our facilities manager, Russ Waller, regarding the condition of the Market Street garage. Please let me know if you have any questions or would like additional information.

Thanks,
Amelia

The Market Street garage was built in 1974. It has 550 total parking spaces--492 spaces available for rent; 387 spaces currently are rented.

In 2009, the structural condition was rated as "poor" after an outside evaluation. It was determined that an investment of \$1 million in structural repairs would extend the life span by 10 to 15 years. Phase One was completed December 2010 at a cost of \$250,000. Phases Two and Three were completed in 2013 at a combined cost of \$750,000.

Since 2013, only minor maintenance projects have been completed and no additional structural repairs have been undertaken. The city intends to include funding in the FY2019 budget to perform a structural evaluation of the garage. According to Mr. Waller, additional structural repairs will keep the facility operational; however, "the rate of return exponentially decreases with the age of the structure."

The city estimates that with additional structural repairs the expected remaining life of the garage is "about 10 years," at which time a replacement plan will need to be in place. I spoke with Steve Rasmussen about the potential cost of these future repairs and he was comfortable stating that it would be at least, but likely more than, the amount spent from 2009-2013.