



Memo

To: Mayor and City Council

CC: Tracey Nicholson, City Administrator
Lesley Riddle, Director, Public Works
Holly Simmons, City Planner

From: Jim Chandler, Assistant City Administrator and Director, Community & Economic Development

Date: March 10, 2023

Re: The Spot Placemaking Project

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the City Council with the scope of a project proposal to transform the existing parcels at 'The Spot' to a more permanent placemaking trail head project.

Summary

In 2014, the City of Hyattsville acquired properties at 4503-4508 Hamilton Street for the purpose of razing the existing structures and financing a structured parking garage facility. The City secured grant funding through the Maryland Department of Housing & Community Development (DHCD) to raze the existing structures and subsidize a portion of the project soft costs.

Over the past decade, the City has evaluated a number of financing models to underwrite the costs of a parking garage facility. As of November 2022, it was determined that there was no financing model that could satisfy basic operating and debt service requirements. In December 2022, the City notified Maryland DHCD that it would not proceed with a structured parking facility, but requested that it retain the funds through an amendment authorizing the City to reprogram the funds for a project with similar intent. The City was notified by Maryland DHCD that the Secretary would authorize an amendment, provided that the amendment (1) be limited to the original subject site and (2) that the City could demonstrate to Maryland DHCD that a

project could be completed within a defined period of time, not exceeding June 31, 2024. Based upon these restrictions, the City Council authorized the Mayor to sign the amendment agreements (HCC-242-FY23), which have been submitted to Maryland DHCD. The amendment will authorize the City to expend the balance of \$281,000, plus \$400,000 that was originally secured by the Prince George’s County Revenue Authority, to finance the costs of transforming the subject properties to a new placemaking space in the City.

The project will transform an existing vacant parcel into a dynamic community hub in downtown Hyattsville. The Spot will serve as a multi-modal hub with parking for motorized vehicles, bicycles and other non-motorized vehicles to access the Rhode Island Avenue Trolley Trail (RIATT) is a bicycle and pedestrian trail that links the Anacostia Trail System in DC to Prince George’s County through the communities of Hyattsville, Riverdale Park and College Park. The final phase of the RIATT is under construction and is set to be completed in the next 14 months.

The Spot will serve as a location to host community events or simply a refuge from the corridor, similar in many ways to the City’s placemaking project at Hyatt Park, but with a Trolley Trail influence. The City will need to invest a significant portion of the funding in stormwater management for the site, as well as other impervious surfaces that will support year round programming in the heart of our downtown.

Budget

Based upon costs and assumptions from the City’s build-out of Hyatt Park, the staff has developed a budget for soft costs, site conditions and amenities. As is standard, the City has budgeted for contingency (11%) for any unknown conditions.

Budget for 'The Spot' Project		
City of Hyattsville, MD		
Soft Costs		
Sub-Total	\$114,000	\$114,000
Site Conditions		
Sub-Total	\$650,000	\$650,000
Site Amenities		
Sub-Total	\$120,000	\$120,000
Sub-Total		\$884,000
Contingency (11%)		\$97,240.00
Grand Total		\$981,240.00

The City has secured \$681,000 in project funding from Maryland DHCD and has requested through the APRA discussion, \$300,000 in ARPA funds, primarily to cover the balance of site conditions and the entirety of the cost of site amenities.

Design & Amenities

At my request, the initial concept was designed by our partners Neighborhood Design Center. The design was to provide Maryland DHCD with a very broad concept placeholder and while we do anticipate some of the programmatic concepts to be realized in a final design, the orientation, scale and other are to be determined. The initial concept is attached for reference.

The project design is intended to launch at Trolley Trail Day on June 10th at 10 AM. Trolley Trail Day is an event developed by the College Park City – University Partnership (CPCUP) and is intended to highlight the social, health and economic benefits of the Rhode Island Avenue Trolley Trail. As part of the programming, the City will be hosting a community sessions to plan the design, we are certain that the site will include multi-modal parking, electric, dedicated space for a food truck(s), seating, play spaces and a stage.

The goal is to finalize a design in July 2023 and proceed with any associate permitting, which will include electrical and may include a stormwater permit for any micro-retention features. The project site work is likely to proceed in December/January, and site amenities to be installed by April 2024.