



WASHTENAW COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

February 21, 2024

WORKING SESSION

I. ROLL CALL

A Working Session of the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners was held at the Administration Building, in the City of Ann Arbor, Michigan, on February 21, 2024.

The meeting was called to order at 05:33 PM by Comm. Somerville, Chair of the Working Session.

Members Present:	Comms. Shannon Beeman, Justin Hodge, Andy LaBarre, Crystal Lyte, Jason Maciejewski, Yousef Rabhi, Caroline Sanders, Katie Scott, Annie Somerville
Members Absent:	None.
Others Present	Greg Dill, County Administrator; Andrew DeLeeuw, Deputy County Administrator; Michelle Billard, Corporation Counsel; Alize Asberry Payne, Racial Equity Officer; Crystal Campbell, Public Information Officer; Brady Peck, Director of Operations; Terrence Williams, Administration; Jason Fee, Facilities Management; Guillermo Hernandez, Director of Human Resources; Cami Khorrami & Akintunde Oluwadare, Equity Office; Marie Pfeifer, Finance; Ashley Hall, BOC Communications and Operations Manager; Bryce Allmacher, Clerk's Office; and members of the public.

II. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

III. REPORT FROM THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

IV. REPORT FROM THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS LIAISON

Ashley Hall, BOC Operations and Communications Manager, reported the following:

County Commissioners representing the City of Ann Arbor (Scott, Rabhi, LaBarre) will be hosting a joint Town Hall on Thursday, February 29th at 5:30pm at the Westgate Branch of the Ann Arbor District Library.

Commissioner Justin Hodge will be hosting a Town Hall on March 4th at 6:30pm at the Whittaker Branch of the Ypsilanti District Library.

V. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- A. Andrew DeLeeuw and Jason Fee, Washtenaw County, joined by Michael Hoffstrom and Danish Nawab, of JLL, gave a presentation on the County's Facilities Master Plan.

Hoffstrom provided a brief overview of needs and considerations for the County's Community Mental Health Facilities, the Eastern County Government Center in Ypsilanti, and the Chelsea Courthouse.

Hoffstrom summarized the methods by which this report and its recommendations were synthesized; the Master Plan's Steering Committee identified sustainability, employee safety and security, worker experience, customer experience, parking, and more as priorities in the development of the plan.

The Facilities Master Plan recommends moving forward with the Transformative Case, which includes an estimated 61,600 (7.6%) square feet of space reductions. The Transformative Case offers the following additional benefits to the County: consolidates most CMH operations into a single facility that is centrally located between Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti, allows the County to exit the Annex, allows CMH's homelessness program to remain downtown Ann Arbor at location to be determined, consolidates and right-sizes departments and services currently provided at the Trail Court and in the Administration Building, allows the County to transform its downtown office space to allow for drop-in and collaborative spaces and 21st century court facilities, and frees up the Administration Building for adaptive reuse to meet other County objectives, such as the development of affordable housing. Hoffstrom detailed a sample timeline and work plan for each proposed phase of Master Plan implementation.

Hoffstrom shared high-cost (\$500 per square foot) and low-cost (\$400 per square foot) construction estimates for different phases of the Transformative Case, Hoffstrom emphasized that the addition of parking costs to the Transformative Case inflates projected costs significantly.

Fee spoke briefly on additional facilities-related issues for the Board to monitor as it considers the adoption of a Facilities Master Plan in the future.

Hoffstrom made the following recommendation to the Board: select architecture and engineering firms to conduct the first stage of analysis for a potential new CMH site and to develop space standards for a reconfigured Trial Court space.

Comm. Somerville asked for examples of what reuse of the 555 Towner Space would look like.

Fee stated that significant renovations would occur to align with Board priorities.

Comm. Somerville asked whether individuals who consume CMH services were consulted during the formation of this plan.

Comm. Somerville asked about the degree to which accessibility to the CMH site was considered during the formation of this plan.

DeLeeuw stated that the committee relied on Department leaders to convey the priorities of those who access their services and that accessibility has been top of mind in any discussions surrounding CMH space.

Comm. Somerville asked staff to elaborate on their vision for a relocated OCED and 14A-2 District Court.

DeLeeuw stated that staff have prioritized the availability of spaces that are well-suited to customer service, the delivery of virtual services, and traditional court services.

DeLeeuw noted that despite the proposed departure from the ECGC space, this plan proposes a significant investment in the 555 Towner Space so as to maintain a strong presence in the City of Ypsilanti.

Comm. Rabhi asked whether County labor groups were consulted during the formation of this plan.

DeLeeuw stated that labor groups have been consulted, and that it is the committee's intent to continue a robust engagement process with all County stakeholders

Comm. Rabhi stated that he will not support the sale of County assets under any condition. Comm. Rabhi said that potentially unused spaces should be considered for adaptive reuse and revenue-generating opportunities.

Comm. Rabhi stated that he supports the proposal to build a unified County Government center.

Comm. Rabhi stated that public spaces should provide a favorable reflection of the public itself.

Comm. Rabhi stated that the County should not be renting space, but rather seeking to acquire space that it can rent out.

Comm. LaBarre said that this County is likely more inclined to pursue unique revenue-generating opportunities than peer Counties.

Comm. LaBarre asked that the Steering Committee conduct an analytical process that is inclusive of the needs of primary services consumers.

Comm. Scott suggested that County staff conduct a holistic review of remote work offerings, both present and potential, prior to moving forward with Master Plan implementation.

Comm. Scott suggested that the Steering Committee conduct an analytical process that is inclusive of the needs of rank-and-file County staff.

Comm. Beeman asked about the price per square foot projections, suggesting that they were potentially overly generous to the County.

Hoffstrom stated that construction cost escalations have slowed in recent months, but that total development costs could easily reach \$850 per square foot, not inclusive of parking costs.

Comm. Rabhi said that the County should be mindful of its efforts to consolidate space

so as not to make County services more inaccessible to residents Countywide.

Comm. Maciejewski said that he hopes the Facilities Master Plan reflects the will of the communities it affects.

Comm. Somerville stated that for the City of Ypsilanti specifically, it is important to keep as many properties on its tax rolls as possible, especially in considering the size of Eastern Michigan's campus.

VI. ITEMS FOR CURRENT/FUTURE DISCUSSION

VII. ADJOURN TO NEXT SESSION

Comm. Scott, seconded by Comm. LaBarre, moved to adjourn. Voice vote - motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 06:59 PM.

Annie Somerville, Chair of the Working Session
Lawrence Kestenbaum, Clerk/Register

By: Bryce Allmacher, Deputy Clerk

Board Approved: March 6, 2024