

**Agenda Item:** 4.a

**Meeting Date:** February 21, 2023

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** City Commission

**Date:** 2022-12-06

**From:** Robert C. Ironsmith, Dir. of Economic & Housing Dev./CRA

**Subject:** Parking Garage discussion and Preliminary Finance Plan

**Presenter(s):** Robert C. Ironsmith, AICP, Dir. of Economic & Housing Dev./CRA

**Recommend:** Receive staff presentation and provide direction on the Parking Garage discussion and Preliminary Finance Plan

**Epic Goal(s):** Goal #1: Create a vibrant, cultural experience that touches the lives of our community and visitors.

**Boards & Committees:** Community Redevelopment Agency Advisory Committee

**Budget Impact:** The FY 2023 Adopted Operating & Capital Budget includes \$6.2 million for the project (\$3.7 million in Penny / \$2.5 million CRA). Per City's cost consultant, CC & A of Tampa, the project is estimated to cost approximately \$7.4 million pending further development and refinement of project scope. Staff is proposing that the Penny Fund contribution be increased by \$1.2 million to a total of \$4.7 million to fully the Parking Garage project.

**Past Action:** On September 16, 2021 Community Redevelopment Agency approved the Assignment of Contract for the Acquisition of 362 Scotland Street (Dunedin Station Development, LLC) at a cost of \$4 million for public parking.

**Next Action:** Pursuant to City Commission direction.

**Attachments:** [A. Parking Garage PowerPoint Presentation 2-17-2023](#), [B. CC & A of Tampa Parking Garage Conceptual Cost Estimate 9.14.2022](#), [C. Kimley Horn Parking Garage Concept Test-fit Plan 01.pdf](#), [D. Kimley Horn Parking Garage Concept](#)

## Background:

A convenient and ample parking supply remains critical to the social and economic vitality of the downtown for the foreseeable future. Over the years in a cost-effective measure the City has leased various downtown properties for parking. A list of these downtown properties with number of spaces is provided below:

Location	Spaces
Monroe Street Parking Garage	-195
Bushnell Parking Lot	- 36
First United Methodist Church Lot	- 76
Ocean Optics Parking Lot	- 41
Justice Parking Lot	- 35

Total leased parking \$207,584

- **At-Risk Parking:** The City continues to aggressively lease private property for public parking, including the Monroe Street parking garage, and is nearing completion on a new surface parking facility at 500 Wood Street across from the new City Hall. As an at-risk leased parking lot, the City also preemptively secured the three-quarter acre parcel on the corner of Douglas Avenue and Scotland Street to safeguard long-term parking options in addition, as a measure to increase downtown parking supply (56 spaces) the City has entered into an agreement with BayCare on the property at 592 Main Street.

A review of the CRA Master Plan envisioned two parking garages. The first garage is leased and although it's a long-term lease it too is potentially at risk of loss upon lease expiration which is in 2035. With the aspect of at-risk surface parking lots diminishing, the need for off-street surface parking consolidated into the parking garages becomes more important.

Another factor to consider when contemplating a parking garage is the future of autonomous vehicles.

- **Automotive Advances:** As technology evolves with the anticipated arrival of autonomous vehicles parking demand will shrink and leased lots can be systematically retired. A second, City garage would serve as insurance on a slow adaptation of autonomous vehicles. Further hedging that expected outcome is to build the second garage with first floor repurposing in mind. The repurposing of upper-level decks are reported to be exceedingly cost prohibitive. The parking garage does offer a vertical solution by allowing for more parking spaces per acre of downtown land than surface lots where both demand and land costs are high. Another strategy is to advance plans for the eventual repurposing, or adaptive reuse, of the parking garage should it become antiquated. This is discussed further below.

Adaptive Reuse

Prior to acquisition of the parcel at 362 Scotland Street, the City requested Kimley-Horn perform a test fit of the parcel to ensure the physical ability to construct a multistory parking garage on the site. Kimley-Horn developed two alternative concepts both of which were priced by the City's cost consultant, CC & A of Tampa. Those cost estimates are attached. The cost estimates do include a premium for a higher first deck elevation to allow for adaptive reuse of the ground floor for retail purposes should such a future community need arise. A heightened deck level will also accommodate large municipal vehicles seeking storm refuge when needed. When a parking structure was discussed for the 500 Wood Street site approximately 29 City vehicles were identified for garage housing during a major storm event.

The parking structure should be designed to enhance the downtown environment with easily accessible ground level access as the industry trend is away from single-purpose, stand-alone garages without adaptive reuse capabilities should market conditions warrant. Rather than simply designing it as "warehouses for cars," it needs to incorporate aesthetics, user comfort, and functional enhancements that complement the character of the community.

When possible, these facilities should incorporate ground level mixed-use spaces such as retail and restaurants to activate the streetscape and enhance the walkability of the neighborhood. This idea is often a given now, as many designers and parking owners have been incorporating mixed-use and aesthetic features into structured parking design for years. However, chases for plumbing and electrical conduits would need to be built now, the heights of standard parking garages are not readily suitable for conversion into office space or residential living so each deck needs heightening, and the sloped floor and internal ramps present costly challenges in global conversions. As such, first floor repurposing appears to be the most practical and cost effective.

#### Concept Plans

The Kimley-Horn alternatives are concepts only and great latitude exists for the size, look, and feel of a parking structure. Many variables exist on both the design elements sought and the construction delivery method preferred. The City Commission has some discretion with certain DC zoning provisions to weigh such as maximum height, step-backs, etc. which will frame the mass and scale of the structure. Neighborhood compatibility, exploitation of beneficial technology, a public art component(s) and DREAM fundamentals should be considered, if not optimized. Preparation of concept images and graphics will be essential to the success of that collaborative effort.

Aesthetically speaking, inspired architectural façade enhancements and remarkable public art can help distinguish the garage and effectively integrate the structure into the very character of the adjacent neighborhoods. The current concept plans price a brick veneer as homage to a historic, downtown building. Alternatively, many newer garages utilize perimeter stainless steel mesh that allows for the application of graphics and art. Regardless of how a design may evolve through public participation, the objective is to create

exceptional architecture for such a utilitarian structure.

- DREAM: Consistent with the City's adopted DREAM policy, the structure would be sustainable and, if applicable, certified and/or accredited, and could include elements such as rooftop solar arrays, vehicle charging stations, innovative technologies for water retention/detention, LED lighting and other energy efficiencies. ADA accessibility, visibly noticeable safety and security measures, including strategically placed cameras, as well as enhanced signage and wayfinding will be key to a user-friendly structure. The use of parking sensors can also provide valuable real-time data for both the City and public. Finally, wireless access for the public can be provided through the ARPA-funded expansion of the City's fiber backbone. The current fiber optic master plan identifies a fiber conduit phase passing the parking garage site on its way to serve the Municipal Marina.
- Fire Department Access Improvements: Life safety and public response time in and around the proposed parking structure will require right-of-way improvements to accommodate Fire Department apparatus access. Specifically, Honey Lane requires widening. Additionally, the radii of Douglas Avenue at Honey Lane, as well as Honey Lane at Railroad Avenue East, need improvement. Costs for these improvements have yet to be determined. Staff's preference is to retain the angled parking on Honey Lane as an urban street edge to the garage.

#### Ongoing Operation & Maintenance

The City currently pays \$500 per parking space for operation, maintenance and insurance of the Monroe Street Parking Garage. The maintenance for a 174-space garage is estimated at \$43,500 per year (174 x \$250) excluding taxes and insurance as a City-owned facility. Please note future maintenance costs of the parking garage are considered a general operating cost and would need to be covered by the general fund.

#### Budget and Financing Plan

Costs, as prepared by the City's cost consultant, CC & A of Tampa, are predicated on a design/build approach using precast concrete components shipped and erected onsite. The logistics and staging for such an operation will require detailed coordination for large and recurring delivery access, as well as for laydown and staging areas during construction to avoid disruptions to business and commerce.

The FY 2023 Adopted Operating & Capital Budget includes \$6.2 million for the garage (\$3.7 million in Penny/\$2.5 million CRA). Per CC & A of Tampa, the project is estimated to cost approximately \$7.3 million pending further development and refinement of project scope. Accordingly, the project will require some form of financing.

- A detailed financing plan will be presented by the Finance Department in approximately 6-weeks which will take into consideration the Aquatic Center and the Skinner Blvd. Complete Streets projects. The CRA Fund is committed to the Skinner Blvd. Complete Streets Project in partnership with

the Florida Department of Transportation and Forward Pinellas, both of whom rely upon their proportionate share of Penny funds in tandem with the proposed garage. Specific to Skinner Blvd., a deficit of approximately \$2.5 million is projected pending receipt of a 30% cost estimate from the FDOT early this Spring.

- Pinellas County will be approached to discuss possible 20-year debt financing of the municipal garage and associated need for an Interlocal Agreement. Those discussions are expected in light of the upcoming 2025 mid-term review and CRA sunset in FY2034.

If the project proceeds, the parking garage should be designed and constructed as a durable, highly functional and user-friendly structure. As a strategic component of the downtown, the parking garage is expected to help sustain and build upon its current vibrancy and economic vitality.

The proposed garage can further serve as a “mobility hub”, adjacent to the Pinellas Trail and municipal collector (Douglas Avenue), which strategically integrates golf cart parking, bicycle parking and ride-share pickup/drop-off accommodations as viable transit options as a one-time parking opportunity for a walkable downtown.

What ultimately ensures the success of our downtown isn’t more parking; it is having an outstanding collection of desirable destinations within walking distance to enjoy upon arrival. Parking is not a catalyst for downtown success. Rather, it is the outcome of a successful downtown.

The attached PowerPoint will help guide discussion in seeking consensus direction for a plan of action going forward.

#### Recommendation

Receive presentation on proposed downtown parking garage at 362 Scotland Street.