

**SPECIAL WORKSESSION OF THE ANOKA CITY COUNCIL
GREEN HAVEN GOLF COURSE & EVENT CENTER
28000 GREENHAVEN RD, ANOKA-MN
MARCH 8, 2022**

Present: Mayor Rice, Councilmembers Barnett, Skogquist, Weaver and Wesp.

Staff present: City Manager Greg Lee.

Anoka City Council and staff met to discuss the proposed County Government Center expansion.

The City Council discussed questions, comments, concerns and identified potential issues with Anoka County Government Center building expansion as proposed.

On Monday February 28, 2022 Anoka County presented a proposal to expand the County Government Building in Anoka's Historic Downtown. After the hearing the County's presentation and asking questions, the Anoka City Council met to discuss the proposal and to initiate formulating a response and City position. The following are comments and concerns express and discussed at this meeting:

1. **Discharging Inmates** directly into Anoka's downtown without prearranged transportation may be a concern. This will be more of an issues if the jail facility is expanded to house 540 inmates.
2. **The Anoka County Historical Society** occupies a building owned by the City. This building is prohibiting the goal of redevelopment of this block and increase the tax base for both the County and City (\$35M structure). The City may request that the County takes this opportunity to locate the Anoka County Historical Society on County property.
3. **Parking Ramp** – The County is proposing a seven (7) stories/ level, 1200 parking stall facility. The City may request that policies be in place that requires all County employees to utilize the parking ramp.
4. **Parking Ramp** – Impacts that a seven (7) story parking facility will have on the downtown and adjacent historic neighborhood is a concern.
5. **Van Buren Street** - The County is proposing to vacate the 300 block of Van Buren Street. How will this impact traffic patterns?
6. **City Prosecution Responsibility** - The County requires the City to prosecute crimes occurring on or within the County's jail facility while not assisting the City by requiring the City received a court order to obtain evidence (video)

7. **Inmate Admittance** – When a person voluntarily checks into the County Jail Facility, the County requires the City to escort said individual.
8. **Taxable Property** – Proposed plan would eliminate an entire taxable city lot causing a loss of revenue for the City.
9. **Electric** – with the jailhouse expansion and without any solid plans to operate off of, AMU expects that they may have infra-structure that needs to be rerouted. Initial estimate is \$2M.
10. **Facility Protection** – Protection of a Government Building from civil unrest, such as protests and riots in an urban setting is incredibly difficult. What protections are being incorporated into the design of this facility to protect it? What protest protocol has been developed? How will this impact the businesses and residents in the downtown area? What remote, non-urban sites, have been considered as alternates?
11. Calls for service to County facilities include a variety of incidents that consume Anoka PD's time. These range from crimes against persons like Harassment Restraining Order Violations, Disorderly Conduct and allegations of misconduct to lower level incidents like escape from custody, suspicious persons and fraud reports. A portion of these calls for service require Officers and or Investigators to invest time to gather evidence and interview suspects and witnesses.

* Calls for service by location are averaged and estimated:

- 2100 3rd Ave (Government Center) - 50 calls annually
- #25 East main St. (Court House) - 20 calls annually
- 325 Jackson St. (Jail) - 75 calls annually
- 3300 4th Ave (Building 10,13) - 30 warrant arrests
- 3300 4th Ave (Huber work release) - 11 escape from custody

12. Zoning/Land Use

Jail Expansion Site:

- The proposed jail location sits in 2 separate zoning districts, which are the EM-1 and B-3.
- The current EM-1 Zoning District does not allow for a County Jail Facility as an principal or accessory use. The current zoning allows for offices-government and parking ramps or lots. The existing jail is an existing facility in the EM-1 zone and could be viewed as an existing non-conforming use, which can be replaced, maintained, and improved, but cannot be expanded under the law.
- The B-3 General Business Zoning District does allow municipal or public buildings as a permitted use on the surface lot site to the north.

Parking Ramp Site:

- The 2040 Comprehensive Land Use Plan guides land use for the parking lot site as commercial. The existing government center site and the surface parking lot to the

north are guided as public/institutional. The 2040 Comprehensive Plan should be amended from commercial to public/institutional.

- The County wants to build a 7 story ramp. The ramp site is zoned B-3 and restricts the height of a structure to the width of surrounding streets based on their width from curb to curb. In this case, the average width is 45 feet, which means the maximum building height allowed is 4.5 stories. A variance would be required from the City.

UNRELATED TOPICS AND ISSUES THE CITY MAY WANT TO INCLUDE IN DISUCSSIONS:

1. **Stepping Stone Emergency Housing** – get a firm commitment that the County will never allow expansion beyond the currently approved sixty-six (66) beds.
2. **Library Ponding** – get commitment to allow for expansion of the existing pond that will allow for development of the property to the east.
3. **Stepping Stone** – the amount of beds that they will have and no further increase in the amounts of beds in town.
4. **Social Services** – how they deal with homeless issues of the mentally ill in town.

Meeting adjourned.

Approval Attestation:

Amy T. Oehlers, City Clerk