

**NOTICE OF STUDY SESSION  
Space Needs Study Analysis and Recommendation  
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE**

**September 14, 2020, at 5:00 p.m.**

**AGENDA**

Requested by the City Manager

**1. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER**

At the Study Session of the City Council of University City held via videoconference, on Monday, September 14, 2020, Mayor Pro Tem Bwayne Smotherson called the meeting to order at 5:04 p.m.

In addition to the Mayor Pro Tem, the following members of Council were present:

Councilmember Stacy Clay  
Councilmember Aleta Klein  
Councilmember Steven McMahon  
Councilmember Jeffrey Hales  
Councilmember Tim Cusick  
Councilmember Bwayne Smotherson

Also, in attendance were City Manager, Gregory Rose; City Attorney, John F. Mulligan, Jr.; Director of Public Works, Sinan Alpasian; Amanda Truemper of Trivers, and Bob Schwartz of HOK.

**2. CHANGES TO THE REGULAR COUNCIL AGENDA**

Mayor Pro Tem Smotherson asked if there were any changes to the Study Session or Regular Council Agendas?

*(Mayor Terry Crow video connected at 5:05 p.m.)*

Mr. Rose asked that Item No. J-(1) of the Consent Agenda be withdrawn from the Regular Council Agenda.

Councilmember Hales asked if Item J-(1) was being removed completely from the Agenda? Mr. Rose stated he is asking that it be withdrawn, and if appropriate, to be resubmitted at a later date.

**3. SPACE NEEDS STUDY ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATION**

Mr. Rose stated this evening Trivers will provide Council with an overview of staff's recommendation for the Space Needs Study; Option 2, renovation of the Annex. He stated he hopes tonight's discussion will lead to Council's authorization to seek out and execute a contract with a financial consultant to assist the City with identifying what its debt capacity is in this current environment.

Amanda Truemper of Trivers introduced Bob Schwartz of HOK, who assisted Trivers in the policing aspect of this study.

Previously, Council was presented with several options for the Police and existing facilities in two separate sessions. Tonight's presentation is a combined version of those options, in totality, as all the pieces work together.

**Concept Design Option Review - Option 2:**

- Test for the ideal workplace and departmental distribution moving as few departments as possible
- Separate Police + Municipal Court programs; *(per the Ferguson Commission Report recommendation)*

- Recommend areas for improvements/upgrades, including ADA accessibility
- Revitalization of historically significant building(s)

**Available Building Totals:**

There is a building stock of about 110,000 square feet (sf) in the City's existing facilities. The City's program needs account for roughly 101,000 sf, which means there is more space across all these facilities than needed.

Most of the City's departments range from 5,000 to 10,000 sf. The largest departments in this study are represented by the Police and Courts, totaling approximately 40,000 sf. Trivers and HOK believe these departments should be located in the City's largest available building stock; the Annex and Trinity Building.

**Option 2 Overview:**

This overview depicts every department across both campuses; City Hall and Heman Park. The Police Department will fit in the Annex with a little room to spare in the Annex Connector; a single-story building between the historic portion of the Annex and City Hall. This placement provides the City with an opportunity to create a new front door to the City Hall Campus; a shared secured lobby and a one-stop-shop of shared services for the more public-facing departments.

**Option 2 – City Hall Campus – basement level**

- Minimal changes to City Hall
- Connector between City Hall and Annex is shared Clerks and meeting/amenities
- Police in Annex, separate from Courts in Trinity
- Police program exclusively utilizes the Basement of Annex

This option uses the basement to refurbish the firing range, along with training areas for Operations, and consolidated storage for evidence all in one area.

**Option 2 – City Hall Campus – level 00**

- Minimal Changes to City Hall
- Connector between City Hall and Annex is shared “one-stop” and campus meeting/amenities zone; central secure entry & new front door to campus
- Police separate from Courts support; some extra storage in Trinity
- Main Security screening point for Council Chambers & Courts on the ground floor of Trinity

Level 00 is dedicated to keeping custody procedures in one place, with holding areas, and a sally port that utilizes the northern vehicle bays. This is the one area of the Annex where the public has access to the Police and conference rooms. There is also the potential to establish a one-stop-shop where the community can access clerical functions for Planning & Development, Finance, and the Courts.

The Bureau of Investigations is located on one side, and Field of Operations and Administration are located on the other side. The Police Chief, his support staff, and a conference area are located on the third floor. The big difference in this design is that the Municipal Court is now in the Trinity Building. Upgrades will be made to the stairs in the Trinity Building, as well as the elevator to provide staff with access to the 2nd and 3rd floors.

**Option 2 – City Hall Campus – level 01**

- Minimal changes to City Hall
- Upgrade/expand existing plumbing facilities; refresh existing offices, accommodate Legal Suite
- The link stays intact, as well as ground floor elevator access
- Police program exclusively utilizes the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor of Annex

- City Council Chambers & Courtroom share Trinity Reading Room; conferencing and anterooms adjacent to shared Chambers/Courtroom
- City Council to move off the 5th floor

Ms. Truemper stated although this design keeps Public Works and Planning & Development in their respective areas, as they move into the schematic design phase these floors can be redesigned to create additional efficiencies. The 5th floor could possibly be a space for events with extra restrooms and improvements to elevators.

### **Option 2 – Heman Park**

- Minimal changes
- Municipal Court moves to City Hall Campus Trinity Building
- Upgrade of existing plumbing facilities and kitchens
- Refresh existing community spaces
- Consider covered/accessible entry more direct to parking for HPCC
- Refresh existing offices; consider some space reconfigurations
- Custodial office for Director and staff

Ms. Truemper stated Trivers only reviewed a small portion of Centennial Commons as it relates to the Parks & Recreation's administrative offices, so no major changes have been proposed.

Mr. Rose stated he believes Trivers has done a good job working with the City's departments to identify space needs throughout the organization.

The next step is to obtain authorization from Council to hire a financial advisor that will help identify the resources available to address these needs. Once those resources are identified the goal is to marry those with Council's priorities so that staff has guidance on how to proceed.

Mayor Crow asked if there was a timeline for when the financial advisor would submit a report? Mr. Rose stated if he does not have to go through the RFP process, he plans to have a frame of reference three weeks after he has received authorization to proceed.

Councilmember Smotherson posed the following questions:

**Q. Where will the City's Boards and Commission hold their meetings?**

A. Mr. Rose stated Boards and Commissions will continue to have access to the Community Center and the Trinity Building once they are remodeled.

A. Ms. Truemper stated they believe Trinity's Reading Room would be a great space for those meetings.

**Q. If that's the case, it should really open the door to a lot of possibilities for utilizing the Community Center?**

A. Ms. Truemper stated that's 100 percent correct.

**Q. Where will the Dispatch Center and the Chief's office be located in the Annex?**

A. Mr. Schwartz stated the Chief and his assistant's office will be located on the third floor and he thinks Dispatch is on the second floor.

**Q. Should the fifth floor be used as an event space, where would the tables and chairs in that area be stored?**

A. Ms. Truemper stated no specific area has been identified at this point, but she would be reluctant to carve out a space for them on that floor. However, if they can create more efficiency with departments on the third and fourth floors it might be possible to add additional space for storage that would make them easily accessible to the fifth floor. Councilmember Smotherson stated an event space would also need a prep room for caterers and maybe even a dressing room.

Councilmember Clay stated everyone has heard him speak about this idea of what to do with the City's facilities, but at this point, both options feel like Council is being asked to choose between a red Chevy Equinox and a Crimson Chevy Equinox. Therefore, he is struggling to find these options satisfying and wondering how Council should go about getting more expansive thinking outside of what has been presented. Councilmember Clay stated in his mind, this is a once in a generation opportunity to do some significant things, and while he understands Triver's directive to utilize all of the City's facilities, he views a world where the Annex is utilized by departments other than the Police. So, when and how does Council start to think bigger? Mr. Rose stated when this project was initiated, it was specifically intended to identify what the needs of the organization were related to space, and how the existing facilities could be utilized to address those needs. But if Council wants to expand this study to explore other possibilities or look at the construction of other built facilities, such a decision is within their realm of authority. However, the absolute guiding factor is how much debt can the City incur regardless of what its needs and desires are? And until he has the answer to that question, he is unable to make a sound recommendation about how Council should proceed.

Councilmember Clay stated from a process perspective, it seems like the financial viability should have been the first thing that occurred. Even though the City is in a different situation than it was when it began this journey, the financials could have been updated to reflect these current circumstances and its potential impact on the economy. But, if he understands Mr. Rose's position, the City could go forward with the financial review and thereafter conduct a more expansive look at the options? Mr. Rose stated again, the decision to expand the scope of this study is up to the Mayor and Council to decide. But yes, there is an opportunity to do just that.

He stated if you recall, this project predates most of us. It started with a previous study that was conducted on this issue that Council believed was flawed and needed to be revisited. That's how the scope of the study was developed and that's how we arrived at where we are today. Mr. Rose stated if he had been the City Manager from the start, he would have expressed the need to start with the financials. But regardless of the circumstances, the space needs of the organization are not going to change based on the available resources. What it does impact is your priorities because while most people would love to have a big fancy car, sometimes all they can afford is a Volkswagen. And that's the area we have to focus on.

Councilmember Clay stated while the assumption is that the big fancy car will be more expensive, the problem for him is that he doesn't have any information about it. So, he's hard-pressed to think about making a decision on tonight's presentation because he doesn't know what the other options are. Councilmember Clay stated, of course, he is not envisioning a scenario where the City throws the doors wide open, but he does not see the harm in asking what else could go into the Annex.

Ms. Truemper stated in the scope of this study which looked at all of the facilities, there is no other facility that could house the Police. So, Councilmember Clay is not wrong in saying there is little difference between the two options because the lion's share of the program is dictating the way the rest of the programs shake out.

Councilmember Clay stated he appreciated Ms. Truemper's comments, which amplified the point; we have not looked beyond our facilities as it relates to the relocation of our Police Station. And we don't know what that would look like. Therefore, since this is a decision that would have to be made by Council, what is the process for moving this topic forward for discussion?

Mr. Rose stated if Council desires to explore alternative options, then what he would recommend is that any discussions related to those alternatives be postponed until after the City's financial position has been determined. Because making a decision prior to having that knowledge may not get you where you want to be. He stated the reality is that the Police certainly cannot remain where they are today, long-term, so the goal should be to relocate them in a facility that will be their permanent home; no matter where that is.

Ms. Truemper stated something she thinks is important to consider moving forward is that a part of the previous plan Mr. Rose mentioned has already been initiated with the renovations of City Hall.

So even though she was aware of the suggestions to put some of the departments from City Hall into the Annex, she did not see that as a viable option because the City has already invested 10 million dollars renovating City Hall to accommodate those same departments.

Councilmember McMahon stated he thinks everyone needs to be clear about exactly what going bigger or looking at other options entails. It seems like what is being proposed is to build a 30,000 square foot structure someplace in U City, on top of all the square footage that already exists, and compare that to see how it can fiscally be accomplished with the City's resources. And if his conjecture is correct, then he thinks Council needs to talk about it. However, if Council agrees that they would like to move the Police sooner rather than later; that they should have a state-of-the-art facility; which Option 2 seems to be able to provide, and that they don't want to see any of the existing facilities sitting empty, then the ability to reach a decision on building something new might be an uphill battle.

Councilmember Hales stated he looks at the Space Needs Analysis from the standpoint of what the City needs; what departments need and what resources are available to satisfy those needs. And what this study has shown us is that the City has a significant net gain with respect to the square footage needed to accomplish all of these things. Previously, the Police were only able to access a portion of the Annex, but this option gives them access to the entire building, plus portions of the Trinity Building.

Councilmember Hales stated he was really impressed with Option 2, which clearly demonstrates there is no need to move other departments into the Annex. So, the question in his mind is how will the City fill this existing space if it builds something new? It's almost like having a house where one side of the roof is caving in. Do you build a new addition to live in or do you take care of the problem first, and then decide whether an addition is necessary? However, on the other hand, what he has consistently heard people say over the last ten years is when is something going to happen with the old library?

So, while he would be happy to have the conversation about alternatives, he does not understand why there is a need to do so when the City has more than enough space to accommodate its needs. He stated another point that needs to be considered is that this building sits within a private subdivision that is subject to indentures and Prop H funding. So, it's pretty clear that it cannot be sold, demolished, or leased without a vote of the people.

Mayor Crow stated he was thinking about what else some of the space in the Annex could be used for and was curious to know how often it was used by the Courts? Mr. Mulligan stated his understanding is that on average, it's held on a weekly basis.

Mr. Schwartz stated he actually thinks it's a lot less than that. Traffic Court is held once or twice a month, and the other courts are held as needed.

Mayor Crow stated even though he is amenable to the change, he had never given much thought to moving Council's Chambers from the fifth floor to the Annex.

He stated recently he took a tour of Clayton's Police Station and their Chief was very candid about the fact that they don't use their holding cells. Is that something that U City uses extensively?

Mr. Rose stated he had a conversation with the Chief about the need for holding cells and learned that they are an important part of their operation because they are used to question individuals before they are sent to St. Louis County. Mayor Crow stated Clayton now has separate examination rooms, so perhaps, that's a concept our Police can give some consideration to. But he really hopes his colleagues will take the opportunity to look at Clayton's conversion of a historic office building into a new state-of-the-art facility and learn more about the pros and cons of doing so.

Mayor Crow stated he is not excited about the idea of an event space, especially since there are not many events going on these days. So, at this point, it seems a little challenging when you weigh it against the City's diminishing population and the need to be cautious moving forward.

However, he does what to thank Councilmember Clay for generating these transformational moments even though he does not think voters will be too accepting of asking for additional space when there's no evidence that it's needed. So, he thinks Council needs to peel back from that blank slate until such a requirement has been demonstrated.

Mayor Crow stated he thinks this administration deserves credit for leading this City away from some of the concerns that many citizens have expressed over the years. So Council has an obligation to be careful and financially prudent going forward. And while it would have been nice to have a clean slate, the first step is to find out what the City's capacity really is. He stated banks have implemented a new clause in their loan process called a "COVID Rider," which influences how much debt an administrator impacted by COVID can carry, as well as their financial and bonding authority.

Councilmember Smotherson asked whether the building that the Clayton Police moved into was larger than their old station? Mr. Schwartz stated he was pretty sure that it is.

Mayor Crow stated although the building itself is larger there are two vacant floors that they would like to lease to someone else.

Councilmember Smotherson stated since they did not renovate the same building they were in; he doesn't understand how their situation is relevant? Mayor Crow stated the significance is that you can put a new, state-of-the-art Police Station inside of an old building.

Councilmember Smotherson stated he would like to respond to some of the other comments made by his colleagues.

1. The scope of Trivers' study was limited, so at this point, we don't know what all of the possibilities are.
2. There is only one issue that has a timeline, and that's the Police. So, he does not understand why everyone is making the Police the pawns in this issue when they should be separated out of the equation. I do understand the Mayor's comments with respect to being fiscally prudent, but neither he nor Councilmember Clay is asking for anything outrageous, and he believes this can be a fiscally responsible decision if Council simply takes it one step at a time. If we can't afford to do everything, then let's do one thing; the Police.
3. The 10-million-dollar renovation of City Hall was not a true renovation in the sense of transforming this building into a state-of-the-art facility. It was to address major cosmetic issues like ceilings that leaked and elevators that kept breaking down. So, whatever happened fourteen years ago does not apply to what we are trying to accomplish today.
4. Something that has not been mentioned is that on March 28, 2016, the previous Council voted 5 to 2, to build a new Police Station, so we are not working with a blank slate. That seems to be something this Council has ignored but it is still on the table and nothing has officially changed that decision.

Councilmember Smotherson stated Council needs to leave the past in the past and start looking forward to the future and where it can take this City. Council also needs to think about the ancillary responsibilities that the Police provide. His wife's daughter has been ordered to make a parental exchange of her children at the Police Station. So, do you really want to house the Police in the middle of a proposed hotel or an ever-changing Civic Plaza with tourists and white-collar workers?

And finally, U City does not have a space to hold events; unless you're contemplating the Community Center, which falls way below the standards needed to support corporate events, banquets, or galas.

Councilmember Hales stated if Council had left the past in the past, this City's EMS would still be outsourced. That was also a very clear vote that was taken by the previous Council that was unanimously overturned by this Council. And he thinks the vast majority of citizens are incredibly thankful for that policy change. Where are the folks who made that decision back in 2016, when Chambers was packed with folks saying this goose is cooked before the report was even disclosed? Or when Council and the administration were pushing for a new Police Station at the same time, they were in court fighting to keep them in a station that had been condemned.

So, I don't think this City Manager, or this Council is trying to make the Police Department the pawns here. But rather, have been working through this process in a very measured fashion to conduct the proper analysis and get it right. And as a result, he thinks Councilmember Smotherson's comments are really unfair to everyone on this call. Councilmember Hales stated while he appreciates the desire to look at other options, he does not understand why the City should create more space, more debt, and more responsibility when this study has demonstrated that it has more than enough space to effectively fulfill its space needs.

He stated the Clayton Police moved into a larger building with more space, and this study is suggesting that our Police move into the same building with more space. Right now, the Police have 22,000 square feet in those trailers and although he does not know what the square footage was in the Annex, everyone would agree that it was not functional. But what most of us have learned over the last six months is that this environment has caused companies, corporations, and even governments across the nation to do more with less space and expense. That's what's on people's minds right now, and he thinks it's a trend that will continue for a very long time.

Councilmember Clay stated this process began with a health-endangering crisis at the old Police Station and he does not think there is any strategic planning firm that would agree that this was the ideal way to begin this process. But from that point on, we have tried to back into a process to resolve that crisis.

He stated if you look at any strategic planning firm, they will tell you that this process starts with a vision by engaging your community. Because what that process does is it illuminates needs, and desires, and possibilities that six or seven people may never think of. So now when we're talking about this is what we need, he would argue that this question has not been asked to all the right people.

Councilmember Clay stated he thinks if Council and this administration had employed such a process, they might have discovered some things they could do differently that would benefit the entire community. Of course, he realizes that community engagement is highly challenging in this environment, but his point is, if we define our needs only based on what we need right now, and continue to ask the same people what those needs are, you might not get the best answers. But when you expand that circle the possibilities that can flow from that exchange are oftentimes amazing. And if we had to do this all over again, he thinks everyone would agree that's probably how this process should have started.

But even if you can't do everything through a traditional visioning process you can start to do something that gets at those bigger questions like what does this community want their Police Station to look like or what do you want your facilities to look like? Then you would have a true sense of what the needs and desires of this community are. Councilmember Clay stated this process will always be tempered by money and reality, but he thinks that if you just ask communities, you're going to get a lot of good stuff. He stated it's unfortunate that this process did not start the right way, but he still thinks they can recover some degree of process integrity.

Councilmember McMahan asked whether the square footage being proposed for the Annex was the same amount of footage required to build a new Police Station?

Ms. Truemper stated their data indicates that the Police would like to have about 35,000 square feet, and there are approximately 38,000 square feet available in the Annex. So, at this point, she does not believe their need would change significantly if the City were to build a new facility.

Councilmember McMahan stated this process hasn't just started. Back in 1980, they were looking at renovating the Annex for the Police because they determined that there was more than enough square footage to accommodate their operations. So, when you start talking about possibilities, visions, and ideas, he thinks you should just be clear. People are talking about building a new 36,000 square foot facility with parking and whatever it takes and retaining two buildings for some other use that has not been identified. Even though every member of this Council has agreed that none of the City's buildings should remain empty. So, if there are people in this community that can resolve that dilemma, he is willing to listen.

Councilmember McMahon stated the implications that this Council has lost its integrity or is using the Police as pawns seem to indicate that Council is slipping in a direction of discussion that he never thought this Council would be having.

Mayor Crow stated to date, this Council has done an excellent job of discussing matters professionally, and he would wholeheartedly suggest that his colleagues continue that practice as Council moves forward. He stated the one critically important thing is for Council not to have a split vote on this issue. That means we must continue talking to each other to understand our concerns and ultimately make certain that everyone is on the same page. He stated in spite of the fact that everyone may have a different perspective; he believes that everyone is working for the betterment of this community. And while some folks may be asking why we don't build something new, he's heard a lot more folks saying why don't you all just get this thing done. It would be great to go back and conduct visioning, but that train has left the station.

Mayor Crow stated he is more than happy to have an event space but does not believe that is Council's role. However, if it works out in this design, great. And secondly, the Police Department has been in the same location for 40 years, and Clayton's Police Station is right in the middle of downtown.

Mayor Crow stated at some point Council will have to decide, and whether you decide to renovate or build something new, it will impact our voters. Council will need their support on the necessary bond issues to make this all come to fruition.

Mayor Crow asked Mr. Rose if he needed Council to take any action before adjourning? Mr. Rose stated unless he hears some concern, he intends to move forward with the onboarding of a financial advisor.

Councilmember Smotherson thanked the City Manager for giving Council more time because he appreciates the opportunity to have had this conversation. He stated he has seen what has occurred in the past and sincerely believes this is a great Council comprised of individuals he has been able to communicate with freely. So, he is not accusing anyone of anything, merely expressing his passion for the future of this City, the Police Department, and last, but not least, the event space.

Councilmember Cusick stated for the people watching at home tonight he would like to emphasize that although there have been disagreements, it does not change what they feel about each other and their desire to make the right decision.

Councilmember Smotherson moved to adjourn the Study Session, it was seconded by Councilmember Hales, and the motion carried unanimously.

#### **4. ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Crow closed the Study Session at 6:22 p.m.

LaRette Reese  
City Clerk