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Julie L. Thomas, President Lee Jones, Vice President Penny Githens, Commissioner

MEMORANDUM

To: Members, Monroe County Council
 Members, City of Bloomington Common Council
 Mayor, City of Bloomington

From: Members, Monroe County Board of Commissioners

Re: Convention Center Expansion

Date: July 24, 2019

The primary reason for this *Memorandum* is to make clear our sincere interest in collaboration, with all of you, on the Convention Center Expansion Project ("Project"). To effectively collaborate and see the Project to completion, the County and City must work together to directly address two core issues: financing and the facilities. To proceed from this point forward without involvement from the fiscal bodies of the County and City Councils would be fruitless and we wish to make decisions that are supported by these bodies. With that in mind, we are extending an invitation to the Mayor and members of the County and City Councils to join us in future public planning and discussion sessions. Our goal is to move this Project forward to its successful completion, in a manner that best serves the entirety of Monroe County.

Many dedicated members of the public have served on two different Steering Committees, providing vital input on this Project. We owe them our gratitude for their time and their excellent work. Without their involvement and recommendations, our path forward would not be as clear as it is today.

We encourage the elected leaders of the County and City – not just those with the authority to contract, but also those with the authority to fund the Project – to actively take the lead to realize this project in an atmosphere of consensus-building. We propose that members of the County and City Councils meet with us and the Mayor in a Working Group to publicly address the essential financial and facility considerations listed below. The recommendations from this group can then be considered at regular public meetings of the City and County Council and the Board of Commissioners. If each body agrees with the recommendations of the Working Group of elected officials, we will have established clear parameters for the Architects to continue their work. If the elected bodies do not agree with the recommendations of the Working Group, the Working Group can meet once again and, in a spirit of consensus-building, resolve any differences. A new proposal can then be brought back to each of the elected bodies. This process will ensure that we are moving forward with the support of the Mayor and a majority of the elected representatives of the City Council, County Council and Board of Commissioners. Most importantly, this will ensure that public input is incorporated into the process.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. Funding Sources, which the County and City Councils, and any other necessary parties, will dedicate, or already have dedicated, to the Project; and,
2. Development of a general, yet realistic, construction budget for the Project, which fits within identified and agreed-upon funding sources. The budget is directly connected with our ability to reach an agreement on the facilities.

FACILITY CONSIDERATIONS

1. Hotel
 - a. Location of a full-service hotel, with the possibility of on-site parking;
 - b. Size (number and size of meeting spaces and approximate number of guest rooms) and,
 - c. Agreement upon the selection of a hotel developer.

2. Convention Center (Center)
 - a. Location for the remodeled and expanded Center, which must take into account available land, capitalizing access to the B-Line Trail, and in consideration of neighborhood and traffic impacts;
 - b. Inclusion of athletic facility space;
 - c. Size of the expanded Center;
 - d. General design and aesthetic considerations for the remodeled and expanded Center (for example, modern or traditional architecture).

3. Free-standing Parking Garage
 - a. Size;
 - b. Location;
 - c. Timing, as related to the construction of the new Convention Center building;
 - d. Intended use; and,
 - e. Ownership.

4. Ownership and Operations
 - a. We seek cooperation between - and the involvement of - both the County and City to ensure the viability of the Project, from the phases of construction through operations. A Capital Improvement Board (CIB), under the authority of Indiana Code 36-10-8 et seq. can be formed to manage this process. The CIB should manage operations of and own and/or control all the property designated for the Convention Center Project, including necessary parking facilities.

Because of the prior research and work already completed by two Steering Committees, we are well-positioned to immediately and efficiently discuss and make decisions on the above items. We think our decisions and guidance can then be provided to a Capital Improvement Board, allowing the Board to complete all subsequent stages of the work.

At your earliest convenience, please respond to this *Memorandum* and the requests contained herein, with your suggestions and comments. We look forward to working with you on the development of a successful Convention & Civic Center project.



Julie Thomas, President
Board of Commissioners



Lee Jones, Vice President
Board of Commissioners



Penny Githens, Member
Board of Commissioners