

GENERAL INFORMATION

Applicant:	Hennepin County (applicant) City of Bloomington (owner)
Location:	1800 W. Old Shakopee Road
Request:	Major revision to final site and building plans for the Hennepin County Courts approximately 36,000 square foot addition to Bloomington Civic Plaza
Existing Land Use and Zoning:	Civic Plaza/Art Center; zoned I-2 Limited Industry
Surrounding Land Use and Zoning:	North – Government building; zoned I-2 South – Institutional; zoned R-1 East – Single-family residential; zoned R-1 West – Multiple-family residential and government buildings; zoned R-4 and R-1, respectively
Comprehensive Plan Designation:	Public

HISTORY

City Council Action:	07/02/2001 – Approved the final site and building plans for a new Police/City Hall and Arts Center facility (Case 10550A-01).
City Council Action:	06/06/2005 – Approved variances to reduce the front yard setback from 20 feet to 14 feet for a ground sign and to increase the permitted ground sign size from 64 square feet to 80 square feet (Case 10550AB-05).

CHRONOLOGY

Planning Commission Action:	06/29/2017 – Recommended City Council approval of the major revision to final site and building plans for the Hennepin County Courts addition.
City Council Agenda:	07/10/2017 – Development Business agenda item

DEADLINE FOR AGENCY ACTION

Application Date:	05/23/2017
60 Days:	07/22/2017
120 Days:	09/20/2017
Applicable Deadline:	07/22/2017
Newspaper Notification:	Confirmed – (06/15/2017 Sun Current – 10 day notice)
Direct Mail Notification:	Confirmed – (500 buffer – 10 day notice)

STAFF CONTACT

Mike Centinario
(952) 563-8921
mcentinario@BloomingtonMN.gov

PROPOSAL

The applicant, Hennepin County, is seeking final site and building plan approval for a two-story, approximately 36,000 square foot building addition to Civic Plaza to house Division 4 of the 4th Judicial District. As described in the applicant's materials, the 4th Judicial District is the State of Minnesota's largest trial court and would be relocating the Division 4 courts from Edina to Bloomington Civic Plaza.

Public access to City Hall and the Police Department would remain the same. The proposed Courts addition would have a west-facing main entrance oriented towards a reconstructed parking lot. Interior access between County space and the Bloomington Police Department would be provided. To serve County employees, half of the existing impound vehicle lot across Logan Avenue would be converted to employee parking, providing 32 parking spaces.

ANALYSIS

Land Use

Civic Plaza is guided for Public land use in the Comprehensive Plan. Public land uses generally include parks, schools, government buildings, or libraries. Further, public uses are permitted in the I-2 zoning district. The District Courts use is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code.

Code Compliance

Staff focused the final site and building plan review on the proposed addition to Civic Plaza. The property is zoned I-2, so the standards listed in Table 1 pertain to development the I-2 district. Additional commentary to provide more detail on particular areas of review are in the paragraphs that follow.

Table 1: City Code Requirement Analysis

Standard	Code Requirement	Proposed	Compliance
Floor area – minimum	10,000 square feet	Approximately 208,000 square feet	Yes
Building setback – all streets – minimum	35 feet	97 feet	Yes
Minimum landscape yard	20 feet – along streets	20 feet	Yes
Parking islands	8 feet minimum width with one tree or more	Trees proposed in most islands at a minimum 8 feet width	Minor revisions required
Drive aisles	24 feet minimum width for 90 degree parking; Institute for Transportation Engineers (ITE) standard for areas that are not 90 degree angle	24 for 90 degree parking and 20 feet for angled and parallel parking	Yes
Parking – minimum	Approximately 900 stalls	544 stalls	Flexibility requested through a shared use parking study
Trash collection and storage	Interior with interior access	Trash would be located within building and accessed from sally port doors on west side of building	Yes

Building Design

The proposed exterior building materials are either the same as Civic Plaza or materials intended to be consistent with the existing building but allow for its own architectural identity. Similar to Civic Plaza today, a mix of pre-patinated copper panels, glass, stone veneers, and brick make up the majority of exterior materials, while pre-finished metal panels and the addition's overall massing would present its distinctiveness. To ensure adequate durability, the City requires pre-finished metal panels to have a minimum 30-year manufacturer's warranty on the finish. The

applicant is aware of the exterior material requirements and would provide specification and warranty information prior to procuring a building permit.

Landscaping, Screening and Lighting

City Code requires at least one deciduous tree for each parking island. While most parking islands depict a deciduous tree, some minor revisions are necessary to achieve Code compliance. Retrofitting the impound lot for employee parking also entails planting trees and shrubs. Parking islands, which are currently paved, must be converted to landscaped islands at a minimum inside curb to inside curb width of eight feet. Further, some additional landscaping would be necessary along Logan Avenue to serve as a parking lot screen.

City and County staff would be coordinating lighting improvements for the Courts entrances and reconstructed parking areas. Elevated lighting levels are required at primary entrances – 7 footcandles is required at the Courts' primary entrance. No lighting upgrades are initially anticipated for the impound lot as it is intended only for County employee daytime parking. If the impound lot is used for extended hours parking, lighting improvements would be needed. Four light poles already exist in the impound lot, but the fixtures themselves would need to be replaced.

Access and Circulation

Access to Civic Plaza and the Courts addition will largely remain the same as today, except that the existing one-way exit from the Police Department sally port and garage to Logan Avenue would be expanded for two-way traffic. The primary access to the Courts addition would be from the existing southern driveway to the main City Hall parking lot along Logan Avenue. Hennepin County would install directional signs on Logan Avenue and internally to direct Court traffic to the appropriate parking area. Police and Hennepin County Sheriff traffic would predominately use the expanded two-way drive that leads to the addition's sally port, and to the Bloomington Police Department's underground garage. A surmountable paved area is proposed to connect the Police/Sheriff drive to the Courts parking lot for emergency services.

Parking

Providing adequate parking for the Hennepin County Courts addition while still maintaining the existing uses of the City facilities, including arts, theatre and special events, have been a primary consideration in the planning and deliberations leading up the application. The Civic Plaza houses a diverse range of uses and activities, such as the day to day customer service and office needs associated with City Hall, as well as theatre and gallery events associated with Artistry, and general recreational and community programming that occurs throughout the year. There has been concern that the parking demand associated with the Courts addition could overwhelm the existing parking supply on site and limit what the City could do with the facility. However, the City Code parking requirement for the combined court annex and City Hall is approximately 900 stalls (over 300 more than presently existing) and neither agency wishes to dedicate the land and

bear the cost burden of constructing parking facilities only to see them go unused a majority of the time. To address these concerns, a comprehensive parking study was conducted in 2016 to determine if the existing parking supply at the Civic Plaza could accommodate the additional parking demand, or if additional parking should be constructed for the Courts addition. The study, which was conducted by Alliant Engineering, came to the following conclusions:

- The total number of existing stalls within Civic Plaza would be sufficient the majority of the time.
- The West Lot (proposed as the 31 stall parking area immediately west of the Courts' main entrance) would accommodate Court user parking demand for a typical case load day.
- Even during peak case load days at the Courts, the total parking supply would still be sufficient, provided there are *no other concurrent events* at Civic Plaza.
- When there are large events at Civic Plaza during peak case load days at the Courts, insufficient parking would be expected.

Based on discussions with court staff, the County has some ability to manage and avoid peak case load days. They also have the ability to schedule court so that hearings would not occur at all on days with large events at City Hall, so long as those days are known well in advance. In summary, so long as both agencies coordinate schedules in advance, the supply of parking included with the proposal should be adequate. The lease requires that City and Courts staff meet to coordinate schedules a minimum of four times per year.

Also, to mitigate potential parking problems and avoid seasonal issues (loss of parking to snow storage, for example), half of the existing vehicle impound lot west of Logan Avenue, 32 new stalls, is proposed to be opened up for Courts and County employee parking. Further, consistent with study findings, a parking management plan would be prepared before the Court facility opens. Elements of the parking management plan may entail:

- Implement wayfinding to better utilize the East Lot located along W. 98th Street.
- Increase staff parking in the East Lot, which is often underutilized.
- Relocate city fleet vehicles from the West Lot to the Southwest Lot to free up convenient parking for Courts visitors.
- Coordinate Civic Plaza events schedule with Courts schedule to reduce the peak parking demand.
- Spread out caseloads and hearings to reduce the AM peak parking demand.

Based on the concern with a parking deficit and the outcome of the Alliant Parking Study, Hennepin County and the City of Bloomington entered into a Parking Development Agreement between Bloomington and the County on September 30, 2016 which was approved by the City Council at its meeting on September 12, 2016. In the agreement, the City and County specify which lots are available for Courts Facility parking, including use of a portion of the impound lot across the street from Logan Avenue for Court employees. The agreement also specifies how

special event parking will occur and how the Court and the City will work together to establish a schedule that limits conflicting events. The agreement states that if parking deficiencies occur regularly, additional studies may be conducted, as well as parking management and mitigation measures may be identified that both the City and the County agree to implement. Continued parking deficiencies would open up the need to build additional parking to meet demand. Consistent with the parking study, and based on the current plans, the proposal includes 544 spaces total, of which 416 would be available for the public, including court and city employees. The remaining 128 spaces are for actively used City vehicles (Police, Building and Inspection staff, etc.) or are set aside as non-public parking for staff and fleet vehicles.

Parking Summary and Conclusion

Parking supply under the proposal is expected to be adequate for most conditions, so long as the provisions outlined above are adhered to. Large special events at City Hall (occurring approximately 10 times per year) will sometimes exceed the available supply of parking, as they do currently, however it is incumbent on the organizers of those events to make arrangements to reduce parking demand and to supply off-site alternatives.

Traffic Analysis

As noted previously, primary access to the site remains off of Logan Avenue, while a small increase in traffic at the James Avenue and 98th Street signal is also likely. All roads and intersections affected by the proposal have adequate capacity for the development. No new safety or capacity issues are expected from the proposal, nor is the proposal expected to exacerbate or increase delay in any measurable way.

Transit and Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

Due to the request for parking deviation, a Tier 1 TDM plan is required by City Code. This plan should be completed in conjunction with both the Hennepin County Courts and City of Bloomington to incentivize employees to travel to the site by means other than driving alone.

Signage

Three freestanding ground signs are located along W. 98th Street, W. Old Shakopee Road, and Logan Ave. One freestanding sign is permitted per street frontage, so Civic Plaza's freestanding sign allocation has been used. The County's plans identified an additional freestanding sign, but signage would need to be incorporated into existing signage. However, there is plenty of space for on-building signage and there may be directional signs, subject to size and setback requirements. The applicant has acknowledged the inability for an additional freestanding sign and would work with staff on directional and building signage.

Stormwater Management

The Stormwater Management plan calculations and narrative have been reviewed and meet the requirements in the City of Bloomington Comprehensive Surface Water Management Plan. The applicant plans to construct an underground stormwater storage area under the “west lot.” A maintenance plan has not yet been provided and will be required to be signed and filed at Hennepin County. This site is located within the Nine Mile Creek Watershed District, so an additional permit will be required. The City has applied for this permit and it has been conditionally approved.

Utilities

The water service for the building will be rerouted around the proposed building addition to connect to the existing public watermain in Logan Avenue. An additional fire hydrant is required in the parking lot south of the proposed building addition, so a water line will be installed to the new hydrant, as well as connected to the public watermain in West Old Shakopee Road to loop the water system.

A new sanitary sewer service from the proposed building addition will be installed and connected to the existing sanitary sewer pipe in Logan Avenue.

Status of Enforcement Orders

There are no open enforcement orders at Civic Plaza.

FINDINGS

Required Final Site and Building Plan Findings - Section 21.501.01(d)(1-4):

Required Finding	Finding Outcome/Discussion
(1) The proposed use is not in conflict with the Comprehensive Plan.	Finding Made – the proposed use is a public government facility and is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan’s Public land use designation.
(2) The proposed use is not in conflict with any adopted District Plan for the area.	Finding Made – Civic Plaza is not located in an area with an adopted District Plan.
(3) The proposed use is not in conflict with City Code provisions.	Finding Made – once minor revisions are made to the site plans, the project will be consistent with City Code provisions.
(4) The proposed development will not be injurious to the surrounding neighborhood or otherwise harm the public health, safety and welfare.	Finding Made – the Hennepin County Courts addition to Civic Plaza will not be injurious to the surrounding neighborhood or harm public health, safety, and welfare. Parking needs have been studied extensively and on-going management of daily operations and events at

	Civic Plaza will mitigate occasional parking problems. The Courts facility has been designed as a modern judicial facility with security operations consistent with best practices.
--	---

RECOMMENDATION

The Planning Commission and staff recommend the following motion:

In Case PL2017-84, having been able to make the required findings, I move to approve the major revision to final site and building plans for the Hennepin County Courts addition to the City of Bloomington Civic Plaza at 1800 W. Old Shakopee Road, subject to the conditions and Code requirements attached to the staff report.