

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING CITY STAFF TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL FROM THE DOWNTOWN DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE TO DEMOLISH THE OLD CITY JAIL.

WHEREAS, the Old City Jail Facility (“Old City Jail”) located at 200 N. Shartel, was built following the issuance of City and County bonds, that were approved in 1935, together with a federal matching grant, which were also used to construct the Civic Center Auditorium, City Hall and Oklahoma County Courthouse; and

WHEREAS, the six story Old City Jail is comprised of approximately 41,310 square feet with a partial half basement, two elevators, only one of which may be operable, with floor plates equaling 6,885 square feet; and

WHEREAS, the floor heights vary in the Old City Jail as floors 1-2 have at least 8 feet of ceiling clearance and floors 3-6 only have a clearance of 6’10”, rendering it very difficult and expensive to rehabilitate and limiting possible uses for the facility; and

WHEREAS, the Old City Jail, built some 85 years ago, has not been designated as a historical preservation site or structure; and

WHEREAS, on July 1, 1997 (Item VIII.I 1. and 2.) The City entered into a Jail Services Agreement with the Board of County Commissioners of Oklahoma County and Sheriff of Oklahoma County, effective July 1, 1997 to house prisoners that were arrested on City charges at the Oklahoma County Jail; and

WHEREAS, after July 1, 1997, the Old City Jail was no longer used to house persons arrested on City charges; however, the City Marshall’s Office did continue to occupy office space in part of the Jail Facility until June 14, 2013; and

WHEREAS, from June 2013 until present the Old City Jail has been abandoned, sat vacant and has fallen into further disrepair becoming a home to pigeons and others, and would most likely be considered dilapidated; and

WHEREAS, on June 20, 2017, a Request for Proposals (RFP) was advertised to redevelop the Old City Jail, which resulted in only one proposal being submitted by Gator Industrial, LLC, even though eighty-nine potential proposers viewed the RFP on-line; and

WHEREAS, on November 7, 2017, the City Council rejected the proposal from Gator Industrial, LLC for the redevelopment of the Old City Jail and authorized staff to re-advertise a Request for Proposal for the redevelopment of the Old City Jail; and

WHEREAS, a redevelopment group called Allied Redevelopment L.L.C., headed by local developer, Marva Ellard, submitted a response to the re-advertised public invitation; and

WHEREAS, a Review Committee consisting of representatives from the Planning, Police, Finance, and Public Works Departments, along with representatives from the City Manager's Office and Municipal Counselor's office reviewed the proposal and submitted follow-up questions to the prospective developer regarding their plans for the Facility; and

WHEREAS, after much review and deliberation the Review Committee recommended designating the developer as the conditional redeveloper of the Facility; and

WHEREAS, on April 10, 2018 (Item VII.AI.) The City approved a Resolution to conditionally designate Allied Redevelopment L.L.C. as a potential and conditional redeveloper of the Old City Jail, subject to the final determination and approval of the final proposed development by the Mayor and Council; and

WHEREAS, the Resolution also authorized and directed the City Manager or his designee(s) to conduct negotiations with the conditionally designated redeveloper for a period of ninety (90) days in an attempt to reach an agreement as to development plans, financing arrangements, price contingencies, and other terms and conditions, and if satisfactory, present an economic development contract for sale of land and the redevelopment of the Facility to the Mayor and Council for review and consideration; and

WHEREAS, on August 13, 2019, at the request of City Council, demolition of the Old City Jail was placed on hold, and the City Manager and City staff was directed to work Marva Ellard, as the potential developer who expressed an interest in redeveloping the Old City Jail into some viable and economically feasible use; and

WHEREAS, after almost two years of discussion and negotiations City staff has been unable to reach an agreement with the proposed developer to redevelop the Old City Jail; and

WHEREAS, while the structural condition of the Old City Jail may be considered by some as fair; there are significant environmental and mechanical issues with the structure, including the existence of asbestos, along with water, sewer, and electrical systems that all need to be replaced and there are numerous other issues with the building as well; and

WHEREAS, the 2007 General Obligation Bond provided for construction of a new Police Headquarters and a new Municipal Court Building; and

WHEREAS, the new Police Headquarters opened in 2015 and the new Municipal Court Building opened in 2017; and

WHEREAS, over the years the Old City Jail has been allowed to fall into further disrepair and has not been used for any significant municipal purpose since 2013; and

WHEREAS, the construction of the new Municipal Court Building and the new Oklahoma City Police Headquarters caused the loss of at least 235 parking spaces for the City's public safety campus, which also served the public doing business with Municipal Court; and

WHEREAS, there is a critical need for parking to support the City's five building public safety campus, consisting of the Communications/911 Center, Municipal Court/Criminal Justice Center, Police Headquarters, Police Property Facility and Police Forensic Laboratory; and

WHEREAS, the demolition of the Old City Jail would provide an opportunity to increase the number of surface parking spaces available to the public; and

WHEREAS, funding has previously been set aside to demolish the structures replaced by the new Police Headquarters and the Municipal Court Building and the Old City Jail; and

WHEREAS, the City must go through the process to obtain a Certificate of Approval for Demolition from the Downtown Design Review Committee; and

WHEREAS, City staff, based on a recent appraisal of the property with the Old City Jail, and based on information previously provided by Marva Ellard, as to the costs of redevelopment, find that redevelopment of the Old City Jail into a viable and economically feasible use is not possible without significant economic development incentives in the form of land and cash that would most likely come from the City's general fund; and

WHEREAS, City staff based on its analysis of the condition of the Old City Jail, the needed economic development incentives needed to make redevelopment possible, and in consideration of the need for additional parking, recommends that City Council determine that it is time to proceed with demolition of the Old City Jail; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and the City Council as follows:

1. That there is a significant need for more parking in and around the public safety campus; and
2. The Council finds based on information provided that the Old City Jail is in such a condition that redevelopment of the structure is not possible without significant economic development incentives that would not result in significant benefit to the City and community at this time; and
3. The Council finds based on information provided that the Old City Jail is in such a condition that demolition of the structure is the best course of action and that said demolition would allow for the possible development of additional parking around the public safety campus; and
4. The City Manager or his designee(s) are authorized and directed to apply for a Certificate of Approval from the Downtown Design Review Committee to demolish the Old City Jail and if approved, take action to demolish the structure.


ADOPTED by the Council and signed by the Mayor this _____ day of _____, 2021.

THE CITY OF OKLAHOMA CITY

CITY CLERK

MAYOR

Reviewed as to form and legality.



ASSISTANT MUNICIPAL COUNSELOR