



CITY OF DECATUR ILLINOIS

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DECATUR, ILLINOIS 62523-1196

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 18, 2024

Council approves agreement for repurposing of Garfield School site, expands Decatur-Macon County Enterprise Zone

Decatur, IL – Highlights from the March 18, 2024 Decatur City Council meeting include an agreement with the Decatur Public Schools District for repurposing the old Garfield School site, and an expansion of the Decatur-Macon County Enterprise Zone.

Repurposing Garfield School site

On Monday night the Decatur City Council approved an intergovernmental (IGA) with Decatur Public Schools District #61 for the repurposing of the old Garfield School site at 1077 W Grand Ave. The School District is transferring ownership of the school building and surrounding property to the City for a potential redevelopment project.

The City, along with a private developer, is applying for funding from the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA) to redevelop the former school building into senior living apartments. The first phase of the project, repurposing the school building, is contingent upon receiving support from IHDA. In February 2023, Council agreed to contribute \$675,000 in ARP and HOME grant funds as part of the investment plant.

Future phases for the property include adding mixed-income housing and new commercial space. Additionally, Garfield Park is undergoing a modern redesign by the Decatur Park District. The City Council recently agreed to invest \$250,000 to help fund the redesign.

Should the IHDA application fail and the City is unable to secure alternative development plans, the City and School District would share the cost of demolishing the school building 50-50.

Expansion of Decatur-Macon County Enterprise Zone

Council also approved an agreement to expand the Decatur-Macon County Enterprise Zone to benefit

future development projects. The Enterprise Zone is an intergovernmental agreement between Decatur, the County of Macon, Mt. Zion, Forsyth, and Long Creek and it is administered by the Economic Development Corporation of Decatur and Macon County. A recent decision by the State of Illinois to increase the maximum acreage allowed for some enterprise zones (including Decatur's) means that the Decatur-Macon County EZ can expand. Information about the areas that were added can be found in the Council packet.

More information about these topics can be found in the City Council meeting packet, downloadable/viewable here: www.decaturlil.gov/mayor-and-council/council-meetings/

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