



January 2, 2018

To the City Manager, Mayor and members of City Council,

I am writing to you as a follow up to our meeting on 11-13-17 about the Downtown Business Association of Charlottesville's (DBAC) requests for additions to the fiscal year 2019 city budget.

The Downtown Mall is a major economic engine for the City of Charlottesville. It is a major tourist attraction and the reason many people move here. In 2012 the city spent \$1.2 million on the Downtown Mall for basic services and everyday maintenance¹. These were expenditures for services any neighborhood or park would expect to receive.

Yet, over the following 4 years, while the city budget increased 17%, expenditures for the mall dropped almost 20%. While pedestrian traffic on the mall increased, the city reduced its commitment to the Mall. Charlottesville needs to value the Downtown Mall, and how important it is to the entire city, its people and its economy

From 2012- 2016 we continuously saw an increase in people frequenting the bricks, the area that the city is responsible for maintaining. This is simply base level funding that any city neighborhood would receive.

The Mall is a neighborhood and stands alone from other city neighborhoods, because it performs diverse functions. It is an economic engine, entertainment destination, a park, and a residential community, making it essentially the crown jewel of the city.

We believe the Mall should be treated as a separate entity and would like an economic impact study in the future. But until we have a comprehensive analysis, I think we can all agree that this is a critical district that warrants a greater investment from the city and we would like to see the following in the 2019 budget:

¹ City of Charlottesville Fiscal Year 2013 Adopted City Budget
<http://www.charlottesville.org/home/showdocument?id=22596>

Increases to the 2019 budget for items that we believe should be a permanent part of the budget

1. 7 day a week policing, on the mall, including officers at 2am when bars close
2. hire an additional person to maintain and clean from the mall to West Main and the Corner, including all side streets
3. designate or hire someone to be in charge of the mall on weekends, at least for any special event
4. full funding for planting and landscaping on the mall

One-time expenditures

1. cameras on the mall
2. additional trash cans on Water and Market Streets
3. updated signage with current information
4. public restrooms
5. additional lighting on side streets and walkways to parking areas, we would like to following to be high priority for year 1:
 - 4th St from Market going south to Garrett St, including under the RR bridge, as a walkway to Friendship Court and parking on Garrett and Monticello Ave
 - 3rd St from E Water to E High St, as the main access to the Market St Garage and a walkway to the North Downtown neighborhood
 - Ridge/McIntire around the western edge of the mall
 - W Market from 2nd St to Ridge/McIntire

Create clear policies for the mall with mall representation

1. special events committee: include a mall representative
2. involve the mall with approval of events that affect mall closures and take place on the bricks in front of business
3. prohibiting food carts and food trucks from the mall, Water St, Market St and the side streets
4. give priority to special events taking place on the mall, not vendors
5. coordination between the city and DBAC on the holiday lighting, events, city market and grand illumination
6. A clear line of communication, so that all departments are informed of events, and businesses are informed of actions from the city that have an effect on them

Staffing; The creation of a full-time position for someone in the city who has authority to oversee the decisions for the mall who has senior level authority.

Fund a recovery program to deal with the effects of August 12th on businesses downtown. Including but not limited to:

\$100,000 for marketing to include broadcast and social media

\$100,000 for office space and salaries to staff DBAC

\$50,000 for mall enhancements, specifically lighting and decorations.

Designate the Downtown Mall as a special neighborhood, which would help in all of the above requests.

DBAC would appreciate another meeting to discuss the next step in the budgeting process.

Sincerely,

Joan Fenton, Chair
Downtown Business Association of Charlottesville