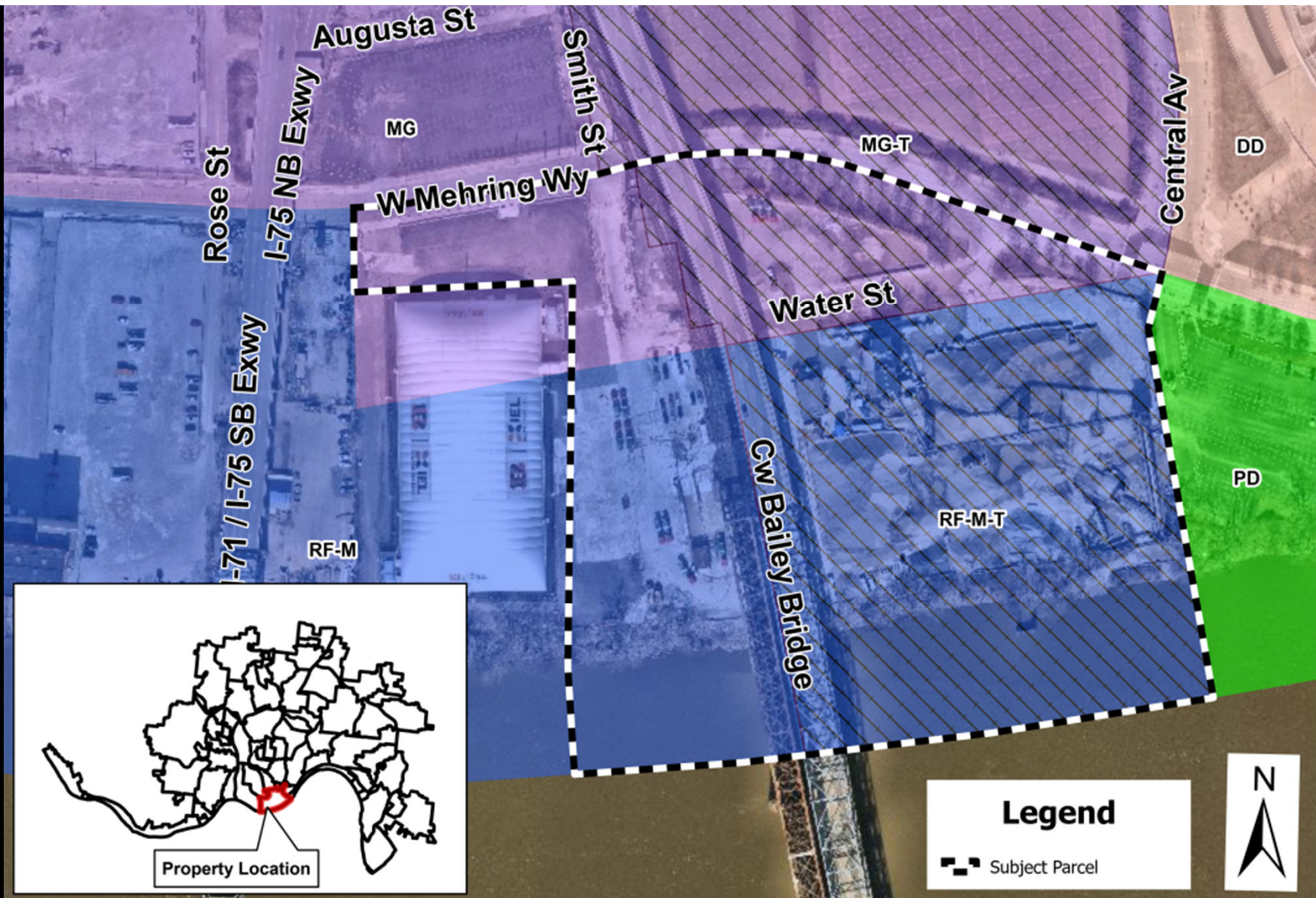


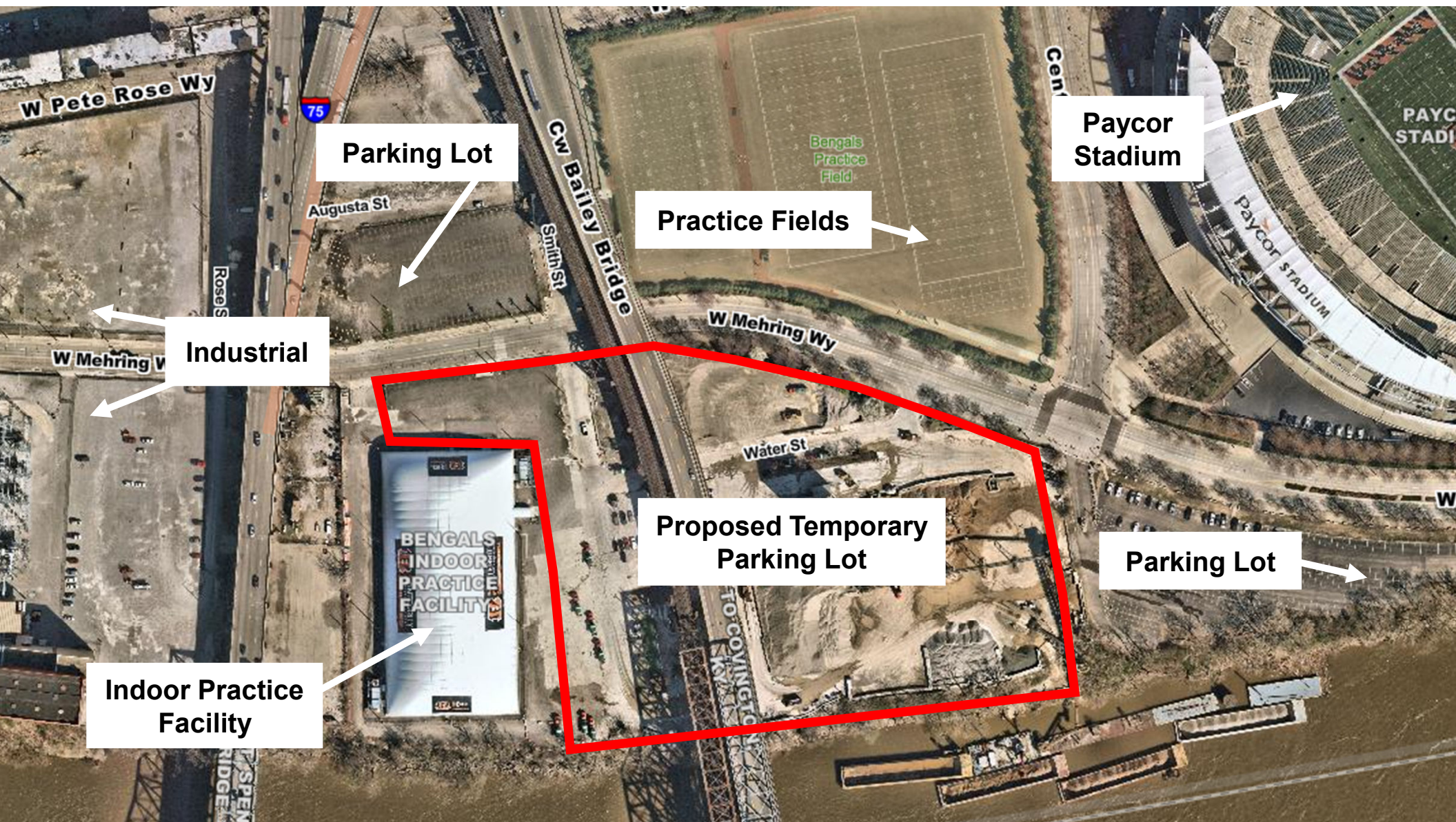


Proposed Notwithstanding Ordinance for 515 Water St in the Central Business District

Equitable Growth and Housing Committee

June 17, 2025





Parking Lot

Practice Fields

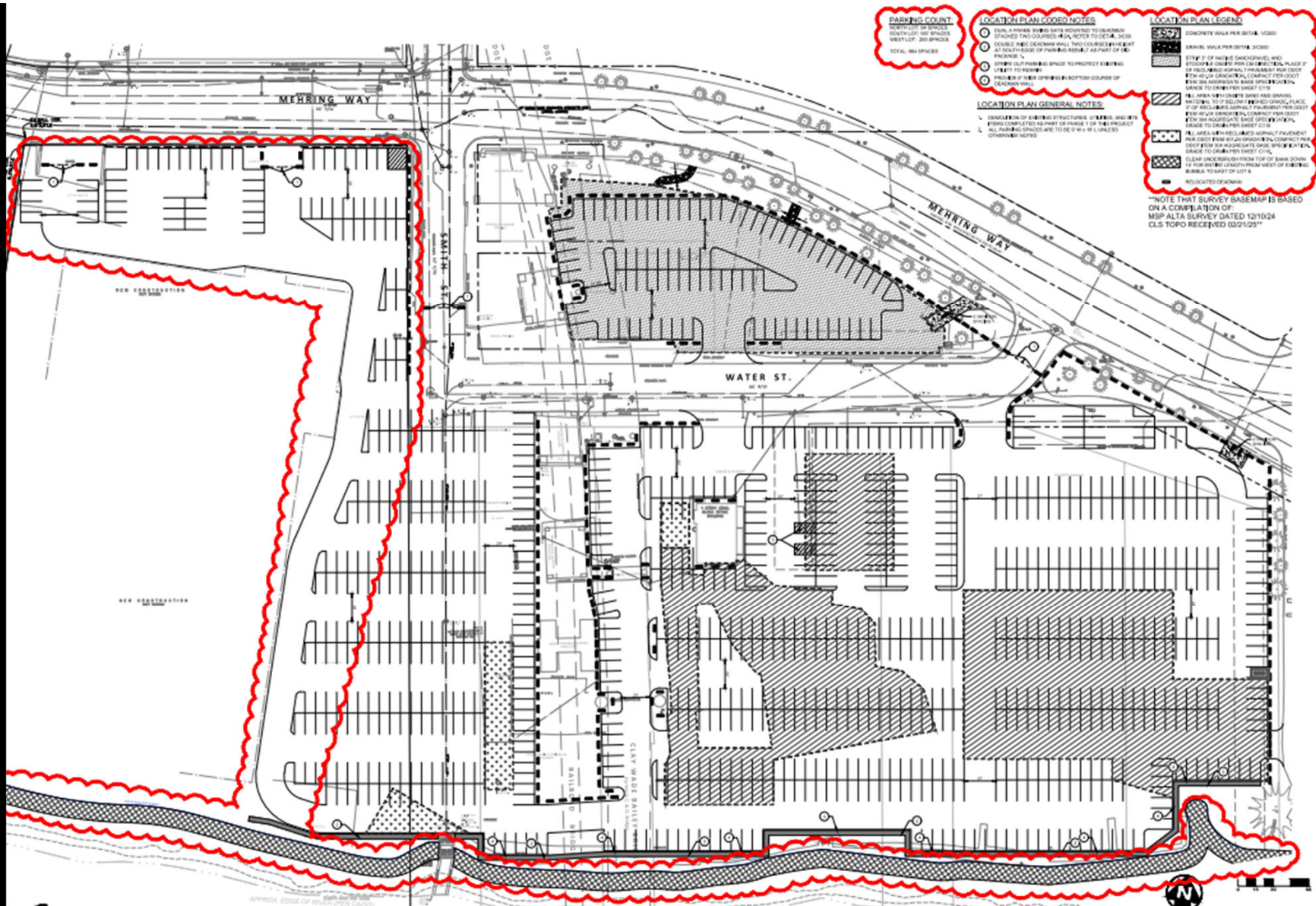
Paycor Stadium

Industrial

Proposed Temporary
Parking Lot

Parking Lot

Indoor Practice
Facility







Proposed Notwithstanding Ordinance

Notwithstanding the following Cincinnati Zoning Code sections:

§1415-05: Land Use Regulations

§1415-19: Ohio River Bank Area

§1421-33: Fences and Walls

§1421-39: Exterior Lighting

§1425-29: Surface Parking Lot Landscaping

§1425-31(b): Parking Lot Markings. *Directional Arrows*

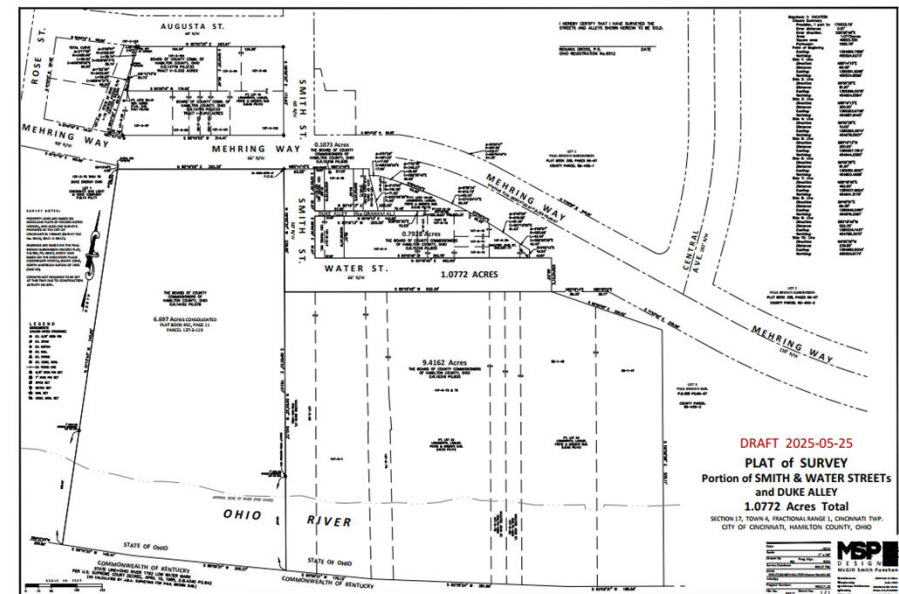
§ 1425-33(b): Additional Parking Lot Standards. *Wheel Stops*

§ 1425-35: Access Drive and Maneuvering Aisles

§ 1425-37(b): Surfacing, Drainage and Grade of Parking and Loading Facilities. *Surfacing*

Additional Coordination

- NWO only applies to the Zoning Code
- Approvals still required by:
 - Department of Building and Inspections
 - Department of Transportation and Engineering
 - Real Estate division of the Law Department



Notice

- **Notice** of the CPC meeting was sent to:
 - 400-foot radius property owners
 - Downtown Residents Council
- Received 4 letters of opposition, with concerns including:
 - Incompatible with the existing zoning
 - The parking would become permanent
 - The design is auto-centric, and there's a desire for a mixed-use development
 - Environment and traffic

Outlook

[External Email] Public comment regarding the proposed surface parking lot at 515 Water Street

From: Riley Owens <riley.owens@gmail.com>
Date: Sun 6/11/2023 12:35 PM
To: Halt, Andrew <andrew.halt@cincinnati-oh.gov>

External Email Communication

Hi Andrew,

My name is Riley Owens and I am a resident of Cincinnati contacting you to express my total opposition to the proposed surface parking lot at 515 Water Street in Downtown Cincinnati, which would add nearly 1000 new spaces.

Making such large additions of car-centric infrastructure will only invite new traffic and guarantee more congestion, especially during the large events at The Banks.

I am concerned by the 'temporary' lot because the applicant has presented no timeline for its removal. I fear that, by the expiration of the ordinance, an excuse for an extension or infeasibility of its removal will crop up. At the absolute minimum, the planning commission should not approve this without a binding, enforceable timeline for the lot's removal. The report appears to rely heavily on 'anticipations' and 'expectations' that The Banks master plan will include the lot and plan a different purpose, but I am hesitant to place unearned confidence in a development that is struggling to match its original vision, with partially-completed lots that have sat unfinished for years.

Granting a notwithstanding ordinance that flouts the ban on parking facilities under the current zoning establishes a terrible precedent. It sets the tone and momentum for the lot's land use moving forward, which will only make it more difficult to reimagine the space as anything better than a destination for cars. At the very least, we must not make a problem worse. The downtown and Queensgate neighborhoods, which have historically been significantly razed by surface parking lots, parking garages, and light industrial space, deserve investments that are more ambitious than a surface parking lot banned by existing zoning that The Banks might include in their master plan and might transform into something better.

I understand that the area is already an auto-centric one. But when we finally decide we want it to be anything better, the city's proposed action now will only make that transformation more difficult. We are selling debt to the future to avoid any personal responsibility for visionary leadership.

I look forward to following this development, and greatly appreciate your continued public service to the future of our Cincinnati.

Thanks,

Notwithstanding Ordinances - Review Criteria

Section 111-5 of the Cincinnati Municipal Code

The committee of council shall consider the following when making a recommendation to council:

- Whether the proposed application will not have an **adverse effect** on the character of the area or **the public health, safety and welfare**;
- Whether the proposed application is **consistent with the purposes of this code and the zoning district** where the subject property is located including but not limited to:

See staff report for full details

Analysis

The Department of City Planning and Engagement does not typically support Notwithstanding Ordinances

Would not support a permanent Notwithstanding Ordinance

Recommending the expiration of the Notwithstanding Ordinance on **March 1, 2026**

The Banks Master Plan Update

Update to 2000 plan began this year
Expected completion in December 2025



Planned Development #43 (The Banks)



Analysis

- Temporary parking lot
- Consistent with the surrounding land uses
 - Less intensive use than the previous concrete plant
- Poses no adverse effects the public health, safety and welfare of the Central Business District and surrounding region
- Does not promote a pedestrian-friendly environment
- Provides parking relief for football games, concerts, and major events at The Banks

Consistency with Plans

Compete Initiative Area:

- **Goal:** Foster a climate conducive to growth, investment, stability and opportunity
- **Strategy:** “Grown our own” by focusing on retention, expansion and relocation of existing businesses

Plan Cincinnati (2012) ✓



Conclusion

- Staff does not support a permanent Notwithstanding Ordinance
 - Recommends that it expires on **March 1, 2026**
- Uses a currently vacant lot for temporary parking relief for major events at Paycor Stadium and The Banks
- Compatible with surrounding land uses
- Provides time to complete the The Banks Master Plan update

City Planning Commission

**Recommended approval
on June 6, 2025, by a vote
of 5-0-0, with two recused**



Recommendation

The City Planning Commission recommends that City Council take the following action:

ADOPT the Department of City Planning and Engagement findings and conclusions based on the fact that it will not have an adverse effect on the character of the area or the public health, safety and welfare and is consistent with the purposes of the Cincinnati Municipal Code Section 111-5 and zoning district(s); and

APPROVE the Notwithstanding Ordinance permitting the installation and operation of a parking facility at 515 Water Street in the Central Business District with the following conditions:

- a) That the Notwithstanding Ordinance is valid until March 1, 2026, after which point it will expire.
- b) That the proposed site plan substantially conforms to the site plan as submitted.
- c) That the City Manager and the appropriate City officials may order the removal of the temporary parking lot and the restoration of the Property, at no cost to the City: (i) upon finding that the County has failed to comply with one or more of the conditions contained herein; (ii) upon the County's vacation of the Property or abandonment of the parking lot.