

Memorandum

To: Dr. Ranney
From: Aaron Zhang, Wayne State Student
Date: February 26, 2018
Subject: Hart Plaza Remodel

This memo proposes that I research the feasibility and benefits that regard remodeling and repairing Phillip A. Hart Plaza in Downtown Detroit. I begin by laying out the benefits that parks have on the local communities and the problems that an aging and decaying Hart Plaza would bring. This will be followed by an overview of the assignments that I will have to create and how I will go about creating them. I will propose four research questions that will guide my work along with some information about parks that I have gathered and I will end by presenting my schedule of research and what I hope to get done and when. This is feasible topic as it is something that can be easily researched and is accessible to all people.

Project: Remodel / Repair of Phillip A. Hart Plaza

Detroit has many parks that are scattered around the city. Hart Plaza is one that is located right in the heart of the city, therefore it is possibly one of the first locations that visitors might see and requires a complete remodel. Hart Plaza hosts many events such as the Detroit International Jazz Festival or the Movement Electronic Music Festival. However, Hart Plaza has fallen into a state of disrepair and has not been as busy during non-festival times as other parks or public spaces. The lack of constant use of Hart Plaza is due in part on account of the hostile concrete architecture that discourages group activities and lack of comfortable seating and leisure time arrangements. My project will research the feasibility of either a complete remodel or a general repair of Hart Plaza and I will present documents that will convey my point.

I will focus this assignment on how to improve Hart Plaza for the general populace. To achieve this goal, I will go into details on how to make parks friendlier for its users and how individual people can contribute by planting flowers and trees. I will use research on public places and top urban planning journals to understand how to make a park somewhere that would facilitate community and well-being. I will give instructions on how to make a park look nicer and how to create good public spaces.

The second assignment would be the infographic part. I plan to create a flyer that would be handed out to people walking on the streets that would be about how to better a park or public space using gardening. The flyer will show how to easily plant trees and flowers as well as showing how to facilitate an area for better public use. I plan to have easy to understand graphics about the benefits an improved Hart Plaza could bring which would include: more tourism dollars, a better sense of community, and a complete riverfront without large obstructions.

The third assignment, which is the white paper, will primarily be targeted towards residents and visitors of Detroit and the city council. Certain publications that would accept it would be smaller Detroit newsletters/newspapers, smaller urban planning

magazines, the Wayne State newspaper, or any local newspaper. In this white paper, I will focus on the benefits that an improved plaza would bring along with costs and how Hart Plaza can grow in the future.

Research Questions

Throughout this assignment, I will have to learn about how the local government of Detroit works, the reactions and normal feelings of Detroit residents on Hart Plaza as well as what they currently use the park for, and the cost and effort it would take to remodel/repair a park. I will then have to do research on all of these topics by utilizing public databases and the knowledge of elected officials. I have organized these topics into research questions which I hope to do further research on.

1. What is the general consensus on Hart Plaza by Detroit residents. What do they wish to see change or be created?
2. Who oversees the politics of the remodeling/repair of a plaza. Is Hart Plaza owned by the city or are private companies in charge?
3. How much money would remodels and repairs cost and how would differing methods cost?
4. How many people would use Hart Plaza if it was changed vs. how many people currently use Hart Plaza.

As I continue through research, I realize that my questions will change and my bottom-line will have to be constantly redirected. As such, this topic is feasible and incorporates both a wide scale and a smaller focus.

Project Plan

The following is the calendar in which I hope to submit all my assignments by. I will be following this very closely.

Dates Week #	Feb 26 8	Mar 05 9	Mar 12 10	Mar 19 11	Mar 26 12
Expected to do	Turn in this draft, General Research on topic	Find multiple papers relating to topic.	Do research on Hart Plaza politics.	Formulate plan for what to create for Assignment 4	Turn in Assignment 4 draft, Begin working on Assignment 5

Dates Week #	Apr 03 13	Apr 09 14	Apr 16 15	Apr 23 16	Apr 30 17
Expected to do	Turn in Assignment 5 sketch Begin working on white paper	Continue to work on white paper and finalize documents	Turn in Assignment 6 draft	Finalize everything, continue working on assignments	Add assignments to website

Sources

“History of Hart Plaza.” *Detroit Historical Museum*, detroithistorical.org/learn/encyclopedia-of-detroit/hart-plaza.

“How Cities Use Parks to Improve Public Health.” *American Planning Association*, www.planning.org/cityparks/briefingpapers/physicalactivity.htm.

“The Health Benefits of Parks.” *The Trust for Public Land*, www.tpl.org/health-benefits-parks.