

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



JOE A. SMITH
MAYOR
mayor@nlr.ar.gov

PHONE (501) 975-8601
FAX (501) 975-8633

CITY HALL
P.O. BOX 5757
NORTH LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS 72119-5757
website: www.nlr.ar.gov

June 18, 2018

Members of the Board of Trustees
William F. Laman Public Library System
2801 Orange Street
North Little Rock, AR 72114

Re: Argenta Branch Parking

Dear Board Members:

North Little Rock's downtown is growing. We are attracting new businesses, residents, and plenty of visitors. Argenta, the name we have given our unique downtown, belongs to every resident of North Little Rock. Our entire city's reputation is often judged by the success or failure of how attractive, safe, and inviting our downtown is and the opportunity for entertainment, dining, shopping, and sightseeing.

It is my view that you cannot have a thriving city without a thriving downtown. We are proud to offer a downtown Laman Library Argenta branch, a Third Friday Art Walk, plenty of festivals, beautiful landscaping, and diverse array of shops, restaurants, and pubs. The dense concentration of fun, interesting attractions is crucial to maintaining the success we have worked so hard for over the past few decades. It is no secret that we pay particular attention to any and all issues that may possibly deter people from enjoying all that Argenta has to offer.

The availability of parking, whether it is free or paid, and its proximity to our downtown attractions is one issue that is paid particularly close attention. **My office is always keeping an eye on the parking options available and making sure the issue never rises to a point where it becomes a prohibitive obstacle for people to visit Argenta.** We continue to anticipate the addition of a great many office, residential and tourist attraction developments, and we have plans to accommodate the inevitable increased need for parking.

Currently, the availability of parking at free city-owned lots, along city side streets, and some inexpensive private lots, provide an ample amount of parking options within a few blocks of all our downtown attractions. This current availability is sufficient to allow visitors to downtown a

"An Equal Opportunity Employer"

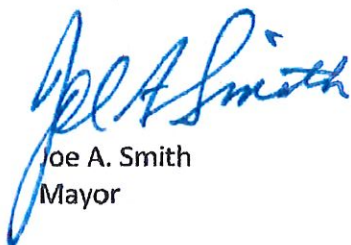
“relatively” hassle free parking experience. I say “relatively” because downtown is NOT a suburban neighborhood or a strip mall. We cannot provide both a downtown “walkable” streets environment and the “front door” parking options that we are aware some people desire. Visiting our downtown offers a great many advantages and enjoyments, including (and likely because of) the dense concentration of attractions, but providing parking for everyone within a few feet of the final destination will never be a possibility and is not our ultimate goal.

Along with the new plaza, office buildings, and residences, we are constructing two new city owned parking lots that will offer 250 additional parking spots that maintain our “couple blocks” criteria. The extension of 5th Street and 6th Street will also provide more options for on-street parking near Main Street. These plans will provide for the anticipated parking needs for our downtown community for the foreseeable future.

Precisely because we are so attuned to the issue of parking availability downtown, we welcome any and all concerns and suggestions for improvement. Due to some recent public suggestions we are working with a private parking lot owner to help facilitate additional parking near the Argenta Branch of the Laman Library, and we are developing a map of available parking options for public distribution at our downtown businesses and events that we hope will help inform visitors of the many alternatives open for nearby parking.

We want visitors and NLR residents alike to enjoy our thriving, artistic, fun, unique downtown. So as Argenta grows in quantity, and more importantly – quality, we will always keep an eye on the parking issue and make adjustments as needed. Thank you for contacting my office. If you have additional comments, questions, or suggestions, I am pleased to always be at your service.

Sincerely,


Joe A. Smith
Mayor

FILED _____ A.M. 3:00 P.M.

BY Nathan Hamilton - Admin

DATE 6-19-18

Diane Whitbey, City Clerk and Collector
North Little Rock, Arkansas

RECEIVED by R. Thomas