



Community Redevelopment Agency

City of Tarpon Springs
324 East Pine Street
Tarpon Spring, Florida 34689
(727) 938-3711

<http://www.ctsfl.us/agenda.htm>

**COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
MEETING AGENDA
FOR THE DOWNTOWN TARPON SPRINGS REDEVELOPMENT AREA
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2025
Immediately Following the BOC Regular Session**

CALL TO ORDER

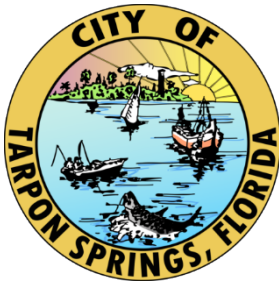
ROLL CALL

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Discussion and Direction for the Jitney Exhibition Building Solicitation

BOARD AND STAFF COMMENTS

ADJOURNMENT



CITY OF TARPON SPRINGS, FL

CITY MANAGER

324 East Pine Street
P.O. Box 5004
Tarpon Springs, Florida 34688-5004
(727) 942-3590
Fax (727) 937-8199

MEMORANDUM

To: CRA Board

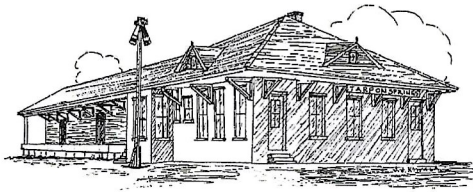
From: Charles Rudd, City Manager

Date: 1/30/2025

Subject: Jitney Exhibition Building Solicitation

From what I have gathered on this topic, this is a project that has been in the hopper for a while. Both volunteers and the city have invested time and effort to move this project forward. The request is to proceed to the bid phase and see what the cost will be. Once we have a real number, we can have a meaningful discussion about the cost and how to pay for construction.

Staff recommends approval to put the project out to bid and bring the results back for further discussion and consideration.



*Tarpon Springs Area
Historical Society*

January 29, 2025

The Honorable Mayor Panagiotis Koulias and
Board of Commissioners
City of Tarpon Springs
324 Pine Street
Tarpon Springs, Florida 34689

Re: Authorization to Bid Construction of Jitney Exhibition Building

Dear Mayor Koulias and Commissioners,

On behalf of the Tarpon Springs Area Historical Society, I am writing to you to request that you authorize City Manager Charles Rudd to solicit bids for the construction of the Jitney Exhibition Building adjacent to the Historic Train Depot.

The Historical Society and the City have had a long successful public private partnership that has benefitted the community. The City owns the Historic Train Depot and leases it to the Historical Society who opens it to the public as a history museum with exhibits donated from city residents. This history museum helps to keep our past alive and educate our young people and tourists about the life and people of Tarpon Springs.

In continuing with this public private partnership, the Historical Society accepted an extremely unique automobile that was modified by immigrant ingenuity to serve a need of our community. The 1926 Jitney provided mobility to city residents at a time when the luxury of every home having an automobile did not exist.

The Jitney had been in storage since 1951 and was in extremely poor condition from being stored for over 62 years. The Historical Society raised private funds from the community in excess of \$45,000 for a first class restoration of the Jitney to full operating condition. The desire of the Ypsilantis Family, the Historical Society and donors was to make the Jitney available to as many people as possible.

In that regard, the Historical Society and the City have been in discussions for a number of years on the best way to display the Jitney and allow it to be used in parades, exhibitions and for special events. The previous Board of Commissioners budgeted \$100,000 in CRA funds to construct the Jitney Exhibition Building adjacent to the Train Depot. Former City Manager Mark LeCouris relocated two handicapped spaces to a convenient location nearby on Court Street to accommodate the approved Exhibition Building location south of the Train Depot.

The architectural design and construction drawings for the Jitney Exhibition Building were donated by Ed Hoffman, Jr., a local architect and member of the Historical Society Board of Directors. Mr. Hoffman also secured the skills of other professional disciplines who donated their services to facilitate the site design.

Please enjoy the enclosures to this letter which include a 1948 newspaper article about the Jitneys in Tarpon Springs and photographs of the Jitney in its before and after restoration state.

In 2026, the Jitney will be 100 years old and the best Centennial present would be to install the Jitney in the new glass Exhibition Garage for all of Tarpon Springs to see and enjoy!

The restoration of the Jitney has been a successful public private partnership for many years and given the efforts of the City and Mr. Hoffman, we are at a point where the next step is to have the Board of Commissioners authorize City Manager Charles Rudd to solicit formal bids for the glass Exhibition Building. Thank you.

Sincerely,

/s/

Nicole Arfaras Kerr, President
Tarpon Springs Area Historical Society

c: TSAHS Board of Directors

Enclosures

TARPON SPRINGS TRIP INCOMPLETE WITHOUT JITNEY RIDE

By LIL BURRUSS

TARPON SPRINGS — Visitors to Bermuda, put aside their habitual modes of travel and resort to bicycles and horse-drawn conveyances for local transportation.

In much the same way, no trip to Tarpon Springs is complete without a ride aboard one of the colorful "jitneys" that hustle passengers all day between the city proper and the sponge exchange section.

Their bright blue and white colors gleam in the sunlight, as

they make their rounds, slowing down at coffee shops, honking a few times to call out regular customers, and letting others alight.

These little jitneys are as much a part of Tarpon Springs as the sponge divers and their sponges.

While the majority of jitneys are fast becoming streamlined, even to plastic upholstery, a few of the older ones are still in existence.

The oldest of these, is owned by Kevito Ypsilanti, who has been running it for 22 years.

Although it's not on the regular run now, Kevito still uses it in transporting his family about the city and on frequent trips to nearby cities.

"I BOUGHT that old jitney in 1926, and she is still going strong. A lot of people have been waiting for her to break down any day, but I'll bet she will still be running when a lot of the others are finished," laughed Kevito, giving the jitney an affectionate pat on the fender.

"I have always had my jit-

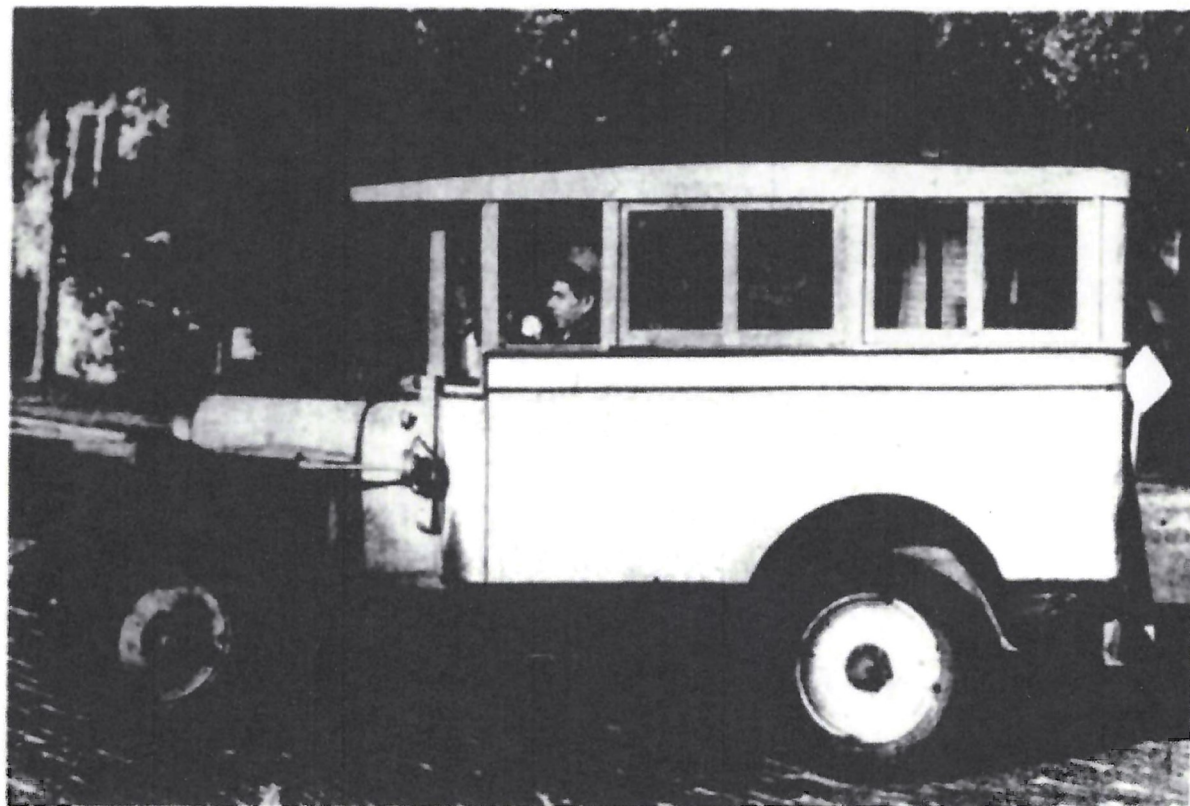
ney painted a bright green outside, with yellow inside. A lot of the fellows used to paint their jitneys with three or four different colors. It was nothing to see a blue top, red body, yellow fenders and green hood. They used to really catch your eye. You could almost tell the owner's personality by the color combinations he would use. Since they all organized recently, they paint them blue and white, which are the national colors of Greece. The new colors are all right, but I'll keep my car green and yellow."

The entrance to the new jitney is at the front, the same as other busses, but the seating arrangement is quite different. Unlike most busses, where the passenger is forced to gaze at the backs of his fellow riders' heads, these seats are built parallel to the length of the

jitney, bringing passengers face to face.

IT IS practically impossible to ride very far in a jitney without striking up a conversation with a neighbor. There is an atmosphere of fellowship aboard each jitney as it pulls away from the bus stop. Passengers laugh and talk, and as stops are reached, the driver passes the time of day with passersby, speaking the Greek language, coupled with much hand waving. For a little extra consideration, drivers will take a regular customer up to his front door, and carry packages to destinations along the route.

In Tarpon Springs this is called service deluxe! Other cities may have their transportation problems, with confused bus schedules, but here, we enjoy our not so modern method of transportation.



Kevito Ypsilanti's jitney, oldest of Tarpon Springs' unique busses, has been going for 22 years.

1926 Jitney Restoration Project

The 1926 Jitney was donated to the Tarpon Springs Area Historical Society in 2012 by Hercules Ypsilantis, whose father ran a Jitney service in Tarpon Springs.

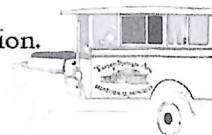
The Historical Society is seeking funds to renovate the Jitney so it once more can travel the streets of Tarpon Springs.

Donations at all levels are gratefully accepted.

The names of Major Donors of \$1,000 or more will be recognized on the Jitney.

Please see a Board member for more information.

www.tarponspringsareahistoricalociety.org





Come see the Transformation!



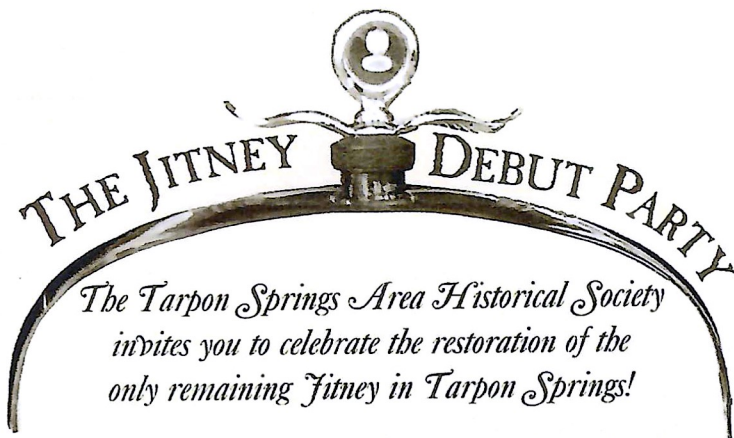
Come see the Transformation of the 1926 Jitney!



JITNEY DEBUT PARTY

November 14, 2015, 2 pm-4 pm

HISTORIC TRAIN DEPOT MUSEUM



Saturday, November 14, 2015

2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

HISTORIC TRAIN DEPOT MUSEUM

160 E. Tarpon Avenue, Tarpon Springs, Florida

The Jitney Debut Party will honor Mr. Hercules Ypsilantis who donated the Jitney to the Society and the major donors who made the restoration possible. The 1926 Jitney has been professionally restored by Hancock Vintage Restoration. Jitney rides will be available in downtown Tarpon Springs.



Tarpon Springs Area

Historical Society

160 E. Tarpon Avenue

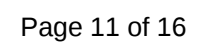
Tarpon Springs, FL 34689

727-943-4624

Refreshments will be served at this free event
which is open to the public.









TARPON SPRINGS AREA
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PERSPECTIVE LOOKING NW
1927 JITNEY DISPLAY GARAGE

 **HOFFMAN**
ARCHITECTS, P.A.
AA0003168



TARPON SPRINGS AREA
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PERSPECTIVE LOOKING SW
1927 JITNEY DISPLAY GARAGE

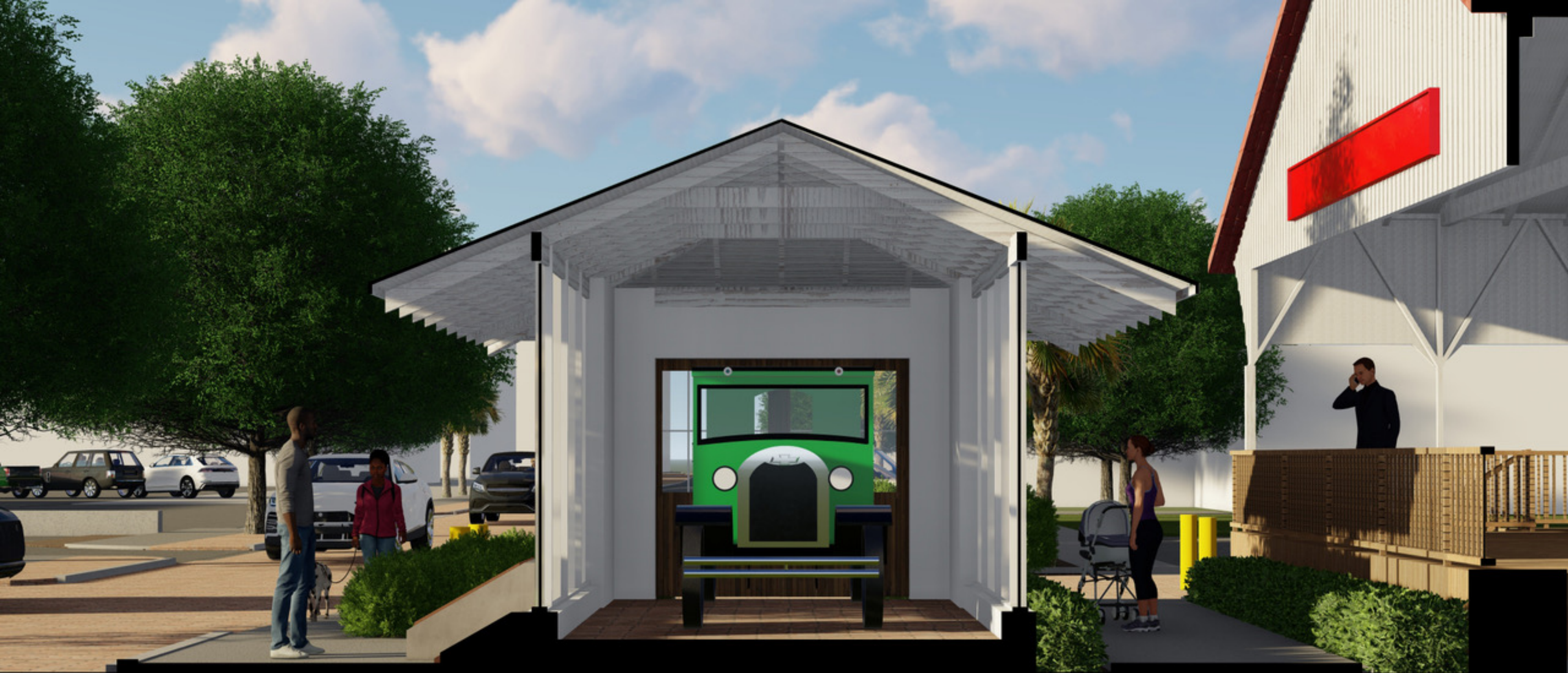
 **HOFFMAN**
ARCHITECTS, P.A.
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TARPON SPRINGS AREA
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

LONG SECTION
1927 JITNEY DISPLAY GARAGE

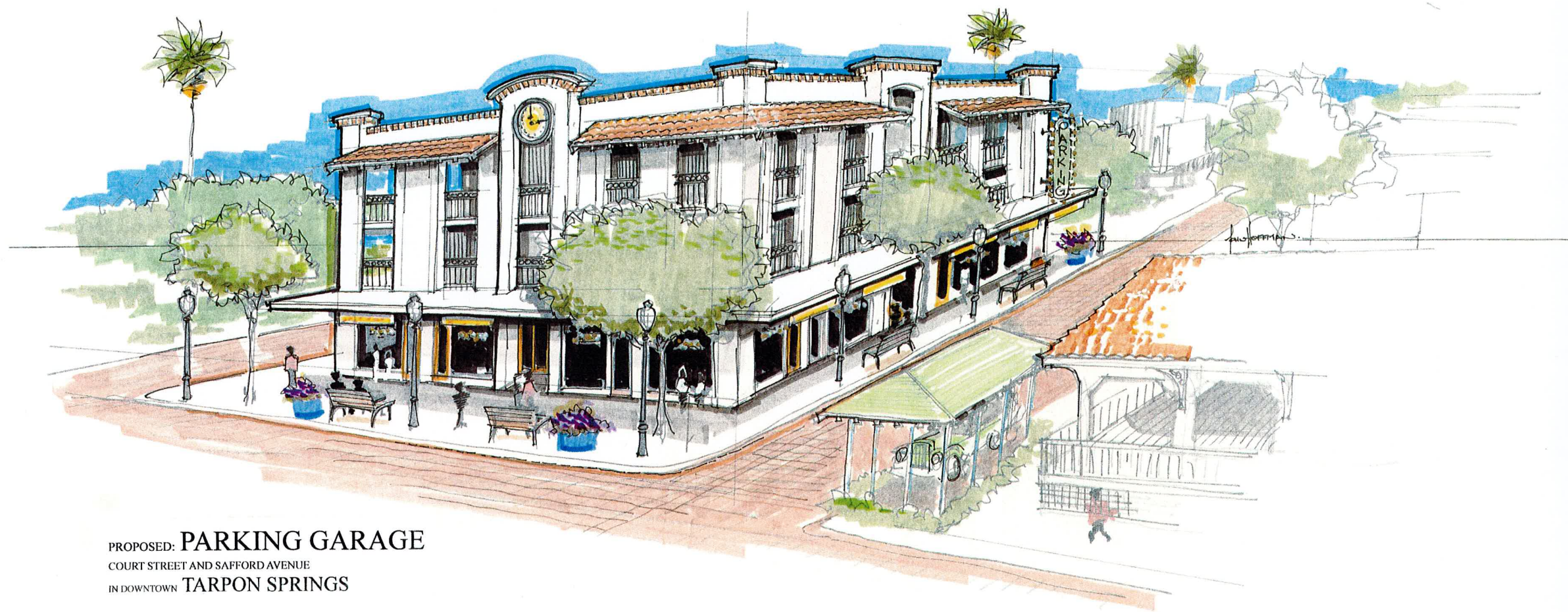
 **HOFFMAN**
ARCHITECTS, P.A.
AA0003168



TARPON SPRINGS AREA
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

CROSS SECTION
1927 JITNEY DISPLAY GARAGE

 **HOFFMAN**
ARCHITECTS, P.A.
AA0003168



PROPOSED: **PARKING GARAGE**
COURT STREET AND SAFFORD AVENUE
IN DOWNTOWN **TARPON SPRINGS**

PREPARED FOR:
THE DOWNTOWN PROPERTY OWNERS

RENDERING BY JOHN HOFFMAN