

**OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER  
DES MOINES, IOWA**

**CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION 96-281  
JULY 1, 1996 AGENDA**

SUBJECT:	TYPE:	SUBMITTED BY:
BUILDING CODE FOR CONSERVATION OF OLDER BUILDINGS	RESOLUTION ◆ ORDINANCE RECEIVE/FILE	JAMES GRANT, DIRECTOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

**SYNOPSIS —**

The proposed changes to Chapter 8 of the Municipal Code: "Building Construction Codes", expand the applicability of the Uniform Code for Building Conservation throughout the City of Des Moines for buildings built prior to 1950 to be similar to the City of Denver, Colorado's Chapter 61 Building Code.

In addition, two new members to the Building Code Board of Appeals are proposed to be added to this board; a person with expertise in real estate or real estate financing, and a person with expertise in historic preservation.

**FISCAL IMPACT —**

N/A

**RECOMMENDATION —**

Approval.

**BACKGROUND —**

The Community Development Department has completed a feasibility study regarding the adoption of a code and process that would provide for flexibility in the application of building codes for the rehabilitation or adaptive reuse of older buildings.

The City of Denver, Colorado's Chapter 61 Building Code process was the model referenced in this study. This code, the Uniform Code for Building Conservation, along with the role of the Denver Chapter 61 Committee, was carefully analyzed. There were several discussions with the staff of the Denver Building Department, along with discussions with an architect familiar with operating within the Denver process. In addition, several individuals known to be involved with rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of older buildings in Des Moines were contacted to solicit their input.

It was concluded that there was a need to broaden the flexibility available in the application of building codes to older buildings in Des Moines, while not significantly jeopardizing the safety provided in these buildings. The proposed ordinance changes broaden the application of the Uniform Code for building conservation, which is the same model rehabilitation code as the City of Denver uses in the process. The two additional members to the Building Code Board of Appeals will make this board closely resemble the membership representation that exists in the Denver Committee.