

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

**CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION 96-364
AUGUST 26, 1996 AGENDA**

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

SYNOPSIS —

The proposed changes to Chapter 8 of the Municipal Code: "Building Construction Codes," expands the applicability of the Uniform Code for Building Conservation (UCBC) 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 known individuals involved with rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of older buildings in Des Moines were contacted to solicit their input.

It was concluded that there was in fact a need to broaden the flexibility available in the application of building codes to older buildings in Des Moines, while not to significantly jeopardize 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 our Board closely resemble the membership representation that exists in the Denver Committee.

This proposed ordinance change was previously presented to the City Council on July 1, 1996 (first reading) and July 15, 1996 (second reading). The Council indicated that, prior to the third reading of this proposed ordinance change, staff provide copies of this ordinance to appropriate organizations for review.

As a result, staff has met with, and presented copies of the proposed ordinance to, the following organizations:

Des Moines Action Board (DMAB), July 9, 1996

This Board voted in favor of the adoption of the UCBC.

Neighborhood Advisory Board (NAB), July 11, 1996

This Board had no objections to the adoption of this conservation code.

Mid-Iowa Construction Code Committee, July 18, 1996

This Committee consists of building officials from around the metropolitan area, along with representation from the Greater Des Moines Homebuilders Association. They had no objections to the adoption of the Conservation Code.

Plan and Zoning Commission, August 1, 1996

This Commission raised no objections to the adoption of this code or the revisions to the make-up of the Building Code Board of Appeals. There were concerns raised as to the terms of the members of the Board. It was suggested that perhaps there be some consideration that Board members have four-year terms rather than two-year terms. In addition, there was discussion regarding the 1950 effective date. Following some discussion, it was determined that the 1950 date was acceptable at this point in time.

Downtown Partnership, August 21, 1996

A presentation to a few key members of this organization took place. Comments were offered regarding the application of this code. The consensus of the individuals who attended this meeting indicated that these changes would be a step in the right direction, and they had no objections to the adoption of this code or changes to the Board membership.