

**CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION 98-101
MARCH 23, 1998 AGENDA**

SUBJECT:

**FAIRGROUND NEIGHBORHOOD
ACTION PLAN**

SUBMITTED BY:

**JAMES GRANT
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR**

SYNOPSIS –

On the March 23, 1998, City Council agenda are two roll calls regarding consideration of the proposed Action Plan for the Fairground Neighborhood. The document, which is an Exhibit of the adoption roll call, includes the proposed text, goal statements, and map graphics for the final plan. This proposed plan was developed out of a six-month planning process of the Fairground Neighbors for Community Improvement Planning Committee and Neighborhood Development Division staff.

Besides the adoption roll call, there is a roll call to receive and file a communication from the Neighborhood Revitalization Board recommending adoption of the plan as a part of the City's Neighborhood Revitalization Program.

FISCAL IMPACT –

With the adoption of the Fairground Neighborhood Action Plan would come a strong commitment of fiscal resources on the part of the City, the County, and private investment. It is assumed that in order to carry-out implementation of this plan over the next three-year period upon its final approval, that funding by the City and County for the NFC will need to remain at the current level or higher based on inflation. It is also assumed that staffing for the City will remain at least at the current level and that Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and Home Investments Partnership Act (HOME) funded programs operated by the City which impact neighborhoods such as Neighborhood Revitalization, Housing Conservation Services, B-NEAT, Housing Code Enforcement, Special Assessment Subsidy, and Neighborhood Infrastructure Rehabilitation Program (NIRP), will remain at their current level or higher adjusted for inflation.

There are several items projected in the Action Plan which would require an additional commitment of fiscal resources if approved. Since many of these are of an unknown quantity, staff has developed a system in order to make an estimated projection of the fiscal impact. Items

which were projected to have a fiscal impact were separated into the following categories:

Minimal up to a \$25,000 commitment
Moderate \$25,000 - \$75,000 commitment
Major \$75,000 - \$150,000 commitment
Extensive over a \$150,000 commitment
Special Projects unknown but expected to exceed \$200,000

Based on a review by staff, the following are the implementation items which fall into the above listed categories of fiscal resource commitment:

Minimal (1)

Development of bilingual educational pamphlets on Zoning Code Enforcement

Moderate (3)

Development of design guidelines for East 30th Street
Identify potential illegal rentals and enforce housing code
Zoning Code Enforcement

Major (4)

Alternatives for financial support for home improvement and maintenance
Financing incentives through rehab loans for investor owners
Incentives to non-profits or private developers for infill housing
Financing options for conversion of contract sales

Extensive (3)

Preserve and provide maintenance on brick streets in the neighborhood
Provide safe and serviceable street infrastructure (NIRP Program)
Pave unpaved streets

Special Projects (3)

East University Beautification Concept implementation
ACCENT Urban Renewal Plan Implementation
Storm and Sanitary Sewer Improvements that mitigate existing problem areas

In order to estimate a minimum fiscal impact of this plan, the mean of the range was used for each item in the minimal, moderate, and major categories; \$250,000 was used for extensive; and \$500,000 was used for special projects. It is understood that actual costs could either exceed or be below these amounts. This is only used for estimation not knowing particular parameters of the items in the plan.

Based on the above used method, the estimated minimum fiscal impact brought by the approval of this plan is \$2,862,500. It must be realized that some of these projects, such as ACCENT Urban Renewal Plan and East University Beautification, are also components of ongoing approved strategies in place which are designed to have an impact on a City-wide level.

RECOMMENDATION –

Staff recommends that the City Council take action to adopt the proposed Fairground Neighborhood Action Plan as part of the Neighborhood Revitalization Program and as an amendment to the Des Moines 2000 Land Use Plan.

BACKGROUND –

The main element of the plan includes goal statements for community enhancement, commercial, housing, and physical environment. Other important elements include the Future Land Use and the Neighborhood Finance Corporation (NFC) lending policy. The final approval of this plan would constitute an amendment to the City's land use plan and inclusion as one of the elements of the Comprehensive Plan for the City.

The Fairground Neighbors for Community Improvement, a Recognized Neighborhood Association, became Designated in July of 1997. Since that time, the Neighborhood Association and Neighborhood Development staff have been working closely to develop the Action Plan for the Fairground Neighborhood.

The following are key steps during the planning process with their correlating dates:

Organizational meeting with newly Designated Neighborhoods July 31, 1997
Neighborhood-wide orientation meeting August 26, 1997
Meeting #1 with Planning Committee October 4, 1997
Meeting #2 with Planning Committee November 8, 1997
NRB given status report November 19, 1997
Internal interdepartmental review of proposed plan goals November 24, 1997
Meeting #3 with Planning Committee December 2, 1997
Meeting #4 with Planning Committee (Final Draft Review) January 17, 1998
Neighborhood-wide review of recommended Action Plan February 19, 1998

The initial organizational meeting with all the new Designated Neighborhood executive boards allowed staff to provide guidance to the neighborhoods on selecting their planning committees and providing them with a timeline for the planning process and interim NFC lending policies. This initial meeting was followed by a general meeting of the Fairground Neighborhood which was advertised by a mailing to 100 percent of households in the neighborhood. At this meeting, staff used an exercise to break into groups and get input from the citizens on what they felt were strengths and weaknesses of the Fairground Neighborhood.

The first meeting of the Fairground Planning Committee consisted of a half-day meeting. The Committee worked with staff to develop general goal statements based on the input from the general session. Staff then spent the following month developing the goal statements and collecting data. The second meeting of the Planning Committee involved reviewing the staff

work and refining the goal statements into a final draft form by adding specific strategies. These draft goal statements were then presented to the Neighborhood Revitalization Board (NRB) and all the departments of the City for review.

The next time the Planning Committee met with staff, they developed a future land use policy and NFC lending policy based on the goals they had developed for the Action Plan. Staff then prepared the text portion of the plan to include an implementation policy, history, demographics, and housing data about the neighborhood. The draft text, goal statements, and supporting graphics were given review at the final meeting of the Planning Committee. The Planning Committee then presented the proposed plan to their board and their membership. Staff and the Planning Committee presented the proposed Action Plan for another general meeting of all residents.

The proposed Action Plan was approved by the NRB at their March 4, 1998 meeting, and provides for a comprehensive and ambitious strategy to improve the Fairground Neighborhood through a three-year implementation phase, as well as provides direction for long-range development for the neighborhood.