

**CITY COUNCIL  
COMMUNICATION:**

**ITEM \_\_\_\_\_**

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

**99-542**

**SYNOPSIS -**

**AGENDA:**

DECEMBER 6, 1999

**SUBJECT:**

SELECTION OF  
CONSULTANT FOR  
EAST 4TH AND  
GRAND BLOCK

**TYPE:**

**RESOLUTION**  
ORDINANCE  
RECEIVE/FILE

**SUBMITTED BY:**

RICHARD CLARK  
DEPUTY CITY  
MANAGER

On the December 6, 1999 Council agenda is a roll call to approve the selection of **Development Strategies** (Richard Ward - Principal, 10 S. Broadway/Suite 1640, St. Louis, MO) and **Brooks Borg Skiles Architects Engineers** (William Anderson - Principal, 700 Hubbell Building, Des Moines, IA) as consultants to prepare a redevelopment plan for the block located between East Locust Street and Grand Avenue, from East 4th - East 5th Streets. This plan shall include exploring the building rehab and reuse opportunities of the existing structures as well as infill and new construction opportunities.

The roll call also directs staff to negotiate a contract in accordance with the City's Request for Proposals (RFP) for consultant services issued on October 27, 1999 for this project and the proposal for services received on November 22, 1999 from Development Strategies/Brooks Borg Skiles Architects Engineers. Upon approval of the contract by the City's Legal Department, the Mayor will then be authorized to execute the contract.

The consultant's report will be completed within approximately 12 weeks from the date the City gives the notice to proceed to the consultant. It is anticipated the final report will be available in April 2000.

**FISCAL IMPACT -**

The recommended consultant has submitted cost and fee total of \$39,700, including reimbursables. Funding for this project will be from the Gateway Project funding.

**RECOMMENDATION -**

**Approval.**

## **BACKGROUND -**

A component of the Gateway Plan is the "*Capitol Gateway East Urban Design Plan*" (CGE). This plan addresses the needs, opportunities, and goals for the project area bounded by the Des Moines River on the west, I-235 on the north, East 14th Street on the east, and the railroad tracks south of Court Avenue on the south.

The primary objective of the CGE Plan is to reestablish the district as a thriving, mixed-use neighborhood or "urban village". In order to achieve this objective, four "catalytic initiatives" were identified which are seen as strategies to help jump start other economic development ventures. One of the four "catalytic initiatives" identified in the CGE is a 'revitalization district centered on East 5th and Locust Streets.

This block currently contains vacant land, surface parking, as well as a number of buildings. As part of the revitalization effort that involves future City investment and private initiatives, a redevelopment plan is needed.

In conjunction with principles contained in the Capital Gateway East Design Plan approved by the City Council in May 4, 1998, Roll Call No. 98-1468, sensitivity to public concern expressed to the Council and City staff, and additional input from the Gateway Steering Committee in late summer/fall 1999, a decision was made to request consultant services for the redevelopment plan.

The City issued an RFP on October 27, 1999, with responses due on November 22, 1999. The RFP listed the scope of services the selected consultant had to undertake which included:

- Stakeholder Input from property owners, tenants, and other interested parties.
- Inventory of Existing Conditions
- Cost Analysis/Market Feasibility
- Rehabilitation/Re-Use Opportunities
- Parking Strategy
- Identification of Infill Sites
- Redevelopment Options
- Design Guidelines for rehab and new construction

The process will explore no less than three redevelopment concepts. These three concepts will be shared with the Gateway Steering Committee, City staff and the public through town hall type meetings.

The final report to the City will present the preferred concept with appropriate refinements. The final concept as presented in the report will: 1) give a general layout of development with design guidelines, 2) identify proposed uses, 3) recommend a parking plan, 4) recommend a phased schedule for project implementation, and 5) explain how the proposed plans for this block may serve as a catalyst for the emerging mixed-use neighborhood/urban village in the surrounding area.

The Selection Team was comprised of the following people:  
Mark Vukovich, Dewey Ford, appointed by Councilman Archie Brooks  
Kirk Blunck, HLKB Architecture, owner of the Teachout Building, appointed by Polk County Supervisor Gene Phillips (absent)  
Gary Lozano, Planning Administrator, Community Development  
Terry Vorbrich, Economic Development Coordinator, Office of Economic Development  
City staff to the Selection Team and project will be Debra Smith, Associate Urban Designer, Community Development

The Selection Team appreciated having three solid proposals to choose from for this important project. The primary criteria which the Selection Team felt made the Consultant Team of Development Strategies/ Brooks Borg Skiles best suited for the project are summarized as follows:

- “ Work experience extensive and compatible with the needs of this project.
- “ Significant level of work has been implemented, including areas with similar issues and goals as the Study Block.
- “ Process integrates market/economic feasibility issues and design issues.
- “ Parking strategy is seen as integral with proposed District development and anticipated success.
- “ Team already possesses working knowledge of the area from the Capitol Gateway East Urban Design Plan, so they have baseline data and graphics in hand.
- “ Local consultant, Brooks Borg Skiles will be an ongoing

presence in the community.

“ Public process includes three "Town Hall" meetings which offer continuity and accountability of the Consultant Team to the public.

“ Project time line, including all Steering Committee and Town Hall meetings, will be scheduled at the beginning of the project to ensure ample advanced notice for public involvement.

“ Consultant Team has credibility already established in the project area and surrounding community.

The Selection Team was in complete agreement in proposing the Consultant Team of Development Strategies/Brooks Borg Skiles to the Gateway Steering Committee at the December 1, 1999 meeting of the Steering Committee. The recommendation was unanimously endorsed by the Steering Committee for recommendation to the City Council for approval at the December 6, 1999 City Council meeting.