



Council Communication

Office of the City Manager

Date May 7, 2007

Agenda Item No. 66
Roll Call No. 07-
Communication No. 07-278
Submitted by: Matthew A. Anderson,
Economic Development Administrator

AGENDA HEADING:

Resolution to Receive and File Des Moines Southside Revitalization Plan (March 2006) and Letter from the South Side Revitalization Partnership Regarding Implementation Strategy Priorities.

SYNOPSIS:

The South Side Revitalization Partnership (Jo Corigliano, President, 2611 SE 7th Street, Des Moines, IA 50315), comprised of business and neighborhood representatives, is requesting that Council receive and file the Des Moines Southside Revitalization Plan (March 2006) and a letter regarding its implementation strategy priorities. It is also requesting that Council refer this information to the City Manager for action, as appropriate.

FISCAL IMPACT: NONE

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

In January 2005, the South Side Revitalization Partnership (SSRP), in coordination with the City of Des Moines Office of Economic Development, prepared and distributed an RFP to develop a land use and economic revitalization strategy for SE 14th Street and Army Post Road. The study area encompassed land along SE 14th Street from the viaduct over the railroad tracks south of Court Avenue to the SE Bloomfield Road intersection *and* along Army Post Road from Indianola Avenue to Fleur Drive. The project was designed to enhance the attractiveness of the corridors, increasing the tax base, and create livable wage jobs. The SSRP hired RDG, which completed the Des Moines Southside Revitalization Plan in March 2006. The plan contains information on community input, demographics, a market analysis, existing conditions, development concepts and project implementation.

During the last 12 months, the SSRP has discussed aspects of the plan with City staff and informally with the City Council. It is now poised to take specific actions, in cooperation with the City, to meet its revitalization goals. The SSRP has identified the following implementation strategy priorities in order of importance.

1. POLICY:

Upgrade the current design standards developers must meet in order to qualify for commercial tax abatement along SE 14th Street and Army Post Road. The SSRP has drafted revised language and would like the City to review, comment on and adopt the new standards. It is important to create architectural continuity and to develop a positive identity along the corridors.

2. PLANNING:

- Create a master plan for future development of the cultural super-block located from Army Post Road to County Line Road and from SE 5th Street to SW 9th Street.** This area, just west of Southridge Mall, contains Fort Des Moines and the Old Parade Grounds, Fort Des Moines County Park, Blank Park Zoo, A.H. Blank Municipal Golf Course and numerous businesses and residences. **Emphasis should be placed on two aspects: (a) Develop a park on the Old Parade Grounds that would maintain its historical connection to Fort Des Moines, accommodate a water feature and a trail, and become a regional attraction. (b) Evaluate the potential to relocate the Fort Des Moines Correctional Facility.**
3. **STUDY:**
Conduct a study of the infrastructure needed to accommodate new development along Army Post Road from SE 14th Street east to Relocated Highway 65. Costs to extend infrastructure, potential financing mechanisms and projected construction timelines also need to be evaluated.
4. **CODE ENFORCEMENT/BEAUTIFICATION:**
(a) Enforce existing codes and develop new ones to remove blight and visual clutter (e.g. deteriorating mobile home parks and buildings, requiring the installation of sidewalks, disallowing the use of pole signs, etc.). **(b) Beautify key intersections along SE 14th Street at SE Hartford Avenue, SE Park and Indianola Avenues, SE McKinley Avenue and Army Post Road.** Unified landscaping and special paving and signage could be used to enhance these nodes.
5. **INVESTMENT:**
Accelerate construction of the Great Midwestern Trail to accommodate walking and biking (Willow Creek Golf Course to and beyond Blank Park Zoo). The trail would support wellness and provide an important link to other south side destinations.

The SSRP would like to work with City staff and the various South Side neighborhoods to realize their mutual goals.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S): NONE

BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S): NONE

ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS:

City Manager to work with staff, the SSRP and neighborhoods.