

 <p style="text-align: center;">Council Communication Office of the City Manager</p>	Date: February 28, 2011
	Agenda Item No. 34 Roll Call No. <u>11-0317</u> Communication No. <u>11-100</u> Submitted by: Phil Delafield, Community Development Director

AGENDA HEADING:

Adoption of the Drake Neighborhood Plan.

SYNOPSIS:

Recommend approval of this proposal to adopt the Drake Neighborhood Plan.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Amount: \$1,375,060 (2010) and \$1,325,710 (Anticipated for 2011)

Funding Source: CIP/NIRP – FY 2010 and FY 2011

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Background

Drake was one of five neighborhoods selected by the Des Moines City Council and the Polk County Board of Supervisor’s to participate in the Neighborhood Revitalization Program in July 2006. The other neighborhoods selected were Waterbury, South Park, Merle Hay, and Douglas Acres. The Drake neighborhood was selected as a “Transitional Negative” neighborhood, and is the last of the five to complete a plan.

During the fall of 2008, City staff conducted an online survey, receiving input from 267 Drake residents, business owners, and other stakeholders. On January 20, 2009, City staff and the Drake Neighborhood Association held a neighborhood-wide input meeting at First Christian Church. Input from this meeting and the online survey helped set the priority focus areas for the plan. Due to the size of the neighborhood and the breadth of the issues involved, seven separate planning committees were formed, each focusing on a specific priority area for the plan. Board members from the Neighborhood Association acted as co-chairs for each planning committee, and reported back to the full Board each month. Other entities involved in the planning process included Drake University, the Drake Area Business Association, and various non-profit housing or social service agencies. After nearly two years of monthly planning committee meetings, a second neighborhood-wide meeting was held on December 2, 2010 to present the plan goals and strategies to approximately 100 neighborhood residents and stakeholders.

The Drake neighborhood is bounded by I-235 on the south, Franklin Avenue on the north, Martin Luther King Jr. Parkway on the east, and 42nd Street/41st Street on the west. Drake shares areas with the

Beaverdale, Kirkwood Glen, Drake Park, and Carpenter Neighborhood Associations. Drake University is located in the center of the neighborhood. The neighborhood is characterized by diversity, with a range of housing types and sizes, land uses, and demographic characteristics. With a population of over 10,300 as of the 2000 census, Drake is one of the largest and most densely populated neighborhoods in the City of Des Moines. Because of the size and diversity, the revitalization issues faced by the neighborhood are complex; therefore the goals and strategies outlined by the plan are also complex.

Summary of the Plan

Housing

The Drake neighborhood has over 6,000 housing units, only 43% of which are single family homes. The remainder of the housing stock is comprised of built-as multi-family apartments (33%), conversions with three or more units (16%) and duplexes or conversions with two units (9%). As of the 2000 Census, 56% of the housing in Drake is renter-occupied. In addition, Drake has many historic homes that may be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Thus housing revitalization priorities include improving rental property conditions, increasing homeownership, and promoting historic preservation.

Major activities for this section of the plan include:

- Work with the City and various non-profit housing agencies to rehabilitate housing stock, including both rental and owner-occupied.
- Develop resource materials and relationships with realtors, the NFC, and area employers to promote homeownership in the Drake neighborhood.
- Encourage the downsizing of conversions in order to relieve negative impacts of density and improve housing conditions.
- Undertake a historic survey of the entire Drake neighborhood to determine eligibility for the National Register / historic tax credits and potential historic districts (Funded by CDBG for 2010-2011).
- Focus attention on the NE part of the neighborhood, where contract sales and vacant or foreclosed properties are prevalent. The Polk County Housing Trust fund recently received a \$250,000 grant from the Wells Fargo Foundation, which will be targeted towards this area.

Parks, Trails, & Open Space

The Drake neighborhood has two City parks located in its boundaries, Drake Park and Witmer Park. The planning committee worked with staff from the City of Des Moines Parks Department to discuss ways that the two parks could be improved and better utilized. Both Drake Park and Witmer Park have features that offer unique opportunities. For example, Witmer Park has the potential to be marketed as a park of four seasons and potentially host winter activities such as ice skating, snow shoeing, and cross country skiing. The planning committee also discussed ways to better link the Drake area to the greater Des Moines trail system, as well as furthering the neighborhood beautification efforts that the DNA is already undertaking.

Community Relations & Partnerships

Improving neighborhood identity and strengthening relationships with Drake University and other community resources were identified as planning priorities. The Neighborhood Association (DNA) will work to engage more residents and area stakeholders to participate by providing events, volunteer opportunities and improving communication. The DNA will look for opportunities to partner with the University and other area institutions like churches, schools, and businesses. In addition, the DNA is hoping to combat negative perceptions of the Drake area by highlighting positive aspects, branding the neighborhood, and celebrating successes.

Crime & Safety

The Neighborhood Based Service Delivery (NBSD) team was heavily involved in the planning process. The NBSD team discussed a variety of neighborhood issues with the planning committee and worked to find solutions. Solutions ranged from better communication to policy change. One policy change that has recently taken place that the Drake neighborhood was involved with and supported was the change in licensing requirements for the sale of liquor. The committee also discussed ways to make the most of NBSD and to better promote the program and services provided to residents and businesses in the Drake area.

Infrastructure Improvements (Neighborhood Infrastructure Rehabilitation Program – NIRP)

Planning Committee members worked with City of Des Moines Public Works staff to examine and prioritize the infrastructure needs in the neighborhood. The use and source of NIRP funds is listed below. Approximately half of the NIRP improvements needed in the neighborhood were completed during the 2010 construction season. It is anticipated that most of the remaining needs will be addressed in 2011.

<u>NIRP Improvements</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011 (Anticipated)</u>
Street HMA Overlay	\$ 868,840 – CIP/CDBG NIRP	\$ 741,580
Concrete Pavement Restoration	\$ 0 – CIP/CDBG NIRP	\$ 35,750
Interim Paving	\$ 0 – CIP/CDBG NIRP	\$ 99,580
Curb Replacement	\$ 308,220 – CIP/CDBG NIRP	\$ 140,800
Sidewalk Repair	\$ 198,000 – CIP/CDBG NIRP	\$ 308,000
 Total NIRP for Drake	 \$1,375,060 – CIP/CDBG NIRP	 \$1,325,710(Anticipated)

Streetscape Improvements

The Plan recommends implementation of two streetscape projects: 1) the Drake Streetscape Plan, which outlines improvements to University and Forest Avenues as well as major neighborhood gateways; and 2) the Roosevelt Cultural District (RCD). The Drake Streetscape Plan was prepared by Genus Landscape Architects in 2007 and to date the City has obtained approximately \$280,000 in Surface Transportation Program-TE funding for construction through the Metropolitan Planning Organization. The Roosevelt Cultural District submitted a streetscape application on 12/18/2010 and will need to go through the formal concept planning phase. Both projects will follow City streetscape project guidelines and require establishing a SSMID.

Commercial Areas

The Drake neighborhood has several commercial districts within its boundaries, some that are well-established, and others that may experience additional development or redevelopment in the future. In general, the plan recommends that commercial areas in the Drake neighborhood be compact and pedestrian friendly. Other recommendations include creating synergy among the various areas through the use of similar design elements, encouraging owners to invest in property improvements, and promoting arts and cultural venues. The City and the Neighborhood Development Corporation will continue to work on redeveloping Forest Avenue into a mixed-use corridor that positively contributes to the neighborhood. Other areas with potential for redevelopment are identified to guide future private sector investment.

Land Use & Zoning

Land use amendments update the 2020 Community Character Plan to reflect existing or preferred uses and will go into effect immediately upon plan adoption. There are a number of rezonings recommended in the plan that the neighborhood will likely pursue, including downzoning from R-3 to R1-60 in the

Carpenter neighborhood area and rezoning C-2 areas to C-1. CD Staff will need to assist with the rezoning process. The plan recommends protecting the existing residential fabric, focusing higher density housing developments along the major corridors, and promoting / preserving compact, pedestrian friendly neighborhood commercial districts.

Implementation & Funding

As perhaps the most complex and ambitious plan in the 20 year history of the Neighborhood Revitalization Program, implementation of the Drake Neighborhood Plan is expected to be a long-term commitment and to require a significant amount of resources. While the Drake Neighborhood Association (DNA) has a number of talented and capable people involved, it will be a challenge to manage plan implementation in addition to their regular activities. The DNA is currently restructuring to meet this challenge, and is working with City staff to explore the possibility of finding a project manager to oversee plan activities. Regardless, it is likely that the City will need to assign a full time planner to shepherd the implementation process for at least the first 2-3 years. Forming partnerships with non-profit housing agencies, area businesses, Drake University, and other community resources will also be critical to successful implementation.

In addition to general oversight and assistance with plan implementation, staff will need to work with the DNA to find funding for many of the plan activities. This will require funds from traditional sources like CDBG and HOME, as well as pursuit of additional types of competitive grant funds. Staff anticipates the need to secure funds for the following plan sections / major activities:

- **Housing:** property acquisition, rehabilitation, demolition, and new construction (*Potential City Funding Source: CDBG, HOME*)
- **Parks:** capital improvements for Drake and Witmer Parks, community gardens and beautification efforts, and trail connections (*Potential City Funding Source: CDBG*)
- **Streetscape Projects:** parking and traffic circulation studies, pre-construction planning, and construction (*Potential City Funding Source: CIP*)
- **Commercial Areas:** redevelopment, property improvements (i.e. façade), potential support for additional economic development activities like new business or job creation (*Potential City Funding Source: CDBG*)

Finally, the Drake Neighborhood Plan poses a number of challenges that have implications for City policies and programs. Such challenges include dealing with the distressed portions of the neighborhood, particularly figuring out how to deal with rental property issues. Unless the rental property issues are addressed, revitalization in the Drake neighborhood will not occur to the fullest potential.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S):

Date: July 10, 2006

Roll Call Number: 06-1346

Action: [Designation](#) of five new neighborhoods to the City's Neighborhood Revitalization Program (Douglas Acres, Drake, Merle Hay, South Park and Waterbury). ([Council Communication No. 06-427](#))
Moved by Kiernan to adopt. Motion Carried 7-0.

Date: March 13, 2006

Roll Call Number: 06-479

Action: [Resolution](#) approving recommendations from the Neighborhood Revitalization Program Evaluation Steering Committee to restart the Neighborhood Revitalization Program and to begin research on the creation of a Comprehensive Affordable Housing Policy. **Moved by Coleman to adopt. Motion Carried 5-2.**

BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S):

Board: Plan and Zoning Commission

Date: February 17, 2011

Resolution Number: N/A

Action: The Plan and Zoning Commission recommended approval to adopt the Drake Neighborhood Plan as an element of and amendment to the Des Moines' 2020 Community Character Plan.

Board: Neighborhood Revitalization Board

Date: February 9, 2011

Resolution Number: N/A

Action: The Neighborhood Revitalization Board recommended approval to adopt the Drake Neighborhood Plan.

Board: Neighborhood Revitalization Board

Date: June 7, 2006

Resolution Number: N/A

Action: Neighborhood Revitalization Board recommendation to designate Waterbury, Drake, South Park, Douglas Acres and Merle Hay to participate in the Neighborhood Revitalization Program with the City providing an implementation plan for neighborhood order and Neighborhood Finance Corporation to be approved and effective by September 1, 2006.

ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS:

Approval of CDBG, HOME, or CIP funding requests for various projects identified in the Drake Neighborhood Plan.

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