

 <p style="text-align: center;">Council Communication Office of the City Manager</p>	Date: April 21, 2014
	Agenda Item No. 18 Roll Call No. <u>14-0607</u> Communication No. <u>14-180</u> Submitted by: Phillip Delafield, Community Development Director

AGENDA HEADING:

Adoption of the Capitol Park Neighborhood Plan Update.

SYNOPSIS:

Recommend approval of the Capitol Park Neighborhood Plan Update. In November 2011, the City of Des Moines selected several neighborhoods to participate in the Neighborhood Revitalization Program. For the first time, Charter neighborhoods with an existing plan that is more than 10 years old were allowed to apply for a pilot program to update their plan. The pilot program was conducted in partnership with graduate students in Planning at Iowa State University (ISU). This is a two (2) year pilot program with Beaverdale and Woodland Heights participating in 2012, and Capitol East and Capitol Park participating in 2013.

FISCAL IMPACT: NONE

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

A new public input process was utilized for the pilot program to coincide with the fall semester class schedule at ISU. The process began with ISU students administering a survey in Capitol Park, which was collected from face-to-face interviews and through paper mailings. The questions asked about the opinions and perceptions of Capitol Park’s current strengths and weaknesses, as well as priorities for the neighborhood. Additionally, the ISU planning team spent an average of 20 collective hours per week over a period of 12 weeks engaging directly with neighborhood residents. In total, over 200 residents contributed to the planning process.

Utilizing the information gathered throughout the neighborhood engagement process, the ISU students facilitated a series of four (4) Steering Committee meetings in the fall of 2013. Steering Committee members consisted of a variety of stakeholders, including neighborhood residents, community organizations, social service organizations, non-profits, businesses, schools, and City departments. The meetings focused on identifying priorities, strategies, action steps, and partners using information gathered from the neighborhood outreach process.

Based on the results of the neighborhood survey and the input received through the various neighborhood engagement efforts, Capitol Park’s residents identified priority goals for the neighborhood to address over the next 5-10 years. The following goal areas were identified:

1) *Community Building*

Capitol Park is home to people from a wide range of backgrounds, which provides opportunities to experience other cultures and traditions and makes the neighborhood distinct. Capitol Park would like to create a community that celebrates the multi-cultural aspect of the neighborhood, and would also like to see more opportunities for residents to get to know their neighbors.

2) *Crime and Safety*

Capitol Park has a crime rate that is comparable to other neighborhoods within the urban core of Des Moines, yet through the neighborhood engagement process it was clear that security is a priority for the area. When residents and business owners spoke of crime in the area, their responses fell into two (2) broad categories – first, a sense of unease caused by crime issues such as robberies and assaults, and secondly, the perception of a need for more police activity in the neighborhood.

3) *Housing*

Housing in Capitol Park is significantly more affordable than housing in other areas of Des Moines, and more than half of the housing stock in the neighborhood was built before 1905. Housing concerns in the neighborhood include the quality, age, maintenance of housing, and vacant property. Residents also expressed a desire for technical help with home repair projects and assistance with financing home repairs. To ensure that Capitol Park has affordable, quality housing into the future, the neighborhood identified strategies to promote home repair and quality of housing while marketing the neighborhood as a prime location with ample amenities.

4) *Youth*

Capitol Park has a high population of youth under the age of 18. Results of the neighborhood survey and feedback from the neighborhood engagement process indicated that there is a lack of activities available to youth in the area. Capitol Park would like to increase participation in existing activities and encourage youth programs that incorporate family-centered activities, enhance athletic programming for youth, and promote career development.

5) *Neighborhood Appearance*

In the neighborhood outreach process, residents expressed a wide range of concerns about the physical appearance of Capitol Park, as well as the neighborhood's reputation. Strategies were identified to address the physical appearance and perception of Capitol Park by focusing on three (3) major areas: connectivity to the City Des Moines, the Capitol Park business corridor, and recreational opportunities.

Neighborhood Led Projects and Initiatives

- Host annual roundtable discussion and potluck with diverse cultural groups in Capitol Park.
- Create and distribute a pamphlet about the history of the neighborhood, available amenities and the quality of housing available to large employers in Des Moines.
- Promote existing family-centered classes and activities occurring at churches and in schools in the neighborhood association's newsletter, school newsletters, radio, and word of mouth.
- Create a Neighborhood Ambassador program that identifies four (4) neighborhood residents that will host block parties and other social events to get neighbors together.
- Establish easy-maintenance landscaping on the triangle park.
- Partner with other nearby neighborhood associations to hold common events or programming.

Potential City Projects and Initiatives

- Increase visible presence of Police patrols throughout Capitol Park by rotating locations where patrols rest between calls.

- Reach out to infill housing developers with locations of available property.
- Add way-finding signs at strategic locations throughout the neighborhood that indicate distances and biking times to East Village, Union Park, and Capitol Park commercial districts.
- Host a roundtable discussion between the City, neighborhood association, and Olivet University, the owner of the old Wallace School.

Estimated Costs of City Projects and Initiatives by Department

Completion of the plan update for Capitol Park does not stop with the approval of the plan. The work to implement the projects and initiatives is just beginning. Potential funding sources for some of these efforts may be identified in the plan, while other sources may still need to be determined or fundraising efforts may need to be pursued. The responsible party for each action step has been determined and is listed in the plan.

For those action steps that are City led projects and initiatives, there has been a commitment made by the City departments that will be responsible for implementation to carry out the action steps in a reasonable timeframe. Some of these efforts have been or will need to be accounted for in existing or future budgets. Community Development staff has tried to capture preliminary cost estimates for the City led projects and initiatives listed in this plan. However, there may be additional costs that have not been accounted for. Below is a summary by department of preliminary implementation cost estimates:

- Community Development: CDBG/HOME funded housing projects to be determined.
- Parks Department: \$72,500-117,500 for park and trail upgrades.
- Police Department: \$133,919 (Shared cost among Capitol East, Capitol Park, & MLK Jr. Park).
- Public Works Department: Cost estimates to be determined.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S):

Date: November 21, 2011

Roll Call Number: [11-1965](#)

Action: [Approving](#) the selection of five Charter Neighborhoods into the Neighborhood Revitalization Program's Charter Pilot Project: Beaverdale, Woodland Heights, Capitol East, Capitol Park, and River Bend. ([Council Communication No. 11-702](#)) Moved by Hensley to adopt. Motion carried 7-0.

BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S):

Board: Neighborhood Revitalization Board

Date: November 2, 2011

Resolution Number: N/A

Action: Approved staff recommendation to select Beaverdale, Woodland Heights, Capitol East, and Capitol Park for the Pilot Charter Neighborhood Program, as well as River Bend for a trial neighborhood-led planning effort.

Board: Neighborhood Revitalization Board

Date: March 5, 2014

Resolution Number: N/A

Action: Approved the Updated and Amended Capitol Park Neighborhood Plan and to forward a recommendation to City Council to approve this plan.

Board: Plan and Zoning Commission

Date: April 3, 2014

Resolution Number: N/A

Action: Amend the Des Moines' 2020 Community Character Plan to incorporate the updated and amended Capitol Park Neighborhood Plan as an element.

ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS:

Future City Council action to support implementation activities may be necessary.

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