

★ Roll Call Number

Agenda Item Number

May 7, 2007

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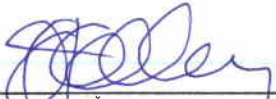
Date.....

RESOLUTION to receive and file the Des Moines Southside Revitalization Plan (March 2006) and the letter from the South Side Revitalization Partnership regarding implementation strategy priorities.

(Council Communication No. 07-278)

Moved by _____ to approve and to refer to the City Manager for action, as appropriate.

APPROVED AS TO FORM:


Michael F. Kelley
Assistant City Attorney

COUNCIL ACTION	YEAS	NAYS	PASS	ABSENT
COWNIE				
COLEMAN				
HENSLEY				
KIERNAN				
MAHAFFEY				
MEYER				
VLASSIS				
TOTAL				

MOTION CARRIED

APPROVED

.....
Mayor

CERTIFICATE

I, DIANE RAUH, City Clerk of said City hereby certify that at a meeting of the City Council of said City of Des Moines, held on the above date, among other proceedings the above was adopted.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my seal the day and year first above written.

City Clerk



Des Moines Southside
Revitalization Plan

SE 14th Street & Army Post Road

Prepared for the citizens of Des Moines
by RDG Planning & Design

March, 2006

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

SOUTH SIDE REVITALIZATION PARTNERSHIP

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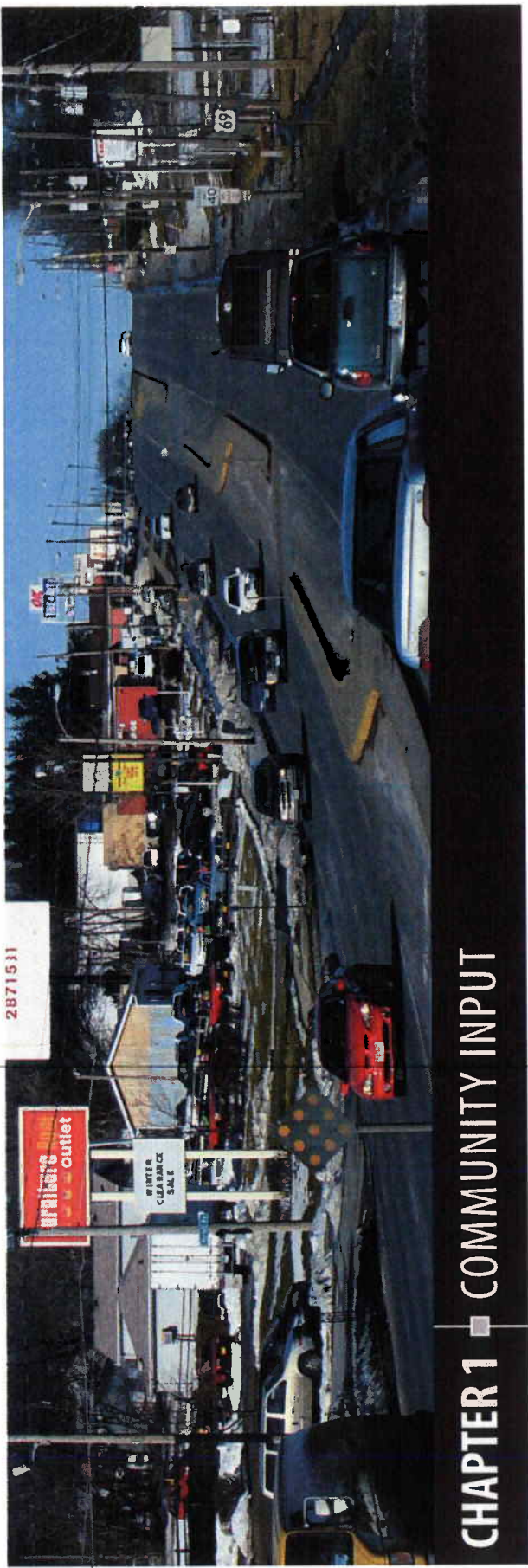
Diana Thomas

Ron Woods

Ellen A. Walkowiak, City of Des Moines

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CHAPTER 1 ■ COMMUNITY INPUT

Oversight and input into this planning process was achieved through the South Side Revitalization Partnership monthly meetings. In order to obtain additional community input on issues concerning Des Moines South Side residents, a series of focus group meetings were conducted. A total of three meetings were held over a one day period. Each focus group contained Des Moines South Side residents and other stakeholders representing a particular community interest. These included business owners, community organizations, boards and commissions, and the general community. A total of about 19 community members participated in the process.

The dialogue during each meeting was documented and analyzed to identify general trends in the perceptions of community members. The primary issue areas discussed during the meetings included:

- Business Growth
- Community Character
- Parks and Recreation
- Redevelopment
- Zoning Ordinance Enforcement and Standards

BUSINESS GROWTH

Although the south side of Des Moines has witnessed substantial commercial development in recent years, there is a need for additional growth opportunities.

Participants noted that the South Side lacks a full range of shopping choice and lack some retail businesses, such as coffee shops, bookstores, Kohls, and Super Target, that are typically located in other community areas. While there is significant South Side retail loyalty, these deficiencies cause shoppers to travel to other retail areas, primarily to Ankeny. There is not felt to be much South Side retail loss to the Jordan Creek Mall retail area.

Several focus group participants mentioned that the abundance of locally owned restaurants on the South Side is an asset for the community that should be capitalized on by creating a “restaurant row” theme, thereby encouraging restaurants to concentrate in a single locality. Related to business growth is the need to create more job opportunities in the South Side, another concern for focus group participants.

Plans for a significant reconfiguration of Southridge Mall were discussed by Mall representatives. These plans include an expansion of Penney’s to replace existing vacant mall corridor space, the demolition of the former Ward’s anchor space, and the expansion of Target into a Super Target store.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

Creating an aesthetically attractive, unique, pedestrian-oriented environment will provide an opportunity for the South Side to be a destination point for Des Moines residents.

Participants noted the need for unique, fun, mixed-use development that will attract people to the area. A recurring message from the participants is to create a theme that would incorporate the diversity of the residents and create continuity between business and land uses in the area. One participant noted the possibility of creating a “South Side Village” that would be characterized by mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented development. Another participant mentioned that there is a need to improve the major corridors as gateways to Des Moines, Army Post Road as well as SE 14th Street.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Continuing to enhance the park and trail system is an important component for future growth and redevelopment.

Participants mentioned several recent or planned South Side recreational enhancements, including upgrades to Crivaro Park and a bike trail to serve the South Side. However, participants noted as growth continues it will be important to provide linkages to Cownie Soccer Park, Easter Lake, and the new housing and baseball fields currently under construction at the old Hartford landfill site. The Blank Park Zoo, Blank Park Golf Course, and Fort Des Moines continue to be recreational assets for the South Side.



Stefon Plaza, a commercial strip mall on the South Side

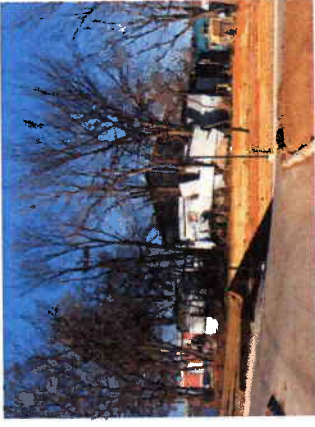


Example of pedestrian-oriented development. Source: Congress for the New Urbanism

REDEVELOPMENT

The redevelopment of dilapidated or vacant properties needs to be a central component of a South Side revitalization plan.

Focus group participants indicated the importance of redeveloping dilapidated commercial buildings, motels, and mobile home courts along these corridors. Specifically, the mobile home parks between King Avenue and Virginia Avenue, and north of Emma Avenue. Vacant lots such as the Auto Auction site at the intersection of McKinley Avenue and SE 14th Street should be developed into a mixed-use project including commercial, office, multi-family and single-family housing. The northeast corner of the SW 9th Street and Army Post Road intersection was also mentioned as a potential site for redevelopment. Ongoing private redevelopment activities are exemplified by the newly constructed Walgreen's at the former Dahl's site on Army Post road, and Dollar General on the southeast corner of the Bell Avenue and SE 14th Street intersection. While such redevelopment is occurring, several participants mentioned the need for incentives for business owners to rehabilitate and/or redevelop along the corridors.



Dilapidated mobile home park, SE 14th Street

ZONING ORDINANCE ENFORCEMENT AND STANDARDS

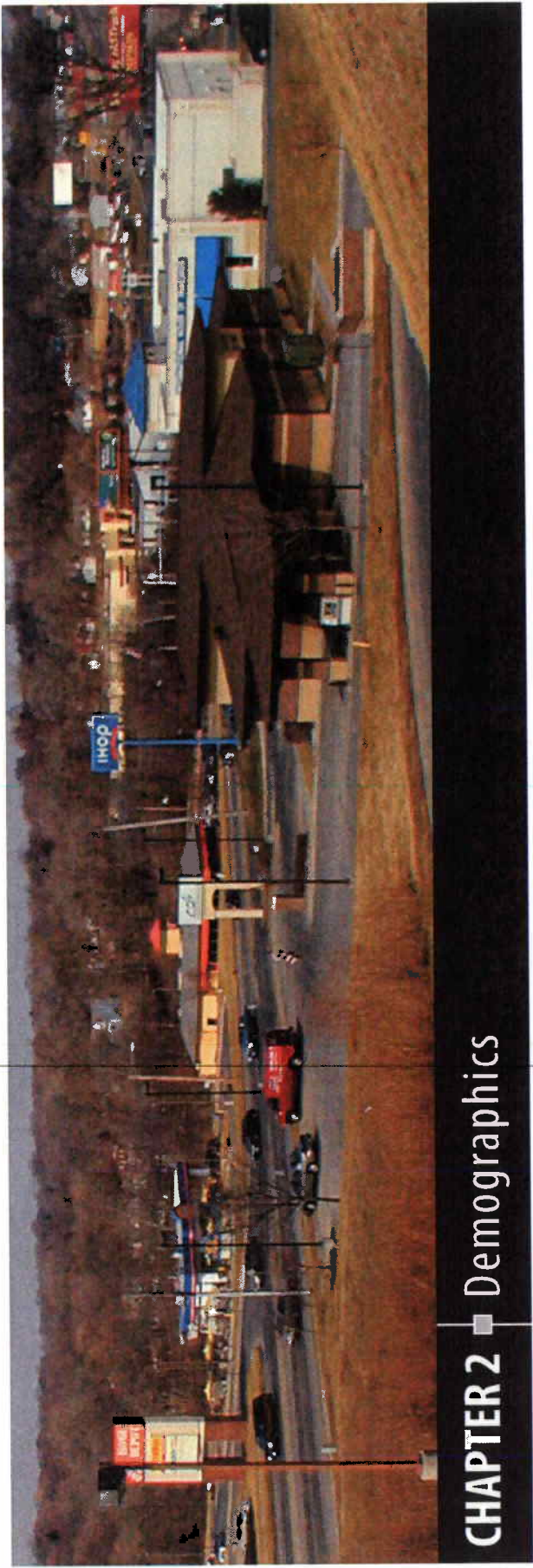
The adherence to and diligent enforcement of the zoning ordinance can prevent some of the negative issues identified with the South Side. Also, there is a need to adopt higher quality standards for new development.

Several focus group participants indicated a need for an increase in zoning ordinance enforcement pertaining to issues such as mobile food vendors, used car lots, building materials, and weed control. Maintenance of required commercial development landscaping over time was pointed out as a particular problem. Also, there are examples of recent commercial construction below the desirable quality level, despite recent tax abatement requirements. This underscores the need for heightened new construction building material standards. Chapter 6 provides a series of zoning recommendations pertaining to these issues.



Mobile food vendor, SE 14th Street

This section outlines the major ideas which surfaced during the meetings. The Appendix of this document contains a detailed transcript of the focus group comments.



CHAPTER 2 ■ Demographics

A revitalization plan for SE 14th Street and Army Post Road must be investment and market based. Improvement strategies should build demand from both inside and outside the area for new businesses and housing, taking into account the area's demographic and economic characteristics and strategic location. This chapter examines demographic trends for Des Moines' South Side.

POPULATION AND HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

Map 2.1 illustrates the Census Bureau's enumeration areas used for the following population analyses of Des Moines' South Side.

The South Side experienced an 8.9% population increase during the 1990s.

Table 2.1 presents the South Side's 10-year population trends. In 2000, the South Side had 58,358 residents, or about 29% of Des Moines' population. The area gained 4,773 residents during the 1990s, representing about 87% of the city's growth. This corresponds to an 8.9% growth rate for the decade, compared with 2.8% citywide and 14.5% for Polk County.

Map 2.2 illustrates population change in the South Side Census enumeration areas. The largest population increases occurred in an area east of SE 14th Street and north of Army Post Road and an area south of Park Avenue and west of Fleur Drive.

TABLE 2.1: POPULATION CHANGE			
	1990	2000	% Change
South Side	53,585	58,358	8.9%
City of Des Moines	193,187	198,682	2.8%
Polk County	327,140	374,601	14.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

