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Date May 6, 2013

WHEREAS, on August 7, 2000, by Roll Call No. 00-3381 the City Council adopted the Des Moines 2020 Community Character Land Use Plan; and

WHEREAS, the City Plan and Zoning Commission has advised in the attached letter that at a public hearing held April 18, 2013, the members voted 14-0 to recommend **APPROVAL** of a request from the Neighborhood Revitalization Board to amend the Des Moines' 2020 Community Character Plan to incorporate the Lower Beaver Neighborhood Plan as an element.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the City Council of the City of Des Moines, Iowa, that the proposed amendment to the Des Moines 2020 Community Character Land Use Plan described above, is hereby approved.

MOVED by _____ to approve the proposed amendment.

FORM APPROVED:



 Michael F. Kelley
 Assistant City Attorney

(21-2013-4.10)

COUNCIL ACTION	YEAS	NAYS	PASS	ABSENT
COWNIE				
COLEMAN				
GRIESS				
HENSLEY				
MAHAFFEY				
MEYER				
MOORE				
TOTAL				
MOTION CARRIED			APPROVED	

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.

 Mayor

 City Clerk

April 29, 2013

Date _____

Agenda Item 49

Roll Call # _____

Honorable Mayor and City Council
City of Des Moines, Iowa

Members:

Communication from the City Plan and Zoning Commission advising that at their meeting held April 18, 2013, the following action was taken regarding a request from the Neighborhood Revitalization Board to amend the Des Moines' 2020 Community Character Plan.

COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION:

After public hearing, the members voted 14-0 as follows:

Commission Action:	Yes	Nays	Pass	Absent
Dory Briles	X			
JoAnne Corigliano	X			
Shirley Daniels	X			
Jacqueline Easley	X			
Tim Fitzgerald	X			
Dann Flaherty	X			
John "Jack" Hilmes	X			
Ted Irvine	X			
Greg Jones	X			
William Page	X			
Christine Pardee				X
Mike Simonson	X			
CJ Stephens	X			
Vicki Stogdill	X			
Greg Wattier	X			

APPROVAL of a request to amend the Des Moines' 2020 Community Character Plan to incorporate the Lower Beaver Neighborhood Plan as an element. (21-2013-4.10)

STAFF RECOMMENDATION TO THE P&Z COMMISSION

Staff recommends that the Des Moines' 2020 Community Character Plan be amended to incorporate the Lower Beaver Neighborhood Plan as an element.

STAFF REPORT

I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Lower Beaver Neighborhood Association (LBNA) was selected to participate in the Neighborhood Revitalization Program in November 2011 as a "Stable Neighborhood". In December 2011, City staff met with the LBNA



CITY PLAN AND ZONING COMMISSION
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ALL-AMERICA CITY
1949, 1976, 1981
2003

Planning Committee for the first time. On February 20, 2012, the planning committee and staff held a neighborhood-wide input meeting at Polk County River Place. Input from this meeting helped the Planning Committee establish and prioritize the issues to address during the planning process. A second neighborhood-wide meeting was held on November 12, 2012 to present the goals and strategies of the plan to neighborhood residents.

II. GENERAL PLAN SUMMARY

The Lower Beaver Planning Committee has met monthly since January 2012 to develop the neighborhood plan. The Planning Committee discussed a wide range of topics, including: infrastructure, housing, parks and trails, commercial corridors, and land use and zoning.

Two areas of particular interest to the committee were the housing, as well as the parks and trails topics. The committee would like to see the housing stock in the neighborhood maintained at a high level. To accomplish this the neighborhood will work closely with the NFC to promote the programs available to homeowners and homebuyers. Analysis of the housing stock shows that foreclosed and abandoned homes are not overly prevalent in the Lower Beaver Neighborhood. However the neighborhood has seen a slight uptick in this in recent years. The committee and staff observed during the planning process that most of the homes that were foreclosed upon in the past year were purchased, rehabilitated and put back on the market relatively quickly. This is a good sign for the neighborhood and is another indicator of the stability of the housing market in the neighborhood.

Another topic of focus was the old Beaver Airfield located along Lower Beaver Road. The property is currently privately owned and listed for sale on the real estate market. The property is a large parcel that only has one small office building located on it and is situated just west of Woodlawn Park. Because the property adjoins the park, the neighborhood would like to see the linkage to the park enhanced if development were to occur. If the property is to remain open space for an extended period of time, the neighborhood would like to consider expansion of the park to the west to incorporate an additional soccer field.

During the planning process the committee also discussed with staff desired improvements to Woodlawn Park. The existing tennis court is in need of playing surface repairs and would benefit from also being painted for pickleball use. The existing half-court basketball court would be better utilized if it were upgraded to a full court layout. The neighborhood is served by the Trestle to Trestle Trail but the neighborhood has limited access to this trail. In order to improve access the committee discussed with staff opportunities to install a connection leading eastward from Sawyer's Landing through the Tai Dam property to the trail. This would also provide a direct link from Woodlawn Park to the Trestle to Trestle Trail.

This plan does not include any recommended land use or zoning changes. Development opportunities, such as the old Beaver Airfield, were discussed during the planning process and the neighborhood emphasized preserving the residential character of the area and strengthening the commercial districts along Douglas Avenue.

Planning Committee members worked with City of Des Moines Public Works staff to examine the infrastructure in the neighborhood. Based on this input, staff provided an initial list of proposed improvements, which was amended and approved by the planning committee. NIRP improvements in the neighborhood were all completed during the 2012 construction season.

Overview of NIRP Improvements

Street HMA Overlay	\$ 191,240 – City CIP NIRP
Concrete Pavement Restoration	\$ 133,900 – City CIP NIRP
<u>Interim Paving</u>	<u>\$ 335,420 – City CIP NIRP</u>
Total NIRP for Lower Beaver	\$ 660,560 – City CIP NIRP

Potential City Projects

- Explore options for installing a trail eastward from the Sawyer's Landing subdivision to the Trestle to Trestle Trail.
- Work with the LBNA and area businesses to promote the City's Façade Program.
- Partner with the LBNA to monitor foreclosed and abandoned housing to ensure that it does not become a problem in the neighborhood.
- Secure funding for improvements to Woodlawn Park, such as tennis court repairs, upgrading the basketball court to a full court, and general landscaping improvements.

Neighborhood Led Projects and Initiatives

- Work with potential developers and the City to ensure that if the old Beaver Airfield site is developed that it is done in a way that is in character with the surrounding neighborhood.
- Educate residents about tools available for home repair / improvement and improve NFC promotional efforts.
- Engage the owners and managers of multi-family housing units, as well as the tenants, in order to get them more involved in the association.
Work with local businesses and the Urbandale Chamber of Commerce to promote businesses along the Douglas Avenue corridor.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

There was no discussion

CHAIRPERSON OPENED THE PUBLIC HEARING

There was no one to speak in favor or in oppositions of the applicant's request.

CHAIRPERSON CLOSED THE PUBLIC HEARING

COMMISSION ACTION:

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Greg Jones moved staff recommendation that the Des Moines' 2020 Community Character Plan be amended to incorporate the Lower Beaver Neighborhood Plan as an element.

Motion passed 14-0.

Respectfully submitted,



Michael Ludwig, AICP
Planning Administrator

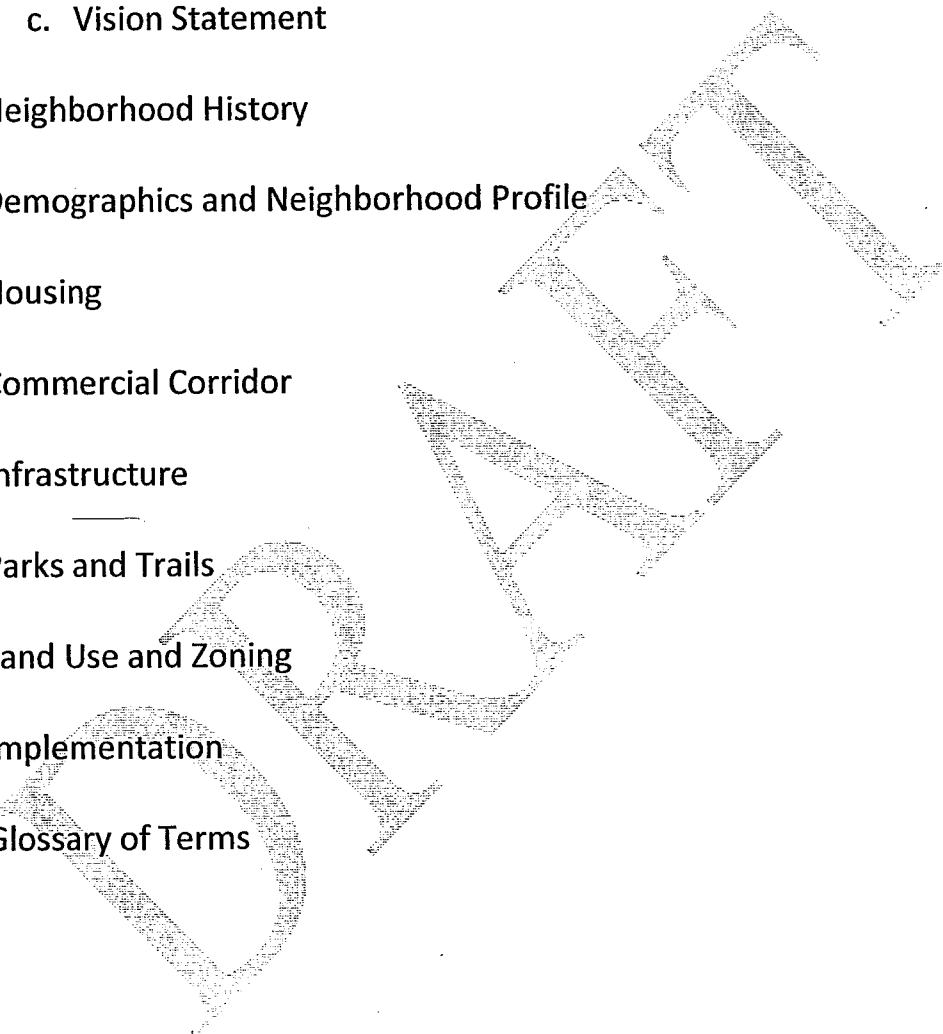
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Attachment

Lower Beaver Neighborhood Plan

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INTRODUCTION

Background on the Neighborhood Revitalization Program

The City of Des Moines and the Polk County Board of Supervisors established the Neighborhood Revitalization Program in the early 1990s to help stabilize and improve Des Moines' neighborhoods. To coordinate this program, the City's Community Development Department formed the Neighborhood Development Division.

The Neighborhood Revitalization Program uses a strategy that calls for neighborhood residents, the City of Des Moines, Polk County, and local business leaders to develop a public/private partnership to address revitalization issues within the city. To participate, recognized neighborhoods must submit an application and make a presentation to the Neighborhood Revitalization Board. The neighborhood planning process relies on active resident groups to identify critical neighborhood issues in their area. The staff of the Neighborhood Development Division provides technical assistance and planning coordination. Neighborhood planning staff works with the neighborhood group to develop appropriate goals and implement a feasible action plan. The neighborhood plan provides a list of activities and identifies parties responsible for implementation. The success of the revitalization effort depends on a continued coordination of efforts among the neighborhood organization, the City, the County, and other public and private organizations.

This plan was prepared through a joint effort of the City of Des Moines Community Development Department's Neighborhood Development Division and the Lower Beaver Neighborhood Association. The approved plan becomes an amendment to the City of Des Moines Comprehensive Plan and an ongoing guide affecting future policy decisions for the Lower Beaver neighborhood.

Planning Process

The planning process for the Lower Beaver neighborhood plan was similar to how we conduct most of neighborhood plans in that a planning committee of neighborhood residents, business owners, and other stakeholders work with a Planner from our Neighborhood Development Division to develop the plan. The planning process officially started with a neighborhood kick-off meeting in February 2012. At this meeting attendees laid the groundwork for the planning process by identifying five priority subject areas to focus on. The subject areas that Lower Beaver chose to focus on were: Housing, Commercial Corridor, Infrastructure, as well as Parks and Trails. A Land Use and Zoning analysis was also incorporated as part of the planning process.

The planning committee met once a month throughout the process to identify key issues within each of the subject areas and then to create goals and strategies to address those issues. The planning committee meetings were facilitated by neighborhood planning staff, with staff members from various City departments participating periodically. Once the draft goals and strategies were identified a second neighborhood meeting was held to share these ideas and get additional feedback from residents. Once the goals and strategies were finalized, they were reviewed, prioritized, and approved by the planning committee. The plan was then approved by the Lower Beaver Neighborhood Association Board, the Neighborhood Revitalization Board, the Des Moines City Council, and the Polk County Board of Supervisors.

Vision Statement

The planning committee utilized the input from the first neighborhood meeting to establish a vision statement for the neighborhood plan. A vision statement provides overall direction and serves as a source of inspiration for the neighborhood planning process and is the basis for the neighborhood plan. Below is the vision statement for Lower Beaver.

The Lower Beaver Neighborhood strives to be a welcoming neighborhood that people want to call home by fostering an environment which...

...supports vibrant, viable businesses, new and old;

...provides quality housing stock for a diversifying population;

...offers enriching opportunities for community relationships and participation, education, and cultural exposure;

...features attractive parks, trails, trees, and year-round recreational opportunities;

...is environmentally responsible, preserving our natural resources, ecology, wildlife, and habitats; and

...maintains an infrastructure effective for the safety and service of all residents, young and old.

Housing

The Lower Beaver Neighborhood entered the Neighborhood Revitalization Program in 2011 as a "Stable" neighborhood. This assessment as a stable neighborhood was based on a number of factors such as home values, home sales, housing conditions, the ratio of homeowners to renters, etc. This is further supported by visiting the neighborhood where you will find block after block of well maintained homes.

The housing stock in Lower Beaver is diverse in terms of the range of architectural styles, as well as the age and values of the homes. The average year built for homes in Lower Beaver is 1959 and the average value of a home is \$152,158. Of the approximately 2,300 homes located within the neighborhood, 99% of them are considered to be in normal, above normal, very good, or excellent condition, as identified by the Polk County Assessor's Office.

Although the housing stock in Lower Beaver is well kept, the majority of the homes in the neighborhood are nearing 50 years old. As homes age, the maintenance needs typically increase as systems near the end of their useful life. Keeping homes updated not only improves the value of the home but also the efficiency of the homes. One strategy to improve the housing stock is to encourage homeowners and homebuyers to utilize the programs made available through the Neighborhood Finance Corporation (NFC). These programs allow homeowners and homebuyers to renovate their homes by updating the major systems, building an addition or garage, or making kitchen and bathroom improvements that ultimately improve the function and value of the home. The neighborhood will work with staff from the NFC to promote the availability of this program.

The planning committee also discussed the importance of well maintained and well managed rental properties with the neighborhood. During the planning process, it was determined that a strong relationship is lacking between the LBNA and the rental community (including investor-owners, property managers, and rental tenants). It is suggested that the LBNA take a more active role in engaging these neighbors because having good quality tenants and well-kept property can increase the return on investment for the property owner/manager, resulting in a win-win situation for the owner, tenant, and neighborhood. The LBNA can also help match investor owners with resources such as the Crime Free Multi-Housing Program offered by the Des Moines Police Department, which trains property managers on how to screen tenants, prevent crime, make security improvements to the property, and engage tenants in safe living practices.

Another area of discussion for the planning committee was the lack of diverse housing options in the neighborhood. The pre-dominant housing type in the Lower Beaver Neighborhood is single-family homes with some multi-family apartment dwellings scattered throughout the neighborhood. There is a lack of alternative housing types such as townhomes, condos, and senior housing options. As long time residents age, there are few alternative housing choices available to keep them in the neighborhood. Developing a broader range of housing options is a goal of the neighborhood going forward.

Goal/Outcome	Strategy	Action Steps	Responsible Party / Priority Timeline
HOUSING			
Ensure that Lower Beaver's housing stock remains stable and well maintained.	Promote the Neighborhood Finance Corporation's (NFC) home purchase, home refinance and home repair/remodeling programs.	The NFC and LBNA will work together to promote NFC's programs to Lower Beaver residents, realtors and prospective home buyers.	NFC, LBNA / Immediately
		Highlight NFC success stories told by individual Lower Beaver homeowners.	LBNA, NFC / Ongoing
	Make Lower Beaver homes more competitive in the greater Des Moines real estate market.	The NFC and LBNA will target homeowners and home buyers for specific improvements to enhance the functionality of the housing stock (such as adding a second bathroom, third bedroom, finished basement, etc.).	NFC, LBNA / High
	Limit the negative impact of foreclosed and/or abandoned homes.	LBNA and the Community Development Department Neighborhood Development and Neighborhood Inspection Divisions will work together to ensure that foreclosed and abandoned properties do not become a nuisance.	LBNA, CDD NDD & NID / Ongoing
		Upon request from the LBNA, the Community Development Dept will provide an annual analysis of the foreclosed / vacant homes in the neighborhood.	LBNA, CDD NDD / Ongoing
Provide a range of quality housing options and opportunities for a diversifying population.	Encourage the development of townhouses, condos, and other diverse housing options that allow residents of all ages and incomes to remain in the neighborhood.	The LBNA and Community Development Department will work with prospective developers to examine ways to increase the diversity of housing choices.	LBNA, CDD NDD & PUD / Low
Enhance the multi-family buildings and rental units in the Lower Beaver Neighborhood.	Encourage owners / managers of rental properties to maintain and manage them in a manner that is consistent with the neighborhood.	LBNA will work with the Community Development Department Neighborhood Inspection Division to ensure that all rental properties are in compliance with the City's rental code and junk & debris ordinance.	LBNA, CDD NID / Ongoing

Goal/Outcome	Strategy	Action Steps	Responsible Party / Priority Timeline
		Acknowledge property owners / managers that complete the Crime Free Multi Housing Program with the Des Moines Police Department through various LBNA outlets (such as Facebook, e-news, etc.).	LBNA / High

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Commercial Corridor

The Douglas Avenue and Euclid Avenue corridor is a major east-west corridor on the north side of Des Moines. The corridor consists of a mix of retail, entertainment, restaurant, automotive, and service oriented businesses. The 2020 Community Character Plan identifies Euclid/Douglas corridor as a gateway corridor. Gateway Corridors are defined as, "...approaches and connections to distinct residential, institutional, and commercial districts. Gateway corridors include those streets that lead to the downtown or run through a large expanse of the city connecting important landmarks and districts...". These corridors are important areas for not only the neighborhoods that surround them but the City and metro as well.

The health and viability of the Euclid/Douglas corridor is important to the Lower Beaver Neighborhood. The Euclid/Douglas corridor has seen some turnover in the commercial district in recent years. Some of those buildings have been reoccupied but others have been challenged to sustain a viable business or tenant. Updating this area to keep pace with other commercial districts and remain competitive within the Des Moines and metro economic arena is a priority for the neighborhood.

Business and property owners should focus on making property and site improvements to update their establishments to attract more customers and retain businesses. Additionally, the neighborhood is supportive of minimal extension of commercially zoned areas along Douglas/Euclid to accommodate reuse and redevelopment of neighborhood retail and commercial uses. To do this successfully there must be a balance to strengthen and grow the commercial corridor but also to be sensitive to the adjoining residential areas that are adjacent to commercially zoned properties.

Making improvements to the commercial corridor will require business leaders, neighborhood leaders, property owners, and City officials to come together and collectively develop strategies and resources. Many of the businesses along Douglas Avenue are members of the Urbandale Chamber of Commerce. The Urbandale Chamber may also play an important role in promoting the area.

For this section of the plan it is difficult to identify implementation timelines, as some projects are dependent on market conditions and private investment. Because of this the planning committee chose to identify and rank those initiatives that at the time of the planning process were considered to be catalysts to improve the commercial areas.

Goal/Outcome	Strategy	Action Steps	Responsible Party / Priority Timeline
NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL			
Maintain and enhance the viability of neighborhood commercial areas in and around the Lower Beaver Neighborhood.	Support neighborhood businesses.	The LBNA will work together with residents and business owners to promote neighborhood businesses and encourage residents to shop	LBNA / Ongoing

	locally.	
	Organize a neighborhood social event to showcase local businesses (such as a restaurant crawl to area eateries).	LBNA / Low
	Continue the partnership with the Urbandale Chamber of Commerce and other like-minded organizations to strengthen the business community.	Douglas Avenue Businesses / Ongoing
Encourage property owners to invest in exterior property improvements.	Promote the City's Façade Program and other economic development programs.	LBNA, City OED / High
Enhance the aesthetics and pedestrian amenities along Douglas Avenue.	Look at opportunities make the Douglas Avenue corridor more attractive through unified design elements, safety enhancements, and the incorporation of pedestrian amenities where necessary.	LBNA, CDD NDD / Medium
	Encourage beautification projects by governmental entities, private businesses, and the neighborhood association including median island plantings and streetscape enhancements.	LBNA / Medium
Ensure that properties are in compliance with applicable City codes and ordinances.	Seek compliance with current zoning and site plan regulations to the extent reasonable, while still accommodating reuse and redevelopment for neighborhood retail and commercial uses.	LBNA, CDD / Ongoing
Encourage future growth of neighborhood commercial areas.	Support minimal extension of commercially zoned areas along Douglas Avenue to accommodate reuse and redevelopment of neighborhood retail and commercial uses, while minimizing the impact to adjoining residential property.	LBNA, CDD / Ongoing

Infrastructure

A key component of the Neighborhood Revitalization Program is the Neighborhood Infrastructure Rehabilitation Program (NIRP). This program targets infrastructure rehabilitation in Designated neighborhoods and provides improvements above and beyond the City's annual street and curb maintenance program. The funding for this program is provided by the City of Des Moines' Capital Improvement Program (CIP).

In most cases the available NIRP funding is not able to meet all the infrastructure needs within a neighborhood. Because of this City staff relies on the neighborhood planning committee to assist in the allocation of these limited resources. Public Works staff provides a list of existing infrastructure needs in the neighborhood to the committee for consideration.

The Lower Beaver Neighborhood was allocated \$665,000 in NIRP funds in 2012 to make infrastructure repairs. The Planning Committee favored street repairs as their top priority. Unmet infrastructure needs remaining after NIRP will be considered for inclusion in future City-wide maintenance programs as conditions, priorities, and funding allow.

NIRP Improvements in the Lower Beaver Neighborhood	
INFRASTRUCTURE	
Interim Paving \$335,420 from FY2013 CIP NIRP	34th Street – Douglas Ave to Seneca Ave 36th Place – Madison Ave to Marianna Trl 38th Street – Aurora Ave to 100' North of Aurora Ave 39th Street – Madison Ave to Marianna Trl Aurora Avenue – 3921 Aurora Ave to Lower Beaver Rd Fleming Avenue – Lawnwoods Dr to Lower Beaver Rd Garden Avenue – 30 th St to Lawnwoods Dr Manor Lane – Marianna Trl to Shawnee Ave Marianna Trail – 36 th Pl to Manor Ln Seneca Avenue – 30 th St to Lawnwoods Dr Shawnee Avenue – Aurora Ave to 100' East of 40 th St Shawnee Place – Lower Beaver Rd to Ardmore Rd
Hot Mix Asphalt Overlay (HMA) \$191,240 from FY2013 CIP NIRP	40th Street – Shawnee Ave to Aurora Ave 40th Street – Aurora Ave to Merced St 40th Street – Merced St to Bel Aire Rd Aurora Avenue – Dead End of 27 th St to 29 th St

NIRP Improvements in the Lower Beaver Neighborhood

	<p>Glennor Road – M.L. King Jr. Pkwy to Sherwood Dr M.L. King Jr. Parkway – Sherwood Dr to Madison Ave M.L. King Jr. Parkway – Douglas Ave to Clarkson Ave</p>
<p>Concrete Pavement Restoration (CPR) \$133,900 from FY2013 CIP NIRP</p>	<p>Bel Aire Road – 38th St to 40th Street Bel Aire Road – 38th Street to Lower Beaver Rd Hillcrest Drive – Skyline Dr to Lower Beaver Rd Lawnwood Drive – Hillcrest Dr to Lindlavista Way</p>

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Parks and Trails

Access to recreation, including Parks and Trails, is important to the quality of life of residents. Park and Open Space add economic and social value to the surrounding area. Parklands also provide aesthetic enhancement and environmental benefits while contributing to the composition and urban fabric of the neighborhood and City.

The Lower Beaver Neighborhood is fortunate to have Woodlawn Park located in the heart of the neighborhood. This Park is located just south of the intersection of Twana Drive and Lawnwoods Drive. Woodlawn Park is approximately 6.8 acres in size and includes the following amenities:

- Half Basketball Court
- Two Tennis Courts
- Community Garden
- Open-Air Shelter
- Playground Equipment
- Water Spray Feature
- Picnic Tables
- Charcoal Grills
- Portable Restrooms
- Off-Street Parking

While the park provides open space and recreational opportunities for neighborhood residents there are some features that are dated and in need of updating. The tennis courts for example are due for resurfacing and the half basketball court would be better utilized if it were expanded to a full court layout. The open space in the southwestern portion of the park is heavily used for youth soccer practice and games. This open area should be retained and maintained to allow for continued soccer use, and if the opportunity presents itself, should be expanded for additional soccer usage.

Woodlawn Park, like many City Parks, does not have a master plan prepared to guide future development of the Park. If improvements are proposed for Woodlawn in the future, it is recommended that a site plan for the park be put together with additional neighborhood input. The parcel immediately west of Woodlawn Park is currently under utilized and for sale. The future of this site is currently unknown and will need to be monitored closely going forward.

The need to strategically plan for and implement improvements at Woodlawn is a priority for both the City's Parks Department and Neighborhood Association. It may be necessary to pursue both public and private funding to implement the goals set forth in this section of the plan.

The Lower Beaver Neighborhood is connected to the Greater Des Moines and Central Iowa Trail System via the Trestle to Trestle Trail. This trail runs primarily along the Des Moines River basin and connects to other trails in northwest Des Moines such as the Inter-Urban and Neil Smith Trails. Access to the Trestle to Trestle Trail within the Lower Beaver Neighborhood is limited to points near Euclid Avenue and Lower Beaver Road.

The neighborhood would like to add another access point to the trail going east from the Sawyer's Landing Subdivision. This would allow for better access to the trail but would also provide a direct link to and from Woodlawn Park. In order to accomplish this, there will need to

