

★ **Roll Call Number**

✓
Agenda Item Number

44

.....
Date December 4, 2017

RECEIVE AND FILE THE CONNECT DOWNTOWN STUDY AND REFER TO THE PLAN AND ZONING COMMISSION FOR CONSIDERATION AS AN ELEMENT OF PLANDSM AND REFER TO THE CITY MANAGER FOR RECOMMENDATION OF FUNDING OPTIONS

WHEREAS, on June 8, 2015, by Roll Call No. 15-0974, the City Council authorized issuance of Request for Proposals for professional services to complete the Downtown Walkability Study and authorized implementation of a pilot project in association with the Downtown Walkability Study; and

WHEREAS, the Downtown Walkability Study was later split into two projects – a planning project led and funded by the Greater Des Moines Partnership and the Urban Land Institute of Iowa and a traffic modeling project led and funded by the City. The combination of the planning project and the traffic modeling project was later retitled Connect Downtown; and

WHEREAS, on April 25, 2016, by Roll Call 16-0717, the City Council adopted PlanDSM: Creating Our Tomorrow which states in 2040, Des Moines will have: A complete transportation system providing safe and efficient infrastructure for walking, bicycling, mass transit, and automobiles; and

WHEREAS, on November 6, 2017, Connect Downtown, previously referred to as the Downtown Walkability Study, was presented by private stakeholders and City staff to the City Council; and

WHEREAS, the overall City-wide network developed as part of the MoveDSM transportation master plan is currently under review, and the City Engineer recommends that the Plan and Zoning Commission review of Connect Downtown and MoveDSM occur concurrently.

★ Roll Call Number

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Date December 4, 2017


NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF DES MOINES, IOWA, that the Connect Downtown Study, a copy of which is on file in the office of the City Engineer, be and is hereby received and filed and referred to the Plan and Zoning Commission for review and consideration of inclusion in PlanDSM, with said Commission review to occur concurrently with review of MoveDSM if and when applicable.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the City Manager and staff are hereby authorized and directed to review and recommend funding options for consideration by the Council for implementation of Connect Downtown.

(Council Communication Number 17-827 Attached)

MOVED BY _____ to adopt.

APPROVED AS TO FORM:


Kathleen Vanderpool
Deputy City Attorney

COUNCIL ACTION	YEAS	NAYS	PASS	ABSENT
COWNIE				
COLEMAN				
GATTO				
GRAY				
HENSLEY				
MOORE				
WESTERGAARD				
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



October 26, 2017

Ms. Meg Schneider
Senior Vice President, Business Resources and Community Development
Greater Des Moines Partnership
700 Locust Street, Suite 100
Des Moines, Iowa 50309

Re: Connect Downtown Project

Dear Meg,

We commend the City of Des Moines, the Urban Land Institute of Iowa and the Greater Des Moines Partnership for its work investigating opportunities to make getting around Des Moines safer, more comfortable and more convenient by embarking on the Connect Downtown initiative. We believe a vibrant and safe downtown is important in our ability to attract and retain talent here in Des Moines. We support initiatives which encourage employees to be more physically active by making it safe and convenient for them to engage in activities such as walking and biking.

We understand that the key elements of the proposal are: changing the majority of one-way streets to two-way and using space on streets with excess capacity for parking and/or bike lanes, and that these changes will be piloted and tested before they are implemented. We appreciate the opportunity to review results and provide input before these changes are made permanent.

We believe that one of the many positive aspects of working in downtown Des Moines are reasonable commute times. We know that the changes to make Des Moines a more walkable city come with trade-offs in potentially longer commute times. It is important to us that we maintain a good balance between the two. We plan to commission a study to do specific analysis of these impacts to our own campus and would be happy to share the results with you.

Lastly, we know how important it is to understand the financial implications of these changes and have a solid funding plan, both in regard to the initial improvements as well as the City's ability to provide adequate maintenance and upkeep. We look forward to learning more about the funding plan and would appreciate an opportunity to provide input.

Thank you for your continued partnership.

Sincerely,

Teri Button
Vice President, Corporate Real Estate and Aviation



Think. Learn. **Grow.**

...becoming the model for urban education in the United States.

26 October 2017

Re: Support Letter for Connect Downtown Project

Mayor Cownie and Des Moines City Council:

A thriving Downtown core is important for our entire region to ensure Greater Des Moines is an attractive place to live, work and play. I am pleased to publicly support the Connect Downtown initiative to make getting around Downtown safer, more comfortable and more convenient.

Making Downtown a safe and easy-to-navigate environment is important to ensuring Downtown's continued growth. To capitalize on this growth, we must ensure safety. Connect Downtown concepts encourage an environment that slows vehicle traffic without significantly increasing commute times. This leads to more safety for all modes of transportation, including Downtown workers who walk to meetings, lunch or to experience the many after-work amenities our region offers.

In response to increased Downtown housing opportunities, Des Moines Public Schools recently expanded capacity at Walnut Street School. We appreciate all efforts to ensure the safety of our young Walnut Street School students.

Recently, in alignment with Connect Downtown's efforts, the City of Des Moines launched a pilot project on East Grand Avenue in the Historic East Village. This project is designed to more effectively utilize existing space on the street in the vibrant shopping and restaurant district. I commend Connect Downtown for leading this effort, and look forward to learning lessons that will help improve mobility throughout Downtown.

These changes add to the vibrancy of our region and make Des Moines an even more attractive location for talented workers. Des Moines Public Schools supports Connect Downtown's work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Thomas M. Ahart".

Thomas M. Ahart, Ed.D. | Office of the Superintendent
2100 Fleur Drive | Des Moines, Iowa 50321 | P: 515-242-7766 | F: 515-242-7579
www.dmschools.org | facebook.com/dmschools

October 25, 2017

City of Des Moines
400 E. Court Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50309

Re: Support Letter for Connect Downtown Project

Mayor Cownie and Des Moines City Council:

A vibrant Downtown core is crucial for Greater Des Moines' (DSM's) continued growth and success. We are pleased to publicly support the Connect Downtown initiative to make Downtown transportation safer, more comfortable and more convenient.

Downtown Des Moines has experienced tremendous momentum in recent years with more than 40 development projects underway or recently completed. This success is due in large part to our ability to push the envelope on new ideas. Connect Downtown does this by encouraging an environment that leads to more safety for all modes of transportation. This concept will make Downtown more inviting for people to visit. It will add to the vibrancy that Downtown workers experience and make it easier for our community to attract companies to DSM. It will also make Downtown an even better place for people to live.

Through Connect Downtown's efforts, the City of Des Moines has launched a pilot project on East Grand Avenue in the Historic East Village. I commend the City of Des Moines for taking a leadership role in this effort. The changes will slow down traffic without significantly decreasing commute times and make the area more inviting for street activity. We look forward to learning lessons that will help improve mobility throughout DSM.

We strongly support Connect Downtown's work to add to the mobility and vibrancy of Downtown Des Moines.

Sincerely,



Jay Byers
CEO



Healthiest State INITIATIVE

301 Grand Avenue
Des Moines, IA 50309
515-309-3225
info@iowahealthieststate.com

October 6, 2017

Dear Mayor Cownie and City Council,

I am writing to you regarding the Connect Downtown plan and our support for adopting the key recommendations in the proposal. As a statewide nonprofit organization, our vision is to make Iowa the healthiest state in the nation.

A key initiative we are working on across the state is to improve opportunities for Iowans to walk, ride their bicycle, drive and use transit. There is significant evidence that active transportation improves health of citizens while increasing the economic vibrancy of the community. Connect Downtown aims to address all of these forms of transportation and builds upon the city's current momentum and vibrancy. There are many benefits for communities who embrace active transportation including creating a place where people want to live and/or plan and increasing retail sales and property values, as seen on Ingersoll Avenue and East Locust Street in the East Village.

Connect Downtown align with the active transportation evidenced-based strategies:

- Restoring the street grid to allow for more options to get around; and
- Eliminating one-way streets, making it easier for to get around downtown, reducing speed and improving safety for both drivers and walkers or bikers.

Lastly, I want to commend the city for supporting the East Grand Avenue pilot project. This pilot will make the Historic East Village more walkable and safer for pedestrians by slowing down traffic without increasing commute times. Additionally, it allows the city to maximize the existing space and accommodate the residential and commercial growth taking place in the neighborhood.

I applaud you for taking this step, in agreement with the PlanDSM vision, to have a complete transportation system providing safe and efficient infrastructure for walking, bicycling, mass transit, and automobiles.

Sincerely,

Jami Haberl, MPH, MHA
Executive Director

To improve the physical, social and emotional well-being of Iowans.



October 19, 2017

To the City Council and City Manager:

I'm writing on behalf of the board of Capitol Park Neighborhood Association to express support for the Connect Downtown recommendations we have reviewed so far.

As you know, our participation in Viva East Bank invites us to consider how our neighborhoods are connected to (or separated from) downtown. Our favorite part of the Connect Downtown proposal is that it would help diminish barriers between neighborhoods.

Specifically, we look forward to safer travel along and across the corridors that currently divide our neighborhood: E. 14th & E. 15th, Pennsylvania & E. 6th, and University Ave. Even if E. 14th and E. 15th won't be two-way, we strongly support adding facilities to allow safer bike and pedestrian transportation. This will help connect areas like Grand View, Union Park, and Capitol Park to downtown, reducing the appearance and feeling of isolation.

East University Avenue is a particular challenge for us, because it bisects our neighborhood, and makes it feel like two separate neighborhoods. We hope you will adopt the recommendations that would make it easier to cross and navigate, especially for the students walking to Carver, Hiatt, and East.

East Grand Avenue is not inside Capitol Park's boundaries, but we feel connected to the business corridor there because of its proximity, and because of working with them as part of Viva East Bank. We are hopeful that it can become safer and more accessible for pedestrians and others. The cosmetic improvements are less important than the practical ones. If improvements like those made to Grand Avenue in the East Village extended to the Hubbell intersection, that could be great for the neighborhood residents and businesses. (For example, I would love to be able to safely ride my bike from, say, Union Park to Los Laureles.)

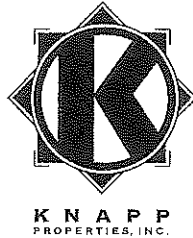
I commend Connect Downtown for their work gathering and incorporating neighborhood feedback. If city staff and/or decision makers have further questions about our priorities or other aspects of implementing these recommendations, we are happy to address them.

Thank you for your time.

Respectfully,

Chelsea Lepley

Chair, Capitol Park Neighborhood Association



October 9, 2017

Re: Support Letter for Connect Downtown Project

Mayor Cownie and Des Moines City Council:

A thriving Downtown core is important for our entire region to ensure Greater Des Moines is an attractive place to live, work and play. I am pleased to publicly support the Connect Downtown initiative to make getting around Downtown safer, more comfortable and more convenient.

Making Downtown a safe and easy-to-navigate environment is important to ensuring Downtown's continued growth. More than 40 development projects are underway or have been recently completed and the concepts proposed in Connect Downtown will encourage additional growth and vibrancy in Downtown.

To capitalize on this growth, we must ensure safety. Connect Downtown concepts encourage an environment that slows vehicle traffic without significantly increasing commute times. This leads to more safety for all modes of transportation, including Downtown workers who walk to meetings, lunch or to experience the many after-work amenities our region offers. We know that a walkable community draws talented people and businesses, and is attractive to investors.

Recently, in alignment with Connect Downtown's efforts, the City of Des Moines launched a pilot project on East Grand Avenue in the Historic East Village. This project is designed to more effectively utilize existing space on the street in the vibrant shopping and restaurant district. I commend Connect Downtown for leading this effort, and look forward to learning lessons that will help improve mobility throughout Downtown.

The proposals in Connect Downtown maximize the potential of our existing streets in a cost-effective way. These changes add to the vibrancy of our region and make DSM an even more attractive location for talented workers.

Knapp Properties strongly supports Connect Downtown's work. We applaud you for taking this step, in agreement with the PlanDSM vision, to have a complete transportation system providing safe and efficient infrastructure for walking, bicycling, mass transit, and automobiles.

Sincerely,

Gerard D. Neugent
President and CEO
Knapp Properties, Inc.



Des Moines Downtown Chamber
301 Grand Avenue
Des Moines, IA 50309
(515) 309-3229
www.DTChamber.com

October 18, 2017

Re: Connect Downtown Project Support Letter

Mayor Cownie and Des Moines City Council:

The Des Moines Downtown Chamber of Commerce supports the Connect Downtown initiative. A safer and more convenient place for all transportation modes will help enhance Downtown as a place to live, work, and shop.

A walkable community draws talented people and businesses, and attracts investors. The improvements made on Ingersoll Avenue and East Locust Street in East Village have demonstrated increased retail sales and property values resulting from these types of enhancements.

Two-way street systems are better for both downtown pedestrian activity and retail viability. Making Downtown safe and convenient is critical to continued growth. Safety for Downtown workers who walk to meetings, lunch, or participate in the many after-work amenities, is good for the entire community.

The changes to East Grand Avenue will help support retail businesses in Historic East Village by making the neighborhood more inviting for people to walk as they explore the neighborhood and visit multiple businesses.

We realize these changes come with some trade-offs. Proposals in Connect Downtown cost-effectively maximize the potential of our existing streets. For most, commute times won't significantly change as we create a more livable and vibrant downtown.

The Des Moines Downtown Chamber of Commerce strongly supports Connect Downtown.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Chittenden
Executive Director



Stephen M. Lacy
Chairman & Chief Executive
Officer
Meredith Corporation
1716 Locust Street
Des Moines, IA 50309
T 515-284-3895
F 515-284-3548
steve.lacy@meredith.com

October 19, 2017

Re: Support Letter for Connect Downtown Project

Dear Mayor Cownie and Des Moines City Council:

A thriving Downtown core is essential to making Greater Des Moines an attractive place to live, work and play. We at Meredith Corporation believe that the Connect Downtown initiative is one of the most important things Des Moines can do to enhance its downtown, and we are pleased to publicly support that initiative.

There are a number of reasons we think this is important to our city. First, Meredith Corporation and our region as a whole have made wellness a major priority. **Connect Downtown will ensure a safer environment for employees who are already biking, walking and running in the city core. We believe that making Downtown Des Moines friendlier for those activities will also encourage employees at Meredith and across our metro to exercise more and improve their health.**

Additionally, we recruit many employees to Des Moines, and we bring very large customers and vendors to meetings here. We also support the Greater Des Moines Partnership efforts to attract large conventions and new investments to Downtown. **The Connect Downtown initiative will show employment prospects, potential investors and visitors alike that Des Moines is serious about safety, wellness, and encouraging people to take time to enjoy our amazing city.** First impressions are important, and Connect Downtown will signal immediately that we know what matters. The East Village is a great example of what this can be. It's impressive that the new streetscape so effectively communicates the importance of bikers and pedestrians to our life here.

We understand from the extensive research already undertaken that Connect Downtown will not significantly increase commute times, and we feel comfortable with the minor adjustments the plan would make to our campus traffic flow.

We applaud the work that has been done to date on Connect Downtown, and wholeheartedly support moving forward to complete the plan as quickly as possible.

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Steve Lacy".

Steve Lacy

October 19, 2017

Re: Support Letter for Connect Downtown Project

Dear Mayor Cownie and Des Moines City Council:

I am writing to express Wells Fargo's support of the Connect Downtown initiative. As we can all agree, creating a safe, accessible place where people want to live, work, and socialize is beneficial to the entire community. It encourages business development and assists in recruiting top talent.

Making Downtown a safe and easy-to-navigate environment is important to ensuring Downtown's continued growth, and with this growth, a thriving workforce. To capitalize on this momentum, we must ensure safety. Connect Downtown concepts encourage an environment that slows vehicle traffic without significantly increasing commute times. This leads to increased safety for all modes of transportation, including Downtown workers who walk to meetings, lunch, or to experience the many after-work amenities our region offers.

Recently, in alignment with Connect Downtown's efforts, the City of Des Moines launched a pilot project on East Grand Avenue in the Historic East Village. This project is designed to more effectively utilize existing space on the street in the vibrant shopping and restaurant district. I commend Connect Downtown for leading this effort, and look forward to seeing the successes that come with improved mobility throughout Downtown.

These changes add to the vibrancy of our region and make Des Moines an even more attractive location for new businesses and talented workers. Wells Fargo supports Connect Downtown's work.

Sincerely,



Marta Codina
Regional Bank President

Together we'll go far





A Pillar of
GREATER DES MOINES
PARTNERSHIP

700 Locust St., Ste. 100
Des Moines, Iowa 50309
p: (515) 286-4950
DowntownDesMoines.com
DSMpartnership.com

October 16, 2017

City of Des Moines
400 E. Court Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50309

Re: Support Letter for Connect Downtown Project

Mayor Cownie and Des Moines City Council:

A vibrant Downtown must be safe and promote mobility. We are pleased to publicly support the Connect Downtown initiative to make getting around Downtown safer, more comfortable and more convenient.

Connect Downtown encourages an environment that slows vehicle traffic without significantly increasing commute times. This makes roads safer and more inviting for all modes of transportation, including driving, bicycling and walking. Providing a safe environment is important for encouraging people to experience the shopping, restaurants, attractions and festivals that Downtown offers. It is also important in making Downtown an attractive place for people to live and work.

We commend Connect Downtown's direction and the City of Des Moines' leadership in launching a pilot project to make East Grand Avenue safer and more convenient for residents, workers and visitors. The project is designed to more effectively utilize existing space on the street and will encourage more people to enjoy the unique shops and restaurants in Historic East Village. This project can create a springboard for more mobility projects Downtown.

These changes add to the vibrancy of our region and make Downtown Des Moines an even more attractive location for people to live, work and experience. The Downtown Community Alliance is proud to support Connect Downtown's efforts.

Sincerely,

Hallie Still-Caris
Shareholder of Nyemaster Goode, P.C.
2017 Board Co-Chair, Downtown Community Alliance

Rick Tollakson
President and CEO, Hubbell Realty Company
2017 Board Co-Chair, Downtown Community Alliance

DSMUSA



Monday, Oct. 16, 2017
Re: Support Letter for Connect Downtown Project

Mayor Cownie and Des Moines City Council:

A thriving Downtown core is important for our entire region to ensure Greater Des Moines is an attractive place to live, work, play and receive an education. I am pleased to publicly support the Connect Downtown initiative to make getting around Downtown safer, more comfortable and more convenient.

Making Downtown a safe and easy-to-navigate environment is important to ensuring Downtown's continued growth. To capitalize on this growth, we must ensure safety. Connect Downtown concepts encourage an environment that slows vehicle traffic without significantly increasing commute times. This leads to more safety for all modes of transportation, including our many DMACC Urban students who walk to class, ride bikes and use public transportation.

These changes add to the vibrancy of our region and make DSM an even more attractive location for talented students, workers and employers. Des Moines Area Community College strongly supports Connect Downtown's work.

Sincerely,

Anne M. Howsare Boyens, Ph.D.
Provost
Des Moines Area Community College, Urban/Des Moines Campus
1100 7th St
Des Moines, IA 50314
515.248.7206 (Office)
amhowsare@dmacc.edu
www.dmacc.edu

Ankeny Campus 2006 S. Ankeny Blvd. Ankeny, IA 50023-3993 515-964-6200	Boone Campus 1125 Hancock Drive Boone, IA 50036-5399 515-432-7203	Carroll Campus 906 N. Grant Road Carroll, IA 51401-2525 712-792-1755	Newton Campus 600 N. 2nd Avenue W. Newton, IA 50208-3049 641-791-3622	Urban Campus 1100 7th Street Des Moines, IA 50314-2597 515-244-4226	West Campus 5959 Grand Avenue W. Des Moines, IA 50266-5302 515-633-2407
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DMACC at Perry Vankirk Career Academy | DMACC Career Academy, Hunziker Center, Ames | DMACC Transportation Institute
Evelyn K. Davis Center for Working Families | DMACC Center for Career & Professional Development at Southridge | DMACC Capitol Center



October 12, 2017

Mayor Frank Cownie
Councilman Chris Coleman
Councilman Joe Gatto
Councilman Bill Gray
Councilwoman Chris Hensley
Councilman Skip Moore
Councilwoman Linda Westergaard

Dear Mayor Cownie and Members of the Des Moines City Council,

I'm submitting this letter in support of the Connect Downtown initiative focused on making downtown Des Moines safer for all modes of transportation – cars, pedestrians, bicyclists, and public transit.

At Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield, we are particularly interested in this initiative as it impacts us in two significant ways. It primarily impacts us as an employer of almost 2,000 individuals in the Western Gateway. And secondarily impacts us as a health insurer of many Iowans – several within Polk County.

We know that the design of the built environment has a significant impact on healthy behaviors. By creating an environment that makes transit safe for all – our employees are more apt to engage in healthy behaviors of walking or biking to work or during lunch breaks. This will help create an active and vibrant downtown community resulting in greater retail vitality. And, it will have a positive influence on our ability to retain existing talent and recruit new talent to Des Moines.

As a health insurer, we are always supportive of initiatives that make it easier for citizens to make healthy choices – such as choosing active transportation. It is easier for citizens to engage in active transportation when they have a built environment that makes them feel safe as a result of adequate sidewalk structures, protected bike lanes, and traffic calming. We understand the Connect Downtown proposal will employ these features – and more.

Please know that we appreciate the great working relationship we have with the City of Des Moines. As this project progresses, we want to continue to work with city staff in the actual street layout design around the Wellmark building which takes into account our drop off locations, parking entrances and exits, and dock functionality.

Finally, given our popular location (in the Western Gateway), we appreciate our ongoing partnership with the city and Des Moines Police traffic department during those events that do impact our employee traffic flow. Thank you for your ongoing support.

If you have any questions about this letter of support for the Connect Downtown proposal, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Laura Jackson
Executive Vice President

Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Iowa, Wellmark Health Plan of Iowa, Inc., Wellmark Synergy Health, Inc., Wellmark Value Health Plan, Inc. and Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield of South Dakota are independent licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.

1331 Grand Avenue | PO Box 9232 | Des Moines, Iowa 50306-9232 | Wellmark.com



Where & means more.™

October 12, 2017

Re: Support Letter for Connect Downtown Project
Mayor Cownie and Des Moines City Council:

A thriving Downtown core is important for our entire region to ensure Greater Des Moines is an attractive place to live, work and play. We are pleased to publicly support the Connect Downtown initiative to make getting around Downtown safer, more comfortable and more convenient.

Making Downtown a safe and easy-to-navigate environment is important to ensuring Downtown's continued growth. To capitalize on this growth, we must ensure safety. Connect Downtown concepts encourage an environment that slows vehicle traffic without significantly increasing commute times. This leads to more safety for all modes of transportation, including Downtown workers who walk to meetings, lunch or to experience the many after-work amenities our region offers.

Recently, in alignment with Connect Downtown's efforts, the City of Des Moines launched a pilot project on East Grand Avenue in the Historic East Village. This project is designed to more effectively utilize existing space on the street in the vibrant shopping and restaurant district. We commend Connect Downtown for leading this effort, and look forward to learning lessons that will help improve mobility throughout Downtown.

These changes add to the vibrancy of our region and make DSM an even more attractive location for talented workers. Kum & Go strongly supports Connect Downtown's work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chad Rasmussen".

Chad Rasmussen
VP of Real Estate



October 6, 2017

Mayor Cownie and Des Moines City Council Members
City of Des Moines
400 East Court Ave
Des Moines, Iowa 50309

Re: Connect Downtown Letter of Support

Dear Mayor Cownie and Council:

Connect Downtown is investigating opportunities to make getting around Downtown safer, more comfortable and more convenient. The City of Des Moines, Urban Land Institute Iowa and Greater Des Moines Partnership are partnering on this project. The major elements of this proposal are eliminating the majority of one-way streets and converting them back to two-way streets and using space on streets with excess capacity to add parking and/or add bike lanes.

I am writing this letter on behalf of Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority (DART). DART continues to offer transit services to many people downtown in order to meet their mobility needs. The Connect Downtown project supports DART in its aim to improve access to and within Downtown, making it safer and in turn helping build momentum and vibrancy between all modes of transportation. Currently DART continues to help thousands of people in the downtown area alone, and this will only increase with the 40 development projects that are currently underway or have been recently completed. Proposals in Connect Downtown restore the street grid within Downtown and allow for more options to get around. Two-way street systems are better for both pedestrian activity and retail viability in downtowns. Eliminating one-way streets will make it easier and less confusing to get around the downtown, and will reduce speeding. All of these proposals are beneficial to making public transit easier to use and access, and we support them.

We applaud you for taking this step, in agreement with the PlanDSM vision, to have a complete transportation system providing safe and efficient infrastructure for walking, bicycling, mass transit, and automobiles.

I am very excited about this project and its potential not only for DART to provide a high-quality transit service, but also for improving the vibrancy and access in downtown Des Moines. I encourage the city to consider this proposal and as always, please feel free to get in touch with me if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elizabeth Presutti". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Elizabeth Presutti
DART Chief Executive Officer

Des Moines
Area Regional
Transit Authority

620 Cherry Street
Des Moines, Iowa
50309-4530

515-283-8100
Fax 515-283-8135
ridedart.com

Meg Schneider

From: Anne Pham
Sent: Friday, October 06, 2017 2:34 PM
To: 'LindaW@dmgov.org'; 'CColeman@dmgov.org'; 'fcownie@dmgov.org';
'clhensley@dmgov.org'; 'dirauh@dmgov.org'; 'skipmoore@dmgov.org';
'billgray@dmgov.org'; 'joegatto@dmgov.org'
Subject: E Grand Avenue Complete Streets Conversion

Honorable Mayor and Council,

I grew up in Des Moines and left back in 2002, to return 10 years later to a city that has remarkably improved. I am extremely pleased with the progress being made with the Connect Downtown project, and look forward to continued movement in advancing the access for walkers, bicyclists, and overall healthier modes of transport.

I have had the opportunity to explore the E Grand Pilot Project as a motorist, pedestrian, and cyclist. Having to travel quite a bit in my line of work, I am familiar with the configuration of lanes, where parking is adjacent to the roadway and the protected bike lane is adjacent to the sidewalk. It is what is seen in all major downtowns, so I am surprised why it is such a new concept to Des Moines. I am much more aware as a motorist in this area, and much more comfortable as a pedestrian and cyclist. I feel comfortable allowing my children to walk and ride here (as kids don't always have the best awareness, and I cannot trust all motorists to compensate for this), and as a result we have spent much more time exploring the East Village and its wonderful offerings.

I hope to see these kinds of projects expand throughout the area to enable healthier modes of transport and recreation, that we may be able to achieve the level of comfort and safety as experienced by my family along E Grand.

Regards,

Anne Pham

OEM Program Manager

Dee Zee Manufacturing

Phone: 515-265-7331 ext. 1354

www.deezeoem.com



Friday October 6, 2017

Re: Support Letter for Connect Downtown Project

Mayor Cownie and Des Moines City Council:

A thriving Downtown core is important for our entire region to ensure Greater Des Moines is an attractive place to live, work and play. Sherman Hill Association is pleased to publicly support the Connect Downtown initiative to make getting around Downtown safer, more comfortable and more convenient.

Making Downtown a safe and easy-to-navigate environment is important to ensuring Downtown's continued growth. To capitalize on this growth, we must ensure safety. Connect Downtown concepts encourage an environment that slows vehicle traffic without significantly increasing commute times. This leads to more safety for all modes of transportation, including Downtown workers who walk to meetings, lunch or to experience the many after-work amenities our region offers.

Recently, in alignment with Connect Downtown's efforts, the City of Des Moines launched a pilot project on East Grand Avenue in the Historic East Village. This project is designed to more effectively utilize existing space on the street in the vibrant shopping and restaurant district. I commend Connect Downtown for leading this effort, and look forward to learning lessons that will help improve mobility throughout Downtown.

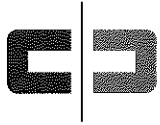
These changes add to the vibrancy of our region and make DSM an even more attractive location for talented workers. The Sherman Hill Association strongly supports Connect Downtown's work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Schlarmann", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David Schlarmann, President
Sherman Hill Association, Inc.
Dschlarm@gmail.com

Sherman Hill Association, Inc. • 1620 Pleasant Street, Suite 204 • Des Moines, IA 50314



CHRISTENSEN
DEVELOPMENT

October 4, 2017

Re: Support Letter for Connect Downtown Project

Mayor Cownie and Des Moines City Council:

A thriving Downtown core is important for our entire region to ensure Greater Des Moines is an attractive place to live, work and play. I am pleased to publicly support the Connect Downtown initiative to make getting around Downtown safer, more comfortable and more convenient.

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These changes add to the vibrancy of our region and make DSM an even more attractive location for talented workers. Christensen Development strongly supports Connect Downtown's work.

Sincerely,

Jake Christensen
President – Christensen Development



September 29, 2017

Ms. Meg Schneider
Senior Vice President, Business Resources and Community Development
Greater Des Moines Partnership
700 Locust Street, Ste. 100
Des Moines, Iowa 50309

Dear Ms. Schneider:

Mercy Medical Center – Des Moines is pleased to support the Connect Downtown master plan proposed through the joint effort of the City of Des Moines, Urban Land Institute of Iowa and the Greater Des Moines Partnership.

Mercy agrees with the Connect Downtown partners that this initiative will make Downtown streets safer for all modes of transportation and will encourage business and community development. This work is consistent with the efforts of the 6th Avenue Corridor, Inc., which Mercy has been a founding supporter. The 6th Avenue Corridor effort to create a new streetscape along 6th Avenue – including new pedestrian safety features, aesthetic improvements, and sustainability concepts – will be strengthened through implementation of the Connect Downtown plan. And, components of the Connect Downtown plan will support Mercy's campus master plan effort to revitalize and expand its Downtown campus.

We understand this is a master level plan and that stakeholders like Mercy will be engaged for input as specific portions of the plan are prepared for implementation. We look forward to continued participation in this important project.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on and support the Connect Downtown plan toward improving transportation access to and within Downtown Des Moines.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael A. Wegner". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Michael A. Wegner
Interim President



HDCG

Hatch Development Group

333 E. Grand Avenue, Unit #101
Des Moines, IA 50309

www.hatchdevelopment.com

Developing Urban Neighborhoods. Des Moines. Cedar Rapids.

September 29, 2017

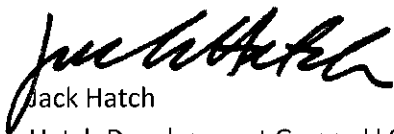
City Council and Mayor
400 Robert D Ray Drive
Second Floor
Des Moines, IA 50309

Dear Mayor and City Council:

Hatch Development Group and Perennial Properties are both very supportive of the street design changes that were made to E. Grand Avenue. We developed and manage the 115-unit East Village Square Apartments at 333 E. Grand Avenue, and we think that the redesign of E Grand Avenue has made the neighborhood more pedestrian friendly without inhibiting the flow of traffic.

We are supportive of implementing the same improvements to other downtown streets as this is an inexpensive way to increase walkability and safety in the core of our city.

Sincerely,



Jack Hatch
Hatch Development Group, LLC and Perennial Properties