



Roll Call Number

Agenda Item Number

*60C ✓*

Date July 15, 2019

**APPROVAL OF THE FRANKLIN AREA NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION PLAN  
AS AN ELEMENT OF THE PLANDSM: CREATING OUR TOMORROW PLAN**

**WHEREAS**, on April 25, 2016, by Roll Call No. 16-0717, the City Council adopted Plan DSM: Creating Our Tomorrow; and

**WHEREAS**, on June 25, 2018, by Roll Call No. 18-1099, the City Council received a report prepared by consultant czbLLC regarding strategies for the City's Neighborhood Revitalization Program, including neighborhood planning and revitalization work; and

**WHEREAS**, on September 24, 2018, by Roll Call No. 18-1617, the City Council authorized Community Development Department staff to redesign the Neighborhood Revitalization Program based on the recommendations contained within the czbLLC report, selected four neighborhood areas pilots for small area plans and subsequent revitalization work, and approved a Professional Services Agreement with czbLLC to provide technical assistance to the City for implementing the recommendations contained within said report; and

**WHEREAS**, a portion of the Waveland Park and Beaverdale neighborhoods, described as the "Franklin Area" and bounded by 48<sup>th</sup> Street to the west, Hickman Road to the north, Beaver Avenue and 41<sup>st</sup> Street to the east, and University to the south, was selected as a pilot target area or "special investment district" based on existing assets and momentum to build upon, and czbLLC prepared a Neighborhood Revitalization Plan for said area with support from City staff and neighborhood input; and

**WHEREAS**, on June 20, 2019, the City Plan and Zoning Commission held a hearing on the proposed Neighborhood Revitalization Plan for the Franklin Area Special Investment District and voted 12-0 to recommend approval of the plan as an element of the existing PlanDSM: Creating Our Tomorrow Plan, as stated in the attached communication from the Commission.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, by the City Council of the City of Des Moines, Iowa, that the attached communication from the Plan and Zoning Commission is hereby received and filed, and that the Neighborhood Revitalization Plan for the Franklin Area Special Investment District is hereby approved and adopted as an element of the existing PlanDSM: Creating Our Tomorrow Plan.

(Council Communication No. 19-315)

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

MOVED BY \_\_\_\_\_ TO APPROVE.

*Glenna K. Frank*  
Glenna K. Frank, Assistant City Attorney

(21-2019-4.10)

COUNCIL ACTION	YEAS	NAYS	PASS	ABSENT
COWNIE				
BOESEN				
COLEMAN				
GATTO				
GRAY				
MANDELBAUM				
WESTERGAARD				
TOTAL				

MOTION CARRIED APPROVED

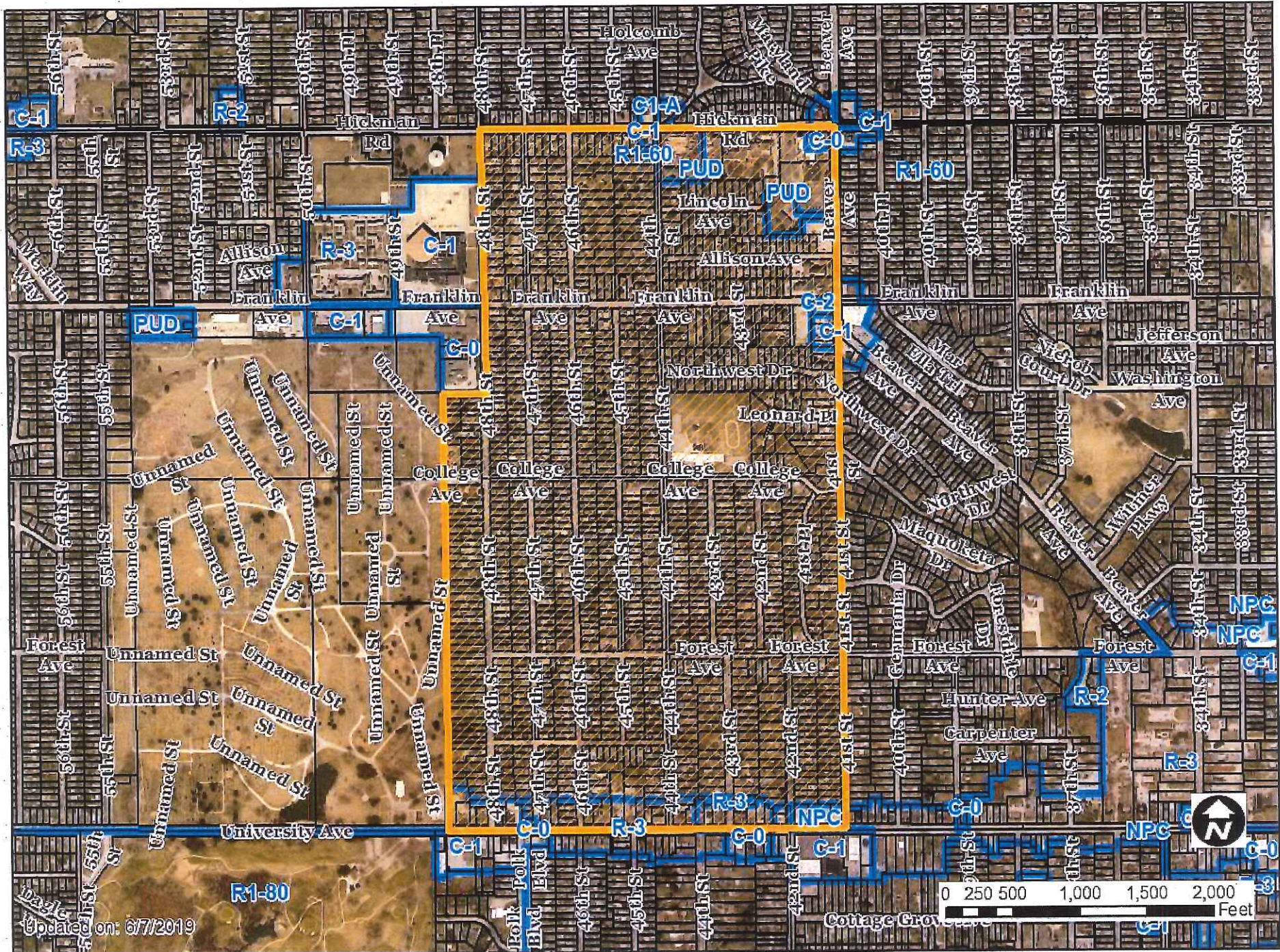
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

**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



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To: Members of the Des Moines Plan and Zoning Commission

Re: Neighborhood Revitalization Plan for the Franklin Area Special Investment District

On behalf of the Franklin Area Steering Committee, I am writing to express our full support for approval of the Neighborhood Revitalization Plan for the Franklin Area Special Investment District.

Over the last six months, a dedicated group of neighborhood representatives from both Waveland Park and Beaverdale have met routinely with City of Des Moines staff and consultants with czbLLC to discuss the future state of our neighborhoods.

We are pleased to have been selected as one of the city's first four special investment districts as part of the new neighborhood revitalization process and look forward to the positive change this will bring about.

The Committee would like to thank everyone involved in the process and is eagerly awaiting the implementation of the plan upon final approval.

Sincerely,

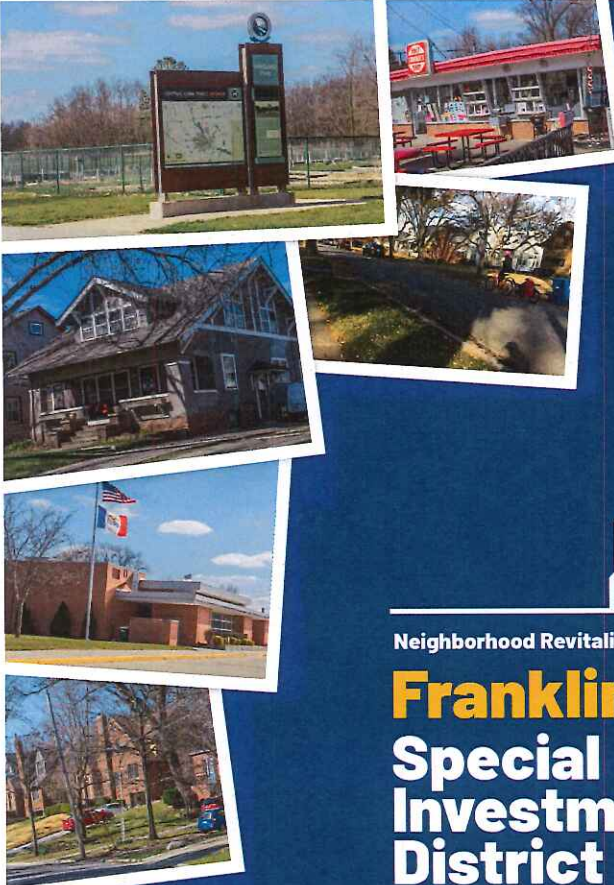


Ethan Standard

President – Waveland Park Neighborhood Association



60C

DRAFT



Neighborhood Revitalization Plan for the  
**Franklin Area**  
 Special  
 Investment  
 District

JULY 2019

Prepared for the City of Des Moines by czbLLC

DRAFT

## Acknowledgements

### Des Moines Mayor and City Council

### Des Moines Plan and Zoning Commission

### Stakeholder Committee Members

- Brad Anderson
- Mike Armstrong
- Scott Bents
- Leslie Berckes
- Charles Chedester
- Teva Dawson
- Naura Godar
- Theresa Graziano
- Cece Ibson
- Mike Kamper
- Sasha Kamper
- Betsy Parker
- Ethan Standard

### City Staff

- Chris Johansen, Community Development Director
- Kyle Larson, AICP, Senior City Planner
- Amber Lynch, AICP, Senior City Planner
- Laura Peters, ASLA, Assistant City Planner (*Project Lead*)
- Anuprit Minhas, AICP, Assistant City Planner
- Carrie Kruse, Economic Development Coordinator

With assistance from various City staff members across multiple City departments.

**Consultants:** czbLLC with Fall Creek Consultants and MJB Consulting

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# Introduction

In many respects, the Franklin Area of Des Moines reflects the idyllic middle class neighborhood that hovers in the American memory from the mid 20th Century.

Verdant streets with tidy, well-built homes designed for the nuclear family, kids riding bikes to the ice cream stand or walking in groups to the neighborhood school. A trip to the corner plaza to fetch a gallon of milk waylaid by a chat with the neighbor.

Much of this imagery still applies to the neighborhood, but it's also a huge oversimplification.

A wide range of household types at different life stages call the Franklin Area home today, and families with kids account for fewer than 30% of all households. Homes are in generally good repair, but a troubling share of properties are showing signs of long-deferred maintenance as they approach nearly a century in service. And while levels of neighbor-to-neighbor engagement and resident leadership are stronger here than in many other parts of Des Moines, resident turnover and divergent lifestyles make engagement an ongoing challenge to sustain.

To residents, planning for the future of the Franklin Area is about embracing the qualities that have made the neighborhood livable for decades, improving on many of those qualities, and adapting to make the much more complex neighborhood of the present and future more inclusive, more active and walkable, and more engaged. **This plan provides a framework for achieving these goals.**



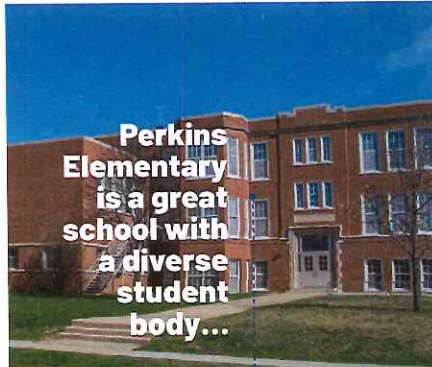
**Our neighborhood has parklike qualities and is a great place to walk and bike...**

**How can we make this an even safer and more enjoyable place to walk and bike?**

**What can be done to make our homes, businesses, and other assets feel more connected?**



**Our homes are charming and our housing market is stable...**



**Perkins Elementary is a great school with a diverse student body...**

**How can we keep blight from threatening this stability?**

**How can we encourage homeowners to preserve the qualities that make our homes charming?**

**How can we take the lead from Perkins and make other aspects of neighborhood life more inclusive?**

**What can we do to promote the Franklin Area as a neighborhood of choice for families?**

## Planning Process Overview

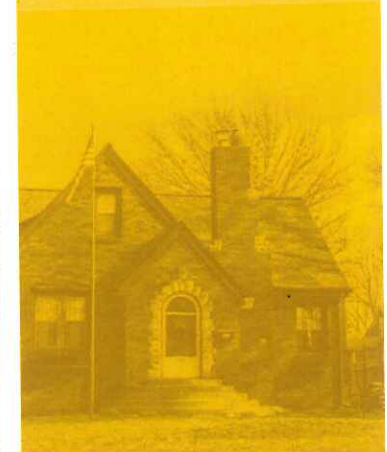


In 2017, the City of Des Moines undertook an evaluation of its Neighborhood Revitalization Program—the third evaluation of the program and its performance since its inception in 1990. The evaluation included a comprehensive look at housing conditions and market dynamics throughout Des Moines in order to understand the impact of previous revitalization work and needs going forward.

The evaluation found that neighborhood engagement and the cultivation of active neighborhood associations has been a key accomplishment of the last three decades, among other successes. It also found, however, that a relatively small number of neighborhoods in Des Moines are genuinely strong—and that most neighborhoods are somewhere between strong and distressed. This large and vulnerable “middle” was identified as a priority for future revitalization work due to the fiscal threat that their decline would pose to the City (resulting in less capacity to invest in all neighborhoods) and the cost efficiency of working in areas that are still stable enough to respond well to revitalization efforts.

Given the sheer size of Des Moines’s middle neighborhoods—which contain nearly 70% of the city’s residential properties—it was necessary to begin this next generation of neighborhood revitalization by focusing attention and resources in a handful of areas to test ideas and develop an effective toolkit of resources to deploy more widely over time. Four **Special Investment Districts** in middle neighborhoods were selected for this pilot round, including the Franklin Area bounded by 48th Street to the west, Hickman Road to the north, Beaver Avenue and 41st Street to the east, and University Avenue to the south.

This plan for the **Franklin Area Special Investment District** was developed between November 2018 and May 2019 by the City of Des Moines in partnership with a steering committee comprised of local residents and business owners, with additional information from a public survey and stakeholder interviews. It provides a framework for revitalization efforts over a **10-year planning horizon** in this Special Investment District. And, together with three similar plans produced simultaneously in Oak Park / Highland Park, Columbus Park, and Drake, it provides a model to replicate—with modifications as necessary—in other middle neighborhoods of Des Moines.





**Franklin  
Area Special  
Investment  
District**

## A Brand and a Vision

At the core of this plan is a statement that expresses the Franklin neighborhood's most important attributes today and the promise it is making to those who choose to live here. It identifies what residents currently see as chief selling points, but it is also aspirational and describes assets that require attention for the neighborhood to achieve its full potential.

This brand statement for the Franklin Area serves as a guiding vision around which the outcomes and actions in this plan are arranged.



For people who want a vibrant, family-friendly community with character near downtown employment and amenities, the Franklin Area offers the best of city and suburban life. We are located at the juncture of the Beaverdale and Waveland Park neighborhoods, and neighbors here walk, bike and drive on leafy streets to iconic local gathering spots and convenient shopping districts. Franklin offers an active lifestyle, great schools, and spacious yards for kids and dogs.



## Franklin Area

## How To Use This Plan

### PART 1

This plan is divided into four parts:

### Neighborhood Planning and Revitalization in Des Moines

provides background on related planning efforts and the recent history of neighborhood revitalization in Des Moines. It also identifies key principles of revitalization planning and defines the characteristics of a 'healthy' neighborhood.

### PART 2

### Assets, Trends, and Key Issues

provides context for planning in the Franklin Area by identifying what is working and not working and why it matters. The data and analysis in this section point to the major issues to develop strategies around.

### PART 3

### Goals and Outcomes

distills the neighborhood's vision from core brand attributes—the characteristics that best describe what makes the neighborhood desirable to current residents and marketable to homebuyers. Part 3 also identifies the outcomes that will be used to assess progress toward revitalization and fulfillment of the vision.

### PART 4

### Action Plan

presents a series of activities to implement over the plan's 10-year planning horizon. It includes action to take solely within the Special Investment District boundaries as well as broader actions at the city and neighborhood levels. It ties each activity to one or more outcomes and identifies the partnerships needed for successful implementation.

### PART 1

# Neighborhood Planning and Revitalization in Des Moines

Des Moines has **over 50 neighborhoods**, each with specific challenges to confront and opportunities to realize within their boundaries. In a city with as much neighborhood diversity as Des Moines, a one-size-fits-all approach to planning for neighborhood improvement is very likely to be ineffective.

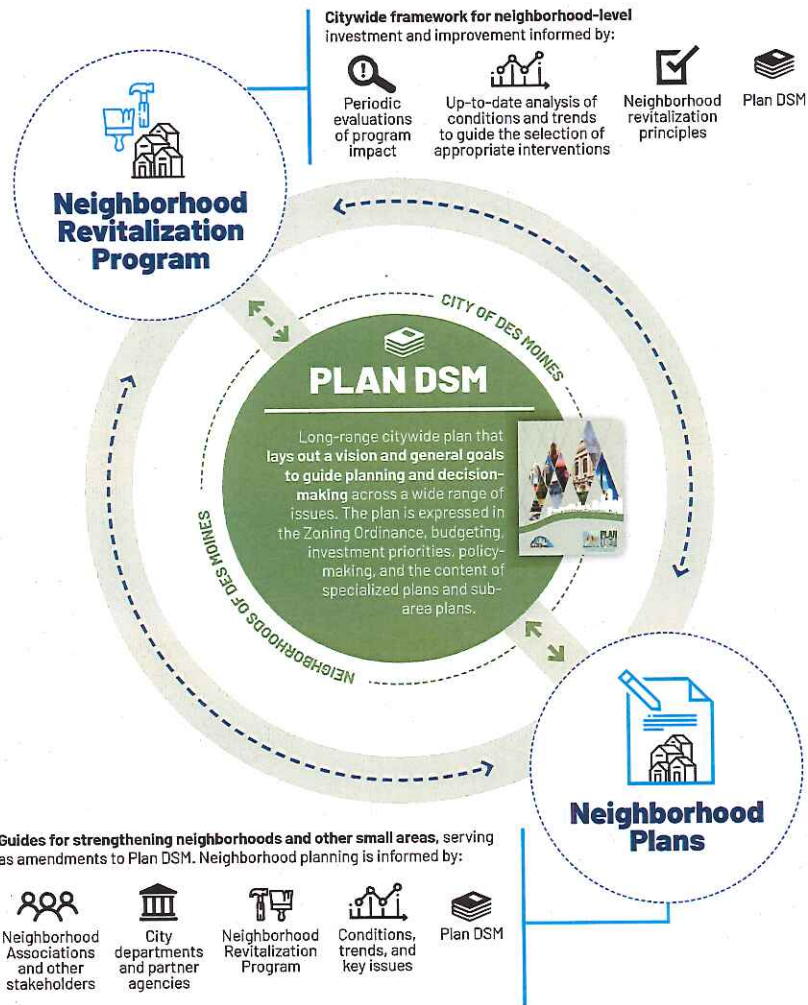
At the same time, each neighborhood contributes to the life and functioning of the wider community, is influenced by and has traits similar to other neighborhoods, and relies on the City for critical services and infrastructure. An approach to neighborhood planning that ignores these relationships or the competition for scarce resources is also bound to fall short.

Instead, a balance is needed that addresses the parts and the whole by identifying the type of work that needs to be done at the neighborhood level and relating that to the "Big Picture" – what the entire community is aiming to solve or

achieve, what resources it is able or willing to commit, and how the work gets done.

In Des Moines, the "Big Picture" in this balancing act is provided by the City's comprehensive plan—Plan DSM—as well as the citywide Neighborhood Revitalization Program. Both provide a wide-lens framework for making decisions about neighborhood-level investments. But they are also designed to evolve: to reflect changing conditions, lessons learned from recent undertakings, and needs expressed by individual neighborhood plans.





## Plan DSM



Des Moines' current comprehensive plan—Plan DSM—was adopted in 2016 and provides general guidance for long-term planning and decision-making throughout the city. The plan is organized around nine topical elements—including Land Use, Parks and Recreation, and Transportation—and identifies general goals to achieve around each element.

Since its adoption, Plan DSM has been supplemented by more detailed subject-specific plans such as Move DSM (a citywide transportation plan) and has shaped the development of an updated zoning, planning, and design code.

The two elements of Plan DSM with the most direct relevance to neighborhood planning are "Community Character and Neighborhoods" and "Housing."

The process behind this plan for the Franklin Area Special Investment District is an extension of Plan DSM and will become an amendment to the comprehensive plan upon adoption.



### Community Character and Neighborhoods

#### PLAN DSM GOALS

- #1 Embrace the distinct character offered in each of Des Moines' neighborhoods.
- #2 Further Des Moines' revitalization efforts to improve the strength, stability, and vitality of all neighborhoods.
- #3 Promote the redevelopment and revitalization of neighborhood nodes and corridors.
- #4 Protect Des Moines' historic and cultural assets that contribute to neighborhood and community identity.
- #5 Expand opportunities for healthy and active living for all residents.
- #6 Strengthen the walkability and connectivity within and between neighborhoods.

### Housing

#### PLAN DSM GOALS

- #1 Provide a diversity of housing options to accommodate residents of all ages, income levels, household sizes, and cultural backgrounds.
- #2 Preserve, maintain, and improve the existing inventory of single-family and multi-family housing.
- #3 Promote sustainable housing development that utilizes existing resources and supports compact, walkable, and bikeable neighborhoods.
- #4 Support development of and access to quality housing affordable to all income level households.

# Neighborhood Revitalization Program

Des Moines started a citywide Neighborhood Revitalization Program in 1990 out of recognition that special attention and resources were needed to stabilize and strengthen neighborhoods. The program has continued uninterrupted since then, undergoing periodic evaluations (in 2005 and 2017-18) to assess its impact and recommend modifications to strategies, tools, and resource allocation.

The latest evaluation identified a series of accomplishments that have produced tangible progress. It also identified a series of challenges that remain or have intensified over time, threatening both the strength of individual neighborhoods and the City's fiscal capacity to invest in needed programs, services, and infrastructure.

## Progress Made

- **Neighborhood associations** have been established across much of the city and provide a proven model for engaging residents in identifying and addressing key issues.
- **Strong relationships between the City and housing providers** have been cultivated, resulting in coordination of efforts to invest in community development and affordable housing.
- **Strong planning capacity** has been developed within City Hall to guide the development and implementation of neighborhood and small area plans.
- **Successful rehabilitation and redevelopment projects** have been completed on properties across Des Moines, showing real capacity to finance and complete complicated work.
- **Many neighborhoods have built identities** and have become strong and proactive advocates for their interests – a key characteristic of healthy neighborhoods.
- **The neighborhood revitalization planning process** has provided a rational system for making decisions and allocating scarce resources.

## Challenges That Persist

- **Suburban competition** remains fierce in the Des Moines market. With the exception of downtown, population growth has been stagnant in most of the city despite healthy levels of regional growth.
- **Demand in core neighborhoods** has not improved and has become even weaker in some areas.
- **Limited appreciation of real estate values** has been experienced by most neighborhoods in Des Moines over the past 15 years. This lack of growth in the taxable property base is a fiscal threat to the City because the cost of providing key services is not going down.
- **Property conditions are far below acceptable standards in many neighborhoods** reflecting soft levels of demand that have made disinvestment behaviors (such as putting off routine maintenance) the norm.

# Housing Market Context

The 2017-2018 evaluation of the Neighborhood Revitalization Program involved a detailed look at housing condition and markets across the city. A result of this was the identification of six market types ranging from very healthy markets—where most homes are very well maintained and prices and demand is relatively strong—to very unhealthy markets.

A central finding of this market analysis was the extensive size of the “middle” market types—types 3 and 4 in the adjacent chart. These markets are dominated by homes that are in average condition—showing signs of neither distress nor evident pride of ownership.

The considerable number of homes that could tip in either direction over the next decade—becoming healthier or more distressed—makes these middle markets points of real vulnerability to Des Moines’ ability to compete in the regional housing market and invest in neighborhood improvement. For that reason, those markets were signaled out as the primary targets for future revitalization work.

Average Field Survey Scoring

Type	1	2	3	4	5	6
# of Neighborhoods	4	5	15	12	9	3
Avg Sale Price	\$271,007	\$205,937	\$127,351	\$82,839	\$62,452	\$51,442
Total Properties	2,798	3,750	22,248	19,328	9,611	2,053
% Homes in Excellent or Good Condition	77%	74%	33%	17%	7%	3%
% Homes in Average Condition	20%	18%	54%	55%	36%	25%
% Deteriorated Homes	3%	4%	13%	28%	57%	72%
Potentially Valuable Intervention	Inclusion	Inclusion	Revitalization + Inclusion	Stabilization + Revitalization	Stabilization	Stabilization + Landbanking

The Franklin Area, with an average field survey score of 2.6, is part of Des Moines’ broad “middle” submarket, where a large share of homes are vulnerable to disinvestment. Revitalization strategies will accomplish the most in these areas.

## Neighborhood Revitalization Principles

In addition to identifying the markets and neighborhoods where revitalization is the most valuable intervention, the 2017-2018 evaluation also identified a set of principles to guide decision-making around neighborhood revitalization activities and resources.

### Principles

#### Strength and assets

Focusing investments around vital assets and building on the genuine strengths of a neighborhood generates progress and returns at a higher rate – and at a faster pace – than dwelling on problems and liabilities.

#### Targeted

Spreading scarce resources across a wide area will severely limit their impact. Focusing resources inside a small number of well-defined areas achieves several important aims:

- (1) it differentiates blocks where investment is occurring, thus enabling the market to take note of cues about positive future change,
- (2) it communicates boundaries which the market interprets as a signal of predictability, and
- (3) it concentrates resources for heightened impact.

#### Patience

Neighborhood change can sometimes seem like something that happens quickly and in one direction, but that is rarely the case. It takes time for resources to be marshalled, for the investments of dozens or hundreds of homeowners to be collectively transformative, and for resident leadership capacity to be cultivated. This is especially true in a market that has been stagnant for decades.

#### Outcomes and measurement

There will always be an impulse to measure progress by outputs, such as the number of homes that have been fixed up, or even the amount of money spent. The key is to identify and track outcomes that will reflect true changes in how the market is behaving and the choices that individual property owners are making. These include the prices people are willing to pay for homes, or the share of homes in a neighborhood that express real pride.

## Defining a Healthy Neighborhood

Revitalization is a process that leads to something: a neighborhood that is vital and healthy. But what is a healthy neighborhood?

The 2017-2018 evaluation of Des Moines' Neighborhood Revitalization Program describes a healthy neighborhood in terms of a four-factor investment cycle, with each factor supporting the others.



“A healthy neighborhood is a place where it make sense for residents and owners to invest their time, energy and money.

The four factors that move together in a self-reinforcing cycle to determine neighborhood health are the MARKET (or who is there), its CAPACITY (or its willingness and ability to manage the neighborhood), the CONDITIONS (or the resulting visible level of care and investment), and the IMAGE (or the perception of the neighborhood held by the broader market). When demand for living in a neighborhood exceeds the supply, the cycle spins in a positive direction, keeping the neighborhood strong. But it can also move in a negative direction, further eroding an already weakened neighborhood.”

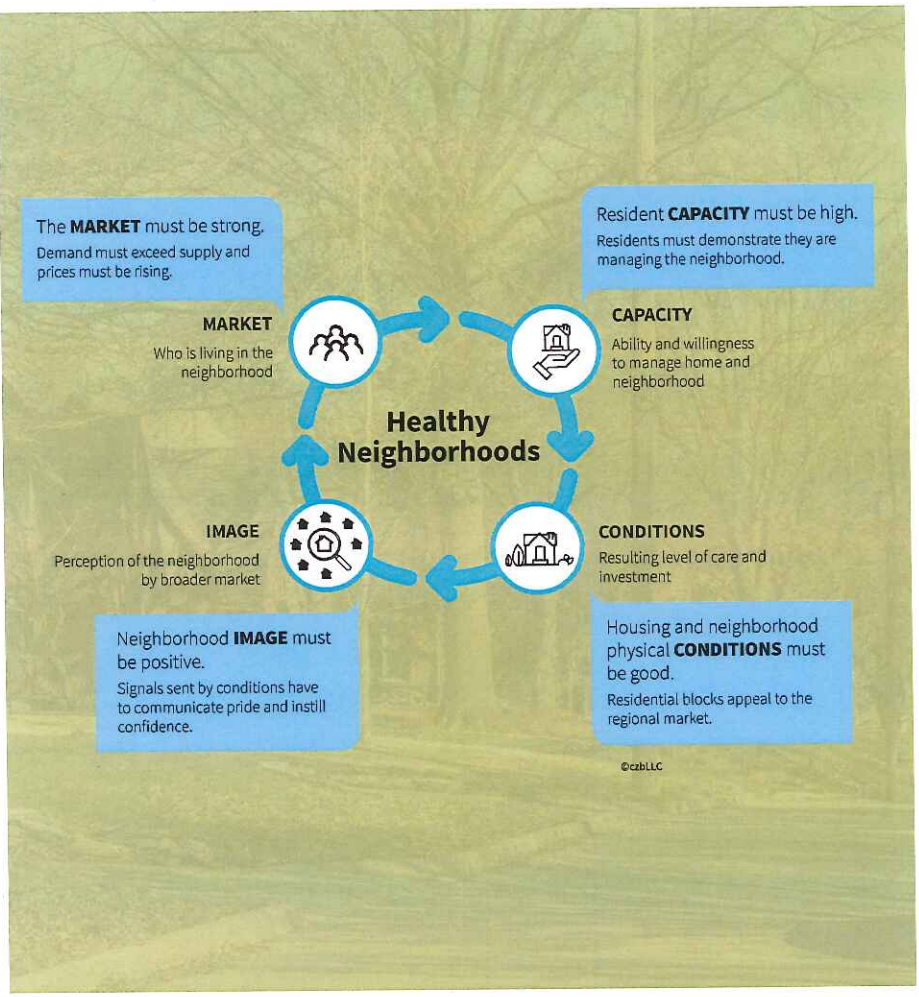
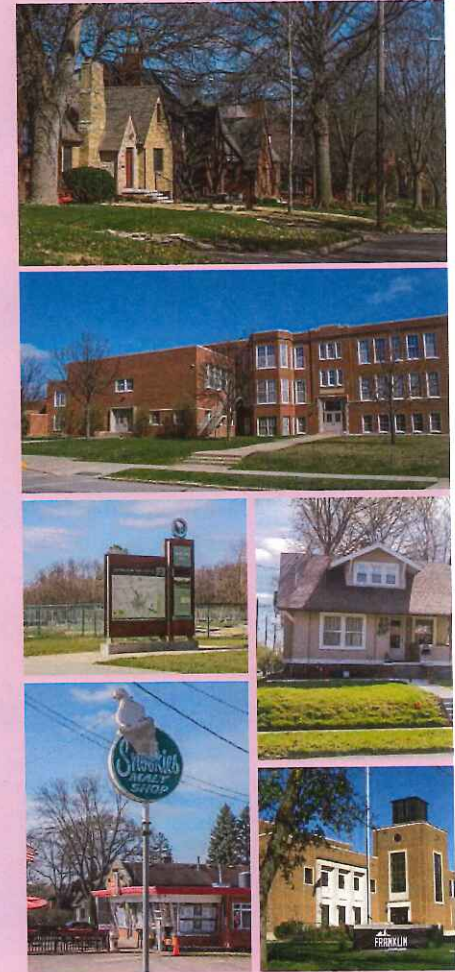
PART 2

# Assets, Trends, and Issues

The four self-reinforcing factors that define a healthy neighborhood – a strong **market**, high **capacity** to manage change, good physical **conditions**, and positive **image** – provide a useful way to gauge and understand where the Franklin Area and its Special Investment District stand today and the type of work that is most likely to make them healthier.

To assess these four factors, observations from residents and stakeholders were blended with analysis of market and demographic data. This work revealed a list of assets and strengths that contribute to market, capacity, conditions, and image in the Franklin Area, and that serve as useful building blocks around which to develop strategies. This work also revealed several key issues that need to be addressed in order to preserve the neighborhood's assets, play to its strengths, and move closer to overall health.

The following is a summary of assets, trends, and key issues that shape the health of the Franklin Area today and provide guidance on where and how to intervene.



## Assets and Strengths

**Great Location** Being close to downtown and the western suburbs makes the Franklin Area one of the more convenient places to live in the region. Its residents enjoy the “best of both worlds.”

**Tree-lined Streets** An impressive tree canopy contributes character and a sense of tranquility to the neighborhood, as do the paths and terrain of Glendale Cemetery.

**Perkins Elementary** Perkins Elementary is a well-regarded elementary school that feeds into sought-after middle and high schools. With more than 20 languages spoken there, it expresses the neighborhood’s growing diversity.

**Friendly Neighbors** Helpful and friendly neighbors are seen as a key selling point to the neighborhood, and the presence of two active neighborhood associations reflects capacity to convene and organize neighbors around critical issues.

**Charming Homes** A high-quality collection of single-family homes from the 1920s and immediate postwar period includes Bungalows, brick Tudors, and other character-rich styles.

**Stable and Affordable** The housing market has been relatively stable for decades, allowing well-maintained homes to appreciate in value. But the market remains highly accessible to households earning the region’s median income.

**Walkable and Bikeable** The tree-lined streets, small shopping districts close to housing, Waveland Trail, abundant green space, and other factors make the Franklin Area a place where walking and biking are both useful and enjoyable.

**Local Shopping & Restaurants** Several small commercial nodes provide a wide range of places to do convenience and specialty shopping, as well as great places to eat, drink, and relax.



## Key Trends and Issues

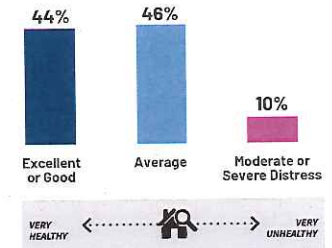
**#1 The prevailing stability of the neighborhood and its housing market is threatened, with many homes and blocks vulnerable to disinvestment in coming years.**

**A large share of the housing stock exhibits pride and healthy levels of maintenance and upkeep—but a larger share does not.**

A fall 2018 survey of exterior conditions in the Special Investment District found that 44% of homes were in excellent or good condition—meaning they exhibited pride of ownership and evidence of healthy investment and maintenance by their owners. Only a few neighborhoods in Des Moines have a higher share of healthy homes.

At the same time, however, 56% of homes did not exhibit outward signs of health. One in ten homes showed moderate or severe signs of distress from deferred maintenance, and fully 46% of all properties were rated as average—showing neither signs of distress nor signs of confidence and proactive upkeep. The dominance of these average properties, which could just as easily improve as decline in coming years, is a key source of vulnerability.

Exterior Condition Survey of Homes in the Special Investment District, 2018

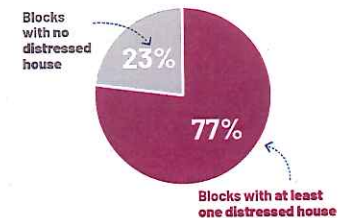


Source: 2018 exterior condition field survey by City of Des Moines and czbLLC

**Most blocks have distressed housing in their midst.**

The 10% of homes in the Special Investment District that show signs of disinvestment and distress are not confined to a small area. They are widely scattered, with 77% of blocks having at least one distressed property serving as a potential drag on confidence and investment by other property owners.

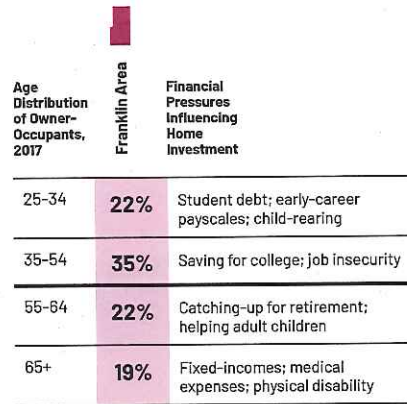
Blocks Influenced by Distressed Housing



Source: 2018 exterior condition field survey by City of Des Moines and czbLLC

**Age diversity among homeowners presents unique challenges to housing investment.**

The current age distribution of homeowners in the Franklin Area is diverse, which is good for market stability. It also means that a wide range of household financial pressures are influencing homeowner investment behaviors and will have to be considered as part of any effort to stimulate housing improvements. For the 22% of owner-occupant householders who are young adults (ages 25-34), a combination of student debt, early-career wages, and child-rearing expenses can lead to delayed investments in home improvements—often to homes that may have been bargains to begin with due to deferred maintenance. For the 41% of owner-occupant householders age 55 or above, catching up on retirement savings or living in retirement on a fixed income can lead to underinvestment and an increasingly outdated stock.

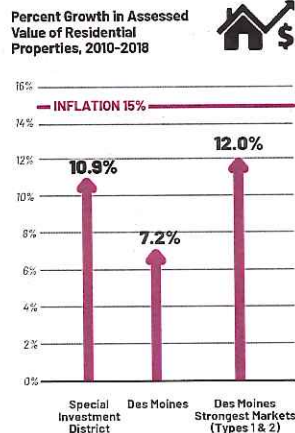


Source: Census Bureau ACS, 2017 5-Year Estimates

**Although property values lag behind inflation, they outperform the city as a whole and housing prices demonstrate the potential for a healthy return on investment by homeowners.**

Between 2010 and 2018, the average assessed value of single-family homes and duplexes in the Special Investment District rose by 11%, which was a larger gain than that experienced citywide. But it was slightly lower than the average gain in the city's strongest markets and lower still than the rate of inflation over the same period. That even the city's strongest markets lagged behind inflation reflects the city's wider struggle to compete in the Polk County housing market even during a time of population growth and market expansion.

Nevertheless, pricing patterns in the Special Investment District demonstrate that the market is strong enough to reward homeowners who invest in their properties with higher equity and sales prices. Average sale prices between 2016 and 2018 show that homes in 'good' condition sold for 22% more than homes in 'average' condition. And homes in the best condition sold for 46% more than homes in 'average' condition.



Source: czbLLC analysis of Polk County assessment database

**#2**

**The neighborhood's commercial nodes are important to quality of life and residential marketability, but they are aging and increasingly incompatible with other neighborhood attributes and goals.**

**Auto-oriented layouts and outdated commercial space pose challenges.**

The commercial areas that surround the Franklin Area—along University Avenue at 42nd and 48th, the Franklin Plaza Shops, Franklin & Beaver, and a handful of smaller nodes—have long contributed to the neighborhood's marketability and convenience, and they still do today. But their auto-centric layouts present challenges for safe pedestrian or bicycle access, especially for residents who want to walk from their homes to local stores and restaurants. Relatively minor site improvements have the potential to improve this situation substantially.

At the same time, some commercial spaces have become obsolete and unappealing to desirable tenants, leading to chronically vacant or underutilized space that diminish the vitality and image of the neighborhood.



**Commercial areas currently lack, but could cultivate, a strong identity.**

Along with pedestrian access from surrounding residential blocks being largely an afterthought, the commercial areas around Franklin lack a clear sense of identity. Establishing an identity—through streetscape elements and higher standards for signage and exteriors—has the potential to enhance the pedestrian experience and make both commercial spaces and homes more marketable.

Snookies and other places that retain a Mid-Century vibe may be a direction to explore in terms of identity—embracing the origins of the neighborhood while paying closer attention to today's multi-modal needs.



#3

**Walkability is a true asset, but much can be done to make the neighborhood more conducive to pedestrians and bicycles.**

**There are gaps in the sidewalk network and maintenance of sidewalks is uneven.**

There are still parts of the Franklin area, especially in the northern half, that have gaps in the sidewalk network on one or both sides of the street. A more universal condition is poorly maintained sidewalks that have been neglected by property owners.



**Unsafe speeds are an issue on many streets.**

The neighborhood's relatively long residential blocks and wide streets are conducive to speeding, as are the major east-west streets that cross the neighborhood, such as Hickman, Franklin, and University. Upcoming work on University and Franklin offer opportunities to calm traffic and improve pedestrian and bicycle safety.



Distance:  
**3/4 mile**

Homes:  
**125**

Stop signs or other traffic calming features:  
**0**

#4

**Residents in the Franklin Area are more engaged on neighborhood issues than is the norm in Des Moines, but it remains a challenge to maintain an active base of leaders and volunteers.**

**Engaging residents is more difficult, but still necessary, when all is well.**

The two neighborhood associations that cover the Franklin Area—Waveland Park and Beaverdale—are more active and have greater levels of resident management capacity than most neighborhood associations in Des Moines. But they still struggle to build and sustain a healthy base of volunteers and engaged residents.

To some extent, this is a function of success, because people are less likely to become involved when things are going smoothly than when crises are brewing. But being resilient and responding to problems successfully when they happen is more likely when neighbors are consistently engaged.



**Diversity requires attention.**

The Franklin Area is 90% white, but there is a strong desire to ensure that underrepresented populations feel welcome and feel like they have a seat at the table of neighborhood leadership and decision-making. Doing this requires very patient relationship-building, often outside of traditional neighborhood meetings.

Boosting City support and training for neighborhood associations—including around this topic—will be important to making progress around inclusion. The diversity of the student body at Perkins Elementary could be a key building block, especially if parents with students at Perkins are a target market for homeownership and home improvement activities in the Special Investment District.



Where are we now?

What will it take to make progress toward a strong market?

MARKET



The Franklin Area has a stronger market than most neighborhoods in Des Moines, but its large collection of vulnerable homes threatens its ability to compete for choosy homeowners—especially when other parts of Des Moines and Polk County have similar assets and advantages.

Promote and support high-quality renovations and improvements to the existing housing stock in order to boost the marketability and appeal of already charming homes.

CAPACITY



The Waveland Park and Beaverdale Neighborhood Associations are active and have solid leadership, but deepening the leadership bench and widening the pool of involved residents is an ongoing need.

Expanding City support for leadership development and training around volunteer recruitment and retention can help grow the base of engaged residents and the skillsets they bring to neighborhood activities. Similar training can also assist with making the volunteer base more diverse.

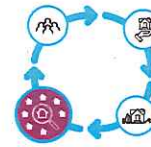
CONDITIONS



Good conditions are already present throughout the neighborhood, but not consistently. A close look reveals tired-looking homes on most blocks and commercial areas that generally fail to express a sense of pride or identity.

A stronger market will help improve conditions, but so will explicit promotion of higher standards such as celebrating homes that are models for high-quality renovation and historic preservation.

IMAGE



The Franklin Area's image is mostly positive because Beaverdale and Waveland Park are viewed in a mostly positive light by the Des Moines market. This image is threatened, however, by parts of the neighborhood that look increasingly worn and tired.

A well-honed and well-delivered message based on core brand attributes (see Part 3), along with progress on the market, capacity, and condition factors, will help to maintain a positive image and differentiate the Franklin Area as a unique part of the city.

PART 3

# Vision, Priorities, and Outcomes

Planning around assets and strengths is a key principle of neighborhood revitalization planning. But translating an understanding of the assets, strengths, and key issues from Part 2 into a set of revitalization strategies requires a few additional steps.

One step is to think about how outsiders—especially potential homebuyers—see the neighborhood and what it has to offer. What does the neighborhood want to convey to them about the essential characteristics that make the neighborhood a place to choose?

This process of thinking about the neighborhood's identity in the wider marketplace led to the selection and refinement of four core brand attributes that distill the area's assets and strengths into priority features. These attributes were then combined into a brand statement that speaks to potential homeowners while also conveying what current residents see as the vision they can realistically achieve and maintain.

Another step is to translate the assets, strengths, and key issues into a clear set of outcomes that progress can be measured against. While the core brand attributes and brand/vision statement express general qualities, the outcomes—which are defined in this part of the plan—represent specific conditions that can be tracked to see if strategies are having the desired effect.

## Core Brand Attributes

These are the characteristics that residents value the most, that form the core of the Franklin Area identity, and that serve as the chief selling points to the neighborhood's target markets.

They are also a means of prioritizing scarce resources. Whenever possible, actions taken by neighborhood stakeholders, the City, and other partners should highlight and strengthen these characteristics.

## Brand and Vision Statement

Drawn from the core brand attributes, the brand statement expresses a vision, rooted in real assets and strengths, that the neighborhood is striving to live up to. It is a promise to those who choose to invest their time, energy, and resources here.

## Outcomes

This is how progress will be measured. Outcomes are the conditions that, if achieved, will mark progress toward (or maintenance of) the vision as well as the strengthening of core brand attributes.





Charming homes on tree-lined streets

Active lifestyle, walkable community with friendly neighbors

Conveniently located to enjoy the best of city and suburban amenities

Family friendly with great schools

For people who want a vibrant, family-friendly community with character near downtown employment and amenities, the Franklin Area offers the best of city and suburban life. We are located at the juncture of the Beaverdale and Waveland Park neighborhoods, and neighbors here walk, bike and drive on leafy streets to iconic local gathering spots and convenient shopping districts. Franklin offers an active lifestyle, great schools, and spacious yards for kids and dogs.



Our business districts are thriving, diverse, and contribute to residential desirability



The neighborhood is inviting, safe, and fun for walkers and cyclists



Neighborhood's image is well-known and celebrates unique characteristics



Public and private spaces have curb appeal and celebrate community character



Neighbors are involved and work together to keep the neighborhood great



Homes are desirable and maintain their value against inflation



Neighborhood invites and includes diverse populations

## Homebuyer Target Markets



For a market to be functional and healthy, there needs to be a steady stream of buyers. National statistics show that in recent years, the average home seller has been staying in their home for 10 years before selling. This means that, on average, 10% of a neighborhood's single-family stock can be expected to hit the market—and be in need of a buyer—in any given year.



When there is a predictable stream of buyers, homeowners will have greater confidence that their investment in interior and exterior upgrades will have a positive impact on their equity and make it easier to sell at a fair price when the time comes. If a homeowner questions whether a good buyer will materialize when it's time to sell, they might hesitate to make even modest improvements, which, when repeated throughout a neighborhood, affects condition and image in ways that reinforce a soft market cycle.



Planning to revitalize a neighborhood, therefore, requires proactive attention to the stream of buyers. Based on the neighborhood's core attributes and selling points, what markets is the neighborhood in a good position to appeal to now and in coming years? And how can the neighborhood speak to those markets in ways that improve the likelihood of a good stream of buyers?

This planning process identified three specific target markets that are likely to value the housing stock and amenities that the Franklin Area has to offer today, and who will find the neighborhood increasingly appealing as the housing stock and amenities are improved.



Identifying this target market does not exclude other markets from the neighborhood—rather, it's a tool for focusing limited branding and marketing resources in ways that speak directly to the highest probability buyers.



Target Market	Young Professional Families	DINKs + Dogs (DINK=Double Income No Kids)	School Parents at Perkins Elementary
	\$225,000-300,000 Price Range	\$175,000	Full range of sizes and price points, but will generally need the more affordable homes in the neighborhood; many will qualify for subsidized construction or homeownership financing from affordable housing partners.
Home needs	3+ bedrooms 2+ bathrooms Garage Move-in ready	2-3 bedrooms 1.5+ bathrooms Some rehabbers; some move-in ready	3+ bedrooms 2+ bathrooms Garage Move-in ready
Characteristics and Needs of the Target Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Young (25-40) professional 2-person households about to start family, or 1-2 kids.</li> <li>Appreciate schools and homes with character in a quiet, safe neighborhood.</li> <li>Identify as more urban, hip, progressive than suburban counterparts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Primarily 25-40 range.</li> <li>Want a yard for dog(s).</li> <li>Want urban, cool, historic, but quiet and safe.</li> <li>Want walkable amenities and friendly neighbors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Perkins families are more diverse overall (47% white, 23% Hispanic, 21% Black) than the neighborhood, speaking more than 20 languages. They also have lower incomes overall (59% of students qualify for free and reduced lunch).</li> <li>Want a safe, affordable neighborhood and home with modern amenities, low maintenance costs.</li> <li>Successfully recruiting this market will require sustained outreach and commitment to providing affordable options.</li> </ul>

PART 3 Goals and Outcomes

Our business districts are thriving, diverse, and contribute to residential desirability

The neighborhood is inviting, safe, and fun for walkers and cyclists

Neighborhood's image is well-known and celebrates unique characteristics

WHAT WE MEAN BY THESE OUTCOMES

- Businesses bring visitors here who then want to live here
- Businesses contribute to a year-round amenity mix
- Empty or underutilized spaces are rare and fill quickly with businesses that boost neighborhood appeal
- The commercial district is a destination; attracts visitors from outside of Des Moines
- Franklin corridor is revitalized
- Streets are safe for walking and biking for ages 8-80
- Sidewalks and trails are connected and safe
- Sidewalk gaps are reduced
- Property owners maintain driveways and sidewalks in good condition
- History (1920s-1950s) is celebrated and promoted
- People associate us with safe, family-friendly, walkable, diverse, affordable, and a bit quirky
- We're the place with cool homes, cool businesses, and great recreation
- Trees and lawns contribute to our leafy image
- Schools contribute to our image and marketability

Baseline Measurements and Targets for Progress

% of storefronts that are vacant, transitional, or ambiguous: Baseline: 18% (2019; Includes space just beyond SID borders) Target: 10-12% by 2024	Gaps in sidewalk network (in feet): Baseline: 13,809 ft. (2019) Target: Reduce to 7,000 ft. or less by 2029
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The outcomes that the Franklin Area will be seeking and tracking all speak to one or more of the factors that contribute to healthy neighborhoods: **market, capacity, condition, and image.** Tracking progress on these outcomes will require, in some cases, a quantitative indicator that can be routinely collected and reflects what the neighborhood is trying to achieve. For conditions that are not easily measured with a statistic, a more qualitative indicator may be needed to convey an overall impression of whether people think that progress is being made.

The following is a proposed set of **quantitative** and **qualitative** indicators to track, including current or baseline conditions and target measurements to move towards.

- Quantitative indicators
- Qualitative indicators

Measurements to Begin Collecting and Tracking in 2020

Prevailing lease rates for commercial space	Number of traffic-calming strategies implemented	Share of media stories over past year that were positive
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Public and private spaces have curb appeal and celebrate community character	Neighbors are involved and work together to keep the neighborhood great	Homes are desirable and maintain their value against inflation	Neighborhood invites and includes diverse populations
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- Landscaping and green spaces exhibit pride
- More homes have master bathrooms
- Neighborhood blocks show visible change for the better when looking at before/after photos
- Streets are in good shape throughout
- Number of homes in 'good' shape exceeds homes in 'average' shape
- Participation with the neighborhood associations grows and reflects an already significant sense of 'community'
- Dog walking contributes to more connections between neighbors; activities around dog walking are planned
- Informal interactions between neighbors is routine
- Block parties and other activities are more frequent and well-attended
- Leaders experiment with new ways of engaging neighbors
- Home values grow with or outpace inflation but are not irrational
- Demand is strong and delivers a steady stream of buyers
- Turnover of homes occurs at an average or below average pace owing to neighborhood desirability
- Homes are modernized for marketability but historic integrity is maintained by owners
- Homes are painted appropriately to house type
- Residents and visitors represent a wider mix of people: income, race, religion, age, families, etc.
- Housing supports diversity through a range of sizes and price points

**% of homes in excellent or good condition:**  
**Baseline:** 45% (2018)  
**Target:** 65-70% by 2029

**Average assessed value:**  
**Baseline:** \$164,040 (2018)  
**Target:** Maintain pace with inflation through 2029.

**Owner-occupancy rate:**  
**Baseline:** 89% (2018)  
**Target:** Remain stable at around 90%

**Building permits issued per 100 properties:**  
**Baseline:** 4.7 (2017-2018)  
**Target:** Sustain a biannual rate of at least 7.0 between 2020 and 2029

Number of active neighborhood association volunteers

Participation/attendance at major activities

Presence of a pipeline of emerging leaders

Number of affordable units added by housing providers

Neighborhood-sponsored events and activities that engage Perkins students and families

PART 4

# Action Plan

The strategies and activities identified in this action plan have been chosen in response to a series of factors:

The outcomes being sought by the neighborhood, which themselves reflect the overall vision and key issues that need to be addressed.

The existing or potential capacity of stakeholders to perform the work and supply the necessary resources.

The wider aims of Plan DSM and the Neighborhood Revitalization Program, including the need to establish a strong model for revitalizing Des Moines' middle market neighborhoods.

With outcomes, capacity, and awareness of changing conditions a key part of this overall planning effort, it is critical to recognize that this action plan is designed to be monitored regularly and updated as often as necessary to ensure that progress toward the outcomes is being made. It is also critical to recognize, though, that patience is an important principle of neighborhood revitalization, which is why this plan is based on a **10-year horizon**. A significant commitment of effort over a decade will be needed for many outcomes to be realized and sustainable.

All of the actions identified in this plan are relevant to the needs of the Special Investment District. Several, however, are also relevant to areas surrounding the Franklin Area and to the rest of the city. The plan, therefore, is divided geographically into three sections:

**CITYWIDE**  
 Strategies that are recommended for citywide application.

**NEIGHBORHOOD**  
 Strategies that can and should extend beyond the Special Investment District to surrounding parts of Franklin Area.

**SPECIAL INVESTMENT DISTRICT**  
 Strategies that should be confined to the Special Investment District in order to focus resources and maximize their impact.

Most directly influenced outcomes 

ACTIONS	Our business districts are thriving, diverse, and contribute to residential desirability	The neighborhood is inviting, safe, and fun for walkers and cyclists	Neighborhoods impose is well-known and celebrates unique characteristics	Public and private spaces have curb appeal and celebrate community character	Neighbors are involved and work together to keep the neighborhood great	Homes are desirable and maintain their value against inflation	Neighborhood invites and includes diverse populations
Begin enforcement of the Property Improvement Code (expanding PIC beyond rental properties)				✓		✓	
Establish a dedicated, in-house junk and debris crew				✓			
Improve and expand training/support for neighborhood leaders and leadership development					✓		✓
Apply complete streets principles and traffic calming measures, especially to upcoming street reconstruction and improvement projects	✓	✓					
Tie existing or new neighborhood pride activities to core brand attributes			✓		✓		✓
Expand awareness and appreciation for area's period architecture			✓	✓		✓	
Create new financing tools to support improvements to commercial properties within and adjacent to the Franklin Area	✓	✓					
Establish a Neighborhood Business District Resource Team	✓						
Create new financing tools to stimulate housing improvements that enhance marketability and property values				✓			✓
Establish a Franklin Area brand that aligns with core brand attributes and target markets			✓				
Designate Special Investment District as target area for affordable homeownership and rehab activities							✓
Make blighted nuisance properties a priority for rehabilitation (or demolition when necessary)				✓			
Perform strategic code enforcement activities				✓		✓	
Improve sidewalk network for walkability and pedestrian safety		✓					
Organize a one-time "Mini-SCRUB" pilot event				✓			

Implementing the actions listed above and described in this action plan will require multiple partners and a wide range of resource commitments.

**IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS**

A wide range of public, private, and not-for-profit entities are identified in the action plan as having necessary roles in implementing specific activities and strategies. But creativity and flexibility will be critical, and the list of partners involved in any part of this plan should adapt as needed to reflect the resources, skills, and coalitions needed for successful outcomes.

**RESOURCES**

This action plan identifies estimated resource requirements for each activity, several of which benefit neighborhoods across the city as well as this Special Investment District. In some cases, committing resources will take the form of refocusing existing funding and human capacity. In others, it will require new funding or the creation of new capacity to coordinate partners and programs.

The largest commitment of new resources centers around the establishment of a new entity, Invest-DSM, to promote and support high-quality investments in housing and commercial stock by property owners.

**PART 4** Action Plan

**CITYWIDE**

**Begin enforcement of the Property Improvement Code (expanding PIC beyond rental properties)**

Neighborhood outcomes advanced 

Homes are desirable and maintain their value against inflation 

Public and private spaces have curb appeal and celebrate community character 

**What problem or opportunity does this respond to?**

Enforcement of the property improvement code in Des Moines has been limited to rental housing. Including homeowners, with a commitment to assisting low-income or disabled owners with code compliance, is an important step toward improving standards of maintenance and preserving the housing stock.

**What work will this entail? What are the outputs?**

Passive enforcement activities, including responding to code complaints; engagement work to educate property owners and neighborhoods about the code, its purpose, and compliance requirements; connecting eligible homeowners with programs to assist compliance; active enforcement in prioritized areas, including code sweeps.

**What resources are required? Where do they come from?**

Approximately \$1.93 million increase in code enforcement budget to support added workload and ensure staff capacity to build productive relationships with neighborhoods and property owners.

**Who does it? When does it happen?**

City of Des Moines Neighborhood Inspection Division; begin in 2020.

**CITYWIDE**

**Establish a dedicated, in-house junk and debris crew**

Neighborhood outcomes advanced 

Public and private spaces have curb appeal and celebrate community character 

**What problem or opportunity does this respond to?**

Junk and debris are the most frequent complaints to code inspectors and detract from neighborhood image. Junk and litter in alleys and other spaces convey unacceptably low standards of maintenance.

**What work will this entail? What are the outputs?**

Dedicate a well-trained in-house team that abates junk and debris issues at nuisance properties and undertakes proactive cleanups; work in concert with City and neighborhood partners to identify and solve problems related to junk, debris, and litter.

**What resources are required? Where do they come from?**

Approximately \$500,000 for private property and right-of-way cleanup staff team and equipment needs.

**Who does it? When does it happen?**

City of Des Moines Department of Public Works; begin in 2019-2020.

CITYWIDE

**Improve and expand training/support for neighborhood leaders and leadership development**

Neighborhood outcomes advanced



Neighbors are involved and work together to keep the neighborhood great



**What problem or opportunity does this respond to?**

Des Moines' network of neighborhood associations is a major asset. But leadership turnover and varying levels of volunteer capacity make for inconsistent effectiveness.

**What work will this entail? What are the outputs?**

Increase the City's capacity to lend support and technical expertise to neighborhood associations through routine training and networking activities for current and emerging neighborhood leaders. Include special training on volunteer recruitment and retention, diversity, marketing and managements skills, and areas of interest to neighborhood associations.

**What resources are required? Where do they come from?**

Resources to hire two dedicated neighborhood coordinators (approximately \$200,000); training budget for neighborhood association leaders.

**Who does it? When does it happen?**

City of Des Moines Neighborhood Development Division; begin in 2019-2020.

**Potential Trainings and Events**

Track 1: Cultivating Vibrant and Effective Neighborhood Associations	Track 2: Influencing the Neighborhood Real Estate Market	Track 3: Improving Neighborhood Business Districts	Track 4: Making the Most of City Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Characteristics of Effective Neighborhood Associations</li> <li>Recruiting and Sustaining Volunteers</li> <li>Engaging Diverse Groups of Neighbors in Decision-Making</li> <li>How to Run a Great Meeting</li> <li>Event and Project Planning</li> <li>Building Social Connections Among Neighbors</li> <li>Building Your Leadership Skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Neighborhood Branding and Marketing</li> <li>How Neighborhood Real Estate Markets Work</li> <li>Attracting Homebuyers to Your Neighborhood</li> <li>Upgrading Your Neighborhood's Housing Stock</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How Successful Business Districts Work in Today's Economy</li> <li>Developing and Sustaining Successful Merchants' Associations</li> <li>Highlights: Researching the Market, Identifying Your District's Niche, Recruiting Businesses</li> <li>Creating a "Third Place" in Your District</li> <li>Dealing with Problem Commercial Properties</li> <li>Financing, Incentives and Technical Assistance for Commercial Property Improvement, Small Business Expansion, and New Business Startups</li> <li>Marketing and Promoting Business Districts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Code Enforcement 101</li> <li>Partnering with the Police Department for a Safer Neighborhood</li> <li>Understanding City Plans and Where Your Neighborhood Fits In</li> <li>Who Does What? (Understanding the Roles of City Departments and How to Partner Effectively)</li> <li>Meet Your City Manager</li> </ul>

PART 4 Action Plan

NEIGHBORHOOD

**Apply complete streets principles and traffic calming measures, especially to upcoming street reconstruction and improvement projects**

Neighborhood outcomes advanced



Our business districts are thriving, diverse, and contribute to residential desirability



The neighborhood is inviting, safe, and fun for walkers and cyclists



**What problem or opportunity does this respond to?**

Small commercial nodes are within walking distance of most residential blocks and are an important amenity. Making the pedestrian experience as safe and enjoyable as possible—on both major and minor streets—will boost quality of life for residents and the marketability of housing and commercial space.

**What work will this entail? What are the outputs?**

As opportunities arise to rework major arteries and intersections, as well as less traveled residential side streets, always apply complete streets principles and accommodate pedestrians and cyclists to the maximum extent possible. Franklin Avenue's reconstruction in 2021 and improvements along University Avenue (including road diet in 2020) are opportunities to exercise these principles. Additionally, explore opportunities for flexible traffic calming measures on blocks where speed is an issue.

**What resources are required? Where do they come from?**

Scope and costs of Franklin Ave. and University Ave. work are under development.

**Who does it? When does it happen?**

City of Des Moines Engineering, in collaboration with Neighborhood Development Division and Neighborhood Associations.

Use regular funding streams for street improvements to incorporate traffic calming or complete street features.

NEIGHBORHOOD

**Tie existing or new neighborhood pride activities to core brand attributes**

Neighborhood outcomes advanced



Neighbors are involved and work together to keep the neighborhood great



Neighborhood invites and includes diverse populations



**What problem or opportunity does this respond to?**

Ensuring that all neighborhood activities are being used to deliver a coherent message about the neighborhood goes a long way towards reinforcing the brand in the minds of residents and outsiders.

**What work will this entail? What are the outputs?**

Annually assess how events/activities are planned and marketed and identify opportunities to reinforce the neighborhood's core brand attributes.

**What resources are required? Where do they come from?**

Development and coordination by Neighborhood Association with help from NDD and partners relevant to each activity.

**Who does it? When does it happen?**

Neighborhood Association; City Neighborhood Development Division; begin 2019.

NEIGHBORHOOD : potential for citywide guide

**Expand awareness and appreciation for area's period architecture**

Neighborhood outcomes advanced



Public and private spaces have curb appeal and celebrate community character



Neighborhood's image is well-known and celebrates unique characteristics



**What problem or opportunity does this respond to?**

The quality of housing and other buildings from the 1910s through the 1950s can be a long-term asset for the neighborhood if new and existing owners appreciate and preserve the area's architectural character. Efforts to expand awareness of this heritage and its value will increase the probability of sensitive renovations.

**What work will this entail? What are the outputs?**

Develop an architectural primer/guide to distribute to existing and new homeowners (overview of the neighborhood's most common styles, their characteristics, and tips on sensitive ownership).

**What resources are required? Where do they come from?**

Cost depends on scope of project and format(s) of finished product. Source of funding is likely to rely on a combination of public and private sponsorship.

**Who does it? When does it happen?**

Historic Preservation Commission; Iowa Architectural Foundation; Neighborhood Associations.

PART 4 Action Plan

NEIGHBORHOOD

**Create new financing tools to support improvements to commercial properties within and adjacent to the Franklin Area**

Neighborhood outcomes advanced



The neighborhood is inviting, safe, and fun for walkers and cyclists



Our business districts are thriving, diverse, and contribute to residential desirability



**What problem or opportunity does this respond to?**

Conditions in the commercial nodes surrounding the Franklin Area vary, but similar ailments are apparent in many of them: (1) they can be tricky to navigate on foot or bike due to their auto-orientation, (2) they lack good curb appeal and sense of identity, and (3) some spaces have become outdated and suffer from high vacancies.

**What resources are required? Where do they come from?**

Allocate a new stream of capital over a 10-year period to support commercial district improvements, with funding drawn from a combination of City, County, and private-sector resources. Find more flexible funding sources for existing programs.

**What work will this entail? What are the outputs?**

Allocate new funding dedicated to (1) financial packages (loans and grants) that address the gap between what it costs to improve or build commercial space and current market rents in the district, and (2) improvements to the public realm that enhance identity and place-making. Continue existing programs and activities related to stimulating commercial investment, but use more flexible funding sources where possible to bolster program utilization.

**Who does it? When does it happen?**

Establish a new not-for-profit entity (Invest DSM) to supply the new capital and work in coordination with the Neighborhood Business District Resource Team, the Office of Economic Development, NDC, and the Neighborhood Associations; launch in 2019-2020 and continue through 2029.

Target Activities



**Equity Gap**  
Capital to assist a building owner or developer in financing renovations, new construction, or site improvements that cannot currently be justified by projected rent income or appraisal.

**Lease Subsidy**  
(1) Capital to assist a building owner with financing commercial space improvements (to secure a tenant) that cannot be justified by current market rents. (2) Direct assistance to a recruited tenant to finance leasehold improvements and/or offset rent costs.

**Land / Property Banking**  
Funding to support acquisition of land or buildings by a public or non-profit entity to facilitate redevelopment.

**Demolition Subsidy**  
Funding to assist with demolition or land preparation costs related to redevelopment.

**Place-making**  
Funding to support improvements to the public realm that boost commercial district identity, such as streetscape elements and investments in branding and marketing.

NEIGHBORHOOD

**Establish a Neighborhood Business District Resource Team**

Neighborhood outcomes advanced



Our business districts are thriving, diverse, and contribute to residential desirability



**What problem or opportunity does this respond to?**

For the purposes of marketing investment tools and opportunities within the Special Investment District, there is a need to create a special purpose brand that aligns with the core brand attributes of this plan.

**What work will this entail? What are the outputs?**

Form an interagency resource team dedicated to the city's four Special Investment Districts. The team would be involved in proactive outreach with property and business owners, helping businesses navigate useful programs and resources, and assisting with implementation of special projects.

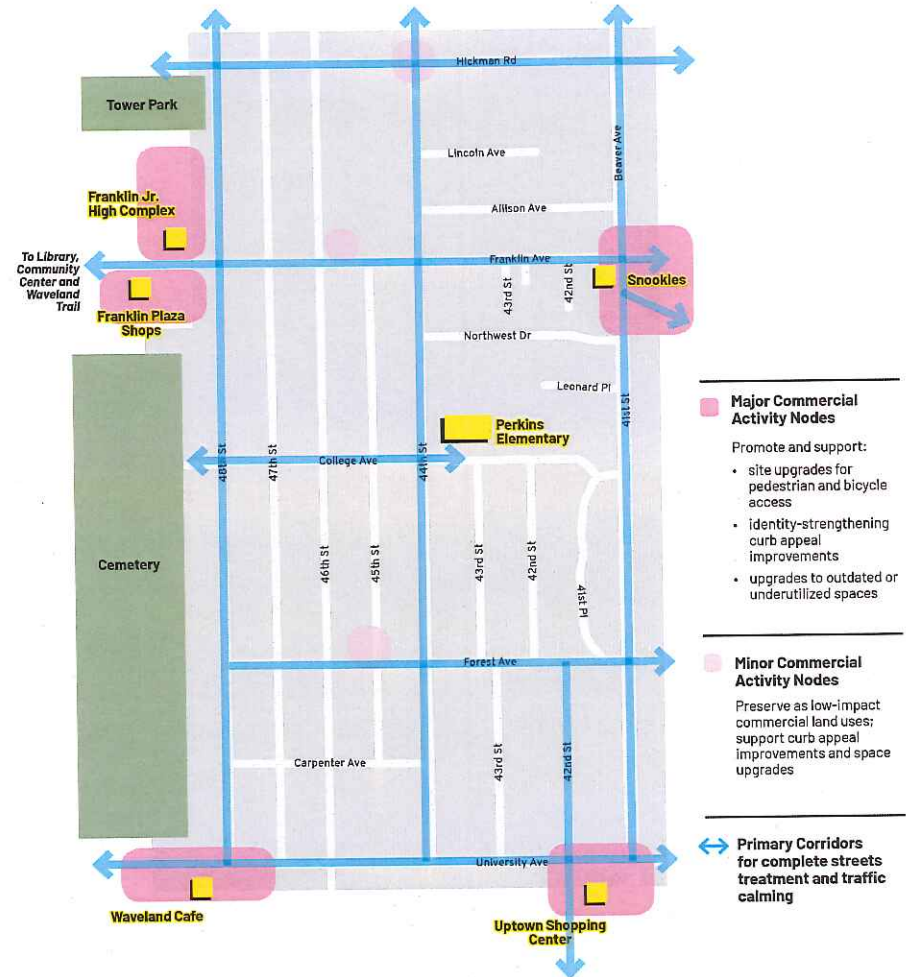
**What resources are required? Where do they come from?**

Use the collective existing capacities of Resource Team members to initiate; realign staff assignments within the Office of Economic Development, as necessary, to perform coordination functions.

**Who does it? When does it happen?**

Convened by the Office of Economic Development in partnership with Invest DSM, NDC, FuseDSM, West Side Chamber, SBDC, and the Des Moines Partnership.

PART 4 Action Plan



SPECIAL INVESTMENT DISTRICT

Create new financing tools to stimulate housing improvements that enhance marketability and property values

Neighborhood outcomes advanced



Homes are desirable and maintain their value against inflation



Public and private spaces have curb appeal and celebrate community character



What problem or opportunity does this respond to?

A typical house in the Special Investment District is now 70 to 100 years old and showing some degree of maintenance deferral. A concerted effort to improve the condition and marketability of the housing stock – while setting high standards for renovations – will help protect the market from further disinvestment and blight.

What work will this entail? What are the outputs?

Provide access to financial packages (in the form of low-cost loans and grants) to support substantial and high-quality home renovations as well as smaller-scale exterior improvements. Sustain the effort over a 10-year period with goal of supporting substantial rehabs to 120 homes, exterior improvements to 240 homes, and at least four new homes as infill.

What resources are required? Where do they come from?

Allocate capital over a 10-year period to support improvements to 360 existing homes and the development of four infill homes, with funding drawn from a combination of City, County, and private-sector resources.

Who does it? When does it happen?

Establish a new not-for-profit entity (Invest DSM) to market and administer the financial tools and to promote investment in the Special Investment District; launch in 2019-2020 and continue through 2029.

PART 4 Action Plan



Target Activities

**Single-family Rehab by Homeowner**  
Encourage and support homeowners in making substantial, market-leading upgrades to their properties, regardless of household income. Specs must be co-developed with Invest-DSM to ensure high-quality and must include some form of curb appeal enhancement.

**Single-family Rehab by Developer**  
Encourage reputable developers to take on the risks involved in performing a market-leading renovation to a single-family home. Specs must be co-developed with Invest-DSM to ensure high-quality, and must include some form of curb appeal enhancement.

**Small Beautification Projects**  
Encourage and support residential property owners in making exterior upgrades that enhance home and neighborhood marketability. Specs must be co-developed with Invest-DSM to ensure high-quality.

**Single-family Infill housing**  
Encourage and support market-leading infill housing on vacant lots. Specs must be co-developed with Invest-DSM to ensure high-quality.

Minimum number of properties to impact over 10 years

90

30

240

4

TOTAL

364



SPECIAL INVESTMENT DISTRICT

**Establish a Franklin Area brand that aligns with core brand attributes and target markets**

Neighborhood outcomes advanced



Neighborhood's image is well-known and celebrates unique characteristics



**What problem or opportunity does this respond to?**

For the purposes of marketing reinvestment tools and opportunities within the Special Investment District, there is a need to create a special purpose brand that aligns with the core brand attributes of this plan.

**What work will this entail? What are the outputs?**

Develop a brand for the Franklin Area that aligns with the core brand attributes and complements the brands of Waveland Park and Beaverdale.

**What resources are required? Where do they come from?**

Coordination by NDD and Invest DSM with a small Franklin Area branding task force; potential need for graphics services.

**Who does it? When does it happen?**

NDD and Reinvest-DSM; develop by the end of 2019

SPECIAL INVESTMENT DISTRICT

**Designate Special Investment District as target area for affordable homeownership and rehab activities**

Neighborhood outcomes advanced



Neighborhood invites and includes diverse populations



**What problem or opportunity does this respond to?**

The Franklin Area represents an ideal market to promote affordable homeownership in Des Moines given its relative strength and accessibility, as well as its high quality of life.

**What work will this entail? What are the outputs?**

Make this a focus area for organizations in Des Moines that support homeownership for income-eligible households (including rehab/sale and financing assistance). Assist at least three sales to eligible buyers and/or affordable rehabs per year for the next 10 years.

**What resources are required? Where do they come from?**

Focus existing funding streams for affordable homeownership from federal, state, and private sources.

**Who does it? When does it happen?**

Local affordable housing developers and providers with coordination from Invest DSM to ensure design quality and compatibility.

PART 4 Action Plan

SPECIAL INVESTMENT DISTRICT

**Make blighted nuisance properties a priority for rehabilitation (or demolition when necessary)**

Neighborhood outcomes advanced



Public and private spaces have curb appeal and celebrate community character



**What problem or opportunity does this respond to?**

Blighted nuisance properties on otherwise stable blocks have a detrimental impact on neighborhood confidence and reinvestment, as well as posing safety issues. Getting them demolished (or in the hands of a rehabber with a good track record, if possible) should be a priority.

**What work will this entail? What are the outputs?**

Use single-family rehab incentives to attract a good owner/developer to recoverable nuisance properties; set aside resources to take swift action to demolish blighted nuisance properties that are not recoverable or marketable.

**What resources are required? Where do they come from?**

Reserve \$25,000 per year to support 1 or 2 property demolitions; funding drawn from Blitz on Blight resources.

**Who does it? When does it happen?**

City of Des Moines Neighborhood Inspection Division; begin in 2019-2020.

SPECIAL INVESTMENT DISTRICT

**Perform strategic code enforcement activities**

Neighborhood outcomes advanced



Homes are desirable and maintain their value against inflation



Public and private spaces have curb appeal and celebrate community character



**What problem or opportunity does this respond to?**

Strategic code enforcement, combined with broadening the property improvement code to cover owner-occupied homes, has the potential to set basic standards for property maintenance while constructively engaging property owners in neighborhood improvement.

**What work will this entail? What are the outputs?**

Perform comprehensive code enforcement sweeps of the Special Investment District in addition to ongoing rental inspections. Proactively engage property owners to educate them about the property maintenance code, find workable solutions to code compliance problems, and connect low-income or disabled property owners with assistance.

**What resources are required? Where do they come from?**

Use code enforcement budget increase described under the first action to provide necessary staff and administrative capacity.

**Who does it? When does it happen?**

City of Des Moines Neighborhood Inspection Division; begin in 2020.

SPECIAL INVESTMENT DISTRICT

**Improve sidewalk network for walkability and pedestrian safety**

Neighborhood outcomes advanced



The neighborhood is inviting, safe, and fun for walkers and cyclists



**What problem or opportunity does this respond to?**

Sidewalk conditions throughout the Special Investment District are inconsistent. Improving sidewalks has the potential to boost neighborhood image, improve the curb appeal of properties, and support a culture of walking that bolsters neighborhood amenities.

**What work will this entail? What are the outputs?**

(1) Reduce gaps in existing sidewalk network as identified in City's Sidewalk Inventory, with priority segments filled by Engineering Department. (2) Educate property owners about sidewalk maintenance and replacement responsibilities. (3) Coordinate volume bidding on sidewalk and driveway work by interested property owners.

**What resources are required? Where do they come from?**

Draw from \$60 million citywide commitment to gap reduction; commitment of Neighborhood Association time and effort to property owner education and volume bidding coordination.

**Who does it? When does it happen?**

Gap reduction work by Engineering Department (2019-2020); Neighborhood Association coordination of property owner education (begin in 2020).

SPECIAL INVESTMENT DISTRICT

**Organize a one-time "Mini-SCRUB" pilot event**

Neighborhood outcomes advanced



Public and private spaces have curb appeal and celebrate community character



**What problem or opportunity does this respond to?**

The City of Des Moines has gone away from neighborhood scale SCRUB events, in favor of Mega SCRUB events that serve multiple neighborhoods across the City. While these events are well utilized by many Des Moines residents, they can be difficult for residents with lesser means and resources to take advantage of. This may lead to junk and debris complaints.

**What work will this entail? What are the outputs?**

Coordinate a pilot "Mini-SCRUB" event by providing direct removal of junk and debris for residents living in the target area. Could be a complimentary strategy to the increased code enforcement work within the SID.

**What resources are required? Where do they come from?**

Private refuse collection contract, logistical details TBD.

**Who does it? When does it happen?**

City Public Works and Neighborhood Development with volunteer support from Neighborhood Association.

PART 4 Action Plan

# Implementation Summary

To successfully implement this plan over the next 10 years, the "how" matters as much as the "what." Each activity or strategy will require some level of technical ability from the partners involved, but they will also require a willingness to do things differently, to learn from experience, to adapt when necessary, to tolerate risk, and to collaborate whenever possible to take advantage of the community's collective wisdom and skills. Getting the "how" right also means avoiding the impulse to treat each activity as a discrete task and losing sight of how everything fits together to achieve long-term neighborhood revitalization outcomes. For example, building resident leadership capacity and issuing housing rehab loans are very different activities but they are both critical to realizing a healthier neighborhood and should never be seen as unrelated undertakings.

**Coalition Framework**

An implementation coalition is a useful framework for ensuring that diverse tasks remain connected and self-reinforcing, and to keep all members of the coalition—regardless of which activities they are directly involved with—mindful of the big picture and of a shared commitment to problem-solving. Because this action plan identifies roles for a wide range of public, private, and non-profit entities that may not typically interact (including residents and property owners), coordination from the newly formed Invest DSM will be needed to bring coalition partners together on a routine basis and to encourage informal interaction between them.



**Convene quarterly to...**

- Review progress on components of the action plan
- Modify actions as needed to reflect new information
- Track outcome indicators
- Track changes in the housing market to identify challenges to affordability and plan appropriate interventions to preserve affordable options for vulnerable households
- Respond to new challenges and opportunities in ways that align with the neighborhood's vision and core brand attributes, as well as Des Moines' neighborhood revitalization principles

**Principles in Practice**

The action plan is designed in response to the issues and conditions that emerged during the planning process and during the 2017-2018 evaluation of Des Moines' Neighborhood Revitalization Program. It lays out activities to respond to what is known.

However, it is likely that unforeseen things will happen over the next 10 years, as will the need to make decisions that are not and cannot be articulated by this plan. For that reason, the revitalization principles identified in Part 1 will be a crucial part of the implementation process—providing a consistent basis for deliberating about tradeoffs and making decisions large and small. The following table demonstrates how the principles can be used as a lens to critically examine and think about circumstances that arise.



**Multiple projects are competing for limited resources.**



**A new opportunity or challenge emerges.**



**Frustration arises with the pace of progress.**

	<b>Multiple projects are competing for limited resources.</b>	<b>A new opportunity or challenge emerges.</b>	<b>Frustration arises with the pace of progress.</b>
<b>Strengths and Assets</b>	Which project does more to protect or strengthen key assets or core brand attributes?	Is a response needed to protect or strengthen key assets or core brand attributes? If not, why is it worth our time?	Where are we having the most success? What can we learn from that and apply elsewhere?
<b>Targeted</b>	Which project contributes the most to a clustering of visible improvement?	If this is worth a response, how do we do so in a way that doesn't scatter our limited attention and resources too widely?	Is it possible to focus our efforts and resources even more tightly to transform market behaviors?
<b>Patience</b>	Which project is the best long-term bet? Are we avoiding a decision based on short-term expediency?	In responding to something new, are we dropping something else too soon? What are the opportunity costs now and five years from now?	Revitalization doesn't happen overnight—are we giving this enough time?
<b>Outcomes and Measurements</b>	Which project is likely to do the most to advance one or more outcomes?	Which outcomes are we advancing by responding to this opportunity or challenge?	Do our data and experience point to necessary adjustments in what we are doing or how we are doing it?

**PART 4 Action Plan**

**RESOURCES**

Implementation of the action plan will require funding from a range of public sector partners to support the emergence of a healthier neighborhood where the market is strong, capacity is high, conditions are appealing, and the image is positive. In other words, the public investment is about building peoples' confidence to invest their own time, energy, and money into the neighborhood, resulting in a more competitive and financially sustainable community over time.

In the same way that "how" matters to the implementation of individual activities and strategies, the nature and diversity of resources matters, too. The commitment of local funding to this effort is a statement about priorities and values—about not waiting for someone else to solve a problem. The vast majority of the resources identified by this action plan are local in nature and reflect the breadth of implementation partnerships.

A potentially important supplement to implementation resources identified in the action plan are resources made available through urban renewal area designation. This plan recommends the creation, as appropriate, of an urban renewal plan in the Franklin Area to 1) increase access to additional tools and financing, particularly in commercial nodes, 2) support the removal of slum and blight, and 3) potentially utilize the increment generated for investments in public infrastructure.

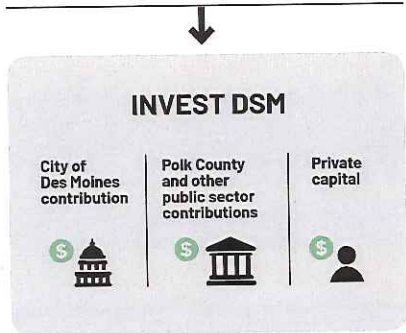
ACTIONS	RESOURCES					
	City of Des Moines: Staff Resources, General Fund, CIP, LOSST, etc.	Invest DSM	State and Federal Resources	Urban Renewal Area Financial Tools	Private: Homeowners, Investors, Businesses, Institutions	Time and Energy of Residents & Other Stakeholders
Begin enforcement of the Property Improvement Code						
Establish a dedicated, in-house junk and debris crew						
Improve and expand training/support for neighborhood leaders and leadership development						
Apply complete streets principles and traffic calming measures, especially to upcoming street reconstruction and improvement projects						
Tie existing or new neighborhood pride activities to core brand attributes						
Expand awareness and appreciation for area's period architecture						
Create new financing tools to support improvements to commercial properties within and adjacent to the Franklin Area						
Establish a Neighborhood Business District Resource Team						
Create new financing tools to stimulate housing improvements that enhance marketability and property values						
Establish a Franklin Area brand that aligns with core brand attributes and target markets						
Designate Special Investment District as target area for affordable homeownership and rehab activities by Habitat, NFC, and others						
Make blighted nuisance properties a priority for rehabilitation (or demolition when necessary)						
Perform strategic code enforcement activities						
Improve sidewalk network for walkability and pedestrian safety						
Organize a one-time "Mini-SCRUB" pilot event						

**Note on the use of federal and state resources for affordable housing:**  
This action plan suggests that local affordable housing providers, using state, federal, and private resources, have a clear role to play in creating affordable homeownership opportunities in the Franklin Area. Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) may also play a role in supporting affordable housing options, though any new-build LIHTC project should be mixed-income and conform to neighborhood scale, with locations along higher density corridors preferred.

**INVEST DSM**

The residential and commercial financial tools identified in this action plan are not an expansion of (or replacement for) existing programs. Instead they reflect Des Moines' updated approach to neighborhood revitalization, which requires the following:

- A focus on raising standards and leading markets to higher ground
- A commitment to intervening with assets that are vulnerable
- An ability to work in middle markets on a combination of market, capacity, condition, and image activities
- A partnership that brings together multiple public and private entities



To accommodate this new approach and its requirements, this planning process has resulted in the creation of Invest DSM, a not-for-profit that will be dedicated to supporting high-quality investment and revitalization in Des Moines' Special Investment Districts (SIDs). The first four SIDs, including this one, will require a collective commitment of \$50 million over 10 years to support residential and commercial investment, along with other neighborhood strengthening activities. The City has committed to funding Invest DSM annually, with partnership from Polk County, and is seeking other funding partners from the private sector.



The targeted number of residential properties for Invest DSM to impact over the next 10 years, as described in this action plan, is 360. This number is based on the estimated need to directly improve the marketability of approximately 20% of the residential stock in order to reach a market tipping point beyond which perceptions of risk will be low enough to support sustainably healthy levels of private investment.

Participation by residential property owners in Invest DSM programs will have no income restrictions. Maximum amounts to be borrowed or granted will be determined based on the average value of homes in the Special Investment District—a figure that should be updated every two years to reflect changes in the market.



# Appendix

## Field Survey Overview

A "field survey of exterior conditions" is referenced in several parts of this plan and was a key data component to the development of this plan and to the Neighborhood Revitalization Planning Program Review completed by czbLLC for the City of Des Moines in 2018. This field survey is a method of gauging the overall health of a residential property by looking for exterior visual cues for investment, disinvestment, and pride.

Properties that were given a score of "1" (Excellent) or "2" (Good) give signals that they are being well maintained by their owners and communicate clear pride to other owners/residents in the neighborhood as well as visitors. Properties that were given a score of "4" (Moderate distress) or "5" (Severe or high level of distress) give multiple indications that maintenance

has been deferred and conditions are declining due to disinvestment. Properties that were given a score of "3" (Average condition) represent the average house in Des Moines—showing signs of neither active pride nor distress.

Results presented in Part 2 of this plan are based on a field survey performed by staff of the Neighborhood Development Division in the fall of 2018. For the purposes of tracking progress in neighborhood conditions and linking the results with other updated datasets (such as sales prices, assessments, building permits, etc.), it is recommended that the City perform a field survey every fall in the Special Investment District.

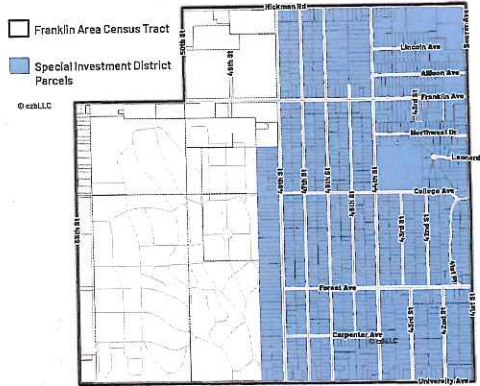
## Field Survey Scoring



The Franklin Area Special Investment District's average field survey score in 2018: 2.6

**Census Profile**

Source: Census Bureau, 2017 ACS 5-Year Estimates Source: 2017 5-Year Estimates from the American Community Survey for the following Census geographies which overlap with the boundaries of the Special Investment District but cover a larger area: Census Tract 9.02 (Block Groups 1, 2, and 3).



	Franklin Area	City of Des Moines
<b>Total housing units</b>	1,644	91,420
Occupied housing units	1,523	83,916
Vacant housing units	121	7,504
Vacant, Other housing units	26	3,587
% Vacant	7%	8%
% Vacant, Other	1.6%	3.9%
<b>Owner-occupied</b>	1,006	50,362
Renter-occupied	517	33,554
Homeownership Rate	66%	60%

	Franklin Area		City of Des Moines	
	#	%	#	%
1-Person Household, Owner	317	32%	13,741	27%
2-Person Household, Owner	354	35%	17,836	35%
3-Person Household, Owner	163	16%	8,009	16%
4-Person Household, Owner	77	8%	6,074	12%
5-Person Household, Owner	63	6%	2,785	6%
6-Person Household, Owner	29	3%	1,083	2%
7+-Person Household, Owner	3	0%	834	2%
1-Person Household, Renter	329	64%	14,003	42%
2-Person Household, Renter	112	22%	7,912	24%
3-Person Household, Renter	58	11%	4,811	14%
4-Person Household, Renter	18	3%	3,328	10%
5-Person Household, Renter	0	0%	2,060	6%
6-Person Household, Renter	0	0%	943	3%
7+-Person Household, Renter	0	0%	497	1%

	Franklin Area		City of Des Moines	
	#	%	#	%
Moved into Unit 2015+, Owner	59	6%	3,069	6%
Moved into Unit 2010-2014, Owner	228	23%	10,921	22%
Moved into Unit 2000s, Owner	373	37%	16,416	33%
Moved into Unit 1990s, Owner	156	16%	9,451	19%
Moved into Unit 1980s, Owner	84	8%	4,345	9%
Moved into Unit Pre-1980, Owner	106	11%	6,160	12%
% Moved into Unit 2000+		66%		60%
% Moved into Unit Pre-1990		19%		21%

	Franklin Area	City of Des Moines
Median Contract Rent	\$753	\$692
Median Gross Rent	\$852	\$797

	Franklin Area	City of Des Moines
Affordability Computed (Renters)	496	31,746
Unaffordable Rent (>30% of Income)	200	15,515
Very Unaffordable Rent (>50% of Income)	55	12,792
% Unaffordable	40%	49%
% Very Unaffordable	11%	40%
Median Value	\$157,033	\$123,3000

	Franklin Area		City of Des Moines	
	#	%	#	%
<b>Population</b>	<b>3,341</b>		<b>214,778</b>	
Under 18 years	711	21%	52,490	24%
18-34	682	20%	58,186	27%
35-64	1,412	42%	79,060	37%
65+	536	16%	25,042	12%
% Under 18		21%		24%
% 65+		16%		12%
Non-Hispanic White	2,986	89%	142,831	67%
Non-Hispanic Black	107	3%	22,948	11%
Non-Hispanic Asian	102	3%	12,717	6%
Hispanic	51	2%	28,085	13%

	Franklin Area		City of Des Moines	
	#	%	#	%
<b>Households</b>	<b>1,523</b>		<b>83,916</b>	
Families	770	58%	48,573	58%
Married-Couple Families	574	38%	31,776	38%
Married-Couple Families with Children	249	16%	13,754	16%
Single-Parent Families	196	20%	16,797	20%
Single-Parent Families with Children	117	12%	10,263	12%
Non-Family Households	753	42%	35,343	42%
Living Alone	646	33%	27,744	33%
Not Living Alone	107	9%	7,599	9%
<b>Population 25+</b>	<b>2,471</b>		<b>139,577</b>	
Less than High School	65	3%	19,046	14%
High School Graduate	410	17%	42,540	30%
Some College	706	29%	42,768	31%
Bachelor's Degree or More	1,290	52%	35,223	25%

	Franklin Area	City of Des Moines
Poverty Rate (Individuals)	7.3%	18.1%
Poverty Rate (Families)	5.2%	13.6%
Median Household Income (2013)	\$61,083	\$45,836
Median Household Income (2017)	\$67,675	\$49,999
% Change (2013-2017)	10.8%	9.1%

	Franklin Area		City of Des Moines	
	#	%	#	%
<b>Households (Income Determined)</b>	<b>1,523</b>		<b>83,916</b>	
with Wage Income	1,216	79.8%	67,113	80.0%
with Social Security Income	399	26.2%	21,188	25.2%
with SSI	10	0.7%	5,265	6.3%
with SNAP	138	9.1%	17,928	21.4%
with Public Assistance	0	0.0%	2,994	3.6%

	Franklin Area	City of Des Moines
	#	#
<b>Population 16+</b>	<b>2,702</b>	<b>167,529</b>
In Civilian Labor Force	2,056	118,301
Unemployed	113	7,727
Not in Labor Force	646	49,118
Unemployment Rate	5.5%	6.5%
% Not in Labor Force	23.9%	29.3%

### Resident Survey

During January and February 2019, residents, business owners, and other stakeholders in the Special Investment District were surveyed about key issues relating to neighborhood conditions and investment using an online survey instrument. The survey was advertised through bilingual postcards sent to all residential addresses (owner and rental) in the Special Investment District and through promotion by the area's Neighborhood Associations.

A total of 165 completed responses were received, 98% of which were from homeowners. Survey participants included a combination of recent arrivals who have lived in the neighborhood for less than five years (28%), residents who have lived in the area for 10-19 years (30%), and residents who have lived in the area for 20 or more years (30%). The most common responses to questions about key issues and neighborhood marketability are summarized below.

#### Top Selling Points

Q3: Identify three characteristics about the neighborhood and/or its housing stock that you see as the top selling points for potential homeowners.

	# of responses
Location to downtown & amenities	86
Housing character & historic charm	83
Affordable	37
Friendly neighbors	34
Well-maintained houses & yards	29
Mature trees / tree-lined streets	29
Good schools	27
Business Districts / local shopping & restaurants	26
Walkable	22
Safe / low-crime	20
Access to parks, trails, and library	20
Quiet, peaceful	17
Sense of community & Small-town feeling	15
Stable property values	10
Diversity of housing styles	10
Houses are well-constructed, solid	9
Diversity of people (age, race, socio-economic)	8
Family (and pet) friendly	8
Established neighborhood & residents	3
High homeownership / few rentals	3
Beautiful, attractive, park-like neighborhood	3

#### Homebuyer Deterrents

Q4: Identify three characteristics about the neighborhood or housing stock that you see as the top turn-offs for potential homebuyers.

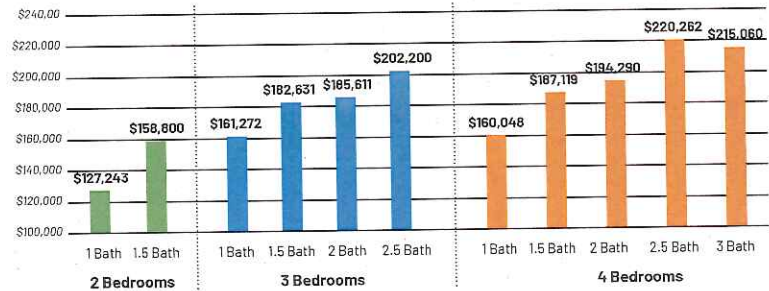
	# of responses
Distressed properties - lack of maintenance & upkeep	64
Older houses are expensive to maintain & renovate	39
Flooding, sewer back-ups, wet basements	35
Crime (increasing)	29
Traffic & speeding	23
Empty storefronts, run-down commercial areas	20
Small houses	19
Increasing number of rentals	18
Older houses have outdated features (i.e. 1 bath, small closets, small rooms)	15
Small lots	14
High taxes	13
Garages (none, or small 1-car)	13
Street Parking and narrow streets (difficult to navigate)	13
Poorly maintained streets (i.e. potholes)	12
Lack of restaurants, other small businesses	11
High or inflated housing prices	11
Poor schools	9
Proximity to less-desirable neighborhoods (crime)	9
Troublesome businesses	9
Old infrastructure, above-ground utilities (slow internet)	8
No park	7
Sidewalks (lack of and/or condition)	7
Dangerous intersections (48th/University/Polk and Beaver Bend)	7
Lack of new construction homes	4
Lack of diversity	4
Poor snow removal	4
Limited access to trails	4
Aging population	3
Tree maintenance	3

Issue to Solve	# of responses
Q5: If you were in charge of making the neighborhood better, what issue would you devote the most resources to solving?	
Stormwater, flooding, & sewer issues	28
Address distressed housing conditions, lack of maintenance	23
Offer home improvement loans and grants (NFC) or tax credits	18
Crime & safety	17
Enhance business districts (physical improvements & vacant buildings)	17
Business development & recruitment (i.e. more restaurants)	15
Repair streets & curbs	13
Address speeding traffic	12
Add/improve sidewalks	10
Address street parking	6
Complete streets - bikeability, walkability, public transportation, EV stations	6
Improve parks, more outdoor amenities	5
Address bad rentals/landlords	4
Beautification, landscaping and tree planting	4
Improve unsafe intersections	4
Upgrade utilities (fiber)	3
More neighborhood events	3
Reduce taxes	3
Appropriate street lighting and light levels	3

Home Improvement	# of responses
Q6: If financial or technical assistance was available to make one improvement that would boost your home's livability or curb appeal, what improvement would you make?	
Landscaping & tree trimming	30
Replace driveway	22
New windows	20
New siding	14
Exterior painting	14
New roof	12
New garage	14
Update kitchen	11
Foundation repairs & basement waterproofing	10
Tuckpointing	7
Add/repair deck or patio	7
Finish attic space	5
Remodel existing bath	5
Add a bath	5
Electrical upgrades	4
Plumbing upgrades	4
Insulation	4
Fix sidewalks	4
Retaining walls & fence	4
Gutters	3
Add an addition or sunroom	3
Finish basement	3
General exterior improvements	3

### Housing Stock Profile

Average Assessed Values, 2018



Bedrooms	Baths	Number of Homes	Share of Homes	Ave. Square Ft.	Ave. Assessed Value	% exhibiting distress	Average home age	% owner-occupied
2	1	303	26%	984	\$127,243	14%	88	85%
3	1	230	20%	1,464	\$161,272	9%	92	92%
3	1.5	187	16%	1,550	\$182,631	3%	85	96%
3	2	108	9%	1,606	\$185,611	5%	86	94%
4	1.5	54	5%	1,760	\$187,119	13%	89	96%
2	1.5	46	4%	1,272	\$158,800	9%	85	96%

Source: czbLLC analysis of data from Polk County Assessor and field survey of exterior conditions



**Brand Concepts**

**Brand Goal** Image of Neighborhood is Well Known and Celebrates Unique Characteristics

**Homebuyer/ Renter Target Market**

<p><b>Target Market 1:</b> Young Professional Families; \$225,000-300,000 Price Range 3+ bedrooms 2+ bathrooms Garage Move-in ready</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Young (25-40) professional 2-person households about to start family, or 1-2 kids.</b></li> <li>• <b>Appreciate schools and homes with character in a quiet, safe neighborhood.</b></li> <li>• <b>Identify as more urban, hip, progressive than suburban counterparts.</b></li> <li>• <b>Want walkable amenities and friendly neighbors.</b></li> </ul>
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<p><b>Target Market 2:</b> DINKs + Dogs (DINK=Double Income No Kids) \$175,000+ 2-3 bedrooms 1.5+ bathrooms Some rehadders; some move-in ready</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Primarily 25-40 range.</b></li> <li>• <b>Want a yard for dog(s).</b></li> <li>• <b>Want urban, cool, historic, but quiet and safe.</b></li> <li>• <b>Want walkable amenities and friendly neighbors.</b></li> </ul>
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<p><b>Target Market 3:</b> School Parents at Perkins Elementary Full range of sizes and price points, but will generally need the more affordable homes in the neighborhood; many will qualify for subsidized construction such as Habitat or HOME Inc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Perkins families are more diverse overall (47% white, 23% Hispanic, 21% Black) than the neighborhood, speaking more than 20 languages. They also have lower incomes overall (59% of students qualify for free and reduced lunch).</b></li> <li>• <b>Want a safe, affordable neighborhood and home with modern amenities, low maintenance costs.</b></li> <li>• <b>Successfully recruiting this market will require sustained outreach and commitment to providing affordable options.</b></li> </ul>
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- Core Brand Attributes**
1. Charming homes on tree-lined streets.
  2. Active lifestyle, walkable community with friendly neighbors.
  3. Conveniently located to enjoy the best of city and suburban amenities.
  4. Family friendly with great schools.

**Brochure Short**

Charming homes on tree-lined streets with friendly neighbors; top-rated schools, convenient location; walk and bike to neighborhood icons including Snookie's, Waveland Cafe, the Franklin Avenue Library, and the re-activated Franklin Jr. High!

**Draft Brand Statement**

For people who want a vibrant, family-friendly community with character near downtown employment and amenities, the Franklin Area offers the best of city and suburban life. We are located at the juncture of the Beaverdale and Waveland Park neighborhoods, and neighbors here walk, bike and drive on leafy streets to iconic local gathering spots as well as convenient shopping districts. Franklin offers an active lifestyle, great schools and open green space for kids and dogs. The Franklin area is home to one of the first Invest DSM Special Investment Districts, so act now and be our neighbor!

**Logo**

Special-purpose Franklin logo to be developed if deemed necessary

## Key Brand Activities Ideas

### 1. To reinforce "Charming homes on tree-lined streets".

- Host a homes tour in the spring launch of Invest DSM – open all homes for sale as well as any newly rehabbed where owners are willing.
- Establish a Franklin Area Facebook and/ or Instagram account. Hold a social media photo call for photos demonstrating "why I love the Franklin area". Use photos in print marketing material for Realtors.
- Host an annual Arbor Day celebration.
- Inventory street trees and fill gaps.

### 2. To reinforce "Active lifestyle, walkable community".

- Host an Open Streets or Better Block event on a regular basis.
- Start Monday evening group walks. Line up local celebrities to walk with the group. Document on social media.
- Install Creative Crosswalks in areas across the neighborhood and encourage residents to post pictures to social media.
- Host a DSM City Ride to Franklin Jr. High.

### 3. To reinforce "Conveniently located...".

- Consider a Walk [Your City] event (walkyourcity.org) to showcase how walkable the neighborhood is.
- Feature social media stories twice monthly on neighbors who work downtown and find the location of the neighborhood convenient.
- Promote neighborhood gathering spots (Snookie's, Waveland Café, Franklin Jr. High, etc.) on Franklin area social media.
- Find a mobile coffee vendor(s) to set up a weekly coffee pop-up with outdoor chairs on Saturdays in summer – in the parking lot of Franklin School. Use the experience of these vendors to recruit a permanent coffee shop to the area.

### 4. To reinforce "Family friendly with great schools".

- Host a back-to-school parade featuring kids and dogs, distribute backpacks with school supplies or similar school-themed items. Have kids judge different dog competitions (cutest, friendliest, goofiest, most obedient). Invite media, document on social media.
- Consider fundraising for a downpayment assistance grant fund for Perkins families who buy in the neighborhood. Promote at the school with homebuyer education class.
- Post a "Meet the Perkins Team" photo and bio twice a month, featuring a teacher or other staff person.
- Promote school events such as the Perkins Cultural Fair to the larger community.

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APPENDIX

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Neighborhood Revitalization Plan for the

**Franklin Area**  
**Special Investment District**

JULY 2019