

CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION 97-069  
FEBRUARY 17, 1997 AGENDA

SUBJECT:	TYPE:	SUBMITTED BY:
SKYWALK CONNECTION BETWEEN HOTEL FORT DES MOINES AND THE TENTH & WALNUT PARKING GARAGE	◆ RESOLUTION ORDINANCE RECEIVE/FILE	HAROLD E. SMITH CITY ENGINEER

**SYNOPSIS —**

The Agreement with Herbert Lewis Kruse Blunck provides for Design- and Construction-Phase Services of the Skywalk Connection (Tunnel) between the Hotel Fort Des Moines and the Tenth and Walnut Parking Garage. The Hotel Fort Des Moines has retained Herbert Lewis Kruse Blunck to design the connections within the Hotel and the Parkade properties. Therefore, it is recommended that the City retain the same firm to design the skywalk connection (tunnel) across 10th Street to connect the two properties. The Skywalk Commission, at its November 21, 1996, meeting, approved the concept of a tunnel skywalk connection between the Hotel Fort Des Moines and the Tenth and Walnut Parking Garage.

**FISCAL IMPACT —**

Compensation to the consultant would be as follows:

Phase I - Schematic Design.....	\$25,410
Phase II - Construction Documentation .....	\$25,410
Bidding and Negotiation/Construction Administration .....	\$12,705
Special Inspections .....	\$18,550
Reimbursable Expenses .....	\$ 4,050
Total Not To Exceed .....	\$86,125

Funds for this project are contained in the 1996-97 CIP under "Downtown Skywalk System," Account No. 389445.

**RECOMMENDATION —**

Approval of Professional Services Agreement with Herbert Lewis Kruse Blunck.

**BACKGROUND —**

On June 19, 1985, the Skywalk Commission received an application for a skywalk connection from the Fort Des Moines Hotel. Typically, upon receiving such an application, the City would initiate negotiations for a skywalk agreement with the originating property owners and also initiate the design of the skywalk bridge. In this instance the properties on both sides of 10th Street are owned by the owners of the Fort Des Moines Hotel; thus, the City has been awaiting their decision on how the skywalk connection would be provided through the 10th Street Parkade (parking garage) and how the connection would be made to the Hotel—which is on the National Historic Register.

The original Skywalk System Plan Map adopted by the Des Moines City Council on June 23, 1980 did not include an east/west connection west from 7th Street through the property owned by Employers Mutual Companies (EMC). After EMC entered into a skywalk agreement with the City of Des Moines, the Skywalk Plan Map was modified to show the east/west connection and the extension of the system to the Fort Des Moines Hotel. This method of adoption of the Skywalk Plan Map did not place any requirement on EMC for construction of an east/west skywalk corridor within their properties. If a corridor was to be constructed, the cost would have had to be borne by someone other than EMC. Because of this, the extension of the Skywalk System west to the Fort Des Moines Hotel has not materialized.

At the time that EMC entered into an urban renewal contract with the City of Des Moines for the construction of their new headquarters building, the following clause regarding the east/west skywalk corridor through their properties was included:

"EMC shall provide a limited Skywalk Easement above the western one-half of to-be vacated alley and to construct this link of the Skywalk Corridor to 8th Street upon the earliest of any of the following:

- A) EMC connects any portion of the NW quarter of this block on which the EMC Project is located to the Skywalk System;
- B) EMC constructs a new building improvement on any portion of the NW quarter of this block;
- C) By December 31, 1998, if a property owner on the block west of the EMC Project agrees to be a part of the Skywalk System and enters into a Skywalk Agreement with the City prior to January 1, 1998;
- D) One year from the date a property owner on the block west of the EMC Project enters into a Skywalk Agreement with the City or in the event such property owner agrees to be part of the Skywalk System on or after January 1, 1998."

This provision now allows the opportunity to initiate the connection to the Fort Des Moines Hotel. As has always been the case, expansion of the Skywalk System has occurred when the property owners make requests for construction of segments or connections to their property. The Fort Des Moines Hotel is now ready to make the commitments necessary to initiate the connection to the existing system. Ultimately, the owners of the remaining property in the blocks between the Hotel and EMC must also make that commitment in order for the System to be completed.

The request for a connection to the Fort Des Moines Hotel provides for an underground connection between the 10th Street Parkade and the Hotel. Although the Skywalk System presently has no underground links, it has always been envisioned that such a connection may at some time be necessary. For example: If a connection were ever to be made to the Polk County Courthouse, the connection probably would have to be made underground because of the historic nature of the Courthouse. The proposal for the underground connection to the Hotel results from three circumstances. First, the Hotel is on the National Historic Register, and a second level connection would not receive favorable approval from the State Historic Preservation Officer or others interested in historic preservation. Secondly, a skywalk corridor through the third level of the 10th Street Parkade would be very difficult or impossible. Finally, a skywalk corridor that would circumvent the Parkade on the east, south, and west sides to a skywalk bridge that would connect at the alleyway along the south edge of the Hotel would provide a very indirect route for the users of the system and would not be advisable.

In all probability, the Fort Des Moines Hotel will be the western termini for the Skywalk System in the blocks between Walnut and Mulberry Streets. The long-range plans for extension of the system to the west, developed as a part of the Gateway Plan, provide for a skywalk spine in the block between Locust and Mulberry Streets. If this is the case, the underground connection to the western termini, the Fort Des Moines Hotel, would be more acceptable than if the system continued to the west. However, for it to be successful, the vertical transfer at both the 10th Street Parkade and at the Hotel has to be carefully considered and designed.

At its November 21, 1996, meeting, the Skywalk Commission approved the concept for an underground connection for the Skywalk System between the 10th Street Parkade and the Fort Des Moines Hotel. The Commission directed staff to negotiate an agreement for such a connection and that the agreement specify that the participation in the costs of design, construction and construction inspection of such a connection be limited to those costs that would be incurred by the City for a normal second level skywalk connection.