

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER
DES MOINES, IOWA

ITEM III

CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION 97-151
MARCH 24, 1997 AGENDA

SUBJECT:	TYPE:	SUBMITTED BY:
30TH/31ST STREET REALIGNMENT PROJECT—PUBLIC INPUT PHASE	◆ RESOLUTION ORDINANCE RECEIVE/FILE	HAROLD E. SMITH CITY ENGINEER

SYNOPSIS —

On February 17, 1997, by Roll Call No. 97-074, the City Council selected Alternate 2 as the approved alternative for the 30th/31st Street Realignment Project and authorized the City Manager to proceed on final design of this alternative.

On March 3, 1997, Mr. Juwon Buckner, 1116 31st Street, addressed City Council regarding his concerns over the public input process on the 30th/31st Street Realignment Project. Following Mr. Buckner's concerns, Council directed that the City Manager report on the public notification process of this project, meet with the affected property owners, and return to City Council at their March 24, 1997 meeting (Roll Call No. 97-750).

Staff has prepared the background on the public notification process for this project and has met with Mr. Buckner and his neighbors on March 17, 1997. The consensus of the group is that Alternate 2 should proceed to final design. Staff is also planning several changes in the notification process.

FISCAL IMPACT —

Alternate 2 has an estimated cost of \$1.9 million, of which \$500,000 is available from the Iowa Department of Transportation's (IDOT's) Traffic Safety Improvement Program. The approved 1996-97/2001-02 CIP (page 336) provides \$50,000 for project design, and \$800,000 is programmed in future years of the CIP. This amount will be adjusted as the project design is completed. Drake University has indicated that they will provide the necessary right-of-way that they own at no cost to the City, which is estimated to be \$500,000.

RECOMMENDATION —

On February 17, 1997, the City Council approved the selection of Alternate 2, and authorized the City Manager to proceed with final design of this alternative. Staff recommends that Council reaffirm this previous authorization.

BACKGROUND —

On March 3, 1997, Mr. Juwon Buckner, 1116 31st Street, addressed City Council regarding his concerns over the public input process on the 30th/31st Street Realignment Project that led to the selection and approval of "Alternate 2" by the City Council on February 17, 1997 (Roll Call No. 97-449). Following Mr. Buckner's concerns, Council directed that the City Manager report on the public notification process of this project, meet with the affected property owners, and return to City Council at their March 24, 1997, meeting (Roll Call No. 97-750).

Mr. Buckner's concerns involved his lack of being informed about various meetings and City Council approval of the selected alternate. Specifically, he indicated (1) late notification of the October 22, 1996, public information meeting; (2) no notification of the later meeting with the Drake Park Neighborhood

Association on December 11, 1996; and (3) no notification in advance of the Council selection of "Alternate 2" at their February 17, 1997, meeting.

Staff has reviewed these concerns, and offers the following comments:

1. A Corridor Public Meeting was held at the Olmsted Center on the Drake University campus at 7 PM on Wednesday, October 22, 1996, to receive public input on four possible realignment alternatives. Approximately 35 people were in attendance. Notification of this meeting was sent out by a letter dated October 4, 1996 (copy attached). This was sent to all affected property owners of any of the four alternatives, which included 31st Street from Cottage Grove Avenue to University Avenue, and also 30th and 31st street from University Avenue to north of Clark Street. Notice was also sent to other interested parties and nearby neighborhood organizations. Mr. Buckner and his surrounding neighbors on 31st Street were included in this notification, and he was in attendance at the meeting.

At this meeting, City staff gave a presentation describing each of the four alternatives and their respective impacts on the area. Staff advised that they did not intend to select or recommend a specific alternate at the meeting, but would receive input on all of the proposed alternates. Following the presentation, large detailed maps of each alternative were available for those in attendance to review with staff. The Drake Neighborhood Association President stated that their group had not had an opportunity to consider the proposed alternatives, so they were not prepared to provide any specific input or recommendations at the public meeting. Staff agreed to meet with the neighborhood group to present the information and receive their input.

2. On December 11, 1996, staff met with members and the board of the Drake Neighborhood Association to further discuss the four alternatives. The City was a guest at this meeting, and therefore, did not notify the general public. Any notice was handled by the Drake Neighborhood Association. Approximately 25-30 people attended, so it is apparent that there was some notification, but Mr. Buckner and several of his neighbors on 31st Street stated that they and other residents who are not members of the neighborhood association received no notice of the meeting.
3. The alternatives and summary of input received at the October 22 public information meeting and the December 11 neighborhood meeting were presented to the Traffic Safety Committee at their February 11, 1997, meeting. Advance notification was sent to Drake University and to the Drake Neighborhood Association chairperson. The information and Committee recommendation to designate "Alternate 2" as the preferred alternative was presented to the City Council for action at the February 17, 1997, meeting.

At the Corridor Public Information Meeting on October 22, 1996, staff indicated that once the final alignment was selected, the residents of the area and attendees at the meeting would be notified. This notice and corresponding map of "Alternate 2" (copy attached) were sent on March 3, 1997.

As Council directed, City staff met with Mr. and Mrs. Buckner and six neighbors on Monday evening, March 17, 1997. Although not unanimous, the consensus of the group was that the project is needed and that Alternate 2 should be constructed. The neighbors were concerned that they had not been notified of the decision to select Alternate 2 until after it was approved by City Council. They also expressed concerns about traffic conditions on 31st Street south of University Avenue. The signal proposed at Kingman Boulevard should help alleviate the accident problem, but they were concerned with the speed and volume of traffic on 31st Street. They are interested in future improvements to 31st Street, especially in conjunction with the changes to the interchange at I-235 proposed as part of the freeway reconstruction.

Council also requested information concerning ownership of the affected properties to be acquired for Alternate 2. The properties and corresponding owners (on record as of March 5, 1997) that will require relocation for construction of Alternate 2, as shown on the attached drawing, are as follows:

Commercial Properties (all in one building)

<u>Address</u>	<u>Owner</u>
3019 University Avenue	David & Beverly Khodai
3021 University Avenue	Florence Weichman
1201 31st Street	E.L.M. Trust (E.L. McCoy-Trustee)

Residential Properties

<u>Address</u>	<u>Owner</u>
1211 31st Street	Drake University
1213 31st Street	Drake University
1215 31st Street	Drake University
1222-24 30th Street	Drake University
1226 30th Street	Drake University
1230 30th Street	Drake University
1234 30th Street	Drake University
1242 30th Street	Drake University

Staff has worked closely with Drake University officials for over two years regarding the development of this project and the impacts of the four alternatives on Drake-owned property.

Future Actions

Two weeks' advance notice is appropriate for residents in the project corridor for major reconstruction or realignment projects. However, additional lead time should be provided to neighborhood groups to allow them to consider the issue at a regular neighborhood or board meeting prior to the public meeting. On future projects where several alternates are being considered, staff will send a follow-up notice to all residents and neighborhood groups who received the initial notice, as well as any others attending the public meeting, advising of the recommended alternative and the schedule for that alternative to be considered by a committee, board and/or the City Council.

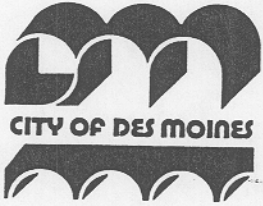
For the 30th/31st Street Realignment Project, it is proposed that a design public information meeting be held later this year when the preliminary design is completed. This meeting would be an open house-type format, extending from mid-afternoon to early evening to allow greater opportunity for residents with different work schedules to attend. Drawings showing significant design features would be available for discussion with individual property owners and other interested persons at the meeting, and input received could be incorporated into the final design details.

Summary

Staff notified the affected residents more than two weeks in advance of the October 22, 1996, corridor informational meeting. In addition, staff made a second presentation to the Drake Neighborhood Association, and also met with interested residents along 31st Street. Public input was incorporated into the decision to select Alternate 2, as well as to study the 31st Street corridor from University Avenue south to I-235, which led to staff's determination that traffic signals should be installed at the intersection of 31st Street and Kingman Boulevard. Staff has proposed changes in the future notification process on similar projects, and also proposes a future design public information meeting for this project.

Attachments

October 4, 1996



TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION
DEPARTMENT
ARMORY BUILDING
602 EAST FIRST STREET
DES MOINES, IOWA 50309 - 1881
(515) 283-4973

ALL-AMERICA CITY 1949, 1976, 1981

TO: INTERESTED PARTIES

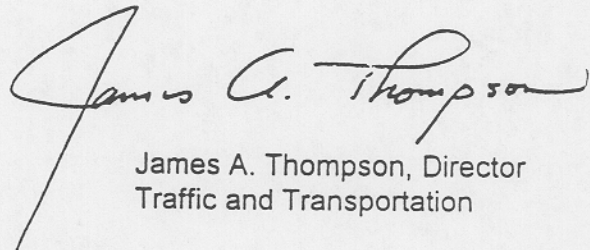
RE: Proposed 30th / 31st Street Connector at University Avenue

The City of Des Moines will be hosting a Public Information Meeting at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 22, 1996, in the Olmsted Center, Drake University Campus, to discuss four alternatives for the construction of the 30th / 31st Street Connection at University Avenue. A preferred alternative would later be selected which would then be carried forward to design and construction. A copy of the general meeting notice is enclosed.

You are cordially invited to attend this meeting. A presentation will be made by the Des Moines Traffic and Transportation staff on the various alternatives, followed by discussion and input from the public.

If you have any questions, please contact our office at 283-4973.

Very truly yours,



James A. Thompson, Director
Traffic and Transportation

JAT/MPR/ms

Enclosure

Mailed on March 3, 1997

*30th/31st Street Realignment Project
Selection of Approved Alternative*



TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION
DEPARTMENT
ARMORY BUILDING
602 EAST FIRST STREET
DES MOINES, IOWA 50309 - 1881
(515) 283-4973

ALL-AMERICA CITY 1949, 1976, 1981

Dear Sir or Madam:

On October 22, 1996, a public meeting was held at Drake University to receive input on the 30th/31st Street Realignment Project. Four possible alternatives were reviewed. At the conclusion of the meeting, City staff indicated that once the final alternative is selected, the affected residents in the area and the participants of the corridor public meeting would be notified of this decision.

On February 17, 1997, the Des Moines City Council officially designated "Alternative 2" as the approved alternative to be carried forward to final design. A copy of this alternate is shown on the reverse side of this letter. This alternative will shift 31st Street to the east beginning at University Avenue, connecting to 30th Street at Carpenter Avenue. Thirtieth Street will also be widened at Forest Avenue to provide north/south left-turn lanes.

Our current schedule indicates that design and property acquisitions will be completed by early 1998, with construction occurring during the summer months of that year.

If you have any questions, please contact our office.

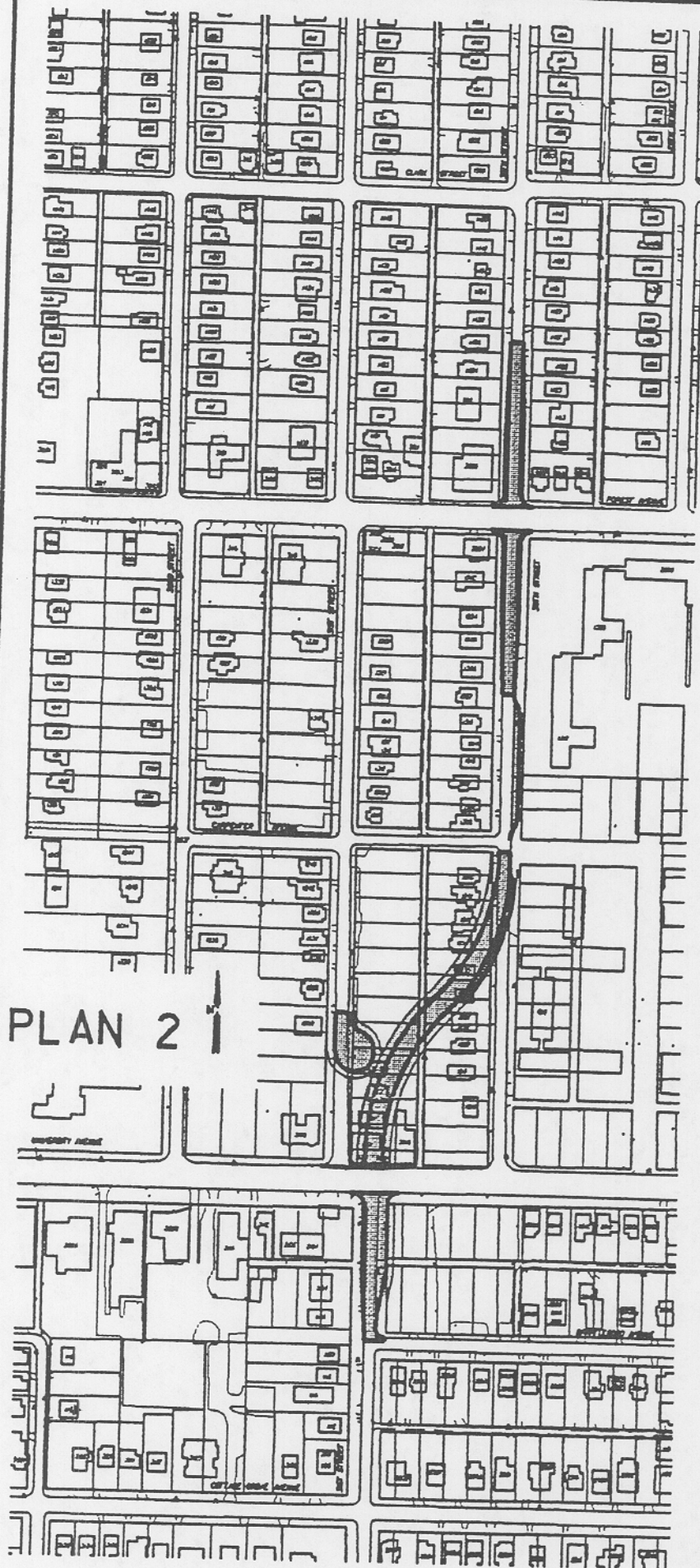
Very truly yours,

Gary L. Fox
City Traffic Engineer

MPR

GLF/MPR/ms

PLAN 2



NOTICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING

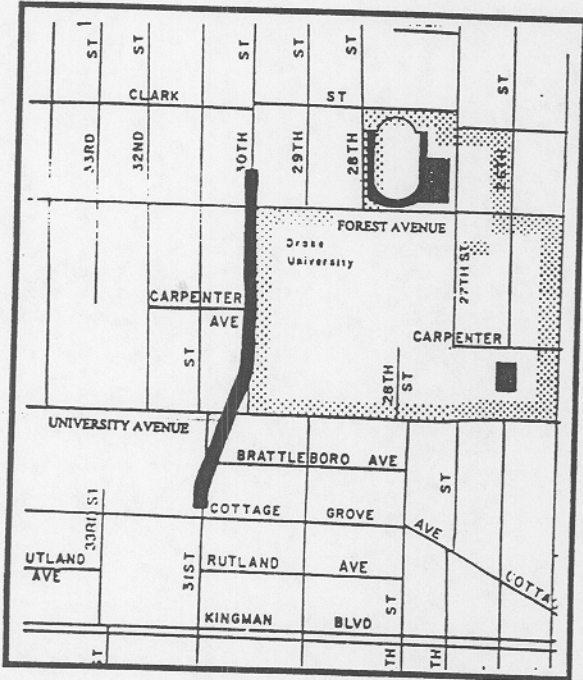
30th / 31st Street Connector Project at University Avenue: Review of Corridor Alternatives

**Tuesday, October 22, 1996, 7:00 p.m.
Bulldog Theatre-Olmsted Building
Drake University Campus
29th Street and University Avenue**

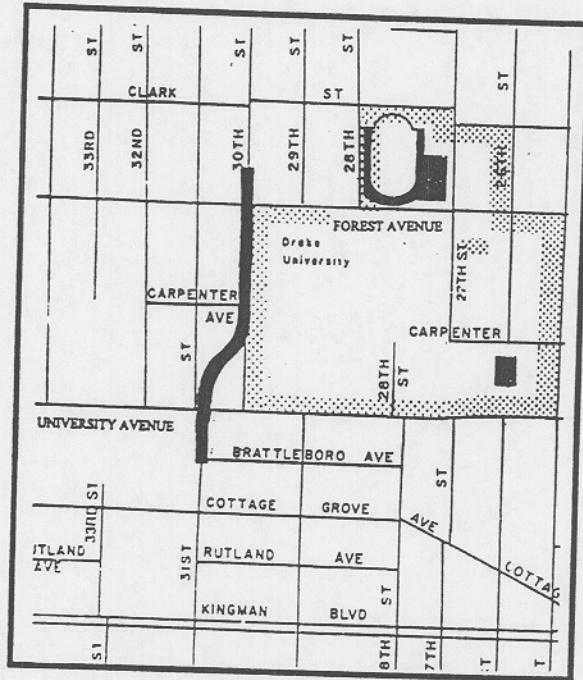
The City of Des Moines will present four Alternatives for the proposed 30th/31st Street Connector. These are shown on the reverse side of this notice. We invite public input on the various alternatives. All interested parties are welcome to attend.

Parking will be available in Drake's lot south of University east of 29th Street. For additional information, contact the Des Moines Traffic and Transportation Department at 283-4973.

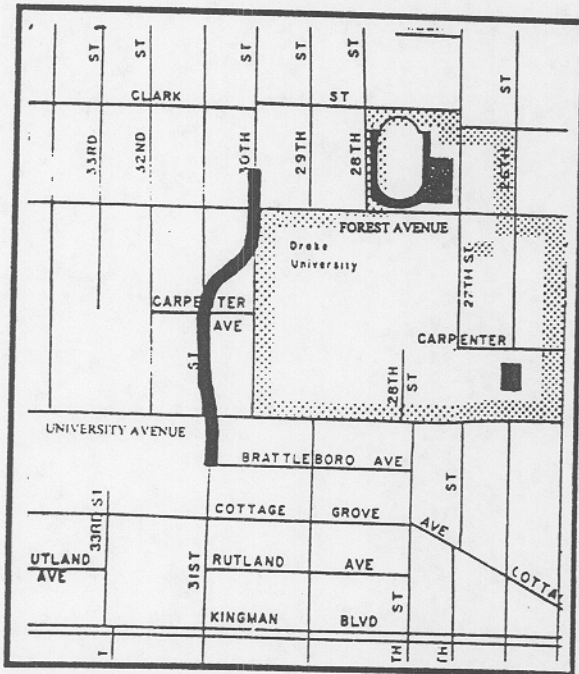
30th / 31st Street Connector Alternatives



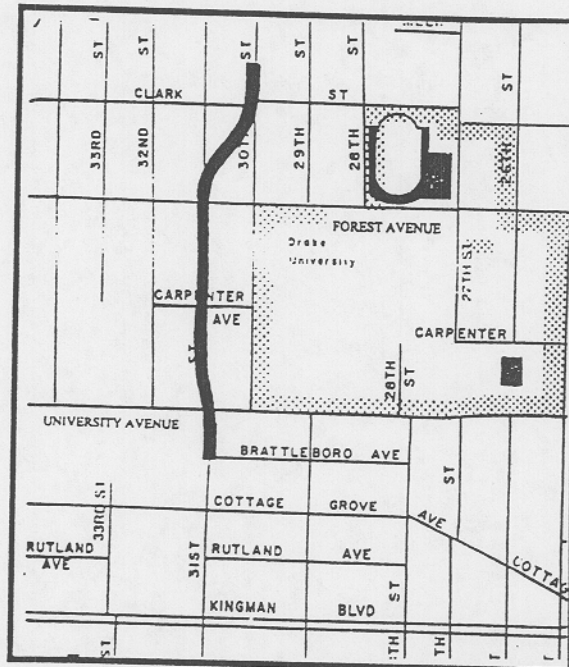
Alternat 1



Alternat 2



Alternat 3



Alternat 4