

**CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION 98-103  
MARCH 23, 1998 AGENDA**

**SUBJECT:**

**NORTH OF GRAND NEIGHBORHOOD  
ACTION PLAN**

**SUBMITTED BY:**

**JAMES GRANT  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR**

**SYNOPSIS –**

On the March 23, 1998, City Council agenda are two roll calls regarding consideration of the proposed Action Plan for the North of Grand Neighborhood. The document, which is an Exhibit of the adoption roll call, includes the proposed text, goal statements, and map graphics for the final plan. This proposed plan was developed out of a six-month planning process of the North of Grand Neighborhood Planning Committee and Neighborhood Development Division staff.

Besides the adoption roll call, there are roll calls to receive and file a communication from the Neighborhood Revitalization Board recommending adoption of the plan as a part of the City's Neighborhood Revitalization Program.

**FISCAL IMPACT –**

With the adoption of the North of Grand Neighborhood Action Plan would come a strong commitment of fiscal resources on the part of the City, the County, and private investment. It is assumed that in order to carry out implementation of this plan over the next three-year period upon its final approval, that funding by the City and County for the Neighborhood Finance Corporation (NFC) will need to remain at the current level or higher based on inflation. It is also assumed that staffing for the City will remain at least at the current level and that Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and Home Investments Partnership Act (HOME) funded programs operated by the City which impact neighborhoods such as Neighborhood Revitalization, Housing Conservation Services, B-NEAT, Housing Code Enforcement, Special Assessment Subsidy, and Neighborhood Infrastructure Rehabilitation Program (NIRP), will remain at their current level or higher adjusted for inflation.

There are several items projected in the Action Plan which would require an additional commitment of fiscal resources if approved. Since many of these are of an unknown quantity, staff has developed a system in order to make an estimated projection of the fiscal impact. Items

which were projected to have a fiscal impact were separated into the following categories:

Minimal up to a \$25,000 commitment  
Moderate \$25,000 - \$75,000 commitment  
Major \$75,000 - \$150,000 commitment  
Extensive over a \$150,000 commitment  
Special Projects unknown but expected to exceed \$200,000

Based on a review by staff, the following are the implementation items which fall into the above listed categories:

**Minimal (3)**

Define and enhance visible entrances to the neighborhood  
Provide regular maintenance of neighborhood and neighborhood entrances  
Pursue nomination to the National Register of Historic Places for districts identified in the Bungalow/Foursquare Study

**Moderate (2)**

Conduct a parking assessment of the Ingersoll Commercial District  
Ensure that all rental properties have current rental certificates and are in compliance with housing code

**Major (3)**

Explore alternative methods to encourage and support home repair and maintenance  
Provide safe street lighting for problem areas within the neighborhood  
Implement the parking strategy identified in the Ingersoll Commercial District Parking Assessment

**Extensive (2)**

Study traffic problems in the neighborhood: investigate the potential for traffic calming and other improvements; implement improvements  
Provide safe and serviceable street and alley infrastructure (NIRP Program)

**Special Projects (3)**

Ingersoll Commercial District Plan  
Bury overhead lines to ensure safety, better service, and neighborhood aesthetics  
Storm and sanitary systems improvements to mitigate existing problems and address future needs

To estimate a fiscal impact for this plan, the mean of the range was used for each item in the minimal (\$12,500), moderate (\$50,000), and major (\$112,500) categories; \$250,000 was used for the extensive category and \$500,000 was for the special projects category. It is understood that actual costs may either exceed or fall below these projected amounts. This projection is only used as an estimate of fiscal impact.

**Based on the above rationale, the estimated minimum fiscal impact of this plan is \$2,475,000.**

## **RECOMMENDATION –**

**Staff recommends the City Council take action to adopt the proposed North of Grand Action Plan as part of the Neighborhood Revitalization Program and as an amendment to the Des Moines Land Use 200 Plan.**

## **BACKGROUND –**

The main element of the plan includes goal statements for community enhancement, commercial, housing, and physical environment. Other important elements include the Future Land Use and the NFC lending policy. The final approval of this plan would constitute an amendment to the City' s land use plan and inclusion as one of the elements of the Comprehensive Plan for the City.

The North of Grand Neighborhood, a Recognized Neighborhood Association, became Designated in July of 1997. Since that time, the Neighborhood Association and Neighborhood Development staff have been working closely to develop the Action Plan for the North of Grand Neighborhood.

The following are key steps during the planning process with their correlating dates:

Organizational meeting with the newly designated neighborhoods July 31, 1997  
(Fairground, Gray' s Woods, North of Grand, and Sherman Hill)  
Neighborhood-wide orientation and planning meeting August 27, 1997  
Planning Committee Meeting #1 October 4, 1997  
Planning Committee Meeting #2 November 8, 1997  
City Inter-departmental Review November 24, 1997  
NRB Status Report December 3, 1997  
Planning Committee Meeting #3 December 3, 1997  
Planning Committee Meeting #4 January 17, 1998  
North of Grand Board Meeting (Approval of Draft Plan) February 18, 1998  
Neighborhood-wide Presentation of Plan (Approval of Draft Plan) February 24, 1998

The initial organizational meeting with all the new Designated Neighborhood executive boards allowed staff to provide guidance to the neighborhoods on selecting their planning committees and providing them with a timeline for the planning process and interim NFC lending policies. This initial meeting was followed by a general meeting of the North of Grand Neighborhood which was advertised by a mailing to 100 percent of households in the neighborhood. At this meeting, staff used an exercise to break into groups and get input from the citizens on what they felt were strengths and weaknesses of the North of Grand Neighborhood.

The first meeting of the North of Grand Neighborhood Planning Committee consisted of a half-day meeting. The Committee worked with staff to develop general goal statements based on the input from the general session. Staff then spent the following month developing the goal

statements and collecting data. The second meeting of the Planning Committee involved reviewing the staff work and refining the goal statements into a final draft form by adding specific strategies. These draft goal statements were then presented to the Neighborhood Revitalization Board (NRB) and all the departments of the City for review.

The next time the Planning Committee met with staff, they developed a future land use policy and NFC lending policy based on the goals they had developed for the Action Plan. Staff then prepared the text portion of the plan to include an implementation policy, history, demographics, and housing data about the neighborhood. The draft text, goal statements, and supporting graphics were given review at the final meeting of the Planning Committee. The Planning Committee then presented the proposed plan to their board and their membership. Staff and the Planning Committee presented the proposed Action Plan for another general meeting of all residents.

The proposed Action Plan provides for a comprehensive and ambitious strategy to improve North of Grand Neighborhood through a three-year implementation phase, as well as provides direction for long-range development for the neighborhood.

The proposed Action Plan was approved by the NRB at their March 18, 1998 meeting.