

**CITY COUNCIL
COMMUNICATION:**

99-567

AGENDA:

DECEMBER 20, 1999

SUBJECT:

GATEWAY WEST
CONSIDERATION
OF ADOPTION OF
PLAN A

TYPE:

RESOLUTION
ORDINANCE
RECEIVE/FILE

SUBMITTED BY:

ERIC A. ANDERSON
CITY MANAGER

ITEM _____

**OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER
CITY OF DES MOINES, IOWA**

SYNOPSIS -

The City Council received the final report and recommendation of the Steering Committee for the Western Gateway on May 19, 1997. This report was referred to the Plan and Zoning Commission, Park Board, Architectural Advisory Committee, Urban Renewal board, Library board, Historic District commission, Skywalk commission, and the Neighborhood Advisory board. On September 22, 1997, the City council received and filed the recommendations of the boards and commissions and referred them to the City Manager for review. On May 4, 1998 the City Council approved the Gateway project and directed the City Manager to undertake a number of actions intended to implement the project. The Gateway Steering Committee has been established and is operating. Acquisition of land within the gateway is underway. The study to assess the financial and architectural feasibility of buildings has been completed and accepted. On April 19, 1999, the City Council approved the Memorandum of Understanding with Des Moines Development. Of the steps that remain to be taken is the selection of a design form that incorporates the guiding principles and parameters the steering committee considered important.

In April 1999, the City Council received recommendations from the Architectural Advisory Committee, the Urban Renewal Board, the Historic District commission and the Plan and Zone Commission to adopt plan "A" presented in the steering committee report. The Executive Committee of the Des Moines Development Corporation has also adopted a recommendation to the City Council to adopt plan "A".

Several things have changed since the plan was first drawn up. The Kingston Apartments have been demolished. The Hallett Apartments are to be renovated jointly with the Arlington Apartments. Also, renovation of the Masonic Building is to be accelerated in the proposed implementation process. These changes have been noted the proposed resolution

FISCAL IMPACT -

None, the financial commitments were made at the time of the Council's April 19, 1999 approval of the MOU with Des Moines Development Corporation.

RECOMMENDATION -

Approval of plan "A".

BACKGROUND -

The Gateway West area has gone through several phases to explore design opportunities, market and economic feasibility issues and to determine what will best serve the community. A brief summary of these phases follows.

The "Vision Plan" for Des Moines was headed by Mario Gandelsonas of Agrest + Gandelsonas from New York City. This plan's process was highly participatory and involved a 90 member Steering Committee which represented the diverse needs and interests of Des Moines. The importance and potential of the Gateway West area was identified as one of the components of the larger plan. This highly publicized plan generated a great deal of discussion throughout the community. It had a significant amount of public support, but there was also some opposition to the Plan and possible negative impacts its recommendations could have on Des Moines.

Interest in capturing the potential of the Gateway West project site and surrounding area led the plan to a more refined level of design exploration with Des Moines Development Corp. (DMDC) taking the lead. A grand open space plan was proposed by the Herbert Lewis Kurse Blunck Architecture (HLKB) office of Des Moines. This plan called for the conversion of the 6 block site into continuous open space for civic use. Questions about the financial feasibility, funding, ongoing maintenance, safety, and compatibility with Des Moines' wants and needs led the project into another phase of design exploration.

The third phase of design came about to address a variety of concerns about the previous plan, nicknamed the "Gateway Green", voiced throughout the community. To address recommendations of the Plan and Zoning Commission, the City Council and DMDC combined their efforts in the interest of finding a Project solution that was the right fit for Des Moines. The City Council and DMDC established an active, 12 member Steering Committee and contracted with a multi-disciplinary design team headed by the firm of Aleks Istanbullu John Kaliski Architecture and City Design (AIJK) from Santa Monica, California. The Steering Committee represents the residents and business community of Des Moines. The design team included architects/urban designers, real estate and economic analysts, and a project management/implementation strategist. Together, this diverse group explored 3 options and proposed a conceptual plan that would create a series of open spaces throughout the 6 block site that would be interconnected with a continuous path woven through a mix of uses, including residential, institutional (public school), specialty and destination retail, restaurants and small-scale professional office development. The design promoted uses with "round the clock" activity to provide legitimate reasons for people to be in the area after business hours, thereby creating an improved perception of security by placing "friendly eyes" in the area.

The summary of Council's actions is:

June 26, 1995 Adopted the recommendations of the Plan and Zoning Commission and City Manager outlined in Council Communication No. 95-273, regarding the Gateway Workbook/Gateway District Concept.

February 26, 1996 Approval of the professional services contract with Aleks Istanbullu John Kaliski Architecture, for study and economic analysis of the Gateway West Project.

May 19, 1997 Receive and file Gateway West Steering Committee report and refer to Boards and Commissions. Receive and file Manager's communication on the historic/architecturally significant properties, and direct Manager to proceed with proposals outlined in the communication.

September 8, 1997 Receive and file Capitol Gateway East Steering Committee report and refer to Boards and Commissions.

September 22, 1997 To defer action on the report from the Manager recommending completion of Gateway West feasibility studies; and, refer to the Manager for additional study and recommendation, including financing and environmental analysis.

September 22, 1997 Receive and file the recommendations on Gateway West from the Architectural Advisory Committee, Plan and Zoning Commission, Urban Renewal Board, Library Board, Historic District Commission, Skywalk Commission, and Neighborhood Advisory Board; and, refer to the City Manager.

May 4, 1998 Receive and file the recommendations on the Capitol Gateway East Plan from the Plan and Zoning Commission, Urban Renewal Board, Architectural Advisory Committee, Park Board, Historic District Commission, Neighborhood Revitalization Board; and Library Board. Approved the Manager's recommendations on the Gateway Project, as outlined in Council Communication No. 98-185, which combining both Gateway West and Gateway East into one unified project.

September 14, 1998 Adoption of the recommendations outlined in the Manager's Council Communication No. 98-412 regarding Gateway Project implementation actions.

November 16, 1998 Council authorized a professional service agreement for environmental study of the land to be acquired for Western Gateway project.

April 5, 1999 Council authorized a professional services agreement for project management services for the Gateway Project.

April 19, 1999 Council authorize the Memorandum of Understanding with Des Moines Development Corporation regarding its contribution of cash and property and financial assistance toward implementation of the Gateway Project.

May 3, 1999 Council authorized the sale of bonds for Gateway Project.

May 17, 1999 Council approved sale of bonds for Gateway Project.

June 21, 1999 Council approved the application to the State for Enterprise Zone certification and partial exemption from property taxation for value added by improvements made to real property for Proposed Gateway Project (including Western Gateway Zone).

September 13, 1999 Council approved that, with the exception of the Masonic Temple (1011 Locust) and The Investment Building (424 - 10th Street), the remaining buildings located in the Western Gateway that are currently owned or are to be purchased by the City and/or Des Moines Development Corporation (DMDC), be demolished.

October 4, 1999 Council approved to begin preparatory work to take title to various downtown properties and to set a date of hearing on Seventh Amendment to the Riverpoint Capitol Center Urban Renewal Area.

October 25, 1999 Council approved a purchase agreement and the conveyance of title to the City for seven properties located in the Western Gateway Project area.