


COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

	Number:	20-246	Meeting:	June 8, 2020
	Agenda Item:	62	Roll Call:	20-0949
	Submitted by:	Erin Olson-Douglas, Economic Development Director		

AGENDA HEADING:

Public Hearing on the proposed Oak Park – Highland Park Urban Renewal Plan and approving same.

SYNOPSIS:

This roll call opens and closes the public hearing on the proposed Oak Park – Highland Park Urban Renewal Plan. The Oak Park – Highland Park Urban Renewal Plan proposal was presented to various neighborhood stakeholders including the Oak Park – Highland Park Neighborhood Association Board of Directors, the Parks Area Foundation Board of Directors, the InvestDSM staff and the Turnaround Arts program staff with the Des Moines Public Schools throughout the months of April and May. The plan has been reviewed by the Urban Design Review Board and the Plan and Zoning Commission. The required taxing entities consultation meeting was held on May 12, 2020, and no comments from taxing entities have been received.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Amount: There is no direct fiscal impact associated with the approval of the Oak Park – Highland Park Urban Renewal Plan. The activities and projects that may be assisted by this urban renewal plan and tax increment revenues will be listed in the plan text and are subject to separate Council action.

Funding Source: N/A

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- The proposed Oak Park – Highland Park urban renewal area is proximate to the Des Moines Central Business District and serves as a satellite support neighborhood to downtown for workforce housing and small-scale neighborhood commercial services. The proposed plan boundary consists of approximately 57-acres, includes 115 properties, and is generally located along Euclid Avenue between 6th Avenue and Cambridge Street, and along 6th Avenue from Ovid Avenue to Seneca Avenue. The plan boundary includes the historic business district as well as the Park Fair Mall area and surrounding properties.
- The purpose for the Oak Park – Highland Park Urban Renewal Plan is to encourage and assist with the redevelopment and/or removal of blighted, obsolete, and underutilized properties within the urban renewal area, to facilitate the development and re-development of commercial, mixed-use and residential uses, to create and retain jobs in the City of Des Moines, and to

provide a diversity of housing options within the plan area. This plan is intended to guide the development of the Urban Renewal Area and to activate new economic investment leading to increased taxable valuations.

- Report on Existing Property Usage and Conditions on June 8, 2020 – Recognition of Slum and Blight Conditions:
 - Low demands for commercial and retail space is driving poor property conditions and low assessments in the business district. The district contains roughly 90,000 square feet of ground floor space spread across 51 shops or office fronts in more than 20 buildings. As many as 35% of the commercial frontages appear to be vacant, in transition, or have ambiguous uses that are unclear to a passerby. Part of this is driven by space that is outdated and unappealing to commercial tenants, a byproduct of years of rents being insufficient to finance improvements, and part is a reflection of the modern retail economy.
 - As of the adoption of this plan, the Oak Park – Highland Park Urban Renewal Area consists of 115 properties, 59 of which are documented by the Polk County Assessor’s Office as having below normal, very poor, or poor conditions, or have been identified as having faulty lot layouts in relation to size, are underutilized, or have had buildings demolished and never redeveloped. An additional 25 parcels noted with normal conditions have extremely low assessed valuations, many of which the building values are below the land values, which is an indicating factor that the building on the property is either vacant, has a non-active use such as storage, and/or is likely falling into a condition that will be considered below normal without significant investment or redevelopment of the site.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S):

Date: April 20, 2020

Roll Call Number: [20-0618](#)

Action: [On](#) the proposed urban renewal plan for the Oak Park-Highland Park Urban Renewal Area, (6-8-20). ([Council Communication No. 20-159](#)) Moved by Gatto to adopt. Motion Carried 7-0.

BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S):

Board: Urban Design Review Board

Date: May 19, 2020

Resolution Number: N/A

Action: Motion to recommend approval of the plan as presented by Wilke-Shapiro. Seconded by Clark. Motion carried. Yes = 9, No = 0, Abstain = 0, Absent = 0.

Board: Plan and Zoning Commission

Date: May 21, 2020

Resolution Number: N/A

Action: Plan and Zoning Commission determined that the Oak Park – Highland Park Urban Renewal Plan is in conformance with the Plan DSM: Creating our Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan. Motion passed 12-0.

ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS: NONE

For more information on this and other agenda items, please call the City Clerk's Office at 515-283-4209 or visit the Clerk's Office on the first floor of City Hall, 400 Robert D Ray Drive. Council agendas are available to the public at the City Clerk's Office on Thursday afternoon preceding Monday's Council meeting. Citizens can also request to receive meeting notices and agendas by email by calling the Clerk's Office or sending their request via email to cityclerk@dmgov.org.