


COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

 CITY OF DES MOINES OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER	Number:	24-124	Meeting:	March 18, 2024
	Agenda Item:	49	Roll Call:	24-0454
	Submitted by:	Cody Christensen, Development Services Director		

AGENDA HEADING:

Hearing on amendments to Chapter 58 of the Municipal Code.

SYNOPSIS:

The proposed amendments to the Historic Preservation Ordinance will update ordinance language to match current City department structure and consolidate the review process for all locally designated properties to provide more efficient design review timelines for applicants that own landmark properties. Creating a single review process for all designated properties was identified as a goal in the City's recently adopted Reflect DSM Historic Preservation Plan. The changes also correlate to efficiency modifications proposed for Urban Design Review Board processes.

FISCAL IMPACT: NONE

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- The City of Des Moines currently has a Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) and Landmark Review Board (LRB).
- The membership of the LRB consists of the members of the HPC and of the Urban Design Review Board.
- The HPC is charged with reviewing applications for alternations to properties located within a local historic district.
- The LRB is charged with reviewing applications for alternations to properties designated as a local landmark that are not located within a local historic district. They forward a recommendation to the City Council, who then acts on the application. This requires applicants to generally wait at least 60 days before obtaining approval.
- Applicants within the local historic district can get approval of their projects in less than 30 days most of the time.
- Staff has routinely received complaints on how long the design review process takes for landmark properties.

- Eliminating the LRB and creating a uniform process is identified as action step “N3h” in the City’s recently adopted city-wide historic preservation plan, Reflect DSM: Honoring All Des Moines Histories.
- All “N3” action steps are intended to “improve the functionality of the City’s preservation program tools and processes.”
- The proposed amendments to Chapter 58 complement the proposed efficiency-focused amendments to Chapter 82.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S):

Date: September 11, 2023

Roll Call Number: [23-1275](#)

Action: [On](#) City-initiated request to amend the PlanDSM Creating Our Tomorrow Plan to adopt Reflect DSM: Honoring All Des Moines Histories (Historic Preservation Plan) and incorporate as an element. ([Council Communication No. 23-403](#)) Moved by Boesen to adopt. Second by Gatto. Motion Carried 6-0.

BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S): NONE

ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS: NONE

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