

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: LAND USE POLICY PLAN UPDATE – REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

BACKGROUND:

As one of the City Council's Goals to support economic development, the Council assigned Planning staff the task of updating the Land Use Policy Plan (LUPP). As part of the Planning & Housing Department's work plan, Council prioritized preparing a Request for Proposals (RFP) from qualified consultants and selection of a consultant as action steps this summer. Work on the plan itself is expected to take approximately 12-18 months. **This report is a review of Council's general direction on updating the LUPP and to confirm staff's recommended approach to the update as being consistent with Council direction.**

Council received a detailed overview of the LUPP and development trends of the City prior to giving direction to proceed with an update in June of 2014. (See Attachment A, Minutes from the June 17, 2014 meeting.) Subsequently, in November and January Council reviewed information concerning high density housing needs. As a result, Council initiated potential LUPP amendments to change commercial land to high density residential land. After initiating these processes, Council reconfirmed its interest in a comprehensive review of housing and commercial land use policies to be addressed in the LUPP update. **Based on Council's direction from the past year, the following issues and tasks are to be included in the LUPP update:**

1. Work with the current Vision and goals and policies (Attachment B), but consider their wording and context for how they apply to different project types of long range versus current planning. Clean up and reformat the Plan to provide clearer priorities and resolve issues of "options" throughout the Plan.
2. Look at growth areas and potential for sub-area plans to identify more clearly the desired locations of major streets, any needed commercial, and variety of housing types. Consider capacity and infrastructure needs in that planning review. Review the language on how Village is described as preferred and the relationship then to suburban as a secondary option and how to meet the need for a variety of housing types. Address high density residential housing needs.
3. Look at how the Fringe Plan relates to our recent annexations and if those fringe land use designations need to be updated. This may involve new or expanded growth area concepts.

4. Look at including language and concepts for integrating current trends and issues of transportation, mobility, economic development, sustainability, community design, etc.
5. Look at infill opportunities and identify the constraints to that for affordable housing. Include a hospital/medical sub area plan.
6. Lincoln Way Corridor sub-area plan as its own place intersecting through the entire City. Plan to consider issues related to integrating residential development, commercial development and transportation issues.
7. Review commercial land needs.

The above list is diverse in scope. The issues range from rewriting and clarifying purposes of the current LUPP, to assessing details on specific issues of housing, to considering sub-area plans that guide future development. Much of the direction was predicated on using the general framework of the Vision and goals of the existing LUPP to shape the work of the update, rather than starting anew with creating a new vision for the City and then writing a new plan.

Staff recommends that not all of the above items be included within the RFP for the initial effort to update the LUPP. Efforts for specific master plans and sub-area plans for the Lincoln Way Corridor, Growth Areas, East Industrial Master Plan and Hospital Medical District are better suited to be individual projects or as implementation tasks of an updated LUPP. Detailed master planning with coordination of stakeholder interests can be an involved process requiring a high level of detailed planning and coordination. To this point, Council has already agreed to separate the Lincoln Way Corridor Plan from the LUPP Update and prioritized it as a project to begin this fall.

Staff also recommends that Item 5, which includes reviewing infill housing opportunities and constraints to affordable housing, is better suited as separate projects. Staff will review land use designations across the City as part of the review of the LUPP update, but is not intending to do site specific assessments across the City. Additionally, Council has prioritized related issues for affordable housing within the Department's work plan for the next 12 months. Background work of the LUPP update will help inform discussions on affordable housing issues.

RECOMMENDED APPROACH FOR RFP

LUPP Text Changes and Revisions

A. Background information of the City will be updated based upon available demographic resources and informed by requested technical assistance for commercial needs and general housing needs. The planning horizon will be for 2040 and include a specified growth projection. City infrastructure plans will be reviewed to determine their relationship and adequacy to the 2040 horizon.

B. The discussion of land use and development will be revised to balance the language corresponding to the LUPP's Vision and Goals with development concepts of Villages and suburban development. The result may be a hybrid of development principles rather than two discrete options as they are in the current LUPP. Implementation and policy options will be updated to reflect issues that have been resolved or projects accomplished and to outline future implementation issues.

C. Review how concepts of planning for sustainability, transportation, health, community design, etc., can directly inform application of the City's Goals to individual projects and help guide implementation language of the LUPP.

D. Prepare a Mobility Element that addresses City policies for all modes of transportation. Outline the general circulation needs and major infrastructure planning needed for transportation to match the 2040 horizon. The Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) will inform the drafting of this new chapter.

Land Use Map and Growth Area Review

A. Review the assumptions of the current Southwest and Northwest Growth Areas to determine consistency with the updated Plan.

B. Review the area near the intersection of George Washington Carver and Cameron School Road for consistency with North Growth area master planning and potential amendments to the Urban Fringe Plan to allow for additional annexation, if it is consistent with ability to provide City services, rather than allow for potential rural development.

C. Identify potential constraints or opportunities for other areas of growth for the City.

Public Outreach Approach and Process of Review

Outreach will be based upon gaining feedback on specific work products, rather than organizing widespread outreach for general input. Materials will be available principally through the Internet and at general public information meetings and through Council

and Commission meetings. The Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council will be kept apprised of the progress and provide review of draft documents during the update.

It should be noted that this public outreach approach is narrower in scope than some of the City's other citywide planning efforts. For example, the Metropolitan Planning Organization's current Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) update included a substantial component of public outreach at the outset of the process to identify issues and projects to be considered in the LRTP. The LRTP is also the first major plan to include a significant online input component in addition to outreach meetings.

There is a significant contrast between the public input process utilized in the 1997 LUPP process and the process now being proposed. The 1997 input process included extensive use of community input and a steering committee to help shape the vision for the plan, prior to writing the plan itself. In contrast, staff has recommended a narrower approach for the current update recognizing how the Council appears to be comfortable with the Vision and Goals of the existing LUPP. Therefore, reaching out to solicit new ideas is not within Council's expressed direction for the current update. Rather, public input will be solicited regarding the specific amendments and updates that are developed by the consultant. Additionally, the use of online tools has the ability to make information available to a wider range of people than would have previously been possible. These steps will allow the current update to occur much more expeditiously than in the 1990's, when over three years of public input preceded drafting of the 1997 LUPP.

Selection Process of Consultant

All proposals will be submitted to the City and scored by a staff lead review team. The team will include members from multiple City departments to review the proposals and provide comments. **In addition, the Planning and Zoning Commission will appoint one member to the review team to assist staff in evaluating the proposals.** Scoring criteria will be broad and encompass topics such as the responsiveness of the proposal, experience with writing comprehensive plans, experience with university cities' issues, experience with development and implementation of comprehensive plans, technical team support and schedule, as well as approach to the project, proposed consultant's fees, and interviews of the consultants. Upon scoring of the proposals, staff will negotiate terms of a contract and return to Council for approval of the contract. Staff tentatively plans on returning to Council by September 22, 2015 to recommend award of a contract.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Direct staff to prepare and issue a formal Request for Proposals (RFP) consistent with the approach described above.
2. Direct staff to modify the tasks or approach described above.
3. Direct staff to return with additional information before preparing the RFP.

MANAGER’S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Staff believes the outlined approach addresses the priority needs of updating the LUPP as directed by the City Council. Issues of affordable housing and sub-area planning are better left as separate issues. While doing sub-area plans is desirable and would provide the greatest degree of certainty of applying the LUPP vision to sub-areas, they should be prioritized independently of the overall update to shorten the timeline of the LUPP update and to allow for more detailed stakeholder involvement on the sub-area plans. Staff will continue on with the separate work plan items of the East Industrial Expansion and Lincoln Corridor Study concurrent with the LUPP Update.

Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative #1, thereby directing staff to prepare and issue a formal Request for Proposals (RFP) consistent with the approach described above.

Excerpt- June 17, 2014 Special Meeting

LAND USE POLICY PLAN WORKSHOP: Planning and Housing Director, Kelly Diekmann, reported that direction from the Council regarding the extent of the update will allow staff to prepare a scope of work with tasks and timelines. A proposed work plan will be based upon the stated range of interests, planning resources of staff and consultants, and community outreach efforts to formulate amendments to the Land Use Policy Plan (LUPP). Depending on the degree of change or Council's specific desired changes, there is a wide range of options for updating the LUPP. Options include a major overhaul with extensive public outreach for a new vision, goals and policies, re-shape goals and policies to meet current intent and purposes, repackage and clarify the Plan's priorities, minor changes to specific test of the plan with no major repackage or rewrite, and finally, create sub-area plans for growth areas and intensification areas.

Staff also took Council's feedback and incorporated information from the May 20th workshop presentation about potential challenges and other trends to make a list of potential update topics. Part of the discussion of an update is to look at current challenges related to implementing the vision of the plan, as well as preparing a comprehensive plan to think about the City's aspirations and intentions for the next 20-30 years.

Council Member Gartin proposed that a workshop including the Research Park, Chamber of Commerce, Mainstreet Action Plan, Ames Economic Development Commission, and others, should be coordinated to focus on economic planning. He believes a workshop may be helpful while creating the LUPP to look ahead to the land we are going to need for industrial and commercial purposes.

City Manager Steve Schainker noted that it's very important to consider the vision of the Council, as well as the community, and how they envision the city growing in the next 15-20 years.

After much conversation surrounding their options for updating the LUPP, Council agreed that they would like to focus on several key areas:

1. Maintain the current Vision and work with language of the Goals and Policies for clarity on how to guide long range planning versus current development projects
2. Review the concept of Growth Areas for their basis and need, including Ames Urban Fringe Plan designations related to future annexation
3. Consider individual Growth Area planning needs, prepare sub-area plans for full range of uses and types of development within a growth area, proactively engage with property owners on defined City interests
4. Consider the residential development pattern, expectations in "New Lands;" and reconsider language of Village and FS zoning designations to meet variety of housing interests and building types
5. Review transportation and infrastructure planning for infill opportunities and limitations affecting future growth

6. Consider Lincoln Way corridor as a unique place with a sub-area plan for intensification of residential and commercial development with design and use requirements

7. Incorporate concepts into the Plan supporting national trends related to housing types, economic development, community design, placemaking, transportation and mobility options, and sustainability

Council Member Orazem would also like to include a sub-area plan and focus on the hospital/medical area surrounding managing transportation, residential areas, etc.

Council would like Mr. Diekmann to define and detail each of the above for further direction on what plans they will be incorporating, as well as identify main key sub areas for sub area planning, besides just the hospital/medical sub-area. Council will prioritize after further direction from Mr. Diekmann.

Moved by Corrieri, seconded by Nelson, to direct Planning and Housing to further look into the options for the Land Use Policy Plan. Vote on Motion: 5-0. Motion declared carried unanimously

A NEW VISION

A Change in Planning Policies. Ames has reached a turning point with regard to its earlier planning policies. While previous efforts have guided development with reasonable success, the existing community has limited capacity for further growth. Competition is keen for remaining capacity. In seeking new resources, the community has expanded in several directions. Various obstacles have limited the extent of expansion. In maximizing the use of existing areas and seeking expansion areas, planning policies have treated both areas as though they are the same. In reality, existing and expansion areas for development are distinctly different, and it is the challenge of the next generation of planning to address their unique qualities. Planning must also address ways to integrate existing and new development in intensification areas.

There are several new precepts represented by the change in planning policies. The four precepts with the greatest significance include the following:

- Allowable growth areas;
- Seeking more expansion areas while limiting intensification of existing areas;
- Addressing existing and new development areas differently; and,
- Providing connections for people, places and activities.

Allowable Growth Areas. Beginning in the late 1960's, north was the first major direction for expansion of Ames. Since then, additional expansion has occurred to the west and, more recently, to the south. Planning has been, in part, a response to this growth. In many cases, the provision of public infrastructure has followed the location decisions of private development as evidenced by the City's policy of paying for over-sizing of extension lines such as wastewater. Further information on the City's capital investment strategy and these "incentivized growth areas" can be found in Chapter 6-Implementation.

Under the new planning policies, growth is allowed for specific areas based on the provision of public infrastructure in coordination with the release of land and support by the development community. Development outside these "allowable growth areas" will be permitted provided it is consistent with the Ames Urban Fringe Plan.

Seeking More Expansion Areas in Limiting Intensification of Existing Areas. Since about 1967, public policy has supported, on a selective basis, the intensification of older areas. The limited availability of developable land within the incorporated area has led to pressures for intensification. Contributing to the relatively landlocked pattern has been the presence of major institutions, major thoroughfare barriers and withholding of large private properties in key locations.

The new planning policies will incorporate the provision of additional areas for development. Provisions will include both expansion areas and removal of barriers to key locations within the present incorporated area. To the extent that additional areas are made available, the reliance on intensification of existing developed areas will be reduced; however, this does not totally preclude the need for intensification. In assuring vitality, the continuing intensification of existing areas shall be required on a selective and limited basis.

Addressing Existing and New Development Areas Differently. The adoption of a new zoning ordinance in 2000 creates a distinction between its application in older existing areas and new development areas. There are now distinct requirements for compatibility, parking and supporting facilities in older areas that differ from the requirements of newly developing areas.

The new planning policies identify three unique and distinct areas for development consideration. The three are identified as follows:

- Urban core;
- University-impacted; and,
- New lands

In recognizing the unique qualities of each, different planning objectives and implementation techniques are recommended for the three areas.

Providing Connections for People, Places and Activities. On the neighborhood level, traditional planning policies have favored mostly separation of residential areas from supporting uses such as convenience commercial and community facilities. Separation of these uses has encouraged more reliance on automobiles for daily types of activities.

On the community level, traditional planning policies have not provided appropriate public spaces for social interaction. There are also inadequate connections between existing public spaces, neighborhoods and other activity areas that are needed in creating a community-wide fabric.

The new planning policies stress provision of public spaces that are designed to encourage social interaction. The new policies also encourage the mixing of uses in new development to create a “village” concept involving closer proximity of uses and more pedestrian activities. These public spaces and villages are further connected in creating an integrated community and sense of place.

GOALS FOR A NEW VISION

The Role of Goals in Creating a New Vision. In creating a new vision for Ames, the role of goals are important for both their individual and collective purpose in guiding development. Ten goals have been established for addressing each of the community's vision statements. These vision statements, as found in the Appendices, relate to the following:

- Planning and management of growth;
- Developable area provisions;
- Environmental-friendliness;
- Sense of place and connectivity;
- Cost-effectiveness and efficient growth pattern;
- Housing opportunities expansion;
- Mobility and alternative transportation;
- Downtown as a central place;
- Economic expansion and diversification; and,
- Cultural heritage preservation.

In addition to the goals, specific objectives are identified for each of the ten. The purpose of these objectives is to identify major activities for assuring and measuring the progress of the individual and collective goals.

Goal No. 1. Recognizing that additional population and economic growth is likely, it is the goal of Ames to plan for and manage growth within the context of the community's capacity and preferences. It is the further goal of the community to manage its growth so that it is more sustainable, predictable and assures quality of life.

Objectives. In managing growth, Ames seeks the following objectives.

- 1.A. Ames seeks to diversify the economy and create a more regional employment and market base. While continuing to support its existing economic activities, the community seeks to broaden the range of private and public investment.
- 1.B. Ames seeks to integrate its growth with an economic development strategy for the Central Iowa region.
- 1.C. Ames seeks to manage a population and employment base that can be supported by the community's capacity for growth. A population base of 61,000-73,000 and an employment base of up to 34,000 is targeted within the City. Additionally, it is estimated that the population in the combined City and unincorporated Planning Area could be as much as 67,000 and the employment base could be as much as 38,000 by the year 2030.



Ames Industrial Park near I-35

Goal No. 2. In preparing for the target population and employment growth, it is the goal of Ames to assure the adequate provision and availability of developable land. It is the further goal of the community to guide the character, location, and compatibility of growth with the area's natural resources and rural areas.

Objectives. In assuring and guiding areas for growth, Ames seeks the following objectives.

- 2.A. Ames seeks to provide at least 600 to 2,500 acres of additional developable land within the present City and Planning Area by the year 2030. Since the potential demand exceeds the supply within the current corporate limits, alternate sources shall be sought by the community through limited intensification of existing areas while concentrating on the annexation and development of new areas. The use of existing and new areas should be selective rather than general.
- 2.B. Ames seeks to assure the availability of sufficient suitable land resources to accommodate the range of land uses that are planned to meet growth. Sufficient land resources shall be sought to eliminate market constraints.
- 2.C. Ames seeks a development process that achieves greater compatibility among new and existing development.
- 2.D. Ames seeks a development process that achieves greater conservation of natural resources and compatibility between development and the environment.
- 2.E. Ames seeks to integrate its planning with that of Story County and surrounding counties in assuring an efficient and compatible development pattern, and in assuring that there are adequate agricultural resources to serve the region.



View to the south of undeveloped
Planning Area and U.S. Highway 30
crossing south of the ISU Dairy Farm

Goal No. 3. It is the goal of Ames to assure that it is an “environmentally-friendly” community and that all goals and objectives are integrated with this common goal. In continuing to serve as a concentrated area for human habitat and economic activity, Ames seeks to be compatible with its ecological systems in creating an environmentally sustainable community.

Objectives. In assuring the community’s “environmental-friendliness”, Ames seeks the following objectives.

- 3.A. Ames seeks to provide biodiversity through the inclusion of plant and animal habitats. Their inclusion shall be provided through such methods as conservation management, protection, replacement, etc.
- 3.B. Ames seeks to maintain and enhance the value of its stream corridors as drainageways and flood management areas, plant and animal habitats, recreational and scenic areas, and pathways for linking the overall community.
- 3.C. Ames seeks to protect and conserve its water resources for the following purposes: aquifer protection; water quality protection; user conservation management; plant and animal life support; water-borne recreation; scenic open space; and, provision of a long-term/reliable/safe source of water for human consumption and economic activities.
- 3.D. Ames seeks to protect and conserve its energy sources for the following purposes: energy consumption reduction through provision of an integrated multi-modal transportation system, and through land use practices that minimize vehicular trips; user conservation management; material recycling; and, long-term/reliable/safe source for the support of human and economic activities.

- 3.E. Ames seeks to protect and enhance its air quality and sky access for the following purposes: maintaining an atmosphere that is free of foreign particles and undesirable odors; oxygen enrichment through plant life; glare and ambient light management for night sky viewing; noise transmission management; and, provision of a long-term/reliable/safe source of clean air for the support of human and economic activities.



Skunk River near Homewood Golf Course

Goal No. 4. It is the goal of Ames to create a greater sense of place and connectivity, physically and psychologically, in building a neighborhood and overall community identity and spirit. It is the further goal of the community to assure a more healthy, safe, and attractive environment.

Objectives. In achieving an integrated community and more desirable environment, Ames seeks the following objectives.

- 4.A. Ames seeks to establish more integrated and compact living/activity areas (i.e. neighborhoods, villages) wherein daily living requirements and amenities are provided in a readily identifiable and accessible area. Greater emphasis is placed on the pedestrian and related activities.
- 4.B. Ames seeks to physically connect existing and new residential and commercial areas through the association of related land uses and provision of an intermodal transportation system.

- 4.C. Ames seeks to psychologically connect the various living/activity areas through closer proximity of residential areas and supporting commercial uses, common design elements, and inclusion of community amenities such as parks and schools. The connections should promote community identity.



Open space connections

Goal No. 5. It is the goal of Ames to establish a cost-effective and efficient growth pattern for development in new areas and in a limited number of existing areas for intensification. It is a further goal of the community to link the timing of development with the installation of public infrastructure including utilities, multi-modal transportation system, parks and open space.

Objectives. In defining the growth pattern and timing of development, Ames seeks the following objectives.

- 5.A. Ames seeks to establish priority areas for growth in which there are adequate and available land resources and infrastructure to meet the major development requirements through the year 2030.
- 5.B. Ames seeks to attract public and private capital investment in the priority areas for growth on a concurrency basis (i.e. having infrastructure available at the time of development approval). Public capital improvements (e.g. trunk lines and a major street system) could be used to leverage the location of development and the availability of land.
- 5.C. Ames seeks the continuance of development in emerging and infill areas where there is existing public infrastructure and where capacity permits.
- 5.D. Ames seeks to have the real costs of development borne by the initiating agent when it occurs outside of priority areas for growth and areas served by existing infrastructure.

- 5.E. Ames seeks to integrate its planning with that of Story County and regional planning agencies.



Utilities Construction

Goal No. 6. It is the goal of Ames to increase the supply of housing and to provide a wider range of housing choices.

Objectives. In increasing housing opportunities, Ames seeks the following objectives.

- 6.A. Ames seeks to increase the overall supply of low and moderate-income housing through the following means: (1) conservation of such units in existing areas that are not designated for redevelopment or intensification; and, (2) inclusion of such units in new market-driven housing developments through zoning incentives.
- 6.B. Ames seeks to establish densities of a net average 5.6 dwelling units per acre in maximizing the number of housing units in new areas.
- 6.C. Ames seeks to establish higher densities in existing areas where residential intensification is designated with the further objective that there shall be use and appearance compatibility among existing and new development.

- 6.D. Ames seeks to make housing ownership and rental more available and accessible through relieving the current constraints to land supply/availability. Relief is sought through increasing the supply of land by the following means: (1) releasing lands for development that are currently controlled by institutions; (2) annexing new lands; and (3) expediting development by targeting areas for public and private cooperative efforts.



City-sponsored new low and moderate income housing in West Ames

Goal No. 7. It is the goal of Ames to provide greater mobility through more efficient use of personal automobiles and enhanced availability of an integrated system including alternative modes of transportation.

Objectives. In achieving a more mobile community, Ames seeks the following objectives.

- 7.A. Ames seeks to establish a comprehensive and integrated transportation system that includes automotive, public transit, pedestrian, bicycle and ride-sharing modes.
- 7.B. Ames seeks a transportation system that is linked with the desired development pattern of the overall community and areas therein.
- 7.C. Ames seeks to establish new transportation corridors that have been planned, in part, to minimize impacts on significant natural resources.
- 7.D. Ames seeks to increase the efficiency of existing traffic movement in reducing air pollutants from automobiles (e.g. improving intersection movements to minimize delays and conserve energy).
- 7.E. Ames seeks a development pattern that protects and supports the airport and its flight approach zones.



Bicycle path along 24th Street

Goal No. 8. It is the goal of Ames to enhance the role of Downtown as a community focal point.

Objectives. In expanding and strengthening the role of Downtown as a community focal point, Ames seeks the following objectives.

- 8.A. Ames seeks to maintain and enhance a strong central activity center through the intensification, expansion and diversification of uses including visitor attraction, entertainment, high density residential, offices and business support services.
- 8.B. Ames seeks to improve and integrate the appearance of Downtown through thematic design, preservation of historically and architecturally significant structures and reuse of structures involving economically marginal activities.
- 8.C. Ames seeks to expand parking in Downtown and to integrate automobile access with additional modes of transportation.



Main Street in Downtown Ames

Goal No. 9. It is the goal of Ames to promote expansion and diversification of the economy in creating a base that is more self-sufficient and that is more sustainable with regard to the environment.

Objectives. In creating an economic base that is more self-sufficient and environmentally sustainable, Ames seeks the following objectives.

- 9.A. Ames seeks more diversified regional employment opportunities involving technology-related services and production, office centers and retail centers.
- 9.B. Ames seeks to attract and support a small- and medium-size business center that utilizes the skills and products of the area's trained workforce.
- 9.C. Ames seeks to expand its research and technology development through greater private, public and university coordination and cooperation.
- 9.D. Ames seeks economic activities that are compatible and sustainable with its environment.



Technology Park

Goal No. 10. It is the goal of Ames to maintain and enhance its cultural heritage.

Objectives. In maintaining and enhancing its cultural heritage, Ames seeks the following objectives.

- 10.A. Ames seeks to provide a record of its earlier development through conservation, preservation and restoration of historically/architecturally significant structures and areas where economically feasible.
- 10.B. Ames seeks to integrate historically/ architecturally significant structures and areas with new development in a compatible and unifying manner.
- 10.C. Ames seeks to protect its archaeologically significant resources. Where such resources are endangered, the community should seek buffering and relocation measures.



Historically/architecturally significant structure in Ames Historic District