

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: REQUEST FROM THE MAIN STREET CULTURAL DISTRICT FOR \$3,000 TO COMPLETE THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES NOMINATION APPLICATION

BACKGROUND:

The City Council previously referred the letter dated September 22, 2016 from the Main Street Cultural District requesting \$3,000 to complete the nomination application for National Register of Historic Places.

The Cultural District has committed to match equally the City's contribution in order to meet the April 3, 2017 application deadline.

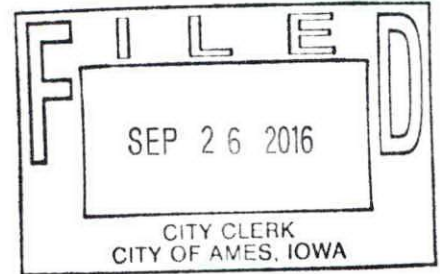
ALTERNATIVES:

1. The City Council can approve the granting of \$3,000 from the Contingency Account as a match to the Main Street Cultural District's contribution to complete the application for the National Register of Historic Places nomination.
2. The City Council can reject the request from the Main Street Cultural District to complete the application for the National Register of Historic Places nomination.

MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

The City had hired a consultant to complete the application for the National Register of Historic Places nomination. A listing on the National Register will allow eligible property owners to take advantage of federal and state tax credits that could spur redevelopment in the Downtown business district. Unfortunately, this task was taking far longer than the staff had hoped and the consultant ceased working on the project. As a result of this previous work, a significant amount of the information needed for the application is available.

Given other staff priorities, this task has languished. The assistance offered by the Cultural District will have great value to the City. Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council approve Alternative #1 and approve the granting of \$3,000 from the Contingency Account as a match to the Main Street Cultural District's contribution to complete the application for the National Register of Historic Places nomination.



September 22, 2016

Mayor and City Council
City of Ames
515 Clark Ave
Ames, IA 50010

Dear Mayor Campbell and City Council,

I write this letter to respectfully request \$3,000 from the Ames City Council board contingency fund that would allow the Downtown Ames district to complete the National Register of Historic Places nomination application. This is a project that was initiated by the city several years ago, but was left incomplete due to issues with the contractor. On September 13, you approved giving these in-process documents to the Main Street Cultural District.

Our goal is to complete the nomination and submit it to the State Nomination Review Committee by the April 3, 2017 deadline for first review. The requested funding from the city will be matched by an equal amount from the Main Street Cultural District and will be payable only upon completion and initial submission of the application.

A listing on the National Register of Historic Places for our downtown district would provide many advantages to the City of Ames and its property owners:

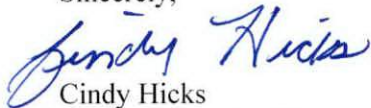
- It will allow our downtown eligible property owners to take advantage of federal and state rehabilitation tax credits. The rehabilitation tax credits are dollar-for-dollar reductions in income tax liability for taxpayers who rehabilitate historic buildings.
- National data shows private preservation efforts, spurred by a listing on the National Register of Historic Places, have resulted in a rise in the value of historic properties and in the creation of construction, business and employment opportunities.
- It will provide a tool for local heritage tourism and education.
- It will provide qualification for federal assistance for historic preservation (such as planning and rehabilitation), when funds are available.
- It makes properties/districts eligible for certain grant funding opportunities.

Completing the application will require the survey to be updated, which entails documenting details on 114 buildings, taking new photographs of those buildings, writing the National nomination, and submitting the survey to State Nomination Review Committee. It is our plan to partner with Iowa State University to complete the application process. The MSCD has identified Dr. Ted Grevstad-Nordbrock, ISU Assistant Professor, Community and Regional Planning who currently teaches historic preservation classes at Iowa State University and Dr. Susan Bradbury, ISU Professor, Community and Regional Planning and current member of the Main Street Cultural District board of directors to assist on this project. Dr. Grevstad-Nordbrock has identified student interns to assist.

Completing the National Register of Historic Places is a project of great value to the City of Ames. Time is certainly of the essence in the situation as much of the work that has already been completed can still be utilized. If the project is further delayed, we will be forced to start from scratch. It is my hope that you will support our organization's work to take this project to the finish line.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Cindy Hicks
MSCD Executive Director