

**COUNCIL ACTION FORM**

**SUBJECT:**      **REQUEST FOR LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR SHELDON MUNN  
SITE FOR A BROWNFIELD/GRAYFIELD TAX CREDIT  
APPLICATION**

**BACKGROUND:**

The Sheldon Munn is a significant historical building within the Main Street Cultural District at the corner of Kellogg and Main Street. The property owner has an interest in rehabilitating the property consistent with its historic character as a mixed-use building and has met with City staff to investigate feasibility of the project. As part of the project assessment, it has been noted by the property owner, that the building includes a number of obstacles to its reuse, see attached letter, related to the potential removal costs of hazardous building materials.

The Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) has a Brownfield/Grayfield Tax Credit program to provide financial assistance for the removal of environmental contamination to further goals of removing development impediments. The Sheldon Munn's owners desire to seek IEDA grant funding to assist in the preservation and rehabilitation of the building. **To this end they are requesting the City's support of their application. The Brownfield Tax Credit program does not require financial participation by a local government and there is no additional administration requirement for the City if the property owners are awarded the tax credits.**

**ALTERNATIVES:**

1. The City Council can authorize the Mayor to sign a letter of support for sponsorship of the Brownfield Tax Credit application.
2. The City Council can deny the request to sponsor the Brownfield Tax Credit application.

**MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

**Based upon the City's interest in the supporting reinvestment in the downtown and desire for historic preservation and rehabilitation of Sheldon Munn, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative #1. This action will authorize the Mayor to provide a letter of support of an application for Brownfield Tax Credits.**



December 12, 2013

Ames City Council  
Ames Public Works Department  
Ames City Hall  
515 Clark Avenue  
Ames, IA 50010

Re: Pursuit of Brownfield Tax Credits for Sheldon Munn

We request the assistance of the City with pursuance of Brownfield Tax Credits for the above referenced building. During our development of plans and details for the restoration, we performed a walkthrough of the building where many items that commonly contain asbestos, such as 9 inch floor tile, frayed pipe insulation and built up roofing mastic, were identified. During additional tours of the building with contractors and staff from the environmental engineer, many areas were pointed out as questionable for containing asbestos. Complete testing for asbestos containing materials was requested before contractors would be allowed to perform work on site. These tests, which will be necessary prior to beginning of the construction process, have yet to be approved during our planning process.

In addition, due to the age of the facility being approximately 100 years, it is highly likely to contain lead based paints in many areas. This also is considered a hazardous material and will have to be mitigated prior to beginning of construction.

Since these hazardous materials presumably exist within the areas of the project where work will be performed, we believe that this project is eligible for the Brownfield Tax Credit program through the Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA). We have been in contact with members of the IEDA concerning these issues, and they have informed us that what they need is a statement of support from a local City official claiming that there is perceived contamination of the site per the Iowa Code definition. Based on our visual walkthrough, and the comments gathered from the environmental engineer, we perceive that these contaminants do exist.

We request that a letter be sent to us claiming your notion of perceived contaminants are located within the Sheldon Munn Hotel. Please find attached a quotation for professional testing services where the environmental engineer claims they will have to test at least 550 samples of existing materials to properly prepare an environmental assessment of the building. Also find attached a copy of the Iowa Code definitions for Brownfield and Grayfield sites within the State of Iowa. This should provide clear information to base your perceptions.

Please address this letter to my attention, and I will forward it to the appropriate parties. Thank you for your quick attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

John D. Lott, AIA, LEED AP BD+C

**Benjamin Design Collaborative**  
401 Clark Avenue, Suite 200 ■ Ames, Iowa 50010 ■ 515-232-0888 ■ Fax 515-232-0882