

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: PARTNERSHIP WITH MAIN STREET CULTURAL DISTRICT ON NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES NOMINATION FOR DOWNTOWN

BACKGROUND:

The City of Ames initiated preparation of National Register of Historic Places nomination for the downtown area in 2011 (Location Map-Attachment 1). At that time the City hired an historian to complete site inventory sheets of properties in downtown and for outreach to downtown businesses as Phase 1 of the nomination process. Phase 2 was to prepare the nomination forms and complete the process with the State Historic Preservation Office for listing of the downtown as an historic district on the National Register.

Unfortunately, in 2013 City staff had to terminate the historian's work on preparation of the site inventory sheets. Phase 1 of the project was not completed and Phase II was never started. City staff received draft site inventory sheets as part of the work that was done with Phase I. **Completing Phase I of this project is listed on the Planning and Housing Department's work plan, but has not been prioritized at this time.** Staff believes that selection of a new historical consultant with a potential cost of \$15,000 to \$20,000 would be required to complete both Phase I and Phase II.

Recently, the Main Street Cultural District (MSCD) expressed an interest in pursuing a listing of the downtown area as an historical district to assist in their efforts for recognition and grant opportunities with Main Street Iowa. The MSCD Executive Director contacted staff to see if the prior Phase I documents were available for use by the MSCD to complete the nomination process. MSCD believes that, with assistance from ISU faculty and student interns, they may be able to complete both Phase I and Phase II.

The MSCD has requested that the City allow them to use the draft site sheet information in preparation of a Downtown nomination. The MSCD will focus their efforts on Main Street and the south side of 5th Street based upon the preliminary work that has already been done.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Authorize staff to share copies of the draft site inventory sheets and materials related to the preparation of a Downtown National Register of Historic Places nomination with the Main Street Cultural District for their preparation of a nomination.
2. Defer action on preparing a nomination with MSCD until the City has completed

Phase I.

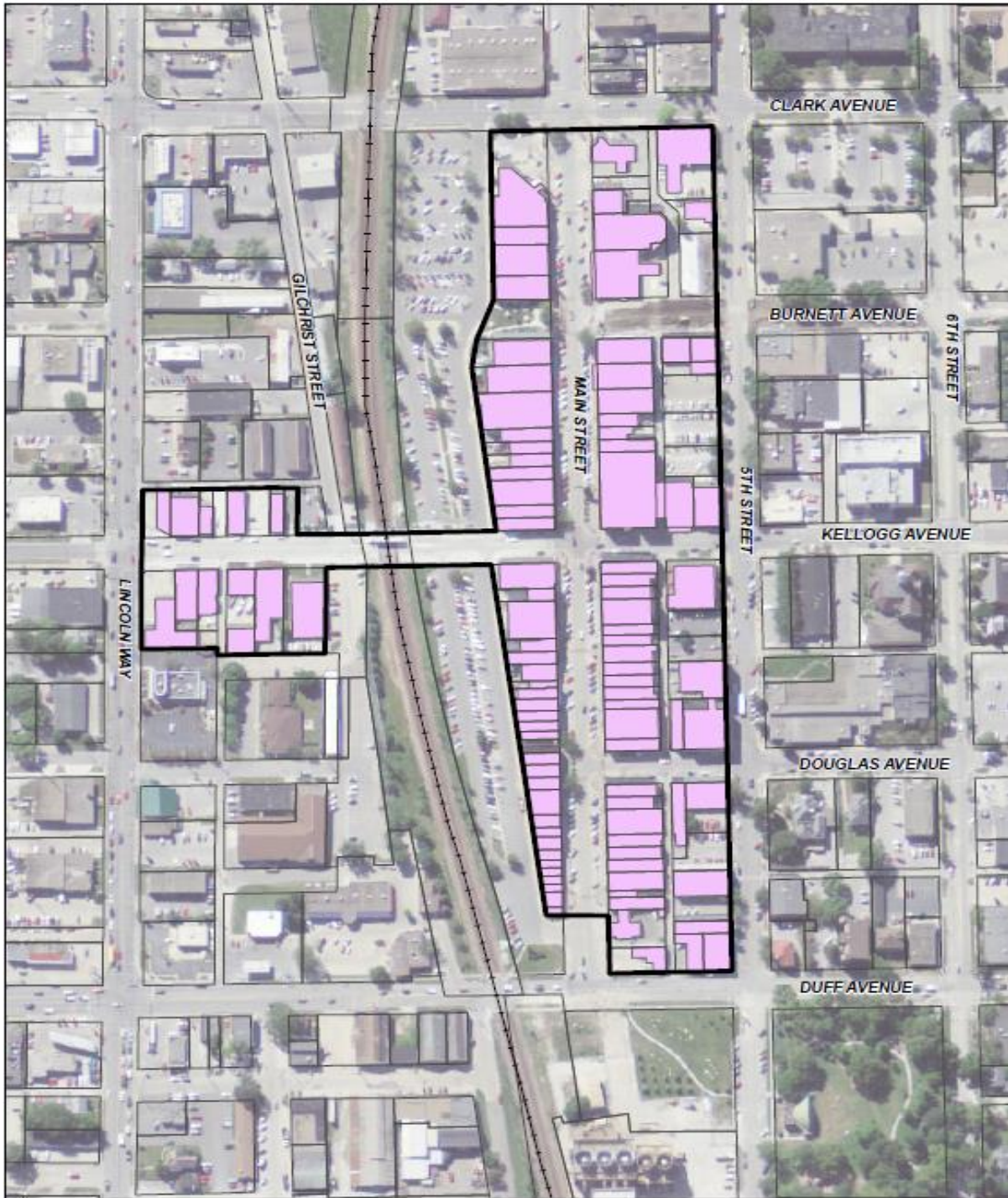
MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

When Phase I was ended, City staff retained the draft sheets. With the help of two community volunteers, notations were made with corrections and information needed for how to proceed with the work. However, due to other priorities, completion of the work has not occurred in the past 2+ years.

The Main Street Cultural District would benefit from the listing of downtown on the National Register in terms of the Main Street Iowa program. The initial evaluation of the site inventory sheets appears to support the nomination of the downtown as a District, and with technical assistance from ISU faculty and interns, MSCD may be able to complete the project. Staff support for such an effort by the MSCD would be minimal compared to the City completing the project on its own, and would consist primarily of coordination of information and providing background to individuals working on the project. If the nomination process is completed, it would require a review by the Historic Preservation Commission and ultimately concurrence for listing by the City Council.

Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative No. 1, thereby authorizing staff to share the Phase I work with the Main Street Cultural District in support of a National Register of Historic Places nomination of downtown as an historic district.

Attachment 1



Downtown Ames Intensive Survey Area



Map Created July 26, 2011
by City of Ames Planning & Housing Department

Filepath: G:\Ames\Departments\Ames_Planing_and_Housing\GIS_PROJECTS\Current Projects

-  Area
-  Parcels
-  Buildings



Background Photo: August 2010 Color Aerial
0 130 260 520 Feet