

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: AMENDMENT TO CHAPTER 2 OF THE LAND USE POLICY PLAN FOR REFERENCES TO THE LINCOLN WAY CORRIDOR PLAN

BACKGROUND:

City Council reviewed the final draft of the Lincoln Way Corridor Plan at its September 22, 2017 meeting. No changes to the Plan were directed by the City Council at the September 22nd meeting and the plan has since been. City Council provided direction on referencing the Corridor Plan within the Land Use Policy Plan and on implementing priorities for zoning and development review for the Downtown Gateway Focus Area and for a Streetscape Enhancement Plan for the entire corridor.

The City Council previously directed use of the Lincoln Way Corridor Plan as an advisory plan rather than a comprehensive update of the Land Use Policy Plan (LUPP). **To meet the interest of including the vision of the Plan and to help prioritize its implementation policies, staff proposes an amendment to Chapter 2 of the LUPP to add a section describing the Lincoln Way Corridor Plan (Attachment A- LUPP Text).** Similar sub-area plans to the Lincoln Way Corridor Plan are included within Chapter 2 of the LUPP. Therefore, including the Corridor Plan would be consistent with this practice of the City. Parts of the Corridor Plan overlap other sub-areas identified with the LUPP, such as the University Impact Area and the Downtown Expansion Area. No changes to the Future Land Use Designation Map are proposed the text amendment to Chapter 2. The full text of Land Use Policy Plan and Chapter 2 can be found on the Planning Division [website at this link](#).

The new LUPP language identifies that the Corridor Plan is advisory to future Land Use Policy Plan and zoning decisions. The proposed text includes language specifying changes that are consistent with the Corridor Plan should be categorized as Minor LUPP Amendments. Staff believes this is an important element of the LUPP Amendment to recognize the extensive amount of time that went into preparing the Corridor Plan and for supporting the vision of the Corridor Plan. Minor Amendments require a noticed public hearing and review by the Planning and Zoning Commission before review by the City Council. A Major Amendment requires public outreach and workshops to scope options and amendments prior to the public hearing process. Without an affirmative statement supporting Minor Amendments, many of the options for change along the corridor could be classified as Major Amendments and require additional outreach and workshops prior to public hearings on the proposed amendments.

The proposed text also includes the objectives of the Corridor Plan for Lincoln Way and the surrounding neighborhoods. The stated objectives and references to the Corridor Plan are intended to provide a policy basis for future implementation measures,

such as future rezoning actions or improvement requirements along the Corridor. **To narrow the scope of the Corridor Plan for implementation the LUPP Amendment text also describes priorities for establishing new zoning for Focus Area 1 (Downtown Gateway) and to work on overall corridor beautification and aesthetic enhancements with a follow up streetscape and gateway plan.** These two priorities are consistent with the City Council's direction from September 22nd for implementation of the Corridor Plan.

The Downtown Gateway Focus Area description includes language for development preferences. The intent of this area is to support commercial redevelopment and allow for mixed use. The most intense redevelopment is intended for the area between Lincoln Way and the railroad tracks. Property aggregation will likely be needed in this area to fully realize the redevelopment options of the Corridor Plan. **This area is intended to act as an extension of commercial uses and potentially mixed use development in relation to Downtown.** Reduced parking and shared parking opportunities may be a preference north of Lincoln Way as well. The Focus Area description will help guide zoning decisions for the area.

The Planning and Zoning Commission reviewed the proposed LUPP text amendment On October 18, 2017 and held a public hearing for its review on November 15, 2017. The Commission voted 6-0 in support of the proposed amendment.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Adopt a resolution to amend Chapter 2 of the LUPP consistent with Attachment 1.
2. Defer action and request additional information from staff.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION:

The proposed amendment facilitates implementation of the Lincoln Way Corridor Plan by establishing policy supporting the objectives and vision of the Corridor Plan. Furthermore, it includes clear priorities for the Downtown Gateway Focus area and for overall enhancement to the corridor. The Downtown Gateway Focus Area includes preferences for uses and development that are commercially focused and complementary to Downtown.

Staff will follow up the LUPP amendment with Zoning Text Amendments and a rezoning process for Corridor Commercial to implement the intent of the Corridor Plan. The proposed LUPP Amendment will provide a basis for evaluating zoning amendments and future development and improvement goals for the Focus Area and corridor overall.

Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council act in accordance with Alternative #1 to approved the proposed LUPP Text Amendment.

ADDENDUM

Background Regarding Corridor Plan

The Lincoln Way Corridor Plan objectives are to create identity along Lincoln Way as a place and not just a thoroughfare, to support enhancements for multi-modal transportation, and to identify opportunities to revitalize properties with land uses that are contextual and support Corridor identity and placemaking. Preparation of the Corridor Plan was an 18 month process of examining background conditions, soliciting public input, and creating contextual options for change within the Plan. To meet the objectives and address the overall scale of Lincoln Way, the consultants have prepared a final plan that looks at the corridor in two ways – as the entire corridor through the Framework Plan, and as more detailed Focus Areas.

The Lincoln Way Corridor Plan Framework Plan section identifies the overall principles for the corridor by looking at the various “districts” within the corridor for land use, mobility and community character enhancements. The Plan identifies six districts for the overall corridor (Attachment A). The Framework Plan looks at development potential through redevelopment areas, bike, pedestrian, and vehicular improvements, and opportunity for streetscape improvements to increase the overall aesthetics and character of the corridor. The Framework Plan is intended to guide overall strategies that improve the corridor and connect it together.

The Focus Areas address five different local areas along the corridor. The Focus Areas allow for more in-depth review of contextual redevelopment options, rather than broad and general interests in redevelopment and intensification along the corridor. The Focus Area concepts also could be applied to other areas along the Corridor that are of a similar nature. The five Focus Areas identified in the plan area as follows:

1. Downtown Gateway (Clark Avenue to Duff Avenue)
2. Lincoln Way and Grand Avenue (Oak Avenue to Grand Avenue)
3. Oak to Riverside Neighborhood
4. Campustown Transition (Sheldon Avenue to Campus Drive)
5. Westside Mixed Use (West Hy-Vee Area, Beedle Drive to Colorado Avenue)

Attachment A

PROPOSED TEXT AMENDMENT TO URBAN CORE SECTION OF CHAPTER 2 OF THE LAND USE POLICY PLAN

LINCOLN WAY CORRIDOR PLAN

Lincoln Way is the primary arterial street that interconnects the community from east to west. Lincoln Way is more than a street that provides vehicle, pedestrian, transit, and bicycle circulation as it is also a place that is part of many different neighborhoods and destinations within the City. The Corridor is home to industrial and highway commercial businesses as well as to single-family homes, multi-family residential, Campustown, and the south edge of the Iowa State University Campus. The City of Ames aspires to enhancing Lincoln Way to recognize it as a place and desirable area within the City that is contextual to its surroundings. The City of Ames objectives for enhancing the Corridor include:

1. Improving mobility options for bicyclists and pedestrians while maintaining adequate vehicle service levels.
2. Supporting select areas of redevelopment to provide for economic development and new infill housing opportunities that are compatible with the surroundings.
3. Maintaining Lincoln Way commercial areas to meet the needs of the community.
4. Enhancing overall aesthetics and continuity of the Corridor with improved streetscapes and gateways.

Enhancing the Corridor includes an overall framework with context specific implementation measures. The 2017 Lincoln Way Corridor Plan describes the planning context and goals for the Corridor in greater detail. The plan includes concepts for changes in zoning, building types, transportation, and streetscape enhancements. The plan relies upon Focus Areas to illustrate potential changes that meet the objectives for the Corridor.

Due to the breadth of the plan and its long term vision for evolution of the Corridor, the plan is intended to be implemented in phases. The first two priorities are for redevelopment in the Downtown Gateway Focus area and aesthetic enhancements along the Corridor. By reference, the plan is to be relied upon as advisory to land use and zoning decisions as a visioning document for the future of the Corridor. Individual amendments to zoning, and, in some areas, Land Use Policy Plan Amendments, are needed to fulfill the objectives of the Plan.

Proposals for zoning amendments or LUPP changes for other areas require authorization or initiation by the City Council. Due to the extensive outreach and details of the Corridor Plan, requests for change that are consistent with Corridor Plan's objectives and Focus Areas may be authorized by the City Council as Minor Amendments. The City Council may also choose to consider concurrent zoning amendments when needed to realize specialty uses or redevelopment options described within the Corridor Plan for individual Focus Area. Concurrent review should only be considered for projects that commit to specific projects and detailed review of plans to ensure compatibility with the surroundings and consistency with the Plan.

DOWNTOWN GATEWAY FOCUS AREA

The City has established the Downtown Gateway Focus Area, located generally from Clark Avenue to Duff Avenue and south of the railroad tracks, as its first development area priority. This Focus Area is within the Downtown Expansion Area Option of the Land Use Policy Plan. The Downtown Gateway is intended to foster redevelopment with a commercial focus that may also include residential development. The area as it is currently developed is a place of community commercial uses formatted in typical highway commercial setting, meaning automobile oriented formats, and providing for retail, office, and restaurant uses.

As redevelopment occurs in the area it is important to maintain a strong commercial base that meets community needs for retail and service use. Redevelopment of the area does not require mixed use residential development, but residential uses can be accommodated when the commercial use goals of the City are met for the area. The goals of redevelopment in this area are not focused on creating student housing options that are already accommodated with the Campustown Service Center area of the Corridor.

The overall character of the area is for development that is complimentary to the use and character of Downtown. Incorporating complimentary uses is a priority for the City and includes accommodating a boutique hotel, entertainment and active retail uses, incorporating outdoor space for events and commercial uses, and maintaining an office and employment presence in the Corridor. Kellogg Avenue is the focal points of the Focus Area and connects to the four-corner heart of Downtown at Main Street. Development along Kellogg must maintain individual building identity and storefront patterns similar to traditional downtown retailing. This type of development pattern can occur through redevelopment of small sites or as part of a larger redevelopment project. In other areas outside of Kellogg Avenue, the Plan encourages aggregation of property in support of a variety of development formats that accommodates the intended commercial uses and for the area.

Facilitating intense redevelopment also allows for collective parking and reduced parking requirements in recognition of the rich transportation options in the area and public parking that exists to the north of the area. Due to potentially large redevelopment sites, design and architectural features are needed that provided variations in appearance of mass and height. Differentiation of façade planes and use of high quality glazing, brick, and metal siding systems is highly desirable to create an attractive and interesting area. Maintaining or creating secondary means of access into the blocks is a priority for the area to ensure that curb cuts onto Lincoln Way are reduced and minimized from existing conditions. Automotive service oriented uses are discouraged from locating in the area. Aggregating property for larger sites may require developers to relocate electric and water utility improvements and potentially have the City vacate certain minor rights-of-way if not needed to serve properties. Widening sidewalks and improving the streetscape along Lincoln Way are a priority with redevelopment.