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**TO:** City Council

**FROM:** Historic Preservation Commission and Department of Planning and Housing

**DATE:** November 10, 2020

**SUBJECT:** Proposed Amendments to the Ames Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan

In the past year, the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) has reviewed in detail the goals, objectives, and action steps of the *Ames Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan (ACHPP)* that City Council adopted in November 2009. The result of the review are recommended changes to update, clarify, delete, or add to the goals, objectives and action steps of the Plan. **The Commission requests that City Council initiate consideration of the recommended changes to formally amend the Plan.** City staff consulted with the Commission during their review and supports the proposed changes. The proposed amendments are included as Attachment A. A short summary of changes is also discussed below. **City Council could choose to place this item on a future agenda to discuss the proposed changes or defer consideration of the recommendations until a later date.**

## **Background**

The *Ames Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan (ACHPP)* includes six (6) goals. The goals remain intact except for the minor changes shown for Goals #5 and #6, below. Additions and deletions for the objectives and action steps are shown in Attachment A.

- Goal #1: Acknowledge the role of historic preservation in encouraging civic pride, neighborhood identity, economic vitality, and community sustainability.
- Goal #2: Promote the preservation of historically, architecturally, and archaeologically significant resources in the community.
- Goal #3: Enhance municipal policies to protect historic resources and implement policies through identification, effective legislation, and efficient regulatory measures.
- Goal #4: Educate the public concerning the value and benefit of historic preservation.
- Goal #5: Facilitate and strengthen preservation partnerships among municipal, county, state and federal government agencies, including Iowa State University, Ames ~~Historical Society~~ History Museum, local school districts, and ~~private~~ developers.
- Goal #6: Promote the economic development and vitality of the city through historic preservation and heritage tourism.

A major accomplishment since adoption of the *ACHPP* has been adoption of revisions to Chapter 31, Historic Preservation, of the Municipal Code. Design guidelines were revised, and new regulations were adopted for garages that were determined to be “Contributing” structures in the 2003 survey of the Old Town Historic District. This was “Objective A” under Goal #3, and has been deleted in the proposed revisions, since the objective and actions steps have been accomplished.

There is a desire on the part of the *HPC* to provide information to the owners of properties that are potentially historically significant. In addition, the *HPC* perceives a need to partner with other community organizations to educate the citizens of Ames about the value of preserving the historic structures in our community. Education may take the form of walking tour brochures, digital tour guides, utilizing information available through the Ames History Museum, information gathered through surveys of properties in various neighborhoods, seminars, summits, and information available on the City of Ames website, as well as through the City’s Geographic Information System (GIS) records.

The *ACHPP* was originally adopted by the City Council by resolution on November 24, 2009. Adoption included the Ames Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan Report, which includes the Goals, Objectives and Action Steps. The proposed amendments, as described in Attachment A, could also be adopted by the City Council by resolution.

**ATTACHMENT A - PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE  
AMES COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN  
GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTION STEPS**

\*Please note that additions are shown in bold type and underlined. Deletions are shown with a strikethrough, and items accomplished have been removed from the text.

**GOAL #1. Acknowledge the role of historic preservation in encouraging civic pride, neighborhood identity, economic vitality, and community sustainability.**

**Objective A:**

Adopt strategies to conserve historic neighborhoods, which reflect their organic development, historical roles and traditions, modern needs, and economic health and stability.

~~Action Step: Form an umbrella organization of neighborhood associations to work toward goals of mutual benefit.~~

**Action Step:** Encourage the study and appreciation of Ames history in all its wards and eras, including the mid-20th century.

**Action Step: Provide each neighborhood representative with the information, in Chapter 4 (Historic Property Potentials) of the Ames Comprehensive Preservation Plan Report, that applies to their neighborhood. Encourage each neighborhood to consider conducting a survey to identify all historically significant structures in their neighborhood.**

~~Action Step: Develop design guidelines for the installation and use of historic streetlights in national or local historic districts.~~

**Objective B:**

Facilitate the preservation efforts of neighborhood associations.

**Action Step:** Share historic preservation survey documentation with neighborhood associations, **through the use of links on the City of Ames website. Clarify that designations of properties in the surveys as “contributing,” “non-contributing,” “potentially eligible,” or some other designation does not necessarily mean that the properties will be subject to local historic preservation regulations, nor listed on the National Register of Historic Places.**

~~Action Step: Sponsor an annual summit of neighborhood associations~~ **Seek ways to meet with established neighborhood associations, and other residential areas throughout the community,** where residents can learn about historic preservation as a tool for community improvement, share accomplishments, discuss problems, and network. **Collaborate with other community organizations to offer a historic preservation summit for neighborhoods, and other community residents interested in historic preservation, at a minimum of once every five years.**

**Objective C:**

Strengthen the role of historic preservation in promoting Ames tourism.

~~Action Step:~~ Inform the Convention & Visitors Bureau, University, and Chamber of Commerce about historic preservation as an essential component to market Ames tourism.

Action Step: Coordinate with the Ames History Museum, Chamber of Commerce, Convention & Visitors Bureau, Iowa State University, and individual neighborhoods in developing the content, design and distribution of printed walking brochures, or digital guides. The brochures and digital guides would focus on historic neighborhoods, historic sites, and other areas in Ames, including Downtown, to persons attending conferences, special events, and others visiting the community.

**Objective D:**

~~Inform the public about the role of historic preservation in stabilizing and increasing property values and the community's tax base.~~

~~Action Step:~~ Analyze property assessment records to test the hypothesis that values have risen in Old Town since the implementation of municipal design review in 1989.

~~Action Step:~~ Encourage the Convention & Visitor Bureau, University, and Chamber of Commerce to disseminate this information in their activities.

**GOAL #2. Promote the preservation of historically, architecturally, and archaeologically significant resources in the community.**

**Objective A:**

Provide financial support for the Ames Historical Society to assist in achieving the goals of the Ames Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan.

**Action Step:** Identify a strategy to assist in funding ~~one, full-time, equivalent professional staff employee and, or~~ supporting costs for of the Ames Historical Society History Museum.

**Objective B:**

Promote economic incentive opportunities to encourage the preservation of historic buildings and neighborhoods.

~~Action Step:~~ Provide property tax abatement for residential improvements to contributing resources within designated historic districts and landmarks.

Action Step: Provide information to the owners of historically significant properties on the use of financial incentives that are available.

**Objective C:**

Provide guidance for preserving and improving historic properties to developers, property owners, and others interested in historic preservation.

~~Action Step:~~ Encourage the owners of public, commercial, and residential property to seek non-binding advice about proposed rehabilitation projects from the Ames Historic Preservation Commission.

Action Step: Partner with the Ames History Museum and the State Historic Preservation Office

**to provide information on preservation tools available to the owners of historically significant properties.**

**Action Step:** **Continue to** encourage the retention of outbuildings on historic properties, particularly automobile garages.

**Action Step:** Preserve **cultural landscapes** ~~natural resources~~ with individual significance or that are significant as contributing to a landscape within which other historic buildings or structures are situated.

**Objective D:**

Encourage private support and commitment for preservation undertakings.

**Action Step:** Encourage property owners to pursue National Register nominations ~~as personal undertakings~~.

**Objective E:**

Increase awareness of the potential for archaeological sites within the city and legal protection for them.

**Action Step:** In all historic survey projects, consider a property's potential for National Register Criterion D significance (archaeology), including sites where historic archaeology (previous buildings, foundations, and/or other habitation materials on a site) might apply.

**GOAL #3. Enhance municipal policies to protect historic resources and implement policies through identification, effective legislation, and efficient regulatory measures.**

**Objective B ~~A~~:**

Continue to improve Ames inventories of historic properties through reconnaissance and intensive historical, architectural, and archaeological surveys.

**Action Step:** ~~Identify and prioritize, by t~~ **The Historic Preservation Commission will prioritize potential reconnaissance and intensive historic surveys projects and strategize, by the Commission, funding mechanisms to achieve them.**

**Action Step:** Publicize results of previous surveys to promote preservation among property owners.

**Action Step:** **Integrate City survey data with the City Geographic Information System (GIS)**

**Action Step:** **Include support of historic preservation in the Ames 2040 Comprehensive Plan.**

**Objective ~~C~~ B:**

Revise local historic district and landmark design guidelines to clarify their intent and to reflect new materials, technologies, and "green issues."

**Action Step:** Remove internal inconsistencies and update design guidelines to reflect new materials, technologies, **sustainability** and "green issues."

**Action Step:** **Use graphics to illustrate Design Guidelines and to make the guidelines more user friendly.**

**Objective D C:**

Continue to designate local historic districts, local landmarks, and **properties for listing on the National Register of Historic Places** properties.

**Action Step:** The Historic Preservation Commission will identify ~~Identify~~ and prioritize, ~~by the Ames Historic Preservation Commission,~~ potential National Register historic districts and strategize, ~~by the Commission,~~ funding mechanisms **available for surveys and preparation of National Register nominations,** ~~if necessary, to list them.~~

**Action Step:** Identify and designate properties eligible for listing as local landmarks and local historic districts.

~~**Action Step:** Explore the possibility of designating a property in Ames as a National Historic Landmark.~~

~~**Action Step:** Explore the potential to register the Lincoln Highway in Ames as a National Register of Historic Places historic district.~~

**Objective E D:**

Ensure that design guidelines for city re/development incentive programs respect the historic character of the properties and surrounding areas to which they are applied.

**Action Step:** Utilize the expertise of **the** Ames Historic Preservation Commission.

**Objective F E:**

Ensure that expansion or development of city **City of Ames** property follows **good appropriate** preservation practices.

**Action Step:** Utilize the expertise of **the** Ames Historic Preservation Commission.

**Action Step:** Develop and adopt an historic preservation policy for City property.

**Objective G E:**

Protect the value of properties and neighborhoods by working to prevent the deterioration of structures.

**Action Step:** Support the minimum maintenance code for rental and owner-occupied property.

**GOAL #4. Educate the public concerning the value and benefit of historic preservation.**

**Objective A:**

~~Increase public awareness of and support for historic preservation archival materials.~~

~~**Action Step:** Create and publish a list of historic preservation archival materials and their locations.~~

**Objective BA:**

Promote and offer ~~walking tours,~~ lectures, workshops and other educational opportunities focused on historic preservation.

~~Action Step:~~ Gather public input detailing stories of Ames history, people, and properties using a city-provided on-line access and other methods.

~~Action Step:~~ Develop and disseminate tour brochures, which identify the homes and worksites of notable Ames residents.

**Action Step:** Sponsor workshops targeted to multiple audiences with emphasis on commercial and residential architecture property, incentives, and hands-on brick and mortar issues.

**Objective ~~CB~~:**

Utilize website/on-line presence.

**Action Step:** Maintain a computerized list of survey materials for city staff and others to consult in planning projects **on the Historic Preservation Commission section of the City of Ames website.**

**Action Step:** Develop and maintain an online instructional sheet to explain correct methods to record information concerning historic properties and an online form for that information **graphics to assist the public in understanding and utilizing the Design Guidelines in Chapter 31 of the Municipal Code.**

**Action Step:** Provide information concerning grants-in-aid and other funding sources for historic preservation.

~~Action Step:~~ Include applications for Ames local historic districts, local landmarks, and National Register of Historic Places properties on the city's website.

**Objective ~~DC~~:**

Facilitate the dissemination of historic preservation information.

~~Action Step:~~ Identify and designate appropriate public access site or sites for preservation information.

**Action Step:** Gather historic preservation information and resource materials and provide public access for their use.

**GOAL #5. Facilitate and strengthen preservation partnerships among municipal, county, state and federal government agencies, including Iowa State University, Ames Historical Society History Museum, and local school districts, and private developers.**

**Objective A:**

Open communication channels among all interested parties to identify common interests and concerns, to explore areas of mutual benefit, and to share historical data and research.

**Action Step:** Collaborate with other historic preservation commissions, historical societies, and related groups to promote common interests.

**Action Step:** Establish an annual joint session between **Meet with the City Council and the Ames Planning & Zoning Commission and Ames Historic Preservation Commission** to review authorities, responsibilities, and procedures **on an as-needed basis.**

**Action Step:** Encourage county, state, and federal agencies to partner with municipal agencies in preservation efforts to increase public awareness of the history of Ames.

**Action Step:** Utilize resources available through Iowa Main Street program.

**Action Step:** ~~Communicate~~ **Collaborate** with Iowa State University regarding historic resources throughout the community.

**Action Step:** Collaborate with other Iowa communities and other interested parties to ~~establish~~ **identify and promote specific historic resources along the** a Lincoln Highway historic conservation corridor across the State of Iowa.

**Action Step:** Partner with **the Campustown Action Association and** Iowa State University to ~~maintain~~ **promote remaining aspects of the historic character** of Campustown, while encouraging its development as a commercial and cultural center.

**Objective B:**

Develop timely notification and review/comment process for proposed re-use, rehabilitation, or demolition of historic resources.

**Action Step: Explore additional ways the Historic Preservation Commission could be involved with the demolition of potentially eligible historic properties in Ames.**

**Objective C:**

Integrate the Historic Preservation Plan with other priorities of the City Council.

**Action Step:** Review the Ames Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan Report and determine priorities as necessary, ~~but not more frequently than once each year.~~

**Action Step:** Obtain approval from the City Council for priorities determined by the Commission following each review of the Ames Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan Report.

**GOAL #6: Promote the economic development and vitality of the city through historic preservation, and heritage tourism.**

**Objective A:**

Assess the impacts of new development on the historic character of existing neighborhoods, commercial districts, and archaeological resources.

**Action Step:** Develop criteria to determine which type of new development projects should be assessed.

**Action Step:** Develop assessment process.

**Objective B:**

**Encourage the use and adaptive reuse of existing public and private buildings.**

**Action Step:** Work with Main Street Iowa and **Downtown** Ames ~~Main Street Cultural and Entertainment District~~ programs to maintain the historic character of Downtown Ames, while encouraging its development as a commercial and cultural center.



~~**Action Step:** Develop design pattern books to illustrate how adopted design guidelines can be applied.~~

**Action Step:** Showcase notable adaptive reuse projects through the media.

~~**Action Step:** Consider Campustown as a potential candidate for the Urban Neighborhood Main Street District (UNMSD) program of Main Street Iowa.~~

**Objective C:**

Explore local incentive opportunities for historic preservation. [e.g. TIF, façade improvement program]

~~**Action Step:** Continue the grant and tax abatement programs for urban revitalization.~~

**Objective D:**

Provide current information concerning preservation grants and financial incentives.

**Action Step:** Continue to include pertinent data and links for additional information on the city website, alongside local model projects if available.

**Objective E:**

Recognize the importance of ~~preservation~~ **heritage** tourism for Ames and support efforts to promote it.

**Action Step:** Encourage interested parties to develop a coordinated **heritage** tourism strategy for Ames with a role for historic preservation in that effort.

**Objective F:**

Partner with businesses in Downtown Ames, Campustown, and other business communities and tourism efforts beyond Ames to explore branding, promotion, products, marketing, and other economic advantages associated with the Lincoln Highway as an historic corridor across Iowa and its attraction to the touring public.

**Action Step:** ~~Encourage~~ Consider sensitive use of the Lincoln Highway logo as a branding tool.

**ATTACHMENT B – RESOLUTION APPROVING  
AMES COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN**

**RESOLUTION NO. 09-539**

**RESOLUTION ADOPTING AMES COMPREHENSIVE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN  
FOR THE CITY OF AMES**

WHEREAS, on October 27, 2009, the Council approved changes to the proposed Ames Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan; and,

WHEREAS, the Plan includes the Goals, Objectives, and Action Steps as reviewed and recommended for approval by the Historic Preservation Commission, the Planning and Zoning Commission, the Steering Committee, and as reviewed and accepted by the City Council in draft form; and,

WHEREAS, the Historic Preservation Commission has been working closely with Consultant William C. Page and the Steering Committee throughout the process of preparing the Plan; and,

WHEREAS, the Goals, Objectives, and Action Steps of the proposed Plan have been reviewed and accepted as a draft by the City Council incrementally in the last several months, based upon recommendations and comments received by focus groups, the Steering Committee, the Historic Preservation Commission, the Planning and Zoning Commission, staff of the Iowa State Historical Society, and interested citizens.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Ames, Iowa, that the Ames Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan is hereby adopted.

ADOPTED THIS 24<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2009.



Diane R. Voss, City Clerk



Ann H. Campbell, Mayor

Introduced by:	Mahayni
Seconded by:	Goodman
Voting aye:	Doll, Goodman, Larson, Mahayni, Popken, Rice
Voting nay:	None
Absent:	None

Resolution declared adopted and signed by the Mayor this 24<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2009.