

Staff Report

PLANNING AND HOUSING DEPARTMENT WORK PLAN PRIORITIES

February 15, 2022

BACKGROUND:

City Council last formerly reviewed the Planning and Housing Department Work Plan in March 2020. City Council has since adopted new Council Goals as well as the Ames Plan 2040. In addition to the typical prioritization of referrals and tasks for implementation of Council Goals, City Council needs to address implementation priorities of Ames Plan 2040.

At the time Ames Plan 2040 was approved, the Implementation Chapter included a list of initiatives categorized as Infrastructure, Plans and Sub-Areas, and Zoning Subdivision Standards. This list captured the most significant needs related to implementing concepts of Plan 2040 in the near term, it is not an all-inclusive list of potential actions for implementation of Plan 2040. The selected categories helped to classify what types of efforts would need to occur to implement the Plan, but they did not specifically tie back to issues identified within the Plan. Staff believes that thinking of the initiatives in the context of different categories such as: Infill/Redevelopment, Housing, Transportation, and Commercial and Other Zoning Issues will assist the City Council in prioritizing specific issues.

Plan 2040 Housing Related Initiatives

- i. City-wide assessment of allowing construction of Accessory Dwelling Units with existing homes. *Staff believes this is intended to be an extensive effort of evaluating options and doing public outreach (300-800 hours).*
- ii. Allow for two-family homes (duplexes) within FS-RL and potentially other zoning districts (50-200 hours). Public outreach will be needed if duplexes are allowed in existing areas.
- iii. Update FS-RL and FS-RM zoning to reflect intended densities and building types for Growth Areas (80 hours)
- iv. Modify F-VR zoning for use in Growth Areas (40-150 hours)

Plan 2040 Infill Related Initiatives

- i. East and West University Impact Area standards review, including parking and how to implement zoning for the RN-4 land use designation within the West University Impact Overlay. (100-300 hours)
- ii. Urban Corridor Designation along Lincoln Way (west of Campustown), needs implementation zoning that does not exist. (100 to 180 hours)
- iii. Create design standards for desired small scale infill projects, applies to multiple issues and zoning districts. (150-300 hours)
- iv. University Overlay for Redirection Area Hunt and Sheldon, rezone area for redevelopment (100 to 200 hours)
- v. South Lincoln Mixed Use Plan from Cherry to Walnut, new Plan and rezoning (300-

500 hours)

Plan 2040 Commercial and Other Standards Related Initiatives

- i. Implement commercial use designation changes, requires new General Commercial zoning district with changes to Highway Oriented Commercial and Planned Regional Commercial zoning district, see also Urban Corridor designation listed under Infill (120-200 hours)
- ii. Parkland dedication ordinance (75-125 hours)
- iii. Review commercial zoning district standards for consistency with Growth Area plans. (40 hours)

Plan 2040 Transportation Related Initiatives

- i. Modify Chapter 23 Subdivision Code with terminology and concepts of the Complete Street Plan. Includes changes to ROW widths, street types, pedestrian and bicycle improvement specifications. (100 – 200 hours)
- ii. Update Zoning Ordinance standards to reflect Complete Street concepts, includes design requirements to match street types aimed at walkability (60 hours, in tandem with Chapter 23)
- iii. Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (Public Works lead department) related updates to planning concepts within Ames Plan 2040 and development standards of zoning (40 hours)

Plan 2040 Plans and Sub-areas Related Initiatives

- i. Ames Urban Fringe Plan Update (Already committed-250 hours Story County, additional time for final plans with Boone County)
- ii. Gateway and beautification plan for rights of way.(Initial report 100 hours)
- iii. Parks Master Plan Update (P&R lead department) as it relates to land use plans and parkland standards (Not budgeted for 2023/23)
- iv. Redirection Areas, select specific areas like Grove Avenue for individual consideration. (50-500 hours)
- v. Infrastructure Project Planning guide for short (1-5 year) and mid-term (5-10 year) priorities in the CIP. (60 hours)

COMMITTED PROJECTS:

Committed projects are either ongoing projects or prior directives of the City Council that are not yet complete. This list includes the Fringe Plan Update and a placeholder for Plan 2040 Initiatives. Attachment A includes a list of 18 projects and their status. Staff deleted an item related to working on the 13th Street Development Site with Elwell Company's due to inactivity. Of the 18 projects, two are related primarily to the Housing Division (Baker Subdivision, CARES/ARP funding). Staff believes four to six of the committed projects will be completed within the next 90 days, such as the Reinvestment District application, TIF Subdivision Development Agreement, Plaza and Public art specifications, and Grove Avenue rezoning. The remaining items are either long term projects or have not yet been started.

NON-COMMITTED PROJECTS:

In addition to the prioritized projects, there is a list of non-prioritized projects as Attachment B. This includes a broad range of topics that have been referred in the past, but not prioritized. Two items on the list are referrals for which City Council received memos dated February 11, 2022 as part of the non-agenda packet.

STAFF COMMENTS:

While the City Council will make the final decision regarding the department's work plan, the staff is offering for your consideration the following projects for the next two years (See Attachment C for phasing schedule):

Plan 2040 Projects Related To Housing

- City-wide assessment of allowing construction of Accessory Dwelling Units with existing homes. *Staff believes this is intended to be an extensive effort of evaluating options and doing public outreach (300-800 hours).*
- Allow for two-family homes (duplexes) within FS-RL and potentially other zoning districts (50-200 hours). Public outreach will be needed if duplexes are allowed in existing areas.
- Update FS-RL and FS-RM zoning to reflect intended densities and building types for Growth Areas (80 hours)
- Modify F-VR zoning for use in Growth Areas (40-150 hours)

NOTE: The first four projects are identified as top priorities in accordance with the City Council's new goals.

Plan 2040 Project Related To Transportation

- Update Chapter 23 Subdivision Code for Complete Streets requirements in conjunction with Public Works (100-200 hours)

Plan 2040 Project Related To Infill/Redevelopment

- Review existing design standards for infill priorities and small multi-family housing options to determine changes should be made. (This project relates to multiple initiatives (150-250 hours)

Two Additional Projects Suggested By Staff That Are Not Part Of Plan 2040

- Develop a Low and Moderate Income Housing Strategy addressing zoning constraints (if any), financial incentives, site acquisition for new construction, locations for existing house acquisition and rehabilitation projects. (150-200 hours)

- Address current language in Zoning Ordinance related to front yard parking when it does not lead to a garage or a side yard. The current language has resulted in inconsistent application to non-conforming properties and driveway widenings. Staff is working through various enforcement concerns related to front yard parking, driveway permits, and rental inspections. A review of the front yard parking standard would be beneficial to effective administration of the standard and provide clarity to a large set of property owners with recent front yard paving for parking. (100-150 hours)

Committed Projects

Staff will also work on the projects that were previously prioritized by the City Council.

Attachment A-Current Priorities

February 2022 Planning and Housing Department Work Plan

Project	Status	Next Steps
Affordable Housing Development Baker Subdivision and LIHTC Project	Selected Prairie Fire as LIHTC Developer, Homebuyer program initiated, infrastructure substantially complete	Awaiting word on State assistance for Prairie Fire LIHTC project. Update planned for February 22, 2022. Beginning homebuyer education classes, preparing for modular home construction and other lot sales.
Downtown subarea planning (parking)	Small apartment exception and overnight parking permits approved.	Consider remote parking changes for residential parking for projects with more than 18 units.
Ames Plan 2040	City Council approval December 14, 2022	City Council to prioritize implementation program March 2022. See separate list of implementation priorities.
Downtown Plaza Development	Completing bid documents.	City Council will approve final plans and specifications Winter 2022.
Downtown Signature Art Piece RFQ	Selection committee reviewing responses.	Present committee recommendation March 2022.
Reinvestment District and Lincoln Way Mixed Use (The Linc)	Urban Renewal Area approved fall 2021. Preparing final application and fiscal analysis with City consultant (Design Innovations) City Council reviewed preliminary concept of Lincoln Way Mixed Use Development November 2021.	City Council approval of Reinvestment District application February 22, 2022. Continue to review LW Mixed Use Development and negotiate development agreement, Spring 2022.
Sign Code Updates	This will be a two-part process as described to City Council in March 2020. Planning and Inspections staff are preparing first set of changes for review focused on definitions, fee structure, loopholes, and legal consistency.	Not initiated.
General zoning text amendments	Ongoing	Administration and application procedures updates planned Spring 2022, includes changes to Zoning Enforcement Officer Role and ZBA support.
Rental conversion incentives	Not started	TBD
Beautification and Gateway Plans - City Council Goal	Not started-Listed as Plan 2040 Implementation Measure	First step would be to provide an inventory and report to Council to refine scope of this task. TBD
CARES Act funding for Rent, Mortgage, and Utility assistance, other ARP funds	Ongoing	Begin administration of Cares Act Round 2 and 3 funding, plan for future use of ARP funds.
Ames Urban Fringe Plan extension and planning update with Story County	Council extended the Fringe Plan 28 E agreement by one year and directed staff to work with the County in 2021 on potential updates.	City Council review proposed scope of update and schedule on February 15, 2022. Anticipate Fringe Plan Update approval in the summer 2022.

Attachment A-Current Priorities

		Desires to engage with Boone County as well with the Fringe Plan update.
Industrial Small Lot TIF Subdivision RFP	One RFP received.	City Council to review proposal and development agreement March 8, 2022.
Grove Avenue Rezoning/Redirection Area	City Council initiated rezoning to RM.	Staff hold property owner outreach meeting, begin rezoning process spring 2022.
Historic Preservation Plan Update	City Council approved amendments.	HPC reviewing recommendation for implementation priorities on February 14 th .. Staff will provide update on February 15, 2022.
Historic Resource Survey Chautauqua Park and Ridgewood Neighborhood Survey	Notice of Grant Award from SHPO.	Accept grant agreement from SHPO. HPC to perform survey with ISU students in 2022/23. Staff assist in admin.
Climate Action Plan	Provide support on technical committee.	TBD
Discuss zoning of West Towne Apartments to allow apartments on ground floor in CCR Zoning.	City Council directed staff to meet with Owner about affordable housing.	Staff has met with the owner and discussing parameters. Report back to Council in February/March 2022.

Non-Prioritized Project List

Date Referred	Description	Comments
1/12/2016	Review demolition criteria in the O-UIE in general, including hardship elements	
1/12/2016	Review demolition criteria in the O-UIE to add criteria for historic preservation and to evaluate sustainability (life cycle evaluation) of demolition vs. rehabilitation.	
1/2020	Review Downtown Façade Program Requirements	Initial request 2016, most recent request by Main Street for façade program changes January 2020. Staff would support adding historic preservation, i.e. window repair, option for contributing buildings. Additional changes require discussion by City Council.
5/16/2017	Review outdoor sales standards for commercial areas. This includes fireworks and other outdoor display.	Would also address food truck locations.
10/16/2018	Begin working with neighborhood associations to develop recommendations for improving the Neighborhood Association program.	Staff has worked on this incrementally as time permits, no formal proposal at this time
2/12/2019	Referred to staff for a memo the letter from Chuck Winkleblack concerning two billboards on the two- block stretch on the north side of Lincoln Way between Clark and Kellogg	Awaiting Legal review of issues.
5/28/2019	Review zoning requirements for landscaping on private property to determine if they are compatible with CPTED principles.	

5/14/2019	Hold off any final decision regarding plaza in Campustown until final decision is made regarding relocating Fire Station #2 and completion of Welch improvements.	On hold- Recommend delete.
7/23/2019	Request to respond to Kurt Friedrich's letter for the Council to consider greater incentives for infrastructure for residential developments.	Staff researching comparable Cities and reviewing with City Manager
10/8/2019	Requested staff memo regarding zoning recommendation for the lot west of old KFC lot on LW.	No change needed for existing uses. Recommend delete.
2/25/2020	Letter from Justin Dodge on Champlin Property roadway improvement requirements and costs	Annexation is currently tabled by Council. Property has been sold by the Champlin family. Not relevant any longer-Remove.
5/11/2021	Request by CAA to consider broad changes to façade grant program for Campustown	Staff met to discuss with CAA and highlight priorities. CAA is no longer active. Staff supports minor modifications to application requirements as a rolling submittal process. Staff would need further direction from Council to address any other issues about the program standards or funding that were previously identified by CAA.
1/11/2022	Request for text amendment to flag lots for industrial zoned properties.	Memo provided to City Council on 2-11-22.
1/25/2022	Request for creating a URA in support of affordable housing by the Annex Group within the Hayden's Preserve development at Hyde/190 th Street	Memo provided to City Council on 2-11-22.

