Council Communication

Department: Community Development Case/Project No.: URN-24-002	Ordinance No.: Resolution No.: 24-	City Council: 8-12-2024 Planning Commission: 8-13-2024 P.H. and First Reading: 9-09-2024

Subject/Title

Resolution determining an area of the city to be an economic development area, and that the rehabilitation, conservation, redevelopment, development, or a combination thereof, of such area is necessary in the interest of the public health, safety or welfare of the residents of the city; designating such area as appropriate for urban renewal projects; and adopting the East Manawa Drive Housing Urban Renewal Plan

Location

Generally located south of Veteran's Memorial Highway and West of Interstate-29

Background/Discussion

Background

In 2022, the City purchased 93.17 acres located on E. Manawa Drive using ARPA funds of $4,190,000. Conceptual plans show a range from 600 to 900 housing units on the property depending on design and developer selection. The City will be selecting a developer for the site in the near future. The City is applying for an IEDA grant for up to $8 million. These funds would be used on the south corridor of the property to help with infrastructure cost and construction of up to 40 single family housing units. Infrastructure improvements on the south corridor of the property will begin in late 2024. It has been determined the proposed area meets the definition of "economic development area." This determination is based on Chapter 403.17 of the Iowa Code.

In order to invoke its urban renewal powers, the City Council must agree to designate the subject property an Urban Renewal Area, adopt an Urban Renewal Plan and negotiate a development agreement with the Developer. Assistance in the form of an urban renewal project area, conforming to the Section 403 of Iowa Code, is necessary to acquire land; improve regulatory control; improve public infrastructure and facilities; and to allow for private development of vacant land.

Discussion

On July 22, 2024, the City Council passed a resolution of necessity, which directed staff to initiate the process of creating the East Manawa Drive Residential Urban Renewal Plan and Area. This resolution establishes the following timeframe:

8-13-2024	City Planning Commission hearing and review
8-20-2024	Consultation meeting to be held with other taxing jurisdictions
9-09-2024	City Council public hearing on the proposed urban renewal plan

Iowa statutes require the City Planning Commission to review the plan for conformity to the comprehensive plan and to forward a recommendation to City Council prior to the public hearing. An urban renewal plan conforming to the requirements of Chapter 403 of the Iowa Code has been prepared and is attached for your review.

The East Manawa Drive Residential Urban Renewal Area is being designated as an economic development area that is appropriate for the construction of low and moderate income (LMI) housing and the provision of public improvements related to housing and residential development conforming to Chapter 403.17 of the Iowa Code. Designation is necessary to assist and promote local commercial enterprises to strengthen and revitalize the economy. Tax Increment Financing (TIF) will be utilized to provide assistance to the City for the infrastructure costs that will be incurred.

Staff Recommendation

The Community Development Department recommends concurrence that the East Manawa Drive Residential Urban Renewal Plan and Area is in conformity with the *Bluffs Tomorrow: 2030 Comprehensive Plan*.

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Attachments

Attachment 1 - East Manawa Drive Residential Urban Renewal Area Plan
Attachment 2 - Legal Description

Submitted by: Courtney Harter, Director of Community Development