Council Communication

Department: Community Development Case No.: URV-21-010 Applicant: Housing & Economic Development	Ordinance No.:	Resolution of Intent: 8/9/2021 Planning Commission: 8/10/2021 Public Hearing & First Reading: 9/13/2021 Second Reading: 9/27/2021 Third Reading: Request to Waive

Subject/Title

Establishment of the Mid-America Urban Revitalization Area.

Location

Generally located on approximately 285 acres of land lying southwest of S 35th Street and north of 23rd Avenue and land lying south of 23rd Avenue, west of S 24th Street, and north and west of Mid-America Drive.

Background/Discussion

Background

Chapter 404 of the Iowa Code authorizes a City to designate an area as an urban revitalization area. Improvements to qualified real estate within designated areas may then be eligible to receive a total or partial exemption from property taxes for a specified number of years. The exemptions are intended to stimulate private investment by reducing the tax increase that would normally result from making improvements to real estate property.

Urban revitalization tax abatement incentives can apply to residential, commercial and industrial development. Both new construction on vacant or unimproved land and rehabilitation of existing structures are eligible for tax abatement.

On November 22, 2004, the Council Bluffs City Council adopted Ordinance No. 5651, which established the MARCC Urban Revitalization Area. Subsequent to the completion of the Mid-America Center, Ordinance No. 5936 was adopted by Council repealing Ordinance No. 5651. The proposed Mid-America Urban Revitalization Area will include land that was located in the former MARCC Urban Revitalization Area. The newly proposed Mid-America Urban Revitalization Plan is intended to incentivize the redevelopment of land that remains vacant around the Mid-America Center.

Staff has prepared an Urban Revitalization Plan in accordance with Section 404.2 of the Iowa Code and has scheduled the matter for City Council consideration. The Mid-America Urban Revitalization Area will consist of approximately 285 acres.

Discussion

Iowa Code permits the City to establish urban revitalization areas which satisfy one of the five conditions outlined in Section 404.1. Staff believes this project meets the criteria under 404.1.4. Section 404.1.4 discusses an area, which is appropriate as an economic development area as defined in section 403.17. Section 403.17 states an economic development area means an area of a municipality designated by the local governing body as appropriate for commercial and industrial enterprises.

On August 9, 2021, City Council approved Resolution 21-233 which directed staff to initiate the process of creating the Mid-America Urban Revitalization Plan and Area. This resolution set

September 13, 2021 as the date of the public hearing.

This matter was brought before the City Planning Commission at their August 10, 2021 meeting. The Commission found the following: 1) That the proposed Mid-America Urban Revitalization Plan furthers the goals of the City's *Bluffs Tomorrow: 2030 Plan*, which is the general plan for the development of the City of Council Bluffs; and 2) That the Mid-America Urban Revitalization Area is an area appropriate for urban revitalization as specified in Section 404.1.4 which discusses areas that are appropriate for economic development as defined by Section 403.17.

Property owners were notified and no written correspondence was received by the Community Development Department either in support or against the proposed plan. Concurrent with the adoption of an urban revitalization plan, an ordinance establishing the urban revitalization area can be considered. Upon adoption of the area and approval of an ordinance, the City is permitted to grant tax abatement to qualified projects.

Staff Recommendation

The Community Development Department recommends approval of the Mid-America Urban Revitalization Plan and Area and 1st consideration of the ordinance.

Planning Commission Public Hearing

Staff speakers for the request:

1. Christopher Gibbons, Planning Manager, City of Council Bluffs

Speakers in favor:

1. John Jerkovich, 535 West Broadway, Suite 100, Council Bluffs, IA 51503

Speakers in opposition: None

Planning Commission Recommendation

The Planning Commission recommended approval of the Mid-America Urban Revitalization Plan and Area.

Vote: 10-0 (1 absent)

AYE – Bass, Danielsen, Halm, Haner, Hutcheson, Rater, Rew, Scott, and Stroebele
NAY – None
ABSTAIN – None
ABSENT – Van Houten

Motion: Carried

Attachments

A) Boundary Map
B) Mid-America Urban Revitalization Plan

Prepared by: Tiffany Schmitt, Community Development Technician, Community Development Department
Approved by: Courtney Harter, Housing & Economic Development Manager, Community Development Department