



Legislation Text

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TO: Members of the Economic Development Authority

FROM: Nate Carlson, Economic Development Coordinator
Chris Heineman, Community Planning & Development Director

Northwest Area Update

In 2017, the City Council initiated a comprehensive Strategic Planning process resulting in six strategic priorities for 2018-2020. One of these strategic priorities was economic development which included a desired outcome of expanded commercial and industrial tax base. One of the strategic initiatives under this desired outcome is to develop a new growth plan and increase the availability of commercial and industrial land. This relates to building opportunities for both business expansion and new business attraction.

In January, Mayor Pownell established a Process Advisory Committee and nominated representatives from the City Council, Planning Commission, Economic Development Authority, Housing & Redevelopment Authority, and other targeted stakeholders to form the Northwest Area Process Advisory Committee (PAC). The City Council approved the establishment of this committee at the January 16 Council meeting.

The PAC is tasked with reviewing the history of the planning process for the Northwest Area and exploring options for consulting services to facilitate working toward a shared vision for this area. The PAC will not have any responsibilities beyond exploring the process, determining who may be appropriate to assist in that process review, and making that recommendation to the City Council.

The PAC includes the following representatives:

- Mayor Rhonda Pownell, Committee Chair (EDA, City Council)
- Jessica Peterson-White (Economic Development Authority, City Council)
- Greg Colby (City Council)
- Brent Nystrom (Housing & Redevelopment Authority)
- Tracy Davis Heisler (Planning Commission)
- Will Schroeer (Planning Commission)
- Betsey Buckheit (Planning Commission)
- Fred Rogers (Carleton College & Hospital Board)
- Jan Hanson (St. Olaf College)

St. Olaf owns a significant amount of property in the contiguous agricultural areas and within the City limits. These are identified in their adopted Framework Plan as potential future non-college

development areas. St. Olaf College Vice President and Chief Financial Officer Jan Hanson was included as a strategic property owner and key stakeholder. Carleton College Vice President and Treasurer Fred Rogers was included as a representative of Carleton College and the Northfield Hospital Board of Directors.

At the March 19 meeting, the Northwest Area Process Advisory Committee outlined the proposed process to solicit and review consultants and recommend a consultant to the City Council. It was also proposed that one additional EDA member be invited to participate in the Northwest Area Process Advisory Committee.

As of the April 3 Council Meeting, the recommendation provided by the PAC was approved by City Council with a 7-0 vote. The next steps include the recruitment and selection of a consultant through an RFP process. This RFP was distributed on Friday, April 20. Proposals are due by end of business day on Friday, May 11.

FINANCIAL IMPACTS:

There are limited funds available for studies. The EDA Other Projects fund has been discussed as a potential source for consultant fees related to this process.

TENTATIVE TIMELINES:

- Process Advisory Committee established - January 16, 2018
- Selection of a consultant/facilitator - May 31, 2018
- City Council, EDA and Planning Commission process completed - July 31, 2018
- Public review completed - September 30, 2018
- City Council approval of shared vision - October 16, 2018