



Legislation Text

File #: 18-289, **Version:** 1

DATE: May 24, 2018

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)
- Britt Ackerman (EDA)
- 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 Vice President and CFO 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 as a member of 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.

The Process Advisory Committee recommendation was approved by City Council with a 7-0 vote at the April 3 City Council meeting. The next steps include the recruitment and selection of a consultant through an RFP process. This RFP was distributed on Friday, April 20 and proposals were due on Friday, May 11.

Staff received proposals from two consultants and the PAC will meet on May 21 to review and discuss the proposals. The PAC scored the proposals prior to their meeting. If the PAC comes to a final decision, the EDA will be presented with a recommendation for a consultant and a request for funding. The EDA may take action to approve the recommendation and funding request.

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. This budget line item currently has \$41,500 available.

TENTATIVE TIMELINES:

- Process Advisory Committee established - January 16, 2018
- Selection of a consultant by City Council - June 5, 2018
- City Council / EDA / Planning Commission planning process - June/July, 2018
- Public review completed - September 30, 2018
- City Council approval of shared vision - October 16, 2018