

*Past, Present,  
Future*

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*Vision...Mission...  
Values...*

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*Listen, Learn, &  
LEAD*

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*Evaluation...  
Planning...  
Positioning...  
Priorities...*

*Listen, Learn & DO*

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- *Housing*
- *Sustainability*
- *Streetscape*

*Implementation*

Windsor Heights Strategic Planning  
January 16, 2010  
Final Report

## REVIEW OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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### A. Zip Code Change

### B. Partnerships

1. Mayor appointed Vice Chair of Metro Advisory Council
2. Enhanced working relationship with DM Partnership; improved DC trip participation
3. Creation of Windsor Heights Chamber
4. Creation of Windsor Heights section in Des Moines Register
5. Cultivated working relationships with realty community
6. Enhanced working relationship with Representative Boswell and staff
7. Participant/founding member of metro joint salt storage facility
8. Participant/member of WH/Urbandale/Clive joint fire training facility
9. Secured Polk County assistance for parks projects
10. Created Windsor Heights/Urbandale food pantry
11. City leaders (elected and staff) in key roles in region with Polk County EMS, Polk County Fire Chiefs, Fire Academy, Traffic Safety Task Force, and ICMA leadership
12. Development leadership on projects with 3E, QT, and Clive Elementary
13. Creek cleanup with Sam's /Wal-Mart/QT
14. Architecture/Design program for Colby Park with 6<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> graders at Cowles School

### C. Finance

1. Successful refinancing of city bonds; secured/maintained highest bond rating received in years
2. Successful procurement of state and federal grants
3. Library assessments reduced by 1/3
4. Adopted green best practices; instituted for Hickman Road
5. Adopted economic development grant program – TIF, in-kind assistance, e.g. demolition

*D. Operations*

1. Hired new police chief; reorganized department
2. Transfer partnership from MINE to DEA
3. Hired new public works director; instituted enhanced departmental processes
4. Hired new Fire Chief and added in-house Fire/EMS staff
5. Enhanced information technology capacities – software systems and hardware
6. Renovated police department/city hall facility
7. Centralized city hall customer service
8. Addressed audit concerns by separating duties, accomplished through City Hall physical renovation
9. Enhanced web presence – website, Facebook, Twitter, email newsletter listserve; municipal code and council packets placed on website
10. Instituted equipment modernization program
11. Instituted staff training program

*E. Citizen Communications*

1. Implemented citizen survey on a regular schedule
2. Enhanced monthly citizen newsletter, citizen on all appointed committees, created marketing committee that developed city's branding program
3. Created Windsor Heights Living Magazine pub insert
4. Creation of Youth Council
5. Instituted Council-Meetings-in-the-Street (Takin' It To The Streets)
6. Instituted Council Coffees (Community Coffee Club)
7. Mayor instituted regular office hours

*F. Housing*

1. Adopted rental housing code ordinance; actively enforcing
2. Development of housing rehabilitation program
3. Instituted in-house housing/building inspection program

*G. Streetscaping / Urban Design*

1. Adopted and implemented streetscaping standards for both new development and rehabilitation/redevelopment of structures

*H. Projects, Completed and/or Commenced*

1. Lions Park, 2007
2. Town Center, Phases 1 & 2 (tax base enhancement)
3. Property acquisition on Hickman Road (reduction of blight/crime)
4. Missing Link trail
5. Renovation of Colby Park
6. Drainage improvements completed
7. Sound barriers on 235 @ 68<sup>th</sup> / 69<sup>th</sup>
8. Plan approved for stormwater intakes, water main replacement and sanitary sewer improvements
9. Adopted pavement management plan

*I. Awards & Recognition*

1. Received Distinguished Budget Presentation award from GFOA, 2007
2. Received American Crown Community award, 2002; Town Center (American City & County Crown Communities Awards program)
3. Finalist in All-American City competition
4. Received ICMA Excellence award for Community Sustainability, 2006
5. Fire Department recognized in national publication

## Teamwork Agreements

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1. We agree to disagree, and unite to serve.
2. We pledge to engage in active listening, by listening to the whole message of another before responding.
3. We pledge to trust, honor, and respect our oath of office and each other.
4. We engage in open and honest intentions and behaviors.
5. We say what we do, and do what we say.
6. We practice courtesy at all times.
7. We agree to make decisions for the good of Windsor Heights, not for personal gain.
8. We strive for excellence.
9. We support and serve Windsor Heights by always keeping the big picture top-of-mind.
10. We choose to consider all viewpoints, and then we make the best possible decision.
11. We assume the best in each other and believe that each of us acts with pure and good intentions.
12. We value and respect the professional experience of each other, consider the historical perspective, while welcoming new ideas.

## Policy Agreements

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1. Engage a more active **housing** program.
2. Plan and implement a city-wide **community sustainability** plan.
3. Study and implement a **shared public works** service/equipment program.
4. More **citizen access** to city council.
5. Plan and implement a program for a **walkable** community.
6. Develop a voluntary **payment-in-lieu-of-taxes** (PILOT) program.
7. Increase the city's grantmaking and participation in the **Safe Routes to School** program.
8. Develop a structured program of **best management practices** and regularly publish results.
9. Institute committee meeting participation by teleconference.
10. Re-assess the **street re-surfacing** program annually.
11. Apply **streetscape design standards** city-wide.
12. Develop written policy for **public works assistance** to citizens with special need.

## Short-Term Strategic Priorities (next two years)

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1. Expand city's housing program.  
Action Steps:
  - a. Meet with Polk County officials (Angela Connolly, Holly Olson, Sheila Lumley) to identify specific program improvements that can be made with county assistance.
  - b. Identify assistance incentives for owner occupied and rental housing units.
  - c. Create a 'flip' program, possibly with assistance from the Neighborhood Finance Corporation.
  - d. Inventory and study housing units that have been retrofitted for non-residential use.
  - e. Evaluate what can legally be done to address residential homes being used as 'group' homes.
  
2. Develop a green initiatives / community sustainability plan.  
Action Steps:
  - a. Create a study committee made up of council member(s)/staff/citizens to develop plan and make recommendations to city council. Engage the community development committee in this initiative.
  - b. Incorporate city-wide design standards into this initiative.
  - c. Create a reputation for "being green."
  
3. Implement best management practices program.  
Action Steps:
  - a. Identify best practices
  - b. Adopt/Incorporate practices
  - c. Develop publicity measures, e.g. monthly newsletter
  
4. Hickman Road Redevelopment Project  
Action Steps:
  - a. Streetscaping – continue review, finalize funding sources, and implement.
  - b. City-owned properties – continue demolition, develop vision and prepare RFP for development.
  - c. Construction project-continue and finalize roadway improvements.

5. Enhance electronic committee meeting participation.  
Action Steps:
  - a. Study and implement internet tools to enable greater participation.
  
6. Increase citizen access to city council.  
Action Steps:
  - a. Conduct Survey Monkey to gauge citizen preferences for Community Coffee Club time.
  - b. Use “Takin’ It To The Streets” again
  - c. Publicize availability of council members
  
7. Change start-time of council meetings. Council action at this meeting: For one year, change meeting time to 6:00 pm starting February 1.  
Action Steps:
  - a. Reevaluate in one year.
  
8. Evaluate condition of the sanitary sewer system.  
Action Steps:
  - a. Convene study session(s) to identify city-wide problems, costs, and solutions.
  - d. Conduct more frequent examination of problem areas throughout the city.
  
9. Develop a Walkable Community Strategy.  
Action Steps:
  - a. Assess and develop strategy for access and connection to parks, bike trails and Town Center.
  - b. Study financing alternatives for sidewalk construction (should homeowners pay?) and incorporate into the walkable community program study.
  - c. Identify funding and develop and execute construction documents to complete sidewalk on 63<sup>rd</sup> Street.
  
10. Adopt design standards for the entire City.  
Action Steps:
  - a. Review current standards with Planning and Zoning Commission.
  - b. Incorporate best sustainability practices and standards.
  - d. Submit P&Z recommendations for Council consideration.

11. Sign(s) for Lions Park.

Action Steps:

- a. Develop and construct directional and identification signs for Lions Park.
- b. Identify parking for Lions Park.

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Mid-Term Strategic Priorities (three to five years)

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1. Develop a city hall renovation plan.

Action Steps:

- a. Review existing plan.
- b. Hire consultant to conduct space needs analysis. Identify all improvement alternatives including vertical expansion.
- c. Conduct parking study.
- d. Develop shovel ready plan.

2. Develop a voluntary payment-in-lieu-of-taxes (PILOT) program.

Action Steps:

- a. Update inventory of non-profit organizations.
- b. Study what other cities have instituted.
- c. Develop ordinance for review and possible adoption.

## Long-Term Strategic Priorities (five to seven years)

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1. Bury power lines.

Action Steps:

- a. Create task force/staff team.
- b. Hire consultant to conduct feasibility study; cost/benefit analysis that would include
  - i. Financing alternatives
  - ii. Impact on property owners/residents
  - iii. Maximizing street paving opportunities.
  - iv. Any redevelopment includes burying power lines.
- c. Identify / implement policy and development standards.