



THE INGERSOLL AVENUE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

CHAPTER 5 ■ IMPLEMENTATION

The Ingersoll Avenue Improvement Plan outlines an ambitious development and physical improvement program for the corridor’s future. This chapter sets forth a phased approach to implementing the comprehensive improvement program presented in Chapter 4.

PHASING STRATEGY

This section presents the Concept Plan’s recommendations, indicating the priority of each plan element and the key players. These recommendations include three types of efforts:

Policies refer to continuing efforts over a prolonged period to implement the elements of the Plan. In some cases, policies include specific regulatory or administrative actions.

Action Items include specific efforts or accomplishments by the community.

Capital Investments include public capital projects that will implement features of the Plan.

Each recommendation is listed by segment of the corridor. In addition, a time frame for implementing recommendations is indicated. Some recommendations require ongoing implementation. Short-term recommendations should be implemented within the next two years, medium-term within three to five years, and long-term within five to ten years. The implementation strategy in the next section suggests priorities for a “pilot project” along the corridor.

NO.	SEGMENT	ACTION	PLAYERS	TYPE	SHORT	MEDIUM	LONG	ONGOING
1	Entire Corridor	Develop private corridor maintenance program for routine maintenance of landscaping along entire corridor.	Property owners	Action	X			X
2	Entire Corridor	Separate storm and sanitary sewer systems.	City, WRA, Bus. Assoc.	Capital		X	X	
3	Entire Corridor	Plant overstory street trees along the north side of Ingersoll in specified locations and understory trees and ground plantings along the south side of Ingersoll in the area between the sidewalk and curb.	City, Bus. Assoc., property owners	Action	X			X
4	Entire Corridor	Add new vehicular and pedestrian lights along the north side of Ingersoll in specified locations.	City, Bus. Assoc., property owners	Capital		X		
5	Entire Corridor	Revise zoning regulations to require building setbacks preserve the area's character.	City, Bus. Assoc.	Policy	X			
6	Entire Corridor	Revise sign regulations to allow for artistic signage that contributes positively to the area's character.	City	Policy	X			
7	Entire Corridor	Add "shared lane" signage and repeated painting of the lane surface to better accommodate bicycle traffic.	City	Capital	X			
8	17th to 19th	Simplify vehicular circulation at 17th and Ingersoll by eliminating median and extend south side sidewalk to the north. Construct 2 traffic lanes in each direction on Ingersoll plus left-turn lanes.	City	Capital			X	
9	17th to 19th	Extend off-street bike trail on north side of street between M.L. King and 15th.	City	Capital		X		
10	17th to 19th	Create a plaza on the southwest corner of 17th and Ingersoll to signify the gateway into downtown.	City, property owners, Bus. Assoc.	Capital		X		
11	17th to 19th	Redevelop the block between 17th and 18th on the south side of Ingersoll (Meadow Gold Dairy site) with mixed uses and adequate street presence.	City, property owners	Action			X	
12	17th to 19th	Provide public art at southwest corner of 17th and Ingersoll.	City, property owners	Action			X	
13	19th to 22nd	Redevelop the block between 19th and M.L. King (Thompson Trust site) with mixed uses and an internal focus. Office buildings would front Ingersoll and apartments would be located to the north. Building facades along Ingersoll should adhere to NPC district standards.	City, property owners	Policy	X			
14	19th to 22nd	Develop apartments similar to the Woodland Avenue Brickstones at 1901-1925 High Street.	City, property owners	Policy	X			
15	19th to 22nd	Enhance parking lot in southwest corner of Chamberlain Park with landscaping and provide a pedestrian link to Ingersoll west of M.L. King.	City, Woodland Heights Neigh.	Capital		X		
16	19th to 22nd	Redesign Mediacom parking lot to provide more spaces and improved circulation.	property owners	Action	X			

NO.	SEGMENT	ACTION	PLAYERS	TYPE	SHORT	MEDIUM	LONG	ONGOING
17	19th to 22nd	Redevelop the area west of M.L. King between Ingersoll and High (Iowa Health Systems, Stew Hansen, First Auto Acceptance sites) with commercial and office uses fronting Ingersoll and townhouses fronting High Street.	City, property owners	Policy	X			
18	19th to 22nd	Improve screening between Mediacom parking lot and High Street.	property owners	Action	X			
19	22nd to 26th	Add a pedestrian-actuated mid-block traffic signal in 2500 block. Location of a bus stop should be coordinated with the signal.	City, Bus. Assoc., property owners	Capital		X		
20	22nd to 26th	Provide public art on south side of Ingersoll in 2300 block.	City, Bus. Assoc., property owners	Action		X		
21	22nd to 26th	Provide public art at 2510 and 2525 Ingersoll.	City, Bus. Assoc., property owners	Action		X		
22	26th to 29th	Expand angle parking on north side of street in the 2700 and 2800 blocks of Ingersoll and 500 and 540 blocks of 28th Street.	City, property owners	Capital		X		
23	26th to 29th	Develop green space at 2701 Ingersoll (Citgo gas station) if site becomes available.	City, Bus. Assoc., property owners	Capital			X	
24	26th to 29th	Reconfigure access and parking at 2603 Ingersoll (Yacht Club).	property owners	Action		X		
25	26th to 29th	Add bulb-outs at intersection of 28th and Ingersoll.	City	Capital		X		
26	26th to 29th	Improve circulation in parking area on north side in 2800 block by creating a shared parking lot.	property owners	Action	X			
27	26th to 29th	Improve screening between Linden Street and parking lots.	City, property owners	Capital		X		
28	26th to 29th	Provide public art at intersection of 28th and Ingersoll and at 2843 Ingersoll (Former Walgreen's).	City, Bus. Assoc., property owners	Action		X		
29	29th to Crescent	Add a pedestrian-actuated mid-block traffic signal in 2900 block.	City, Bus Assoc.	Capital		X		
30	29th to Crescent	Establish on-street angle parking on south side of Ingersoll on 2900 block and 3100 block.	City, property owners	Capital		X		
31	29th to Crescent	Redesign parking area at 3100-3124 Ingersoll (Zimm's).	City, property owners	Policy, Action	X			
32	29th to Crescent	Improve parking lot at 3200 Ingersoll (Subway).	City, property owners	Policy, Action	X			
33	29th to Crescent	Provide public art at 2911 Ingersoll and 3030 Ingersoll.	City, Bus. Assoc., property owners	Action		X		
34	Crescent to 35th	Add a pedestrian-actuated mid-block traffic signal in 3300 block. Location of a bus stop should be coordinated with the signal.	City, Bus. Assoc., property owners	Capital		X		

NO.	SEGMENT	ACTION	PLAYERS	TYPE	SHORT	MEDIUM	LONG	ONGOING
35	Crescent to 35th	Construct new Dahl's store behind existing store with parking lot in front and truck access in southeast corner. Provide adequate pedestrian connections between sidewalk and building.	property owners	Action			X	
36	Crescent to 35th	Provide public art and small plaza on northeast corner of 35th and Ingersoll.	City, Bus. Assoc., property owners	Capital		X		
37	35th to 39th	If site becomes available at 3625 Ingersoll (Phillips 66 gas station), demolish building at 3701 Ingersoll and realign intersection of 37th and Ingersoll to provide green space.	City, Bus. Assoc., property owners	Capital			X	
38	35th to 39th	Expand angle parking on north side of street in the 3600 and 3700 blocks.	City, property owners	Capital		X		
39	35th to 39th	Redesign parking lot at 3730-3804 Ingersoll (Bruegger's, Bauder's).	property owners	Action	X			
40	36th to 39th	Provide public art at 3730 Ingersoll.	City, Bus. Assoc., property owners	Action		X		
41	35th to 39th	Add a pedestrian-actuated mid-block traffic signal in 3600 block.	City, Bus. Assoc., property owners	Capital		X		
42	39th to 42nd	Develop landscaped median on Ingersoll west of 42nd Street.	City	Capital		X		
43	39th to 42nd	Provide public art on northeast and southeast corners of intersection of 42nd and Ingersoll and in median west of 42nd.	City, Bus. Assoc., property owners	Capital		X		

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

The preceding section lays out a multi-year recommended implementation schedule for improvement of Ingersoll Avenue. Many questions arise when contemplating implementation of this plan, perhaps the most significant relating to funding sources. Most of the improvement program implementation components will rely on the neighborhood and business association groups to initiate and support. However, certain improvements are currently underway or planned by the City of Des Moines. Those projects currently underway by the City include the following:

- *M.L. King Jr. Parkway Project.* As a part of the M.L. King Jr. Parkway construction project, several improvements listed on the Implementation Table are currently underway. These include completion of intersection improvements at Ingersoll and extension of the bike trail along the north side of Ingersoll east to 15th Street. An upgrading of street lights is included along the bike trail extension.
- *Interstate 235 Stormwater Improvements.* The M.L. King improvements included the upgrading of the storm sewer along the ML King right-of-way south to the Des Moines River. This upgraded storm sewer will ultimately serve, in addition to

the adjoining neighborhood, as the drainage outlet for the rebuilt I-235. New east-west storm sewer trunk lines will be installed along the alignment of High Street to convey this interstate drainage to the new M.L. King sewer. These new storm sewers will allow the abandonment of existing storm sewers and easements mid-block on both sides of M.L. King Parkway, removing that impediment to development on these blocks. Although completion of these sewers is some years off, the new trunk line will also allow for the ultimate separation of sanitary and storm sewers along Ingersoll, thereby addressing a fundamental infrastructure issue along the corridor.

A fundamental question regarding implementation is “How are these proposals to be encouraged? Who is going to push these projects? How is the maintenance to be handled?” The answer to these questions is that the Ingersoll Business Association must step forward and take the leadership role if the plan is to be implemented. Step One is to use this plan to generate interest and support for the Business Association among Ingersoll Avenue businesspeople and property owners. Strengthening the Association through a membership and fund drive is fundamental to undertaking plan implementation.

In order to compete in today’s competitive commercial environment, traditional business districts have found that they need to begin to function with some of the management attributes of the suburban mall. They need, for example, to better coordinate their business hours and marketing efforts. They need to deal collectively with maintenance of the public areas. This is, of course, much more difficult along a business corridor comprised of separate ownership properties than in a mall. Nonetheless, to some extent this strengthening of the role of the Business Association is already occurring. However, the Ingersoll Business Association must redouble efforts to strengthen their organization, accept these district management responsibilities, and take the leadership role in implementing the improvement plan.

One approach to the raising of funds to undertake these responsibilities is through the establishment of a Business Improvement District, in Iowa called a Self-Supported Municipal Improvement District (SSMID). SSMID’s are essentially self-taxing districts that raise funds to improve the district through an agreed upon increase to the property tax rate. While SSMID’s are described in more detail below, it should be pointed out here that most of the recommended implementation components can be funded through the SSMID approach.

With most of the implementation projects requiring neighborhood initiation and support, there is need for a more detailed short-term implementation strategy. The following is a recommended short-term strategy for proceeding with implementation of this plan.

1. Address Ingersoll public space maintenance issues.

The Ingersoll District must show that it “has its act together” before public support for desired improvements can be expected. The space between the street curb and the sidewalk is public property and is the adjacent property owner’s responsibility to maintain. Most property owners along the district do a fine job of maintaining this area. However, a few do not and those few properties can have a significant impact on perceptions of the district. The Ingersoll Business Association should establish maintenance standards for this public area along the corridor (e.g. maintain grass height of no more than 3 inches;

trim around utility poles; etc.). These standards should then be conveyed to all businesses and property owners with the intent to achieve compliance with these standards through peer pressure. However, if these efforts do not succeed, the Association must be prepared to deal with the problem directly. A single worker with a weedeater walking along the corridor once a week could deal with the overgrown weed problem around the utility poles pretty effectively.

2. Initiate private parking improvements.

This plan identifies four locations where the parking situation can be substantially improved through better coordination and cooperation in the arrangement of private off-street parking. Once again, it is important to show the City policy makers that the District is dealing with its private parking issues before asking the public to support on-street parking improvements. Perhaps the most important, and promising, potential private parking improvement area is north side of Ingersoll, 28th Street to 29th Street. The Association should take the lead in bringing these property owners together to accomplish this parking lot improvement that will benefit all parties and demonstrate the Business Association's ability to accomplish district improvement goals.

3. Initiate the Ingersoll Landscaping Project.

This plan proposes a corridor landscaping concept and identifies high priority areas for its implementation. The Association should evaluate these high priority areas, select one as an initial "pilot project" and install the landscaping improvements. Factors in selecting the pilot project area should include condition of the adjacent buildings and property, business owner or property owner interest and contribution, and likely impact on perceptions of the corridor. This initiative, combined with the improvement of landscape maintenance under #1 above, can be implemented as early as this summer and could have a significant impact on perceptions of district appearance and activism.

4. Undertake Pedestrian Crosswalk Project: Bulb-out, traffic signal, streetscape and Art Display.

This plan recommends several locations for future pedestrian-activated crosswalks to enhance the pedestrian environment and calm traffic. Once again, the association should determine which location, if constructed, would deliver the most "bang for the buck" in terms of positive impacts on the district. Then, all of the major components of the plan, including sidewalk reconfiguration, traffic light, streetscape and art display should be combined into a single project to be pushed by the Business and Neighborhood Associations. While design concepts are provided in this plan, additional detailed landscape architecture design development and construction specifications would be required to proceed with this project.

5. Revise Zoning.

Suggestions are made herein for the minor amendment of the Neighborhood Pedestrian Commercial zoning to better reflect the character of Ingersoll Avenue. The Business and Neighborhood Association should initiate discussions with the City to proceed with these amendments. While not major, these amendments nonetheless can significantly affect the appearance of any new developments proposed for the district.

FINANCING STRATEGIES

As already mentioned, a strong Ingersoll Business Association must step forward to push the proposed improvement projects. This includes raising private funds to help pay for the initiatives. Potential private and public funding sources include:

Self-Supported Municipal Improvement District. Under Chapter 386.2 of the Iowa Code, cities are allowed to create special taxing districts in commercial or industrial zones for the purpose of funding district improvements. Key elements of the designation process include:

- Petition must have the signatures of at least twenty-five percent of all owners of property within the proposed district.
- Petition must include a statement of the maximum rate of tax that may be imposed upon property within the district. This maximum tax rate may be stated in terms of separate maximum rates for the debt service tax, the capital improvement fund tax, and the operation tax, or in terms of a maximum combined rate for all three.
- Petition is submitted to City Council. City Council refers matter to Plan and Zoning Commission, who make recommendations back to Council.
- Council receives report from P&Z, sets public hearing, and notifies each property owner in district by certified mail.
- Adoption of ordinance establishing district requires affirmative vote of three-fourths of the City Council (6 votes out of 7). However, if 25% of property owners, owning 25% of property value in district object, approval requires unanimous vote of Council.
- The petition shall be withdrawn upon receipt of signatures of 40% of the owners or the owners of 40% of the assessed value in objection to the establishment of the district.

The designation of a SSMID on Ingersoll Avenue would establish a source of funds for undertaking the improvement of the district. Of course, a successful designation process requires considerable marketing of the concept, as there will likely be significant opposition to the imposition of additional tax burden on the property owners. Nonetheless, this tool has been widely used around the country to fund district improvements. In Des Moines, the Sherman Hill historic lighting project

was funded by means of a SSMID, historic districts being the one exception to the requirement that districts be zoned commercial or industrial.

Tax Increment Financing. TIF uses added tax revenues created by new development or redevelopment projects to finance improvements related to those projects. While most of the corridor is stable and significant redevelopment is not anticipated, there are two exceptions. First, the property on both sides of M.L. King Parkway is likely to develop within the next couple of years. The redevelopment of the Dahl's site at 35th Street into a new, larger Dahl's store is the second exception. Both of these developments will be significant and could add substantially to a TIF pool. In addition, added tax value from upgrading of existing properties or scattered redevelopment would also add to the pool of funds.

However, the corridor is currently designated as an Urban Revitalization District, making tax abatement available for commercial and residential development. Although tax abatement can be used for the first several years of a development's existence, TIF can be used after the tax abatement expires, providing a reliable source of financing for capital improvement projects along the corridor. The TIF designation process is essentially the same as designation for Urban Renewal and requires that the area designation be justified either under state "slum and blight" or "economic development" criteria.

Federal Transportation "Enhancement" Funds. A new federal transportation funding law, called TEA 21 is currently under debate in Washington. As is past funding bills, a portion of the funds will likely be earmarked for "transportation enhancements", including trails, historic preservation and streetscape and beautification improvements. These funds are administered regionally through the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization and while competition for allocation of funds is intense, an Ingersoll Avenue streetscape/pedestrian crossing project would certainly be eligible for consideration. In fact, it has the potential to combine aspects of both the historic preservation and streetscape/beautification categories. Currently, funding allocation occurs on an annual basis, with the recent total Enhancement pool in the range of \$500,000.00. The new funding bill could impact the amount of funds available.

Other potential funding sources include:

Community Development Block Grants. CDBG funds have been a staple of the revitalization process for residential neighborhoods. The flexibility of these funds in low- and moderate-income neighborhoods and their ability to be used for a variety of purposes, including leveraging private financing for housing development, make them a potential component of the revitalization of Ingersoll in the Woodland Heights and Sherman Hill area, basically from 15th street to 31st Street. In Des Moines, major allocation decisions are made by the City Council upon recommendation by the Neighborhood Revitalization Board (NRB).

HOME Funds, used to leverage private and other public funds for housing development and rehabilitation. May be a source of funding for housing rehabilitation along the corridor.

Tax Credits, including Section 42 credits for low-income housing development; and historic tax credits for certified rehabilitation of National Register eligible properties. These tax credits are effective in raising equity for projects, reducing

the amount of debt financing required to complete major developments.

Private Financing. In recent years, the efforts of nonprofit organizations have been instrumental in stimulating private redevelopment along both Sixth Avenue and East Grand Avenue. The Ingersoll Business Association can learn from these experiences in establishing their role in the district. The key to success lies in using private investment funds to leverage other sources of public improvement funds.

Street and Transportation Bonds. City bond issues, in combination with Federal programs, such as TEA-21, can help to finance associated transportation improvements, such as intersection improvements.



Sheet Key

Key Recommendations

- Add shade trees on north side (typical all segments).
- Establish south side sidewalk linear plant beds (typical all segments).
- Target outdoor art/sculpture opportunities (typical all segments).
- Add new north side vehicular/pedestrian lighting (typical all segments).

39th to 42nd Street

Ingersoll Improvement Plan Conceptual Master Plan

0 50 100 200



project #:23486.00

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Sheet Key

Key Recommendations

- Reorganize 37th and Ingersoll intersection to provide potential green space.
- Retain and expand on-street parking from 37th to 39th Streets.
- Reorganize south side off-street parking at 38th Street.
- Incorporate pedestrian actuated mid-block traffic signal near 37th Street, coordinate with bus stops.

35th to 39th Street Ingersoll Improvement Plan Conceptual Master Plan

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