

# GREENWOOD HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN



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## GREENWOOD HISTORIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

### Greenwood Historic Neighborhood Association

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City of Des Moines Neighborhood Revitalization Board

City of Des Moines Plan and Zoning Commission

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Special thanks to staff from the Public Works, Engineering, Parks & Recreation and Police Departments for their assistance.

# INTRODUCTION



The City of Des Moines and the Polk County Board of Supervisors established the Neighborhood Revitalization Program in the early 1990s to help stabilize and improve Des Moines' neighborhoods. To coordinate this program, the City's Community Development Department formed the Neighborhood Development Division.

The Neighborhood Revitalization Program uses a strategy that calls for neighborhood residents, the City of Des Moines, Polk County, and local business leaders to develop a public/private partnership that addresses revitalization issues within the City. To participate, recognized neighborhoods must submit an application and make a presentation to the Neighborhood Revitalization Board. The neighborhood planning process relies on active resident groups to identify critical neighborhood issues in their area. The staff of the Neighborhood Development Division provides technical assistance

and planning coordination. Neighborhood Planning staff work with the neighborhood group to develop and implement appropriate goals and a feasible action plan. These neighborhood plans provide a list of activities and identify parties responsible for implementation. The success of the revitalization effort depends on a continued coordination of efforts among the neighborhood organization, the City, the County, and other private organizations.

This plan was prepared through a joint effort of the City of Des Moines Neighborhood Development Division of the Community Development Department and the Greenwood Historic Neighborhood Association. The approved plan becomes an amendment to the City's Comprehensive Plan and an ongoing guide affecting future policy decisions for the neighborhood.



# DESCRIPTION

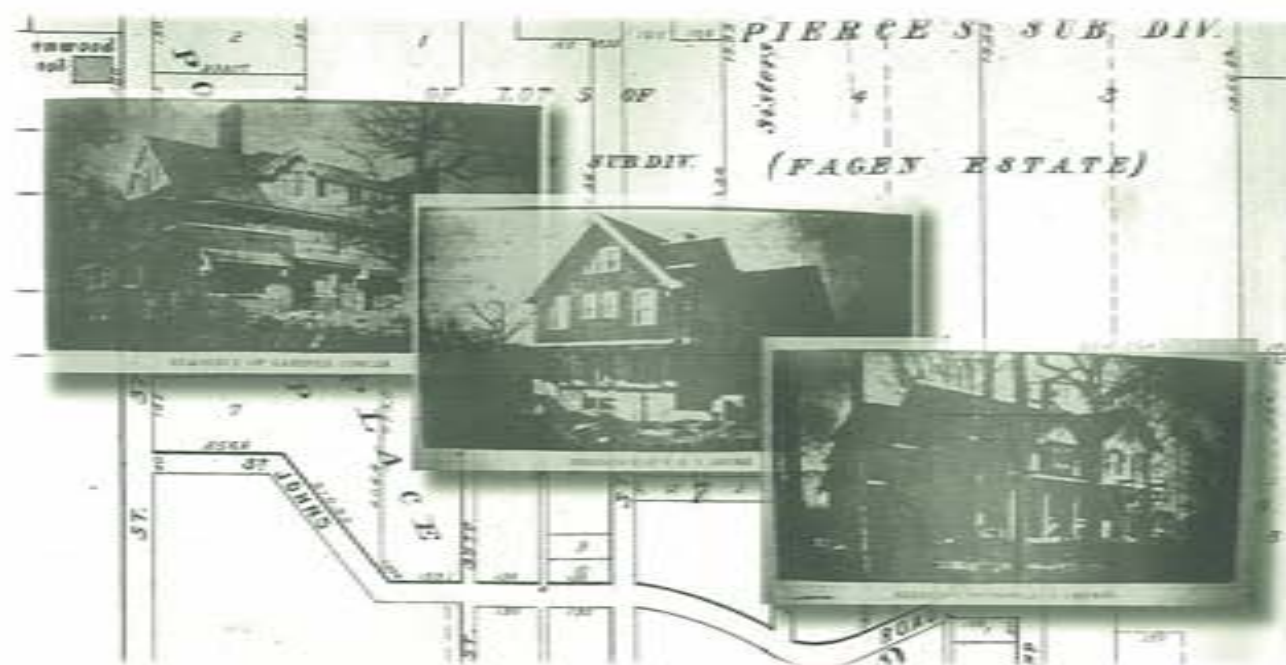


The Greenwood Historic Neighborhood is located in the heart of the City and is generally bound by Grand Avenue to the north, 31st Street to the east, the railroad tracks to the south and 37th Street to the west. It is minutes away from the central business district, the airport, parks, horse stables, trails, educational facilities, shopping, Interstate 235, and medical facilities.

Greenwood Historic enjoys the advantages of city life while maintaining a unique sense of rural calm. This calm is created by its limited access from Grand Avenue, hilly terrain, mature trees and plants. Among the hills and trees is an excellent mix of housing stock from the turn of the century to the mid 1900s that range in size from 1,200 sq. ft. to 9,800 sq. ft. This combination of terrain and vegetation, along with spectacular views of the Raccoon River flood plain and the downtown, make Greenwood Historic one of Des Moines' most picturesque neighborhoods.



# HISTORY



By the late 1860s Grand Avenue west of downtown was becoming the location of preference. As more people moved to the area there was an increasing desire for city services. In 1881 the City of Greenwood Park was incorporated with the boundaries of Center Street (north), 28th Street (east), the Raccoon River (south) and 42nd Street (west). The City of Greenwood Park was short lived because in 1890 the State approved legislation that allowed the City of Des Moines to annex it and four other suburbs.

The southeastern quarter of the original City of Greenwood Park is what we today call the Greenwood Historic Neighborhood. The first homes, developed during the late 1800s into the second decade of the twentieth century, consisted of large homes, in many cases architect-designed. These homes on large lots were occupied by leading businesspeople and incorporated elements of

Tudor, Prairie and Craftsman styles into their stained glass, elaborate entrances and beautiful woodwork. A second phase of housing was built between the two World Wars and consisted of more moderate homes occupied by middle and upper middle class residents. Although smaller in size, these homes in mostly Tudor and Colonial Revival styles, blend well with the earlier architectural styles.

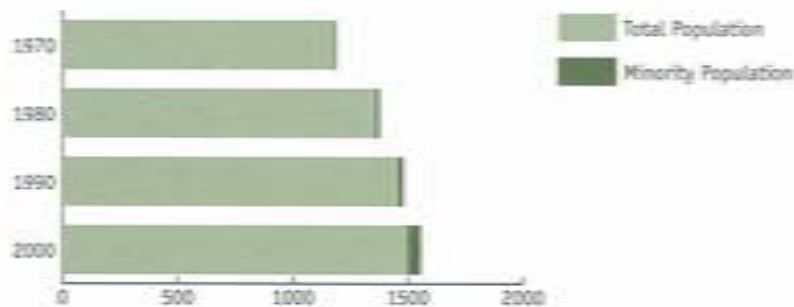
While the physical development of the Greenwood Historic Neighborhood is intriguing it pales in comparison to the unique individuals who have called it home. Greenwood Historic has been the home of some of Des Moines' most accomplished including; a Vice-president of the United States, two U.S. Secretaries of Agriculture, a U.S. Senator, five major publishers, a four-star general, Drake University presidents, and numerous bishops, doctors, lawyers, inventors, entrepreneurs, men and women civic leaders.

# DEMOGRAPHICS

During the past four decades the Greenwood Historic Neighborhood population has grown by 31%. The construction of multifamily residences and expansion of Wesley Acres Retirement Community on Grand Avenue account for most of this growth.

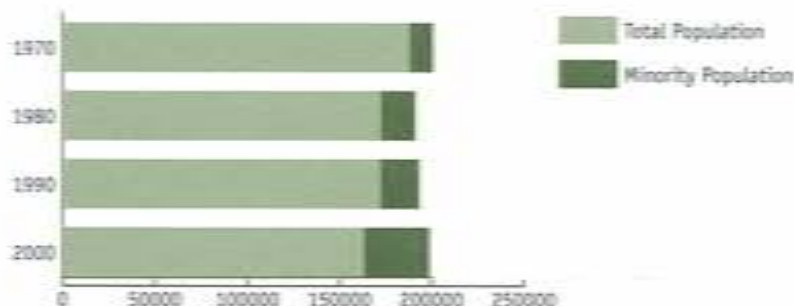
## GREENWOOD HISTORIC (U.S. CENSUS)

Census Year	1970	1980	1990	2000
Total Pop	1,187	1,375	1,479	1,557
Total Minority Pop	7	14	21	56
Percent Minority	0.6%	1.0%	1.4%	3.6%



## CITY OF DES MOINES (U.S. CENSUS)

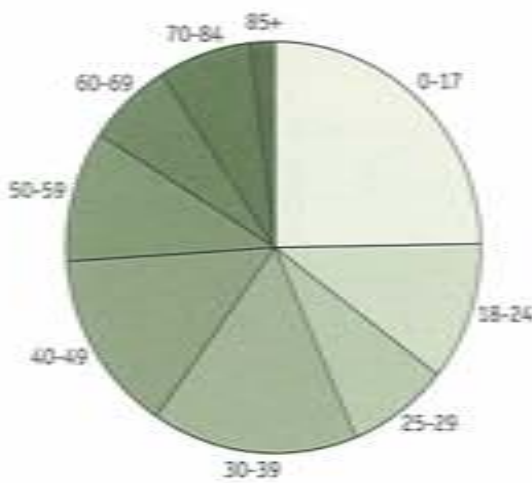
Census Year	1970	1980	1990	2000
Total Pop	200,587	191,003	193,187	198,682
Total Minority Pop	12,408	18,385	20,770	35,188
Percent Minority	6.2%	9.6%	10.8%	17.7%



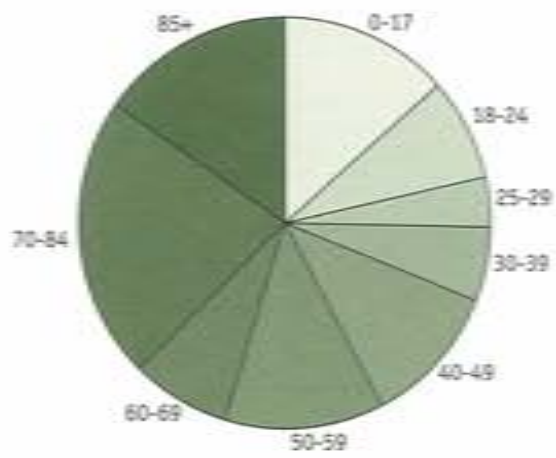
The Greenwood Historic Neighborhood has a very large elderly population. Of the 1,557 residents, 45.4% are 60 years old or older versus 15.8% for the City as a whole. This relatively high percentage can be attributed to the Wesley Acres Retirement Community and lengthy tenure of many residents.

**POPULATION BY AGE GROUP (U.S. CENSUS)**

Age Group	City	% of City	Green His	% of Green His
Under 17 Years	49,328	24.8%	206	13.2%
18 to 24 Years	21,071	10.6%	125	8.0%
25 to 29 Years	16,375	8.2%	62	4.0%
30 to 39 Years	31,870	16.0%	93	6.0%
40 to 49 Years	28,366	14.3%	172	11.0%
50 to 59 Years	20,325	10.2%	193	12.4%
60 to 69 Years	12,916	6.5%	121	7.8%
70 to 84 Years	14,814	7.5%	345	22.2%
85 Years +	3,617	1.8%	240	15.4%
Total Population	198,682	100%	1,557	100%



DM Population by Age Group



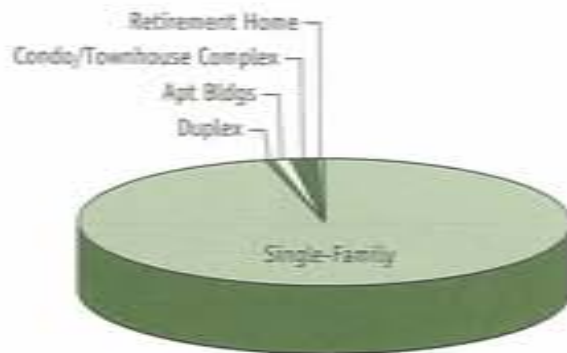
GH Population by Age Group

# HOUSING DATA

The Greenwood Historic Neighborhood is composed of primarily single-family homes of good quality and condition, resulting in relatively high property values. The neighborhood is also characterized by several large multi-family buildings along Grand Avenue.

## TYPES OF RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURES (BASED ON 2000 ASSESSOR DATA)

Single-family	Duplex	Apt Buildings	Condo/Townhouse Complex	Retirement Home	Total
174	1	2	3	1	181



## SINGLE-FAMILY STRUCTURE VALUE AND CONDITION INFORMATION (2000 ASSESSOR DATA)

	NH Average	Excellent	Very Good	Above Normal	Normal	Below Normal
Total Single-Family Homes	174	44	56	44	28	2
Age of Housing Stock	1939	1932	1937	1941	1952	1928
Average Total Assessed Value	\$297,392	\$439,600	\$273,385	\$237,783	\$211,637	\$352,970
Citywide Avg Total Assessed Value	\$84,491	-	-	-	-	-



# LAND USE AND ZONING

## FUTURE LAND USE TERMS (2025 COMMUNITY CHARACTER PLAN) ZONING TERMS

### Intown Estates Residential

Areas developed with single-family homes on large lots of up to 2 units per acre.

### Low Density Residential

Areas developed with single-family homes and duplexes legal as of December 31, 1996, with up to 6 units per acre.

### High Density Residential

Areas developed with high-rise and mid-rise multifamily buildings with over 17 units per acre.

### Park/Open Space

Uses including parks, golf courses, trails, zoos, cemeteries, etc.

### Public/Semi-Public

Uses such as government facilities, schools, and hospitals

### Planned Unit Development (PUD)

Zoning classification designed for large-scale developments that require the developer to create a master plan for a site that specifically shows how the site will be developed. This classification is very useful because it allows the City and the developer to customize regulations to the site and gives the City more input on the design.

### R-3

Zoning classification that allows for single-family, duplexes and multifamily dwellings to be developed at a medium density.

### R-4

Zoning classification that allows for single-family, duplexes and multifamily dwellings to be developed at a high density.

### R1-80

Zoning classification that allows for the development of low density single-family dwellings to be developed on a lot with an 80 foot frontage and a minimum area of 10,000 square feet.



# IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of the plan is the hardest part of the Neighborhood Revitalization Program. To be successful, it is imperative that the present collaboration between the City of Des Moines and the Greenwood Historic Neighborhood Association continues to exist and grow. It will also require the following:

1. Strong and active leadership from the Greenwood Historic Neighborhood Association;
2. Continued commitment and support from the Des Moines City Council and the Polk County Board of Supervisors; and
3. Technical assistance from Neighborhood Planning and other City Staff.

The Neighborhood Revitalization Program is not intended to be a permanent commitment of resources to a specific neighborhood. The goal is to solve specific priority problems that require some intensive work and enhance the neighborhood. This neighborhood entered the Designated Neighborhood Program as a stable neighborhood based on:

1. Housing conditions;
2. Property values;
3. Proportion of homeowners to renters; and
4. Home sales information.



The Neighborhood Development Division will conduct periodic assessments of the progress of a particular plan and will recommend that the program be ended once the work plan has been completed. It is possible that certain activities may be investigated and found not to be feasible or require an unreasonable demand of resources. Once a plan has been found to be complete, a report is prepared with input from the neighborhood organization and forwarded to the Neighborhood Revitalization Board. Pending its approval, the recommendation will be forwarded to the Des Moines City Council and the Polk County Board of Supervisors for final approval. At this point the neighborhood becomes a Charter Neighborhood and is phased out of the Neighborhood Revitalization Program.

# GLOSSARY



## Charter Neighborhood

A Recognized Neighborhood which has an approved Plan under the Neighborhood Revitalization Program

## CIP

Capital Improvement Program; the City's five-year budget and schedule of infrastructure projects

## City

City of Des Moines, Iowa; includes the City Council, City Manager's Office and all operating departments

## Designated Neighborhood

A Recognized Neighborhood which has been selected to participate in the Neighborhood Revitalization Program

## GHNA

Greenwood Historic Neighborhood Association

## NIRP

Neighborhood Infrastructure Rehabilitation Program; a program operated by the City's Public Works Department to improve infrastructure in Designated Neighborhoods

## NRB

Neighborhood Revitalization Board; a City Council appointed citizen board charged with making policy recommendations regarding the City NRP and Consolidated Planning process for federal funds

## NRP

Neighborhood Revitalization Program; a comprehensive approach to revitalizing Des Moines' neighborhoods, initiated by the City Council based on the recommendation in a 1990 report prepared by consultant Stockard & Engler, Inc.

## Recognized Neighborhood

A neighborhood with an active association that submitted an application to the City Council and in turn was approved as having an officially recognized relationship with the City

## SCRUB (Spring Cleanup to Reduce Urban Blight)

SCRUB clean-up days provide a free drop-off site for non-hazardous trash and yard waste on selected Saturday mornings from early April to late October. SCRUB events are coordinated by neighborhood associations with the assistance of the Community Services and Public Works providing dumpsters, landfill fees, and security.

## PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

GOAL	STRATEGY	IMPLEMENTATION	FUNDING
Improve Streets & Sidewalks in the Neighborhood	Pavement Repair - Hot Mix Asphalt Overlay	31 <sup>st</sup> St - Grand Ave to John Lynde Rd 34 <sup>th</sup> St - Lincoln Place to Elmwood 37 <sup>th</sup> St - Grand Ave to John Lynde Rd Elmwood Drive - 31 <sup>st</sup> St to 34 <sup>th</sup> St Jewett Lane - Arapahoe Drive to end John Lynde Road - 31 <sup>st</sup> St to 34 <sup>th</sup> St Lincoln Place Dr - John Lynde Rd to 34 <sup>th</sup> St Lincoln Place Dr - 34 <sup>th</sup> St to River Oaks Dr St Johns Road - 31 <sup>st</sup> St to 37 <sup>th</sup> St	The following work will be conducted by the Public Works Department. This work is estimated to cost \$225,000 and will come from the FY 2003 CIP NIRP.
	Pavement Repair - Slurry Seal	32 <sup>nd</sup> Place - John Lynde Road to Terrace Drive Shortview Dr - Elmwood Dr to St Johns Rd	The following work will be conducted by the Public Works Department. This work is estimated to cost \$5,000 and will come from the FY 2003 Public Works Operating Budget.
	Interim Pavement	Mahaska Parkway - 31 <sup>st</sup> St to Railroad Tracks	The following work will be conducted by the Public Works Department. This work is estimated to cost \$17,000 and will come from the FY 2003 CIP NIRP.
	Concrete Pavement Restoration	35 <sup>th</sup> St - St Johns Road to Arapahoe Drive	The following work will be conducted by the Public Works Department. This work is estimated to cost \$13,500 and will come from the FY 2003 CIP NIRP.
	Curb Replacement & Repair	37 <sup>th</sup> St - Grand Ave to St Johns Road 31 <sup>st</sup> St (spot repair) - 110 31 <sup>st</sup> St to Elmwood Drive 34 <sup>th</sup> St (spot repair) - Elmwood Drive to Lincoln Place Arapahoe Drive (spot repair) - 34 <sup>th</sup> St to 37 <sup>th</sup> St Lincoln Place (spot repair) - John Lynde Road to 34 <sup>th</sup> St	The following work will be conducted by the Public Works Department. This work is estimated to cost \$92,000 and will come from the FY 2003 CIP NIRP.

GOAL	STRATEGY	IMPLEMENTATION	FUNDING
Improve the Drainage of Storm Water in the Neighborhood	Removal of Unused Drive Approaches	Drive approach at 3221 Elmwood Drive Four (4) drive approaches on the north side of St John's Road between Shortview Drive and 34 <sup>th</sup> St	The following work will be conducted by the Public Works Department. The cost of this project is included in the Curb Repair/ Replacement budget.
	Sidewalk Repair/ Replacement	Approximately, 9,100 lineal feet of defective sidewalk will be replaced by the Public Works Dept. throughout the neighborhood.	The following work will be conducted by the Public Works Department. This work is estimated to cost \$166,000 and will come from the FY 2003 CIP NORP.
	Perform necessary maintenance on existing system.	The City will clean out all intakes and culverts that are in need. The City will repair damage to the storm sewer pipe located behind 121 Lincoln Place Drive.	Ongoing Maintenance function covered by Public Works Department's Operating Budget.
	Develop a dry bottom detention pond on City-owned lot at 3221 Elmwood Drive.	The City will design and construct a pond at this site.	The project is estimated to cost \$45,000 and will be funded from the Storm Water Utility Budget.
	Address drainage problem east of the Lincoln Place Drive and River Oaks Drive intersection.	City staff will evaluate the situation and work with GHNA to develop a solution.	Unknown
Improve the safety of large intakes.	GHNA will work with the Public Works Department to determine if it is feasible to use grates with smaller openings without compromising the functionality the intakes.	Unknown	

## PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

GOAL	STRATEGY	IMPLEMENTATION	FUNDING
Improve the Appearance of the Utility Pole & Lighting Systems in the Neighborhood	Explore relocating utility lines.	The relocation of utility lines has become the goal of many neighborhoods in Des Moines. Since this has become a City-wide issue, staff and GHNA are recommending to the NRB and the City Council that a committee be appointed to work with Mid American Energy Company to address the issue. GHNA will appoint a representative to this committee if requested.	Unknown
	Explore decorative lighting options for the neighborhood.	GHNA will appoint a committee to research this strategy. The committee will work with the City and Mid American Energy Company to utilize their expertise.	Unknown

## NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

Protect & Promote the Neighborhood's Diverse Housing Stock and Single-family Owner-occupied Character	Maintain active relationship with the City by maintaining Recognized Neighborhood status and reviewing agenda and actions by the City Council, City Boards/ Commissions.	GHNA will provide recommendations to City staff, the Plan & Zoning Commission and the City Council on land use and development issues.	
	Advocate for the protection of single-family residential portion of the neighborhood by limiting encroachment by institutions.	GHNA will proactively work with institutions within the neighborhood to ensure that opportunities for redevelopment enhance the neighborhood, Grand Avenue and consider the needs of the institutions.	
	Encourage the City to develop greater buffering and residential protection requirements.	During the development of the City's new zoning ordinance, GHNA will advocate to staff, the Plan & Zoning Commission and the City Council that the new ordinance implement the residential protection goals from the 2020 Community Character Plan.	

## COMMERCIAL

GOAL	STRATEGY	IMPLEMENTATION	FUNDING
Develop plan for the Ingersoll Avenue Commercial Corridor	Work with the Ingersoll Area Association and surrounding Neighborhood Associations to develop a plan for adoption & implementation by the City.	GHNA will appoint a member to a steering committee that is made up of business and other neighborhood representatives to work with City staff to develop a plan	
	Provide continuing support for implementation of the adopted Ingersoll Avenue Plan.	GHNA will continue to support the implementation of the plan by sending representatives to public meetings as needed to assist in securing resources.	

## COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENTS

Improve the Appearance of the 34 <sup>th</sup> Street Bridge	Develop a cosmetic improvement plan (art project) for the bridge with the assistance of a professional designer.	GHNA will secure the services of a designer to develop a cosmetic improvement plan for the bridge. GHNA will leverage public and private funds to develop and implement the project. To expedite City approval, GHNA and the designer will involve appropriate City staff during the development of the plan.	GHNA will leverage public and private funds. Project costs are unknown.
Promote the Preservation and Enhancement of Trees	Encourage property owners to preserve existing and plant new trees.  Maintain an active relationship with the City's Forestry Division.	GHNA will locate and distribute information and resources from sources such as the State of Iowa Department of Natural Resources.  GHNA and Public Works Department will work closely in order to maintain and improve street trees and trees on City-owned greenspaces	
Promote the Water Works Park as an Asset to the Neighborhood	Develop entrance feature at the park gate near Edwards Avenue.	GHNA will work with Water Works Board & staff to develop a entrance feature for the park.	GHNA will raise funds for design and implementation.

## COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENTS

GOAL	STRATEGY	IMPLEMENTATION	FUNDING
Improve the Appearance of City-owned Greenspaces	Clearly designate where parking is allowed in the park.	Water Works will place signs in the park that direct drivers to the parking lot and restrict parking on the roadway.	Water Works has identified funding for this project.
	Pave the park's north side road and the parking lot.	Water Works will pave the parking and road within the park (south of old park gate). Water Works will work with the City to pave the portion of 31 <sup>st</sup> St that is south of Edwards Ave.	Water Works has identified funding for pavement within the park. Water Works intends to negotiate with the City to pay for the pavement of 31 <sup>st</sup> Street south of Edwards Avenue.
	Improve the appearance of the John Lynde Road and 31 <sup>st</sup> Street intersection traffic island.	GHNA will appoint a committee to explore several options to improve the traffic island. GHNA will work with the proper City staff to insure that the final project meets the City's standards.	GHNA will raise public and private funds and provide volunteers to maintain any improvements.
Promote Walking in the Greenwood Historic Neighborhood	Improve the appearance and accessibility of the Bird Sanctuary at 37 <sup>th</sup> Street and Arapahoe Drive while maintaining its wild state.	GHNA will appoint a committee to work with the Park and Recreation Department to develop and implement a plan for this site.	GHNA will raise funds to leverage matching funds from the City to develop and implement a plan for this site.
	Develop 3221 Elmwood Drive (City-owned dry bottom detention pond site) as recreational resource for the neighborhood.	GHNA will explore the option of adopting the space, once the dry bottom detention pond has been constructed, in order to develop it as a neighborhood-maintained park.	If adopted, GHNA will provide volunteer labor for maintenance.
	Develop a walking course with benches and distance markers.	GHNA, with the assistance of the Parks & Recreation Department, will explore developing a course that allows walkers to keep track of the distance they have walked and provides appropriate bench facilities to allow pedestrians of all ages and physical condition the ability to rest.	GHNA will raise public and private funds to implement this goal.



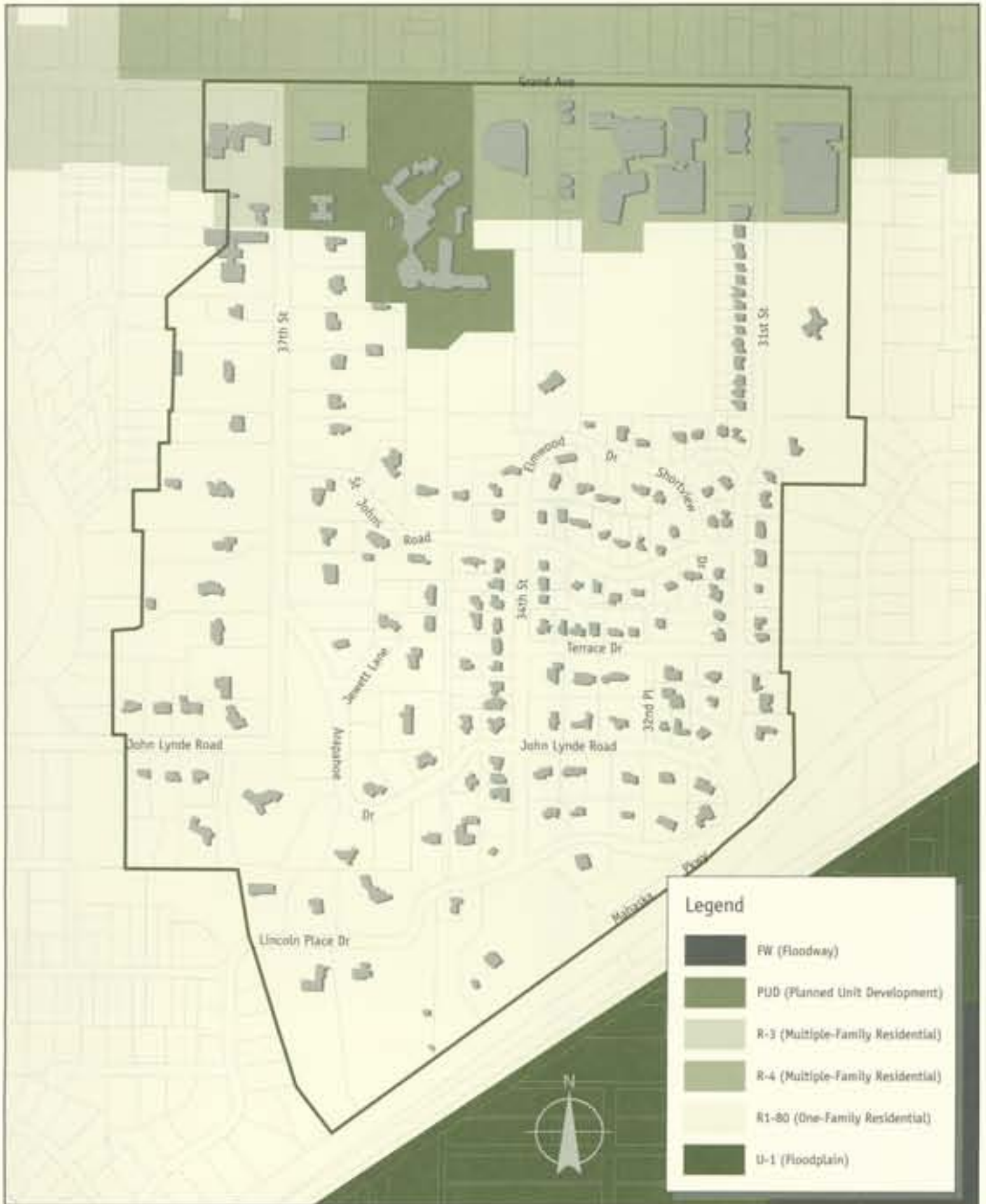
GOAL	STRATEGY	IMPLEMENTATION	FUNDING
	Enhance the Des Moines University trail system by developing access from within the neighborhood.	GHNA will work with the University to develop access to their trail system from 3221 Elmwood Drive.	Des Moines University
Encourage the Use of Bicycles	Develop designated bicycle lanes through out the neighborhood with a connection to the Water Works Park trail.	GHNA will work with the City's Traffic & Transportation Division and the Water Works Park to explore painting a designated bicycle lane throughout the neighborhood with a connection to the park trail.	City and Water Works Park. Project costs are unknown.
Promote the Neighborhood's Unique History and Architectural Character	Develop a self-guided historical walking tour of the neighborhood.	GHNA will explore creating and implementing a self-guided walking tour of the neighborhood.	GHNA
	Develop a neighborhood history booklet.	GHNA will research and write the booklet. The Des Moines University will provide graphic, editing and printing services for the production of the booklet.	GHNA and Des Moines University
	Identify and list districts on the National Register of Historic Places.	GHNA will hire a consultant to study the neighborhood and nominate districts to the National Register of Historic Places.	GHNA
	Place signs identifying any districts that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.	GHNA will work with the City's Traffic & Transportation Division to determine the number of signs needed and where they can be placed.	GHNA
Neighborhood Promotion & Outreach	Increase the neighborhood's identity with entrance features and/or neighborhood signs.	GHNA will work with the Traffic & Transportation Division and the Community Development Department to insure that proposed entrance features and/or signs meet City ordinances and safety standards. GHNA will be responsible for purchasing and installing the features and/or signs. GHNA will also partner with other south of Grand Ave neighborhoods that are interested in developing a common design for entrance features and signs.	GHNA

## COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENTS

GOAL	STRATEGY	IMPLEMENTATION	FUNDING
Promote the Need to Maintain a Clean Neighborhood	<p>Develop a strong relationship with the residents that live between the Water Works Park and GHNA's southern border.</p> <p>Encourage residents to utilize the City's SCRUB program.</p>	<p>If it is determined that GHNA's southern border should be moved to include this area GHNA will submit a request for approval to the Neighborhood Revitalization Board and the City Council.</p> <p>GHNA will provide the volunteers necessary to participate in the City's SCRUB program.</p>	<p>GHNA</p> <p>City's SCRUB Program</p>



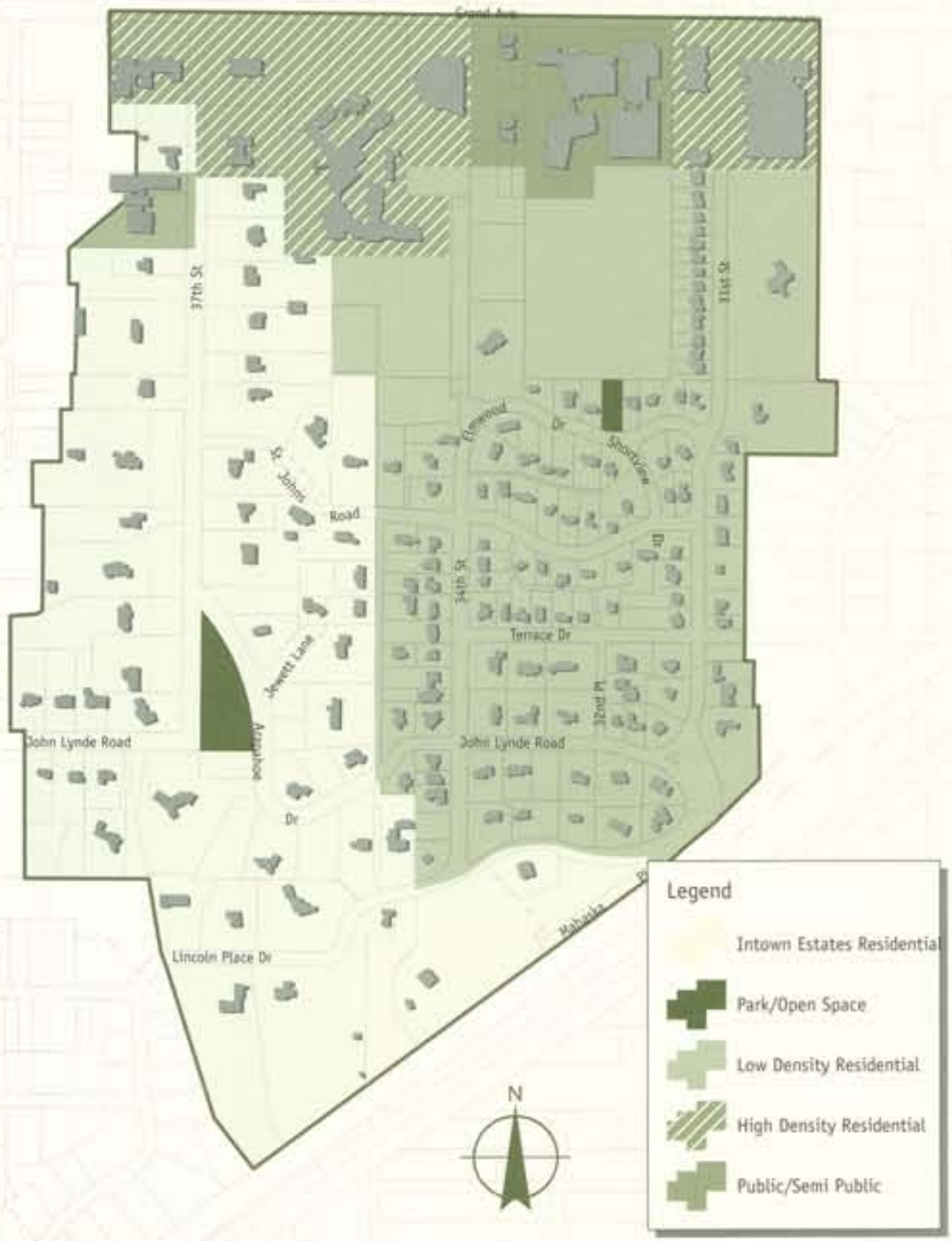
# GREENWOOD HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOOD - EXISTING ZONING MAP



# GREENWOOD HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOOD - EXISTING LAND USE MAP



# GREENWOOD HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOOD - 2020 COMMUNITY CHARACTER PLAN



PRESENTATION AND APPROVAL OF  
GREENWOOD HISTORIC  
NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

Greenwood Historic  
Neighborhood Association  
10-7-02

Neighborhood Revitalization Board  
10-16-02

Plan & Zoning Commission  
10-17-02

Des Moines City Council  
11-4-02

Polk County Board of Supervisors  
12-17-02