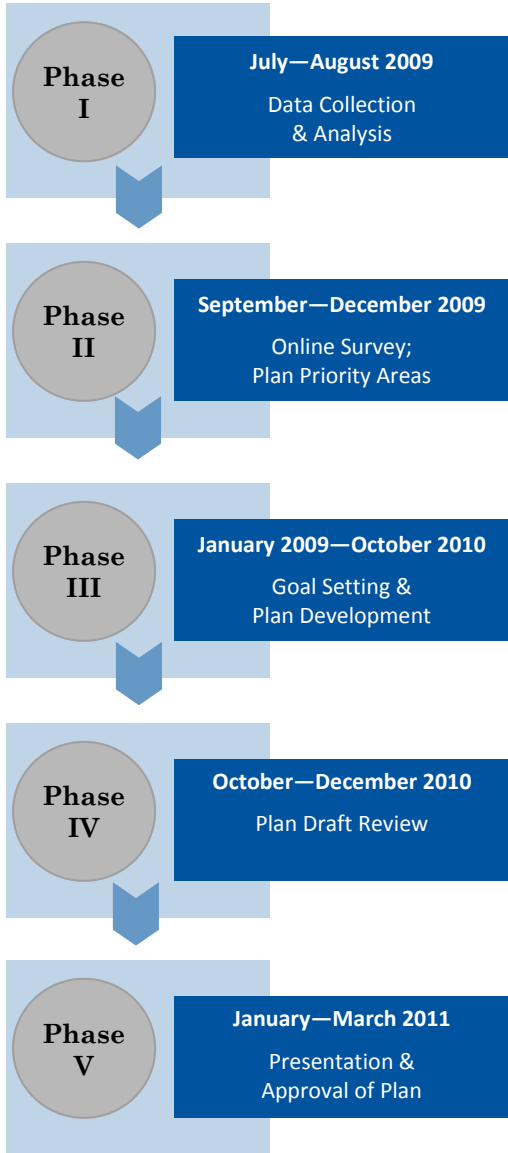


# Drake Neighborhood Plan

2011

**Drake Planning Process**



**Plan Development and Oversight**

**Drake Neighborhood Association**

**Drake Area Business Association**

**Drake University**

**City of Des Moines Neighborhood Revitalization Board**

**City of Des Moines Plan & Zoning Commission**

**City of Des Moines City Council**

**Polk County Board of Supervisors**

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*Special thanks to City staff from the Office of Economic Development, Public Works, Parks & Recreation, Police, and Community Development Departments for assisting with the development of this plan.*

Cover photo of Old Main courtesy of Drake University.

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Thank you to everyone who participated regularly in the planning committees...

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...and to the many other neighborhood residents, business representatives, Drake University staff members, and non-profit stakeholders who also contributed their input to the plan.

\* Indicates planning committee co-chair

**Plan Presentation & Approval**





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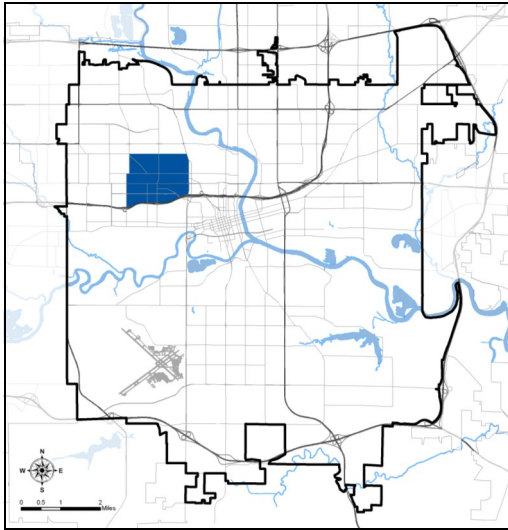
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# Introduction

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Map 1. Vicinity Map

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 to address revitalization issues within the city. To participate, recognized neighborhoods must submit an application and make a presentation to the Neighborhood Revitalization Board. Once selected into the program, the neighborhood planning process relies on active resident groups to identify critical issues in their area. The staff of the Neighborhood Development Division provides technical assistance and planning coordination. Neighborhood planning staff works with the neighborhood group to develop appropriate goals and implement a feasible action plan. The neighborhood plan provides a list of activities and identifies 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 public and private organizations.

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

## Planning Process

The Drake Neighborhood Plan is the most in-depth and complex neighborhood plan undertaken in the 20 year history of the Neighborhood Revitalization Program. The Drake neighborhood has a larger population than 22 of the 99 counties in Iowa. The size of the neighborhood in terms of both population and geography presented a number of challenges that required City staff and neighborhood leaders to deviate from the standard neighborhood planning process and at times to think outside the box and devise creative, multi-faceted strategies for solving problems.

The public input process for the Drake Neighborhood Plan began with an online survey that asked area residents, business owners, and other stakeholders for their opinions on the current strengths and weaknesses of the neighborhood and for input on goals for the future. Between September 2008 and January 2009, the survey garnered 267 responses, with the majority of respondents being white homeowners between the ages of 19-64. Other respondents included minority residents, renters, business owners, or others interested in the future of the neighborhood. The responses were analyzed by Neighborhood Development staff, and reviewed with neighborhood members at various planning subcommittee meetings.

The planning process officially kicked off in January 2009 at a neighborhood-wide meeting. At this meeting attendees laid the groundwork for the planning process by identifying six priority subject areas to focus on. The six subject-areas that the Drake neighborhood chose to focus on were: Housing, Crime and Safety, Infrastructure/Streetscape, Commercial Areas, Parks/ Public

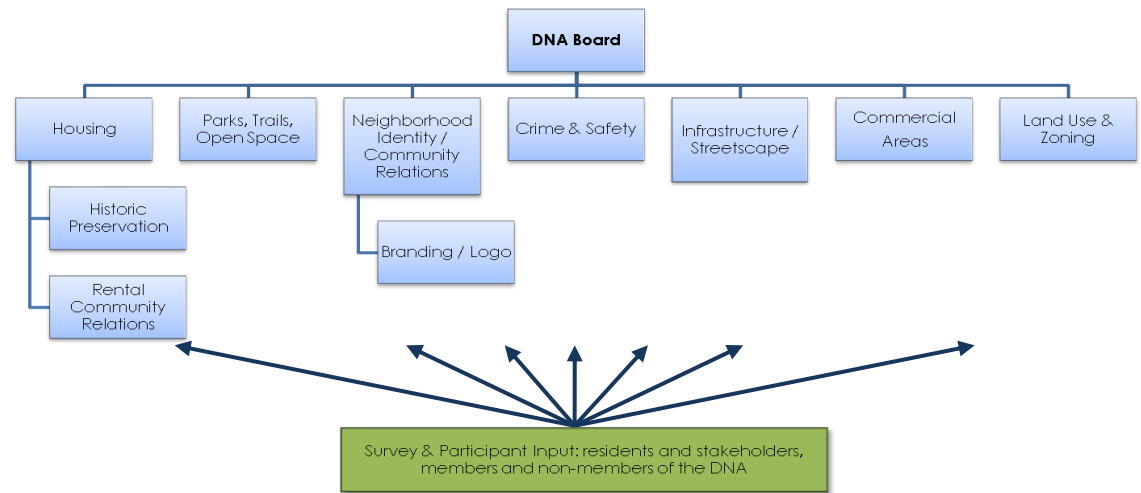
Open Space/Trails, and Neighborhood Identity/ Partnership with Drake University. Rather than having one planning committee tackle all six subject areas, the Neighborhood Association created six separate committees in order to involve as many neighborhood residents and stakeholders in the process as possible. Several additional subcommittees were formed to work on specific tasks such as historic preservation, rental community relations, and a new logo for the neighborhood. A special series of meetings was held to address land use and zoning in the neighborhood. Although the Neighborhood Association coordinated each planning committee, participants included both members and non-members, representatives of area businesses and institutions, landlords, homeowners, as well as students and staff from Drake University. Over 70 people participated in the development of the Drake Neighborhood Plan, contributing over 7,000 volunteer hours.

The planning committees met once a month throughout the course of 2009 and 2010, as many times as was necessary to develop their section of the plan. Each committee was responsible for identifying issues and then creating goals and strategies related to their subject area. The meetings were facilitated by neighborhood planning staff, with staff members from other City departments participating periodically. Various local non-profits, subject matter experts, and other community organizations participated on an as needed basis as well. Once the goals and strategies were finalized, they were reviewed, prioritized and approved by the Drake Neighborhood Association Board. In addition, the final version of the plan is approved by the Neighborhood Revitalization Board, the Plan & Zoning Commission, the Des Moines City Council, and the Polk County Board of Supervisors.

Figure 1. Planning Timeline

|                     | 2009 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 2010 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---------------------|------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|                     | J    | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D | J    | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D |
| Parks               |      |   | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ |   |   |   |   |   |      |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Community Relations |      |   | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ |   |      |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Housing             |      |   |   | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █    | █ | █ |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Infrastructure      |      |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | █ | █ | █ | █ | █    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Commercial          |      |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |      | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ |   |   |
| Crime & Safety      |      |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |      |   |   | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ |   |   |   |   |
| Land Use & Zoning   |      |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |      |   |   |   |   |   | █ | █ |   |   |   |   |

Figure 2. Planning Committee Structure

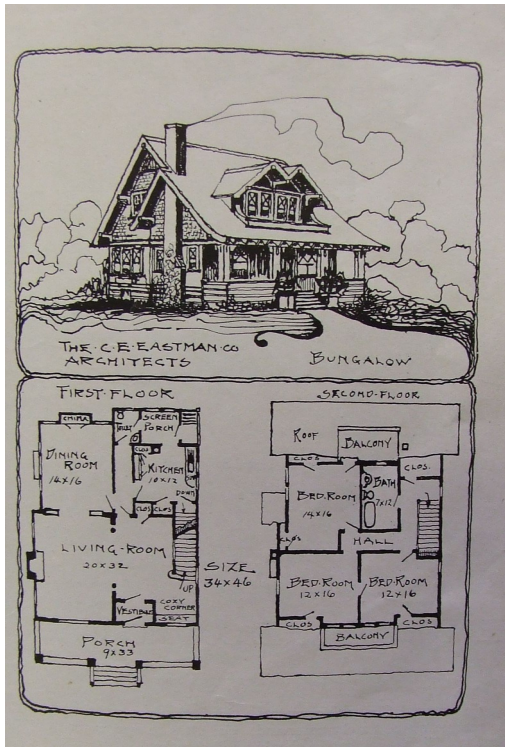




# Neighborhood History

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By Jennifer Irsfeld James



The Drake neighborhood can be called the original “west side” of Des Moines. Settlement began with farmsteads and, in the 1870s, clusters of the earliest suburban development in the metro area. But it was the founding of Drake University in 1881 that set into motion development patterns that have continued and endured since.

Naming rights for the new Disciples of Christ-affiliated university went to Gen. Francis Marion Drake, a Civil War hero and wealthy railroad owner who would go on to serve a term as governor of Iowa. He and other university backers purchased 140 acres of high and dry land and embarked on an ambitious funding plan for campus buildings that involved selling lots through the University Land Company.

The land company carefully and purposefully laid out an attractive community with spacious lots, wide streets, alleys, and parkland—all centered around the 5-acre Drake University. Land auctions were an efficient means of selling the 465 lots, which were priced at \$275 to \$500. For each lot that sold, one-fourth of the price was donated to the university. This was an innovative financing arrangement that later inspired two other Des Moines colleges to follow suit.

Lot buyers were encouraged to build houses as soon as possible so that students attending the university would have a place to stay. The university did not have on-campus dormitories for its first 50 years, and instead relied on homeowners to board students. However, fast and furious land speculation on the outskirts of Des

Moines outstripped housing construction, leaving vacant lots scattered about. This is one reason why the Drake neighborhood supports such a wide mix of architectural styles and housing types built over several decades.

After the land company dissolved in 1886, the university continued in the real estate business, acquiring more land, platting and selling lots, and even developing two apartment buildings. The university’s real-estate successes prompted other developers to found their own subdivisions to the north and west of the campus.

Due to the brisk land sales, University Place became a booming suburb – officially incorporated in 1883. Shortly after, in 1890, Des Moines annexed its surrounding suburbs, offering municipal services such as expanded streetcar service as incentives for consolidation. University Place was the first of the suburbs to get an electric streetcar route, which ran from downtown to 24th Street, then down University Avenue, turning back at 29th Street.

University Place retained its own identity for decades after. The majority of residents had direct ties to Drake University – as trustees, professors, students, alumni, or university supporters. The homes they built set an example for the type of middle-class to upper-middle-class housing the university desired in order to recruit and retain students.

Much of the housing stock directly around the original university campus was built in the Queen Anne and

Colonial Revival styles – most built between 1885 and 1915. The fashionable Victorian neighborhood also supported two business districts (including today's Dogtown), plus schools, churches, post office, and library.

In the 1910s, a student-housing crunch led to some older, larger houses being used as multifamily dwellings—either as fraternity or sorority houses for Drake students or apartments. As students began to dominate the area around the campus, homebuilding escalated to the west. Craftsman and Colonial Revival two-stories and bungalows proliferated during a building boom that occurred roughly between 1900 and 1917. And Revival architecture dominated automobile-oriented subdivisions developed between World War I and World War II.

After World War II, when Drake University enrollment spiked thanks to the GI Bill, the university eagerly repurchased land it had originally sold in order to expand. Some homeowners around the campus converted their houses into apartments as the financial incentives rose.

The 1950s saw the unveiling of the freeway plan for American cities. In Des Moines, the construction of Interstate 235 resulted in dramatic changes and the loss of some housing on the southern end of the Drake neighborhood. By the time the interstate opened in the 1960s, property values had plummeted, many families had fled to new subdivisions, and absentee-landlord-owned properties became the norm. The university

continued to rely on the neighborhood to relieve student-housing pressure as enrollment swelled during the height of the Vietnam War.

In the 1970s, the first wave of Des Moines urban pioneers purchased apartment houses and boarding houses—some for just a few thousand dollars—and began converting them back to single-family homes.

A group of concerned residents created the nonprofit Drake Neighborhood Association in 1979. It was the second such organization in the city. Members researched National Register of Historic Places nominations, wrote a neighborhood history book, refurbished original brick sidewalks, and other projects. Within a few years, the Drake neighborhood was named the state's most improved neighborhood.

Today the Drake Neighborhood Association remains one of the largest and most active recognized neighborhood associations in Des Moines. Restoration work continues one house at a time. The Drake neighborhood has gained several additional National Register historic districts and individually listed buildings, which offer prestige and help market the neighborhood. Many families are choosing to live in the Drake neighborhood, including university professors and staff. As the neighborhood looks to the future, preservation and homeowner investment remain key to continuing revitalization and bringing the percent of owner-occupied houses back in balance.





# Demographics

---



Understanding the demographic composition of a neighborhood may help identify issues or may explain the reason why certain patterns are occurring. The Drake neighborhood is one of the larger neighborhoods in Des Moines, with a population of just over 10,300 as of the 2000 Census (see Table 1). The neighborhood experienced a significant drop in population between 1980 and 1990, as many of the boarding houses from previous decades were turned back into single family homes and Drake University razed homes to make room for campus expansion. The reduction in housing units along with decreasing enrollment at Drake University relieved some of the density pressure occurring in parts of the neighborhood. Still, the Drake neighborhood has a significantly higher density than the City as a whole (7,800 persons per square mile versus 4,569 persons per square mile).

| Census Year                  | 1970    | 1980    | 1990    | 2000    |
|------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Drake Population             | 16,861  | 16,087  | 11,242  | 10,336  |
| Percentage Change            | NA      | -4.6%   | -30.1%  | -8.1%   |
| Percent of DSM Population    | 8.4%    | 8.4%    | 5.8%    | 5.2%    |
| Des Moines Population        | 200,587 | 191,003 | 193,187 | 198,682 |
| Percentage Change            | NA      | -4.8%   | 1.1%    | 2.8%    |
| Drake University Enrollment* | 7606    | 6592    | **6050  | 5126    |
| Percentage Change            | NA      | -13.3%  | -8.2%   | -15.3%  |

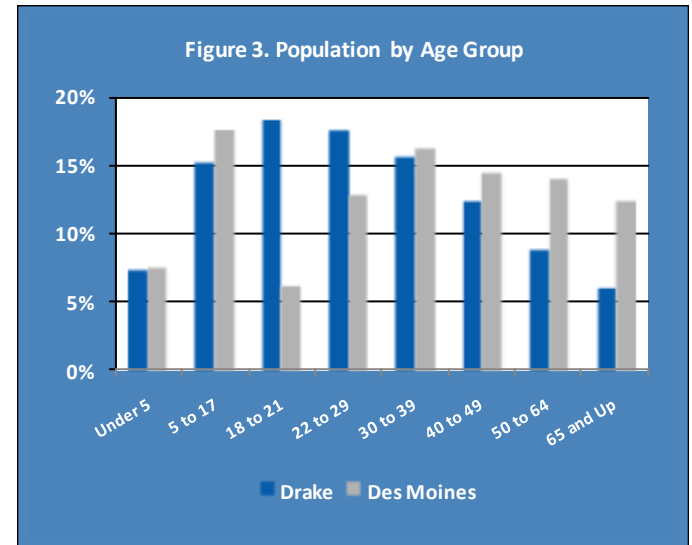
Data from U.S. Census Bureau & Drake University Office of Institutional Research

\*Includes ALL students: undergraduate, graduate, law, pharmacy, full- and part-time

\*\*Estimate

While the rest of Iowa may be suffering from “brain drain”, the Drake neighborhood has a high proportion of young adults living within its boundaries. Because of the University, 18% of the neighborhood's population is between the ages of 18 and 21. Another 17% of the population is between the ages of 22 and 29. The Drake neighborhood far exceeds the citywide average in these two age categories, as shown in Figure 3. In fact,

of the approximately 38,000 Des Moines residents between the ages of 18 and 29, 32% live in the Drake neighborhood. Although not all of the students enrolled in the University live in the Drake neighborhood, they do all attend classes and activities on campus. While they are in the neighborhood, many frequent the retail shops in the area, which has a direct economic impact on neighborhood businesses and service providers.



The population in the neighborhood is also fairly diverse in terms of race and of income. As of the 2000 Census, 24% of the Drake population was classified as minority. This compares with 18% in the City as a whole, as shown in Table 2. The two largest minority groups in the neighborhood are Black and Hispanic. The median household income in 2000 ranged from \$11,932 to \$64,167, with the low end reflecting the student population. However, the diversity is not equally distributed throughout the neighborhood. Rather, the eastern side of Drake is home to more minority and low-income residents. These patterns are displayed in Maps 2 and 3 on page 13.

| Census Year                | 1970   | 1980   | 1990   | 2000   |
|----------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Drake Minority Population  | NA     | 1,853  | 1,747  | 2,520  |
| Percent Minority           | NA     | 12%    | 16%    | 24%    |
| Minority Percentage Change | NA     | NA     | -6%    | 44%    |
| DSM Minority Population    | 12,408 | 18,385 | 20,770 | 35,188 |
| Percent Minority           | 6.2%   | 10%    | 11%    | 18%    |
| Minority Percentage Change | NA     | 48%    | 13%    | 69%    |

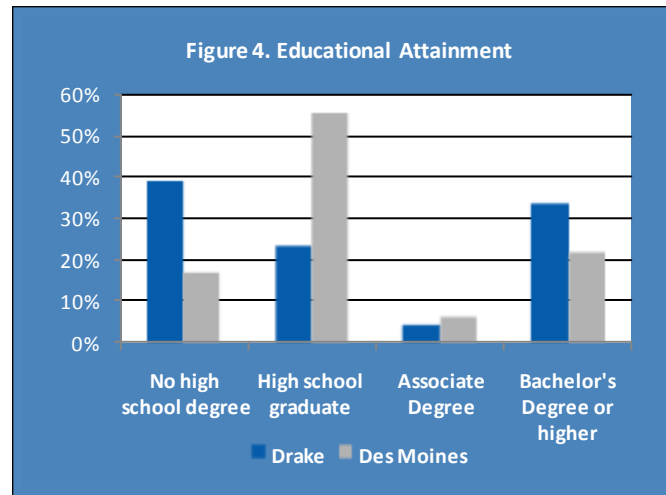
Data from US Census Bureau

As shown in Table 3, the characteristics of families and households in the Drake neighborhood are similar to Des Moines as a whole, except that Drake has a higher percentage of non-family households due to the student population. The Drake neighborhood also has a slightly higher percentage of single mother households.

The educational attainment pattern in the Drake neighborhood is unique as well. When compared to the City of Des Moines as a whole (see Figure 4), there are more Drake residents who have a Bachelor's degree or graduate degree. However, there are also significantly more Drake residents who have not attained a high school degree.

|                                      | Des Moines | Drake |
|--------------------------------------|------------|-------|
| Persons per household                | 2.4        | 2.3   |
| Non-family households                | 39%        | 50%   |
| Family households                    | 61%        | 50%   |
| Married with children under 18       | 34%        | 32%   |
| Married with no children under 18    | 38%        | 37%   |
| Male-headed with children under 18   | 4%         | 6%    |
| Female-headed with children under 18 | 15%        | 18%   |
| Single with no children under 18     | 9%         | 8%    |

Data from US Census Bureau

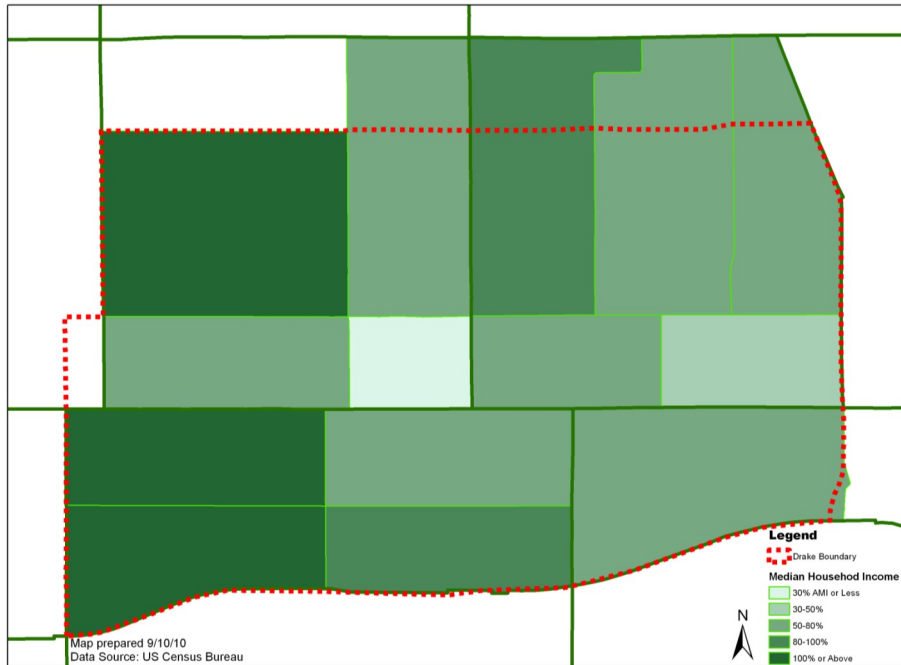


There are two important lessons from the demographic analysis. The first is that the Drake neighborhood is home to a diverse range of races and ethnicities, income levels, and educational backgrounds. The challenge is for the Neighborhood Association to find ways to engage residents at both ends of the spectrum and to meet a broad range of needs. To maintain its diversity, the Drake neighborhood should continue to provide a range of housing opportunities, commercial venues, and recreational amenities.

The second lesson is reflected in the age pattern of the neighborhood. Drake University helps to keep young adults in the neighborhood by drawing students, alumni, and others attracted to the vibrancy of a college atmosphere. The proximity and ease of access to downtown is another appealing factor. The number of residents in their 20s and 30s show that the Drake neighborhood is attractive to this demographic. Young professionals are fixing up homes. Students patronize area businesses. It is important for the Neighborhood Association, business owners, realtors and service providers to keep this age group in mind, as it gives the neighborhood a unique market niche.

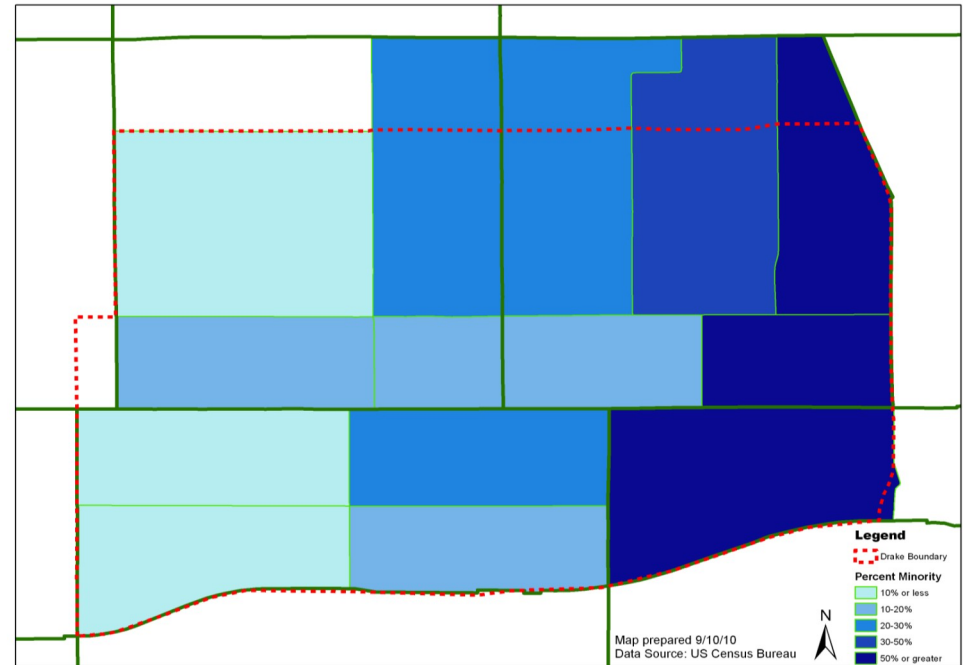


**Map 2: Income levels in 2000,  
Based on HUD Area Median Income**



Map 2 uses the median income for each block group from the 2000 Census and displays it based on the income categories calculated for the Des Moines Metro Area by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The darker the green, the higher the median income in that block group.

**Map 3: Minority Population in 2000,  
by Block Group**



Map 3 shows the percent of the population in each block group that reported their race as a minority group for the 2000 Census, such as African-American or Asian (the most common categories in the Drake neighborhood). The darker the blue, the larger the minority population.

# Housing

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A major component of every neighborhood plan is revitalization of the housing stock. Drake entered the Neighborhood Revitalization Program as a “transitional negative” neighborhood in 2006, based on home values, home sales, housing conditions, and the ratio of homeowners to renters. The housing stock in the Drake neighborhood is diverse, with over 6,000 housing units in a range of architectural styles and home sizes as well as a mixture of single-family, duplexes, multi-family conversions, and built-as multiple-family dwellings. This variety is an asset that encourages diversity within the neighborhood; however, it also makes revitalization more complex.

Table 4 shows the housing units in the Drake neighborhood by type and classification. The Polk County Assessor classifies dwellings with less than three units as residential property. Properties with three or more dwelling units have a commercial classification. Condition ratings are based on exterior characteristics and consider the age of the structure and type of construction.

|                                  | # of Units   | %           | Class       |
|----------------------------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|
| Built-as MF                      | 1,995        | 33%         | Commercial  |
| Conversion (3+ Units)            | 952          | 16%         |             |
| 2-Unit (Conversion, Bi-Attached) | 412          | 7%          | Residential |
| Duplex                           | 130          | 2%          |             |
| Single Family                    | 2,582        | 43%         |             |
| <b>Total</b>                     | <b>6,071</b> | <b>100%</b> |             |

Data from Polk County Assessor

Table 5 compares the property characteristics of the residential properties in the Drake neighborhood to residential properties citywide. Drake has five percent of the City’s housing stock, eight percent of the City’s structures listed in below normal or worse conditions, and 14 percent of the City’s public nuisance structures. Overall, the housing stock in the Drake neighborhood is

in slightly worse condition than the citywide average. The average assessed value in the neighborhood is also lower than the citywide average, despite the fact that homes in Drake are larger.

|                     | Des Moines    |      | Drake*       |      |
|---------------------|---------------|------|--------------|------|
| Excellent           | 621           | 1%   | 41           | 1%   |
| Very Good           | 8,473         | 14%  | 378          | 13%  |
| Above Normal        | 26,082        | 44%  | 1171         | 41%  |
| Normal              | 19,947        | 34%  | 943          | 33%  |
| Below Normal        | 3,528         | 6%   | 273          | 10%  |
| Poor                | 567           | 1%   | 40           | 1%   |
| Very Poor           | 124           | 0.2% | 6            | 0.2% |
| <b>Total</b>        | <b>59,342</b> |      | <b>2,852</b> |      |
| <b>Commercial</b>   |               |      |              |      |
| E, VG, AB           | 35,176        | 59%  | 1,590        | 56%  |
| Normal              | 19,947        | 34%  | 943          | 33%  |
| BN, P, VP           | 4,219         | 7%   | 319          | 11%  |
| Public Nuisance     | 177           | 0.3% | 25           | 0.9% |
| <b>Residential</b>  |               |      |              |      |
| Avg. Assessed Value | \$121,429     |      | \$112,634    |      |
| Avg. Sq Footage     | 1,232         |      | 1,439        |      |
| Value per Sq Ft     | \$99          |      | \$81         |      |
| Avg. Year Built     | 1945          |      | 1920         |      |

Data from Polk County Assessor

\*Includes Single Family, Bi-Attached, Duplex, 2-Unit Conversion

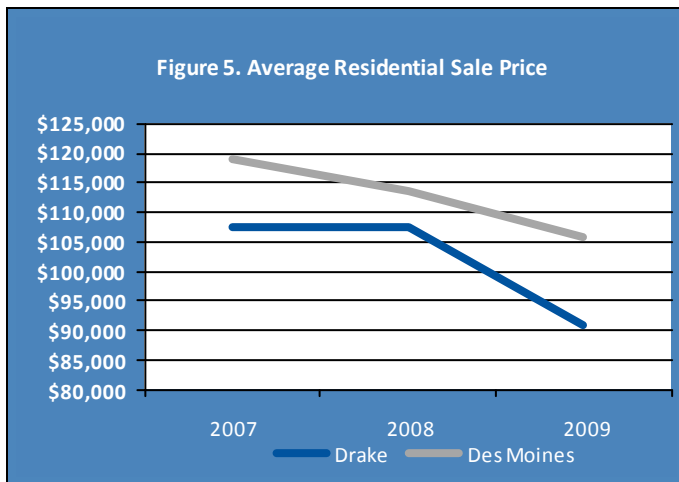
Home sales information is summarized in Table 6. The Drake neighborhood experienced a significant drop in the number of residential home sales between 2007 and 2008, followed by a drop in the average sale price between 2008 and 2009. While this followed a citywide trend, sale prices in the neighborhood fell further than they did in the City as a whole, as shown in Figure 5.

|            | Total Sales | Contract | Deed   | % of Homes on Contract |
|------------|-------------|----------|--------|------------------------|
| Drake      | 540         | 47       | 493    | 9%                     |
| Des Moines | 12,008      | 1,021    | 10,986 | 9%                     |

Data from Polk County Assessor

Residential properties can be further subdivided into dwelling types: single family, bi-attached, duplex, or conversion. Further analysis showed that 91 percent of the neighborhood's residential properties in above normal, very good, or excellent condition are single family homes. Conversions, homes that were once single family but have been converted to multiple units, have the lowest assessed value per square foot, \$55 on average, compared to \$77 for bi-attached/duplexes and \$83 for single family homes. This, along with the condition ratings for commercially classified conversions discussed below, demonstrates why improving this type of property is a major priority of the plan.

Housing classified as commercial property in the Apartment Occupancy Group by the Polk County Assessor includes apartments (built-as multiple-family structures) and apartment conversions (conversions with



three or more units). Table 7 compares the property values in the Drake neighborhood to the City. Table 8 further analyzes this class of property within the Drake neighborhood. Based on the data, it is likely that the conversions are bringing down property values in the neighborhood and contributing to the negative perception of the area.

As the housing needs were analyzed, it became apparent that the housing stock in the Drake neighborhood varied greatly between the eastern and western parts of the neighborhood. Additionally, some issues were localized in only part of the neighborhood. For example, while the neighborhood as a whole does not have a higher incidence of contract sales than the rest of the City, further analysis showed that the majority of contract sales occurred in the northeast part of the neighborhood.



|                   | Des Moines | Drake     |
|-------------------|------------|-----------|
| # of parcels      | 1,023      | 286       |
| Avg. Assessment   | \$466,991  | \$383,906 |
| Median Assessment | \$140,500  | \$120,500 |

Data from Polk County Assessor

| Condition    | Apartments |     | Apt. Conversions |     |
|--------------|------------|-----|------------------|-----|
|              | #          | %   | #                | %   |
| Above Normal | 10         | 13% | 6                | 3%  |
| Normal       | 64         | 80% | 54               | 26% |
| Below Normal | 5          | 6%  | 145              | 70% |
| Poor         | 1          | 1%  | 1                | 0%  |
| Total        | 80         |     | 206              |     |

\*Does not include 4 properties with no condition listed.

|                     | Apartments  | Apt. Conversions |
|---------------------|-------------|------------------|
| Avg. # Units        | 24.9        | 4.6              |
| Avg. Assessed Value | \$1,077,840 | \$113,763        |

Data from Polk County Assessor



To better understand the differences in property and housing characteristics, the neighborhood was divided into five areas, or quintiles. The subsequent analysis was used during the planning process to define the housing goals and strategies, some of which are geographically specific. See Map 4 for key issues and characteristics of each quintile.

Housing revitalization priorities identified during the planning process included: rental properties, home owner-

ship, and preservation of historic and older housing. For plan implementation, the Drake Neighborhood Association has defined its role as collecting and disseminating information regarding resources and best practices, to promote upkeep of property and the provision of quality housing options. Partnership with the City, the Neighborhood Finance Corporation (NFC), non-profit housing agencies, and private developers will be critical to implementing the housing goals.



Map 4: Housing Characteristics by Quintile (2009)

**NW Quintile**

Avg. Sq. Footage = 1,476  
 Avg. Year Built = 1929  
 Avg. Home Value = \$149,001  
 Avg. Value / Sq. Ft. = \$104.55  
 Excellent conditions  
 Fewer rentals  
 Predominantly single-family

**NC Quintile**

Avg. Sq. Footage = 1,249  
 Avg. Year Built = 1918  
 Avg. Home Value \$94,242  
 Avg. Value / Sq. Ft. = \$79.76  
 Mostly Good conditions  
 Fewer rentals  
 Predominantly single-family

**SW Quintile**

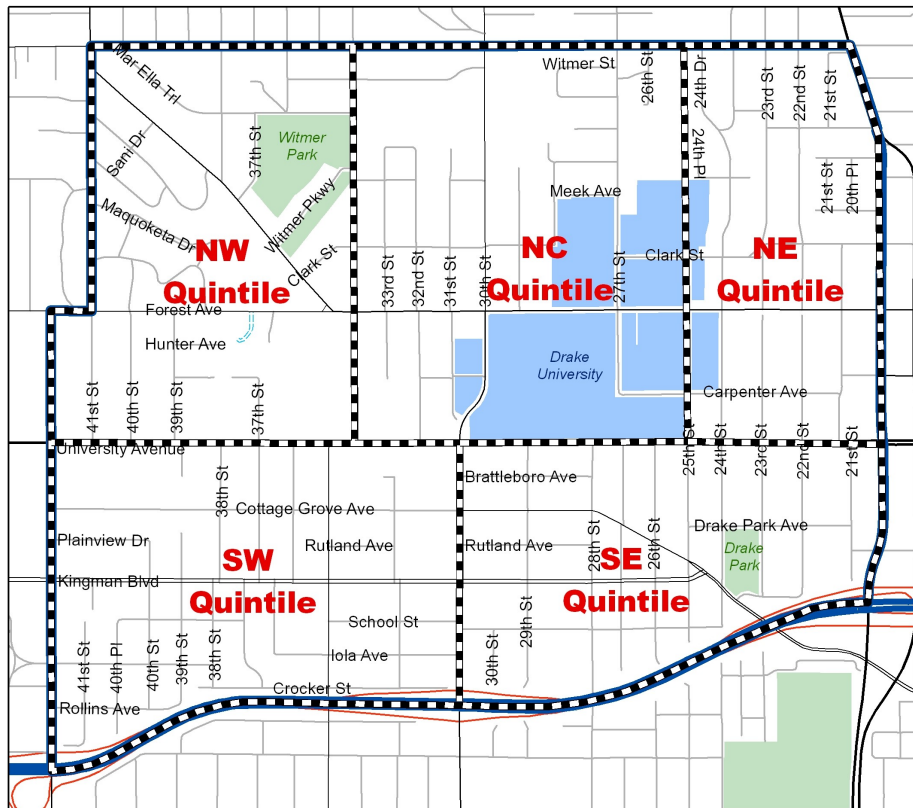
Avg. Sq. Footage = 1,716  
 Avg. Year Built = 1919  
 Avg. Home Value = \$131,214  
 Avg. Value / Sq. Ft. = \$88.25  
 Good conditions  
 Fewer rentals  
 Predominantly single-family

**NE Quintile**

Avg. Sq. Footage = 1,211  
 Avg. Year Built = 1914  
 Avg. Home Value = \$62,920  
 Avg. Value / Sq. Ft. = \$54.28  
 Below normal conditions –  
 Vacant, abandoned, foreclosed,  
 Public nuisances  
 Contract sales  
 Rental properties

**SE Quintile**

Avg. Sq. Footage = 1,510  
 Avg. Year Built = 1909  
 Avg. Home Value = \$92,660  
 Avg. Value / Sq. Ft. = \$59.85  
 Conversions prevalent  
 Variety of conditions  
 Some revitalization occurring



**Legend**

- Quintile Boundaries
- Park
- Drake Campus

## Rental Property

Drake has a high proportion of renter-occupied housing, 56 percent as of the 2000 Census, compared to 35 percent in the City as a whole. Many larger homes were converted to multiple-unit flats between the 1920s and the 1950s to support the booming University population. The neighborhood also has a number of built-as multiple-family buildings and double-houses scattered throughout the neighborhood. The conversions are concentrated in the south and east parts of the neighborhood, and adjacent to Drake University. While most of these conversions are not occupied by students today, they do provide rental housing for low and moderate income residents. Neighborhood stakeholders are concerned with the quality of these housing units and the effect on property values; as illustrated by the data in the beginning of this section, many of the conversion properties are not well-maintained.

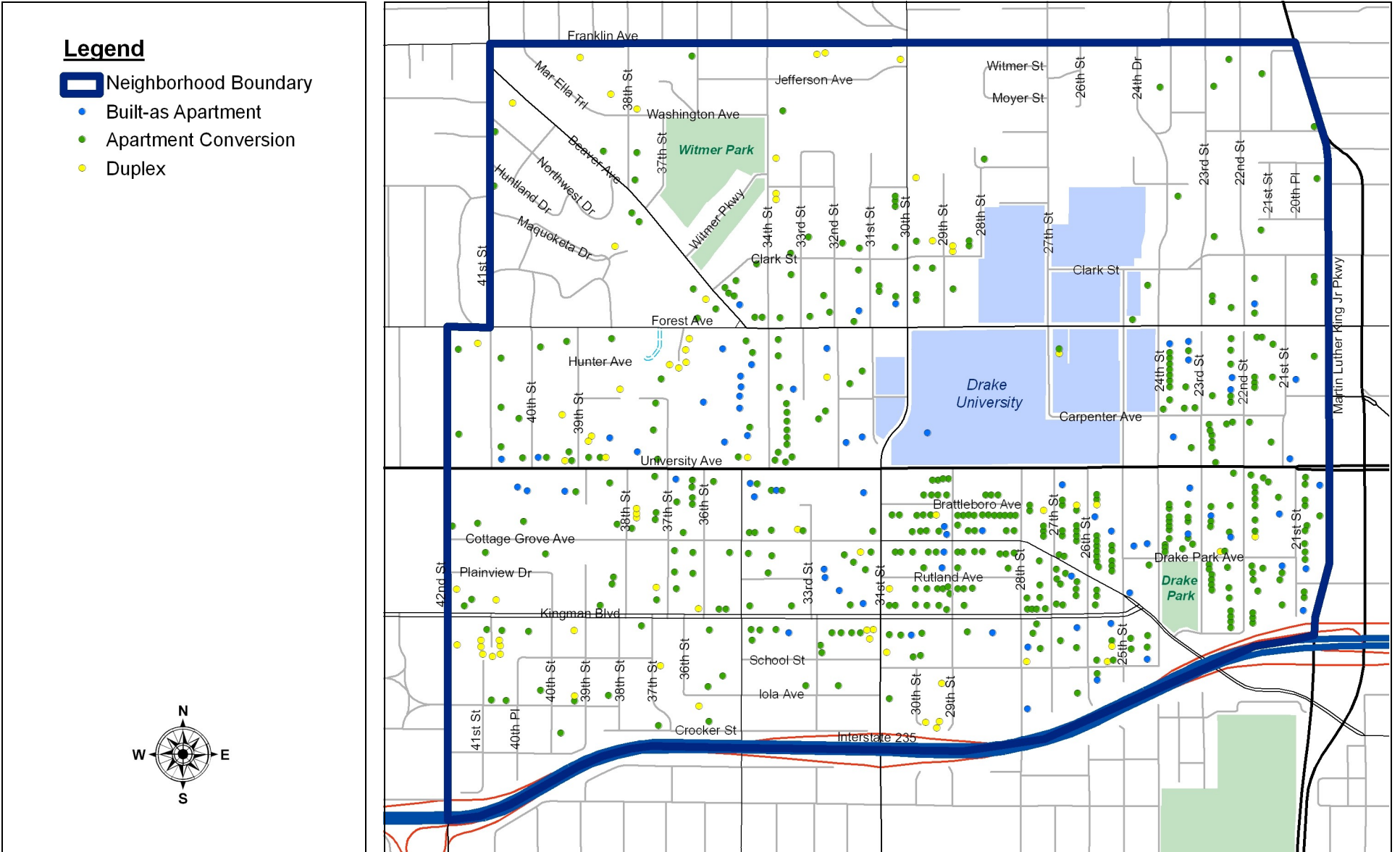
Another major concern is the impact of these conversions on the neighborhood, given that they were originally constructed as single-family homes and the lots are not large enough to accommodate the number of tenants living in them today. Issues such as parking, traffic, garbage collection/storage, and unsightly building additions contribute to a negative perception of the area. While it may not be feasible for every conversion to be restored as a single-family home, the neighborhood would like to see more properties downsized to reduce the number of units and lessen the negative impacts on the surrounding area. Whenever possible, the Neighborhood Association would prefer that properties be restored to their original configuration, in

keeping with historic preservation goals. There are several resources available for new construction or rehabilitation of rental property through the City's Neighborhood Conservation Services program. In addition, the Neighborhood Finance Corporation has a downsizing program that offers a subsidy. The Neighborhood Association will work with the NFC to develop a pilot downsizing loan program in targeted geographic areas.

In addition to encouraging property improvements, stakeholders would like investor-owners to attract good tenants. During the planning process, it was determined that a strong relationship is lacking between the Drake Neighborhood Association and the rental community (both investor-owners and tenants). To remedy this situation, a separate subcommittee formed to begin a conversation with investor-owners about their needs, and encourage the provision of quality rental housing that adds, rather than detracts, value in the neighborhood. The Neighborhood Association will help to match investor-owners with resources like the Crime Free Multi-Housing program offered by the Des Moines Police Department, which trains property managers on how to screen tenants, prevent crime, make security improvements to the property, and engage tenants in safe living practices. They will also provide resources for tenants, such as a handbook describing their rights. Having good quality tenants and well-kept property can increase the return on investment for the property owner, resulting in a win-win situation for the owner, the tenant, and the neighborhood. The Drake Neighborhood Association recognizes that renters and investor-owners are an important part of their community.



Map 5: Multi-family Housing in the Drake Neighborhood



## Historic Preservation

A major asset of the Drake neighborhood is the historic housing stock. Homes within the Drake neighborhood have provided generations of residents with high quality housing in a variety of architectural styles. Common architectural styles in the neighborhood include: Queen Anne Victorians, American Four Squares, Craftsman Bungalows, Brick Tudors, among others.

Drake University played a key role in the residential and commercial development of the neighborhood. Prior to 1880 the Drake area remained relatively undeveloped with limited, scattered housing and farmsteads dominating the landscape. Residential development began in earnest after Drake University was founded in 1881. The Drake University Land Company was formed in order to develop the large tracts of land that were owned by the University east of campus. Several residential subdivisions were platted and developed at this time by Drake University Land Company with the most prominent being University Place. A quarter of the proceeds from the land sales were returned to the University Treasury.

Many of the historic homes from this era of development are still present in the neighborhood today and some are being restored to their original configuration. The gradual expansion of Drake University's campus, as well as the construction and recent expansion of I-235 (formerly known as the McVicar Freeway) resulted in the loss of some homes. But by in large the Drake neighbor-

hood is fortunate in that it has been able to retain the majority of its original housing stock and does not suffer from a large number of vacant lots. Because of this, preservation of the existing housing stock is a priority housing objective rather than focusing on infill development.

The Drake neighborhood currently contains two National Register Historic Districts, Kingman Place and Drake University Campus along with at least 17 individually listed properties. Additionally, the Forestdale Plat and Iola Place have been determined eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. These National Register listed districts and properties, as well as eligible districts have been identified through the work of various studies but there has not been a comprehensive historic and architectural survey of the Drake neighborhood.

In order to fully understand the historic development of the Drake neighborhood, the housing committee determined that a comprehensive historic and architectural survey of the neighborhood is a top priority. The goal of this effort is to identify additional historic properties or districts within the neighborhood for listing on the National Register. This will provide property owners with recognition of their property's historic and/or architectural significance. Additionally, it makes the property eligible to receive grants, tax credits, rehabilitation resources, and other benefits when undertaking a preservation or rehabilitation project.



| Goal / Outcome   | Strategy  | Action Steps   | Responsible Party / Timeline | Timeline for Completion | Focus Area |
|--|---|--|------------------------------|-------------------------|------------|
| 1.0 Increase home ownership in the Drake neighborhood. | 1.0.1 Promote NFC and other area non-profits' homebuyer programs. | 1.0.1a Include NFC advertisements in the DNA newsletter & on the DNA website regularly.  | DNA, NFC                     | 1 year;<br>Ongoing      | NHOOD      |
|  |   | 1.0.1b Highlight NFC experience/success stories told by individual homeowners in their newsletter & on the DNA website.  | DNA, NFC                     | 1 year;<br>Ongoing      | NHOOD      |
|  |   | 1.0.1c Include information on area non-profit housing agencies such as Habitat for Humanity and HOME, Inc. on the DNA website.   | DNA, Drake Housing Coalition | 1 year;<br>Ongoing      | NHOOD      |
|  | 1.0.2 Market the Drake neighborhood to homebuyers.                | 1.0.2a Develop a promotional strategy / marketing story on "reasons to live in the Drake neighborhood" to give to realtors.  | DNA                          | 1 year                  | NHOOD      |
|  |   | 1.0.2b Make information on homes for sale more accessible, by listing on the DNA website, in the newsletter, at the farmer's market booth, and during the annual house tour.   | DNA                          | 2 years                 | NHOOD      |
|  |   | 1.0.2c Invite realtors to take turns at the Farmer's Market in the DNA booth.  | DNA                          | 2 years                 | NHOOD      |
|  |   | 1.0.2d Establish relationships with relocation managers' at large employers in the Des Moines Metro Area, such as Drake University, Principal, Nationwide, etc., and promote the Drake neighborhood's housing opportunities. | DNA                          | 3-5 years               | NHOOD      |
|  | 1.0.3 Educate residents on "good practices" for homeownership.    | 1.0.3a Host an informational housing fair and include resources/tips for homeowners.   | DNA, Drake Housing Coalition | 1 year                  | NHOOD      |
|  |   | 1.0.3b Create a handbook with advice on "living in the neighborhood", including important phone numbers, City policies, and good neighbor ethics.  | City - CD, DNA, DU           | 2 years                 | NHOOD      |
|  |   | 1.0.3c Post the handbook on the DNA website, ultimately creating an easy to search online resource.  | DNA                          | 2 years                 | NHOOD      |

| Goal / Outcome   | Strategy   | Action Steps   | Responsible Party / Timeline                   | Timeline for Completion | Focus Area        |
|--|--|--|--|-------------------------|-------------------|
|  |  | 1.0.3d Sponsor a booth at the Drake Farmer's Market at least twice per season offering resources for homeowners, the neighborhood handbook, and other relevant information.                          | <b>DNA</b>                                     | 2 years                 | NHOOD             |
|  | 1.0.4 Work with area lenders to develop promotions and/or loan products.                                       | 1.0.4a Establish a relationship with at least one local lender and promote loan products that assist in the rehabilitation of homes or conversion of rentals to owner-occupied units.                | <b>DNA, City - CD</b>                          | 3-5 years               | NHOOD             |
|  | 1.0.5 Reduce the number of homes purchased on contract in the NE part of the neighborhood.                     | 1.0.5a Partner with the City and local non-profits to replace contracts with mortgages for eligible buyers. Start by offering credit counseling.   | <b>DNA, Drake Housing Coalition, CCI</b>       | 5-7 years               | NE Quintile       |
|  | 1.0.6 Reduce the number of homes vacated or abandoned due to foreclosure.                                      | 1.0.6a Utilize the City's Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) to return the viability of these properties.  | <b>City - CD, DNA</b>                          | 2 years                 | NE Quintile       |
|  |  | 1.0.6b Sponsor a meeting to educate neighborhood residents on how to handle vacant, abandoned or foreclosed properties.  | <b>DNA, City - CD, City - NBSD</b>             | 2 years                 | NE/SE/SW Quintile |
|  | 1.0.7 Transition multi-family buildings to owner-occupied units, as appropriate.                               | 1.0.7a Promote existing, conforming duplexes as opportunities for home ownership.  | <b>City - CD, DNA, Drake Housing Coalition</b> | 2 years                 | NHOOD             |
|  |  | 1.0.7b Establish financing that would allow for, if/when appropriate, built-as multi-family building from rental to owner-occupied condo units.  | <b>City - CD, DNA, NFC</b>                     | 3-5 years               | SE/SW Quintile    |
| 1.1 Promote the renovation and maintenance of built-as double-houses and multi-family buildings. | 1.1.1 Work with landlords and investor owners to ensure good management practices for multi-family properties. | 1.1.1a Host an informational housing fair and include resources for landlords and tenants.   | <b>DNA, Drake Housing Coalition</b>            | 1 year                  | NHOOD             |
|  |  | 1.1.1b Acknowledge property owners that complete the Crime Free Multi Housing Program with the Des Moines Police Department in the newsletter, on the DNA website, and in the DU Real Estate Office. | <b>DNA, DU</b>                                 | 6 months                | NHOOD             |
|  | 1.1.2 Showcase quality rental units in the neighborhood.   | 1.1.2a Continue to include quality apartment buildings whenever possible on the annual house tour.   | <b>DNA</b>                                     | 1 year;<br>Ongoing      | NHOOD             |

| Goal / Outcome   | Strategy  | Action Steps   | Responsible Party / Timeline                          | Timeline for Completion | Focus Area        |
|--|---|--|---|-------------------------|-------------------|
|  | 1.1.3 Encourage property owners to utilize resources such as the Rental Rehabilitation Program through the City of Des Moines Community Development Department. | 1.1.3a Develop a housing resource guide listing available programs and application criteria.   | City - CD, DNA, Drake Housing Coalition               | 2 years                 | NHOOD             |
| 1.2 Increase the involvement of the rental community in the neighborhood and DNA.                          | 1.2.1 Provide information that is useful for renters and landlords.   | 1.2.1a Partner with HOME, Inc. to distribute their <i>Rental Handbook for Landlords and Tenants</i> to rental properties.  | DNA, HOME, Inc.                                       | 2 years                 | NE/SE/SW Quintile |
|  |   | 1.2.1b Promote the housing counseling services offered by HOME, Inc. as a resource for renters or landlords.   | DNA, HOME, Inc.                                       | 2 years                 | NHOOD             |
|  |   | 1.2.1c Work with neighborhood landlords to create a Drake Area Landlord Association.   | DNA, DABA   | 6 months                | NHOOD             |
|  |   | 1.2.1d Encourage landlords to participate in the Iowa Landlord Association.  | DNA   | 1 year                  | NHOOD             |
| 1.3 Improve neighborhood appearance by restoring and preserving the architectural integrity of properties. | 1.3.1 Identify properties or blocks that are in greatest need of improvement.   | 1.3.1a Conduct a property condition survey in the field and use housing data provided by the City to identify properties that are in the greatest need of improvement. | DNA, City - CD  | 1 year                  | SE/NE Quintile    |
|  |   | 1.3.1b Identify local non-profits' programs available to assist in revitalizing properties in disrepair.   | City - CD, DNA, Drake Housing Coalition               | 2 years                 | NHOOD             |
|  | 1.3.2 Sponsor a "Great Unveiling" project each year, in conjunction with the house tour and National Preservation Week.   | 1.3.2a Organize a project (pursuant to available funding), where a house covered in replacement siding is stripped to the original cladding.                           | DNA, Partnering Agency (y.e. SHPO, DM Rehabbers Club) | 2 years                 | NHOOD             |
|  | 1.3.3 Provide assistance to those who are unable to maintain their property.  | 1.3.3a Partner with Rebuilding Together, Drake students, local churches, contractors, and organize volunteer clean-up/repair projects.                                 | DNA, DU, Rebuilding Together                          | 6 months; Ongoing       | NE Quintile       |

| Goal / Outcome   | Strategy   | Action Steps   | Responsible Party / Timeline            | Timeline for Completion | Focus Area |
|--|--|--|---|-------------------------|------------|
|  | 1.3.4 Promote awareness of tools for home improvements and repair.   | 1.3.4a Post information on the DNA website on available grants, loans, and other tools for home repair (NFC, NCS, etc.)  | DNA, Drake Housing Coalition            | 6 months; Ongoing       | NHOOD      |
|  | 1.3.5 Utilize NBSD staff assigned to Drake to enforce the City's existing codes.   | 1.3.5a Educate residents, through the DNA website, on the role of NBSD staff in the neighborhood.  | DNA, City - NBSD                        | 6 months; Ongoing       | NHOOD      |
|  |  | 1.3.5b NBSD officers will attend at least one quarterly DNA meeting per year to educate residents on City housing code.  | City - NBSD, DNA                        | Ongoing                 | NHOOD      |
| 1.4 Provide a range of quality housing opportunities in the Drake neighborhood.  | 1.4.1 Encourage for-profit developers & not-for-profit housing providers to build quality housing units consistent with the existing neighborhood character. | 1.4.1a Establish a Drake Housing Coalition.  | City - CD, DNA, Drake Housing Coalition | 1 year                  | NHOOD      |
|  |  | 1.4.1b Encourage new, affordable multi-family developments to be located along neighborhood corridors such as University Ave, Forest Ave, MLK Jr. Parkway, etc. [See also Land Use & Zoning Section]       | DNA, City - CD                          | Policy                  | NHOOD      |
| 1.5 Preserve, promote, and protect historic resources in the Drake neighborhood. | 1.5.1 Identify historic districts and properties that exist in the Drake neighborhood.   | 1.5.1a Conduct a Historical and Architectural Resource Survey of the Drake neighborhood.   | DNA                                     | 2 years                 | NHOOD      |
|  |  | 1.5.1b Prepare the site inventory forms for historic eligibility and nominations for properties/districts to be listed on the Nat'l Register of Historic Places.   | DNA                                     | 3 years                 | NHOOD      |
|  |  | 1.5.1c Share findings from the historical and architectural survey via workshops and other association events, such as the annual house tour. In addition, all findings will be posted to the DNA website. | DNA                                     | 3 years                 | NHOOD      |
|  |  | 1.5.1d Post data from the historic survey onto the DNA website, creating a searchable tool for property owners and history buffs. May include the creation of a photo database.                            | DNA                                     | 3 years                 | NHOOD      |

| Goal / Outcome  | Strategy  | Action Steps   | Responsible Party / Timeline                  | Timeline for Completion | Focus Area  |
|---|---|--|---|-------------------------|-------------|
|   |   | 1.5.1e Promote awareness of National Register Historic Districts through signage, among other tools.   | DNA   | 3-5 years               | NHOOD       |
|   |   | 1.5.1f Continue to research, identify, and nominate eligible properties to the National Register of Historic Places.   | DNA   | Ongoing                 | NHOOD       |
|   | 1.5.2 Encourage the restoration of historic homes in the Drake neighborhood.                                | 1.5.2a Provide information, such as a pattern book or palette of designs, on appropriate home repairs, additions, etc., and include this information on the DNA website among other means of distribution. | DNA, City - CD                                | 3-5 years               | NHOOD       |
|   |   | 1.5.2b Promote the State Historic Tax Credit, available to owners of houses eligible for the Nat'l Register of Historic Places, via the DNA website and at workshops.                                      | DNA   | 3-5 years               | NHOOD       |
| 1.6 Restore the original character of the SE part of the neighborhood while providing a range of quality housing opportunities. | 1.6.1 Reduce density of properties originally built as single-family. [See also Land Use & Zoning Section]. | 1.6.1a Develop a model for downsizing converted single-family properties, defining criteria for rehabilitation and financing.  | City - NCS, NFC, DNA                          | 1 year                  | SE Quintile |
|   |   | 1.6.1b Identify properties that could effectively utilize the NFC's downsizing program, or would be good candidates for downsizing in general.   | City - NCS, NFC, DNA, Drake Housing Coalition | 2 years                 | SE Quintile |
|   | 1.6.2 Reduce density of multi-family properties. [See also Land Use & Zoning Section].                      | 1.6.2a Identify a project area and develop program guidelines targeting density reduction and renovation of multi-family properties.   | City - NCS, DNA, Drake Housing Coalition      | 1 year                  | SE Quintile |
|   |   | 1.6.2b For a limited time, offer low interest loans to renovate and reduce units in multi-family properties in the identified project area.  | NFC, City - NCS, Drake Housing Coalition      | 2 years                 | SE Quintile |

| Goal / Outcome  | Strategy  | Action Steps   | Responsible Party / Timeline  | Timeline for Completion | Focus Area         |
|---|---|--|---|-------------------------|--------------------|
| 1.7 Promote sustainability in the Drake neighborhood.   | 1.7.1 Encourage “green” construction techniques in rehab & new construction projects in keeping with the architectural integrity of the property. | 1.7.1a Partner with Center on Sustainable Community (COSC) to host a workshop on sustainable initiatives and available incentives.                               | DNA, COSC, DU, DM Rehabbers Club  | 2 years                 | NHOOD              |
|   |   | 1.7.1b Spotlight green building practices in the newsletter, DNA website, and on the DNA House Tour.   | DNA   | 6 months                | NHOOD              |
|   | 1.7.2 Improve energy efficiency of homes in the neighborhood while maintaining their architectural integrity.                                     | 1.7.2a Partner with Polk County, MidAmerican Energy, and/or another corporation to do a weatherization project in the neighborhood.                              | DNA, Polk County, MidAmerican Energy, Rebuilding Together, City - NCS / CIA | 1 year                  | NHOOD              |
| 1.8 Establish a relationship with residents in the NE quadrant of the neighborhood to implement plan goals.                                 | 1.8.1 Improve communication with residents in this area.  | 1.8.1a Work with the Kirkwood Glen, Carpenter, and Ingleside Hills neighborhood groups as well as CCI to identify common interests and a communication strategy. | DNA   | 1 year                  | NE Quintile        |
|   | 1.8.2 Develop strategies to engage non-English speaking residents and ethnic groups.  | 1.8.2a Partner with Drake University or another individual or agency to translate their newsletter into Spanish, Sudanese, Laotian, etc. at least once per year. | DNA, EFR, DU  | 1 year                  | NE Quintile        |
| 1.9 Improve property conditions and overall appearance in a manner that is in keeping with the architectural integrity of the neighborhood. | 1.9.1 Identify problem properties or block areas in need of clean up or repair.   | 1.9.1a Conduct NESS surveys throughout the Drake neighborhood.   | DNA, Rebuilding Together, City  | 1 year                  | NE Quintile; NHOOD |



# Parks, Trails, and Open Space

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Recreation is an important component in the health and prosperity of Des Moines neighborhoods. Quality parks and open space add economic and social value to the surrounding area. Parklands also provide aesthetic enhancement and environmental benefits while contributing to the composition and urban fabric of the City.

### Drake Area Parks

The Drake neighborhood benefits from two beautiful city parks within its boundaries, Drake Park and Witmer Park. Both of these parks have a rich history, patronized by generations of Des Moines residents to enjoy the rolling landscape and mature tree canopy they provide. Preserving and improving these quality parks for current and future generations to enjoy is a high priority for the Drake Neighborhood Association.

#### Drake Park

Drake Park is located at 24th Street and Cottage Grove Avenue in the southeast corner of the neighborhood. Amenities at Drake Park include an open shelter with restrooms, basketball and tennis courts, playground equipment, wading pool, and others. The park itself is relatively flat but is raised in elevation above 24th Street and Cottage Grove Avenue making it difficult to see into the park from those streets. While this elevation change adds to the presence and grandeur of the park it also creates a safety issue by limiting the view of the public and police patrols into the park from the south and west.

Drake Park is one of the oldest parks in Des Moines with its origin dating back to around 1900 when the land was acquired for public use by the City of Des Moines from the Drake University Land Company. The history of Drake Park is unique with its ties to Drake University Land Company and its role in the development of the neighborhood. The neighborhood would like to see this

rich history reinforced through the installation of markers or boards in the park to tell the story to park patrons.

#### Witmer Park

Witmer Park is located at 34th Street and Witmer Parkway in the northwest corner of the neighborhood. Amenities in Witmer Park include a pond, recreation trail, tennis court, softball diamond, playground equipment, and others. The park is part of the Closes Creek watershed and plays a role in storm water management for the surrounding area. Because of this it was suggested that additional native plantings, bioretention systems, and/or raingardens be installed where appropriate in the park to assist in storm water management and reduce runoff.

Witmer Park has potential to be a park of four seasons with emphasis placed on winter activities. The pond, the park's perimeter, and the hillsides offer opportunities for ice skating, cross-country skiing or snow shoeing, and sledding or tubing. The Parks Department and Neighborhood Association should work together to organize winter games and activities at Witmer Park.

#### Park Improvements

While the two parks provide open space and recreational opportunities for neighborhood residents, the play equipment, facilities and landscapes have begun to show signs of age and wear. Neither park has had a master plan prepared to guide future improvements. There is no doubt that the City of Des Moines has been faced with some difficult budget decisions in recent years. This has led to some significant changes for the Parks and Recreation Department, including the privatization of much of the park maintenance activities. However, the need to strategically plan for and implement improvements within these parks remains a priority for the both the Parks Department and the Neighborhood Association.



| Goal / Outcome   | Strategy  | Action Steps   | Responsible Party<br>(Primary in Bold) | Timeline for Completion |
|--|---|--|--|-------------------------|
| 2.0 Improve the family friendliness and functionality of Drake Park.             | 2.0.1 Identify and address the short term needs of Drake Park.                | 2.0.1a Pursue grants to aid in the funding of smaller improvements (such as updated play equipment.)         | DNA                                    | 2 years                 |
|  |   | 2.0.1b Install additional trash cans in the park.  | City - Parks                           | 1 year                  |
|  |   | 2.0.1c Install bike racks in Drake Park.   | City - Parks                           | 1 year                  |
|  |   | 2.0.1d Partner to do minor landscape improvements where appropriate (native plantings).                      | <b>DNA</b> , City - Parks              | 1 year                  |
|  | 2.0.2 Develop a plan to address larger, long term improvements at Drake Park. | 2.0.2a Develop a master plan for Drake Park.   | <b>City - Parks</b> , DNA              | 3 years                 |
|  |   | 2.0.2b If necessary, pursue private funding to implement park improvements.                                  | DNA                                    | 3 years                 |
|  |   | 2.0.2c Update the wading pool and add a water feature. If necessary, pursue grants to aid in the funding.    | <b>City - Parks</b> , DNA              | 3-5 years               |
| 2.1 Ensure Drake Park is a safe place for people of all ages to gather and play. | 2.1.1 Address existing safety issues and concerns at Drake Park.              | 2.1.1a Analyze/address safety concerns in Drake Park.  | <b>City - NBSD</b> , DNA, City - Parks | 1 year                  |
|  |   | 2.1.1b Consider security lighting in the park, including in/ around the shelter (dark sky compliant).        | <b>City - Parks</b> , DNA              | 1 year                  |
|  |   | 2.1.1c Look at improving sight lines into Drake Park from 24th Street.                                       | <b>City - Parks</b> , DNA              | 3-5 years               |
| 2.2 Preserve the historical significance of Drake Park for future generations.   | 2.2.1 Educate park visitors on the history of Drake Park.                     | 2.2.1a Develop historic boards / informational signage to tell the history of the neighborhood and the park. | <b>DNA</b> , City - Parks              | 2 years                 |
|  | 2.2.2 Improve awareness/ marketing of Drake Park.                             | 2.2.2a Utilize the DNA and Parks Department websites to better promote the amenities of the park.            | <b>DNA</b> , City - Parks              | 1 year                  |
|  |   | 2.2.2b Organize special events in the park/explore alternative uses to increase usage of the park.           | <b>DNA</b> , City - Parks              | 1 year                  |

| Goal / Outcome   | Strategy   | Action Steps   | Responsible Party<br>(Primary in Bold)   | Timeline for Completion              |           |
|--|--|--|--|--------------------------------------|-----------|
| 2.3 Restore the native character of Witmer Park while maintaining its family friendliness and functionality. | 2.3.1 Identify and address the short term needs of Witmer Park.  | 2.3.1a Maintain tennis courts in playing condition at Witmer Park, as they are frequently used.  | City - Parks   | 2 years                              |           |
|  |  | 2.3.1b Address maintenance issues in Witmer Park such as: walking path, aeration system in the pond, and waterfront accessibility to the pond. | City - Parks   | 1 year                               |           |
|  |  | 2.3.1c Partner to do minor landscape improvements where appropriate (native plantings).  | <b>DNA</b> , City - Parks  | 1 year                               |           |
|  | 2.3.2 Develop a plan to address larger, long term improvements at Witmer Park, considering its native character. |  | 2.3.2a Develop a master plan for Witmer Park, respecting its native character.   | <b>City - Parks</b> , DNA            | 3 years   |
|  |  |  | 2.3.2b If necessary, pursue private funding to implement park improvements.  | DNA                                  | 3 years   |
|  |  |  | 2.3.2c Analyze the need to replace the recently removed shelter with an appropriate shelter.   | <b>City - Parks</b> , DNA            | 3-5 years |
|  |  |  | 2.3.2d Evaluate storm water collection facilities within the park and assess alternative solutions (Closes Creek).                                     | <b>City - Parks</b> , City - PW, DNA | 1 year    |
|  |  |  | 2.3.2e Study alternative parking solutions, including the possibility of closing Witmer Pkwy at 34th St to provide addition/better off-street parking. | <b>City - Parks</b> , DNA            | 3-5 years |
|  | 2.3.3 Utilize Witmer Park year around. 2.3.3 Utilize Witmer Park year around.                                    |  | 2.3.3a Allow winter recreational activities in Witmer Park such as ice skating, XC skiing, snow shoeing, etc.  | City - Parks                         | 1 year    |
|  |  |  | 2.3.3b Host a winter carnival event to promote Witmer as a park of four seasons.   | <b>DNA</b> , City - Parks            | 2 years   |
| 2.4 Ensure Witmer Park is a safe place for people of all ages to gather and play.                            | 2.4.1 Address existing safety issues and concerns at Witmer Park.  | 2.4.1a Analyze/address safety concerns in Witmer Park.   | <b>City - NBSD</b> , DNA, City - Parks   | 1 year                               |           |
|  |  | 2.4.1b Research security lighting for Witmer Park (dark sky compliant).  | <b>City - Parks</b> , DNA  | 1 year                               |           |
| 2.5 Preserve the historical significance of Witmer Park for future generations.                              | 2.5.1 Educate park visitors on the history of Witmer Park.   | 2.5.1a Develop historic boards / informational signage to tell the history of the neighborhood and the park.                                   | DNA  | 2 years                              |           |
|  | 2.5.2 Improve awareness/marketing of Witmer Park.  | 2.5.2a Utilize the DNA and Parks Department websites to better promote the amenities of the park.  | <b>DNA</b> , City - Parks  | 1 year                               |           |

## Recreation, Bicycling, and Trails

The existing and planned trail network provides alternative transportation opportunities for residents of the Drake neighborhood. Drake's location between other neighborhoods such as Beaverdale and Sherman Hill place Drake at a critical center point in connecting northwest Des Moines neighborhoods to downtown

and points beyond. In 2008/9 the City of Des Moines Parks and Recreation completed the Waveland Trail connection at 42nd Street just north of I-235. This important trail connection improves the connectivity of the Drake neighborhood to the Walnut Creek Trail and other segments in the Central Iowa Trail System.



| Goal / Outcome  | Strategy  | Action Steps  | Responsible Party<br>(Primary in Bold)  | Timeline for Completion               |         |
|---|---|---|---|---------------------------------------|---------|
| 2.6 Increase active recreational opportunities in the Drake neighborhood.                                 | 2.6.1 Encourage biking, running, and walking in the Drake neighborhood.   | 2.6.1a Establish/expand recreational bike routes within Drake and the surrounding neighborhoods.  | <b>City - Parks</b> , City - T&T, DNA   | 2 years                               |         |
|   |   | 2.6.1b Develop running and walking routes within the neighborhood.  | DNA   | 1 year                                |         |
| 2.7 Increase the use of bicycling as an accepted form of transportation for recreation and commuter uses. | 2.7.1 Encourage bicycling as an alternative form of transportation for short trips within the neighborhood and for commuter trips on a regular basis. | 2.7.1a Review and make recommendations for bicycle and trail facilities within the Drake neighborhood by attending public input meetings or workshops for the City's Bicycle Master Plan. | DNA   | 1 year                                |         |
|   |   | 2.7.1b Identify appropriate locations for additional bike parking in neighborhood commercial areas.   | <b>DNA</b> , DABA, City - Parks   | 2 years                               |         |
|   |   | 2.7.1c Add bicycle parking to the Drake University campus at all buildings.   | <b>DU</b> , DNA   | 2 years                               |         |
|   | 2.7.2 Tie the Drake neighborhood into the greater Des Moines trail and bikeway system.  |   | 2.7.2a Develop Forest Avenue as a bicycle corridor with a dedicated bike lane. [See also <i>Commercial Areas Goals</i> ]. | City - T&T                            | 3 years |
|   |   |   | 2.7.2b Improve the linkage between Beaverdale, Drake, Sherman Hill, Downtown, as well as Witmer Park and Drake Park.      | <b>City - Parks</b> , DNA             | 3 years |
|   |   |   | 2.7.2c Explore way finding signage along dedicated bike routes.   | <b>DNA</b> , City - Parks, City - T&T | 3 years |
|   |   |   | 2.7.2d Identify and publicize commuter bike routes to downtown and other destinations.                                    | DNA                                   | 2 years |
|   | 2.7.3 Work to create a "bike culture" in the Drake neighborhood.  |   | 2.7.3a Organize bicycle events such as a "bike night" at the Drake Farmers Market or Dogtown.                             | <b>DNA</b> , DABA                     | 1 year  |
| 2.7.3b Support existing bike events in the neighborhood like "Cranksgiving" and others.                   |   |   | <b>DNA</b> , DABA   | 1 year                                |         |



### Neighborhood Beautification

The Drake Neighborhood Association has long been an advocate for enhancing public spaces wherever possible. Two prime examples of this are the plantings within the median along Kingman Boulevard, as well as in Carpenter Square at the intersection of Kingman Boulevard and Cottage Grove Avenue at 25th Street.

These enhancements at highly visible locations not only create a positive impression for residents and visitors but they also serve as an annual community building and social activity for the Neighborhood Association. The Drake neighborhood looks to continue these efforts and expand upon them as additional opportunities come forward.

| Goal / Outcome  | Strategy  | Action Steps  | Responsible Party<br>(Primary in Bold)            | Timeline for Completion |
|---|---|---|---|-------------------------|
| 2.8 Maintain a clean, attractive, and desirable neighborhood.   | 2.8.1 Establish a long-term maintenance plan and funding source for DNA sponsored neighborhood plantings and green space. | 2.8.1a Expand the existing beautification committee to oversee Parks, Trails, and Neighborhood Beautification efforts.                  | DNA   | 1 year                  |
|   |   | 2.8.1b Recruit resident volunteers to assist in ongoing maintenance of DNA sponsored neighborhood plantings.                            | DNA   | 1 year                  |
|   |   | 2.8.1c Acquire a meter box from Des Moines Water Works to connect to a fire hydrant for watering.                                       | DNA   | 1 year                  |
|   | 2.8.2 Increase awareness of DNA beautification efforts.   | 2.8.2a Install signs in the boulevard planting beds promoting the DNA's efforts.  | DNA   | 1 year                  |
|   |   | 2.8.2b Utilize the DNA website and newsletter to increase awareness and recruit resident volunteers.                                    | DNA   | 1 year                  |
|   | 2.8.3 Explore additional neighborhood beautification efforts.   | 2.8.3a Coordinate with the DABA on beautification efforts in Dogtown and the Roosevelt Cultural District.                               | <b>DNA, DABA</b>                                  | 2 years                 |
|   |   | 2.8.3b Form a neighborhood Garden Club.   | DNA   | 1 year                  |
|   |   | 2.8.3c Organize a garden tour, similar to the house tour, as a fundraiser for the DNA.  | DNA   | 2 years                 |
|   | 2.8.4 Create community garden opportunities within the Drake neighborhood.  | 2.8.4a Review possible locations for community gardens in Drake Park and Witmer Park.   | <b>DNA, City - Parks</b>                          | 2 years                 |
|   | 2.8.5 Educate homeowners on tree planting, maintenance, and preservation.   | 2.8.5a Utilize the DNA website as a resource to post tree related information, tips, and tutorials.                                     | DNA   | 1 year                  |
| 2.9 Create opportunities for students, churches, non-profits, etc. to get involved in the Drake neighborhood. | 2.9.1 Utilize volunteer services/labor for neighborhood beautification projects.  | 2.9.1a Develop a strategy/process for Drake University student volunteer projects. [See also Community Relations & Partnerships Goals]. | <b>DNA, DU Student Life Volunteer Coordinator</b> | 1 year                  |
|   | 2.9.1 Utilize volunteer services/labor for neighborhood beautification projects.  | 2.9.1b Lead volunteer groups on beautification projects (installation and maintenance).   | DNA   | 1 year                  |

# Community Relations & Partnerships

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Neighborhood identity and the relationship with Drake University was one of the planning priorities identified at the kickoff meeting in January 2009. A committee comprised of neighborhood residents, Drake University staff and students, and representatives from other organizations or institutions in the area devoted its attention to building relationships, branding, and improving the broader perception of the Drake neighborhood. Every neighborhood wants to be an attractive and desirable place to live, work, or play. By forming sustainable and meaningful relationships among the many resources in the area, the Drake neighborhood can achieve its vision of being a diverse, culturally rich destination within the City of Des Moines.

Within this section, the Drake Neighborhood Association Board has prioritized the goals as follows:

1. Increase resident engagement
2. Strengthen the relationship with Drake University
3. Increase collaboration with other community resources
4. Build a more positive image for the neighborhood
5. Improve the sense of Neighborhood Identity

While the Drake neighborhood has many positive things happening, it continues to battle against negative perceptions. Due to a rash of crimes in the late 80s, an ongoing struggle to roust bad landlords, and a higher density than many other Des Moines neighborhoods, outsiders tend to think of the Drake neighborhood as unsafe. Media coverage of negative events further

exacerbates this impression. Even within the neighborhood, some residents feel disconnected from the Neighborhood Association and unsure that their interests are represented. To combat that impression and bolster the revitalization efforts occurring in the neighborhood, the planning committee decided to take a two-pronged approach: focus on engaging more residents from throughout the neighborhood and work to create a more positive image for Drake.

## Resident Engagement

Drake has long had a strong and active Neighborhood Association. Yet at the beginning of the planning process, it was generally agreed that the same people were often the primary contributors to association activities. The committee recognized the need to engage more residents in neighborhood activities and recruit volunteers to help implement plan goals. In order to do so, they proposed a series of strategies intended to increase communication, help neighbors get to know one another, facilitate services that are beneficial to residents, and organize programs and events that bring the community together in a positive way. The subcommittee also recommended a number of organizational changes to the Neighborhood Association Board, including creating standing committees, actively seeking participation from all parts of the neighborhood, and clarifying the role of the Board versus that of the standing committees. The Board identified resident engagement as its top priority from this section of the plan.

| Goal / Outcome  | Strategy   | Action Steps  | Responsible Party<br>(Primary in Bold) | Timeline for Completion |
|---|--|---|--|-------------------------|
| 3.0 Increase resident engagement in the neighborhood.   | 3.0.1 Facilitate volunteer opportunities.                                      | 3.0.1a Create a standing committee to oversee and organize volunteer efforts, including identifying projects and scheduling volunteers.                               | <b>DNA</b>                             | 1 year                  |
|   |  | 3.0.1b Continually recruit new volunteers to avoid burnout and cultivate new leadership.  | <b>DNA</b>                             | Ongoing                 |
|   |  | 3.0.1c Create a system to track volunteer hours and provide incentives/rewards.   | <b>DNA</b>                             | 2 years                 |
|   | 3.0.2 Develop a set of communication strategies to reach out to all residents. | 3.0.2a Collect contact information from neighborhood residents at all DNA events.   | <b>DNA</b>                             | Ongoing                 |
|   |  | 3.0.2b Partner with a local agency, individual, or DU to translate the DNA newsletter into other languages, at least once per year. [See also <i>Housing Goals</i> ]. | <b>DNA</b> , EFR, DU                   | 3 years                 |
|   |  | 3.0.2c Explore interest in developing a block captain system or communication tree to relay information.  | <b>DNA</b>                             | 3-5 years               |
|   | 3.0.3 Organize events that encourage neighborhood participation.               | 3.0.3a Host a series of block parties and "meet your neighbors" events.   | <b>DNA</b>                             | 2 years                 |
|   | 3.0.4 Provide programs that benefit neighborhood residents.                    | 3.0.4a Partner with churches and/or area non-profits to offer service opportunities that help neighbors, such as adopt-a-family, food drives, clothing drop, etc.     | <b>DNA</b> , Churches / Non-profits    | 2 years                 |
|   |  | 3.0.4b Collect requests for small repair / clean-up projects and match with volunteers.   | <b>DNA</b>                             | 3 years                 |
|   | 3.0.5 Explore ways to expand the community gardening program.                  | 3.0.5a Explore the creation of an urban farming program including identifying funding, land, and partners to support the project.                                     | <b>DNA</b> , Urban Ambassadors         | 1 year                  |
| 3.0.5b Determine if there is interest in additional community gardens in the neighborhood. [See also <i>Parks, Trails &amp; Open Space Goals</i> ]. |  | <b>DNA</b> , City - Parks   | 1 year                                 |                         |



Branding

A brand identifies a product, service, company, or in this case, neighborhood. It shows how the neighborhood relates to key constituencies: residents, visitors, and partners. To increase visibility of the neighborhood and establish a consistent brand, the DNA held a logo competition during the planning process. Artists from around the metro submitted entries and a panel of neighborhood representatives selected the winner. The logo is now featured on pole signs at various entry points to the neighborhood and on DNA materials such as brochures, posters, t-shirts, etc.

However, a brand goes beyond just a logo image. Branding also encompasses developing expectations, with the ultimate goal being to construct a positive association when people think of the “Drake neighborhood”. The DNA sees the need to form various strategies for communicating the valuable and attractive qualities of the Drake neighborhood in order to build and reinforce positive recognition and encourage investment from homebuyers, homeowners, renters, landlords, business owners, developers, real estate agents, visitors, and government. This requires an intentional effort to combat negative perceptions.

| Goal / Outcome  | Strategy  | Action Steps  | Responsible Party<br>(Primary in Bold) | Timeline for Completion |
|---|---|---|--|-------------------------|
| 3.1 Build a more positive image for the neighborhood. | 3.1.1 Create a consistent branding image.                     | 3.1.1a Hold a competition for a new logo design.  | <b>DNA</b>                             | 6 months                |
|   |   | 3.1.1b Post neighborhood signage at entry points to the Drake neighborhood.   | <b>DNA</b> , City - T&T                | 1 year                  |
|   | 3.1.2 Increase positive news coverage about the neighborhood. | 3.1.2a Assign a committee the task of handling media relations.   | <b>DNA Board</b>                       | 2 years                 |
|   |   | 3.1.2b Submit press releases to showcase neighborhood events and successes.   | <b>DNA</b> , City - CD                 | Ongoing                 |
|   |   | 3.1.2c Utilize the DNA newsletter, Facebook page, and Twitter to generate positive “buzz” about the Drake neighborhood. | <b>DNA PR Committee</b>                | Ongoing                 |

## Relationship with Drake University

The Drake neighborhood is one of only a few neighborhoods in Des Moines that boasts a higher learning institution within its boundaries. This makes the neighborhood unique, offering the opportunity of that special “college town vibe”. Throughout the planning process, participants stressed the importance of a relationship between the neighborhood and Drake University. Initial input suggested a need to enhance the existing relationship by opening new opportunities for partnership, dialogue, and interaction. The planning committee worked to devise goals and strategies that would benefit both the neighborhood and the University.

As a center point for the neighborhood both physically and culturally, Drake University is a vital part of the surrounding neighborhood and its identity. The neighborhood and the University should view one another as both assets and resources. The neighborhood serves as the front and back door to the University, and is a part of the first impression made on students, staff, and visitors. It also houses and provides shopping and recreational opportunities for the University community. Drake University provides a “destination” within the neighborhood, and attracts people to the residences

and businesses in Drake. It also hosts cultural opportunities, sporting events, and contributes to the vibrancy of the neighborhood. Finally, Drake University is a major employer and property owner in the neighborhood.

For this section, the goals related to Drake University focus on building relationships between the neighborhood and University communities. Other sections identify potential opportunities for partnership on specific tasks, such as housing, commercial areas, streetscape, or land use and zoning.

When possible, the neighborhood should create opportunities for students to engage in the surrounding community, whether that is through volunteer opportunities, special events, or class projects. Drake University should consider the impact of its decisions on the neighborhood, particularly those related to land acquisition, facilities, and events, and get input from residents whenever possible. The two entities should work together to leverage each other's activities. If each view the other as a neighbor and partner, there is much they can accomplish together. To do so will require communicating frequently, acting collectively, celebrating successes, and developing a sustainable relationship.



*Photo courtesy of Drake University*

| Goal / Outcome  | Strategy   | Action Steps   | Responsible Party<br>(Primary in Bold) | Timeline for Completion |
|---|--|--|--|-------------------------|
| 3.2 Strengthen the partnership between the Drake Neighborhood Association and Drake University. | 3.2.1 Improve two-way communication between the DNA and Drake University.  | 3.2.1a Define the Community Relations Committee's desired role and mission in relation to the DNA Board and the Drake Neighborhood Improvement Task Force (NITF) and seek recognition from both parties. | <b>DNA</b> , NITF                      | 6 months                |
|   |  | 3.2.1b Develop relationships with multiple parties at Drake University for various needs (i.e. student volunteer coordinator, department heads, student government, student organizations).              | <b>DNA</b>                             | 6 months                |
|   |  | 3.2.1c Maintain updated contact information for Drake University representatives.  | <b>DNA</b>                             | Ongoing                 |
|   |  | 3.2.1d Share information about DNA / neighborhood happenings with DU's newspaper.  | <b>DNA</b> , DU                        | 1 year;<br>Ongoing      |
|   | 3.2.2 Formalize the relationship between the DNA and DU through regular projects and opportunities for students. | 3.2.2a Plan annual service project(s) for DU's "Welcome Weekend" in advance.   | <b>DNA</b>                             | 1 year;<br>Ongoing      |
|   |  | 3.2.2b Create an intern or work-study position for a Drake student. Potential projects include managing the newsletter, website, social media, or marketing of events.                                   | <b>DNA Board</b>                       | 3-5 years               |
|   |  | 3.2.2c DU will identify a student liaison to attend DNA and DABA meetings.   | <b>DU Student Body</b> , DNA, DABA     | 1 year                  |
|   |  | 3.2.2d Identify opportunities to utilize DU student volunteers in the neighborhood (i.e. block surveys, clean-up & beautification).  | <b>DNA</b>                             | 2 years                 |
|   |  | 3.2.2e Partner with DU students, student organizations and staff on neighborhood projects as appropriate.  | <b>DNA</b>                             | Ongoing                 |

## Other Partnerships

In addition to Drake University, there are many other community resources that contribute to the vitality of the Drake neighborhood. These assets include churches, schools, non-profit agencies, and businesses. The Neighborhood Association will work to build relationships with these entities to identify common goals, coordinate activities, and share resources.

Examples of collaboration exist already, such as the very popular Drake Farmer's Market, which is hosted weekly by First Christian Church during the summer. The planning committee identified a need for more formalized opportunities to network, partner, and share information. They discussed ideas for formal meetings, utilization and enhancement of the DNA

newsletter and website as a tool for communication and promotion, and other concepts to enhance partnerships within the neighborhood. Collaboration with other neighborhood stakeholders can enable the partners involved to achieve goals that they may not be equipped to reach on their own.

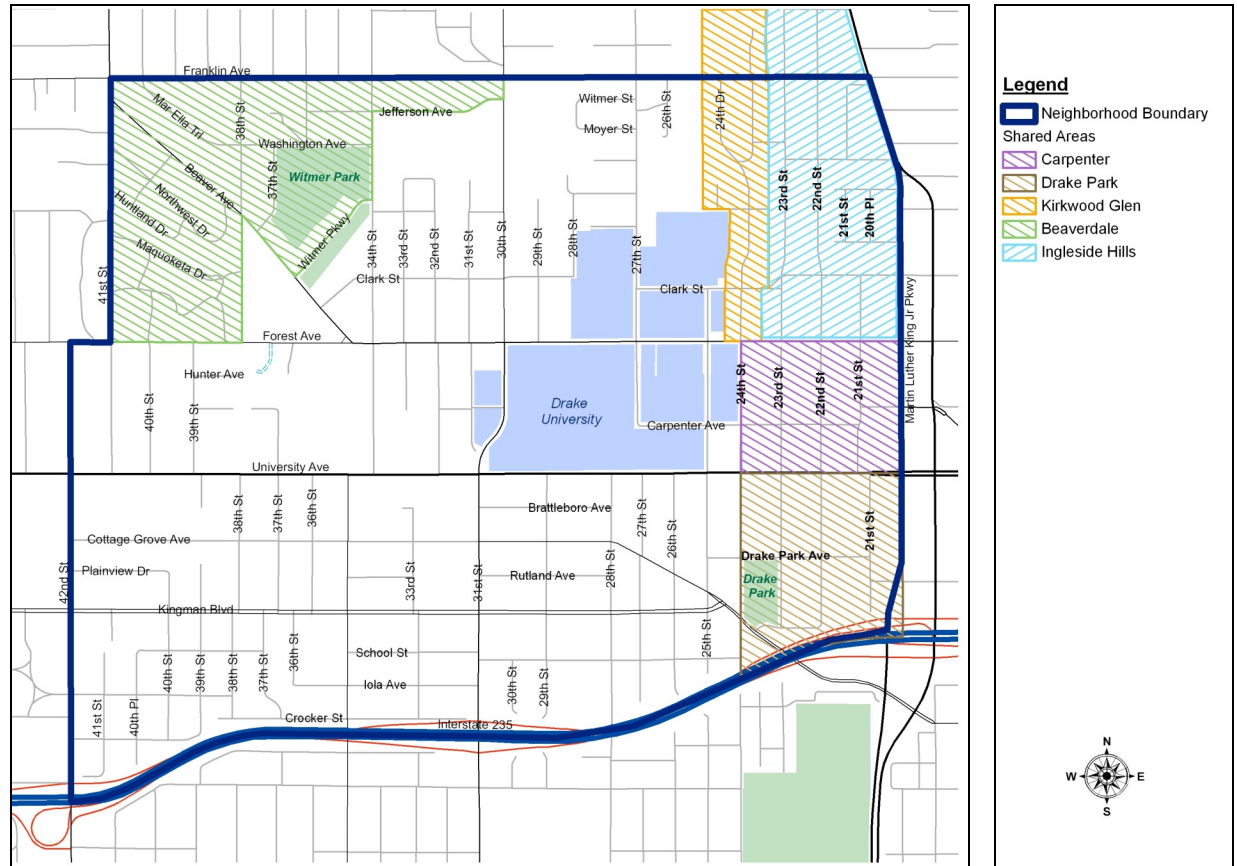
| Goal / Outcome  | Strategy  | Action Steps   | Responsible Party<br>(Primary in Bold) | Timeline for Completion |
|---|---|--|--|-------------------------|
| 3.3 Increase collaboration between the DNA and other resources in the Drake neighborhood. | 3.3.1 Communicate with other resources in the neighborhood to increase awareness of community happenings. | 3.3.1a Identify potential partners such as churches, schools, businesses, area non-profits, and civic organizations, and establish points of contact.                      | <b>DNA</b>                             | 1 year                  |
|   |   | 3.3.1b Create an email distribution list of "partners" to exchange information on news and events.   | <b>DNA</b>                             | 1 year                  |
|   |   | 3.3.1c Set up generic email addresses for all DNA committees and officers (i.e. president@dna.com) to make contact easier.   | <b>DNA</b>                             | 1 year                  |
|   |   | 3.3.1d Change the format of quarterly meetings to be more participative, and invite other organizations to share about their activities (i.e. 30 seconds around the room). | <b>DNA</b>                             | 2 years                 |
|   |   | 3.3.1e Create and maintain a community events calendar on the DNA website.   | <b>DNA</b>                             | 2 years                 |
|   |   | 3.3.1f Have regular content in the DNA newsletter, website & Facebook page featuring partner organizations and their activities.   | <b>DNA</b>                             | 2 years                 |
|   |   | 3.3.1g Hold an annual neighborhood partners summit to plan and discuss upcoming events.  | <b>DNA, Partners</b>                   | 3 years                 |
|   | 3.3.2 Create mutually beneficial relationships through promotional activities and joint projects.         | 3.3.2a Continue to support events hosted by other organizations in the neighborhood through sponsorships and volunteers.   | <b>DNA Board</b>                       | Ongoing                 |
|   |   | 3.3.2b Solicit sponsorships from, and/or partner with other organizations to host DNA events.  | <b>DNA Board</b>                       | 2 years                 |

## Shared Areas

Drake is unique in that it has other neighborhood associations that function within its boundaries, as shown in Map 6. On the east side, three smaller neighborhood associations formed in the 1990s to focus on issues specific to their area: Drake Park, Carpenter, and Kirkwood Glen. Drake Park and Carpenter had their own neighborhood plan completed in 1995. These neighborhood associations continue to function as sub-groups under the broader umbrella of the Drake Neighborhood Association. Additionally, the Ingleside Hills area has its own independent neighborhood organization. In the northwest corner, Drake overlaps with the Beaverdale neighborhood. Currently, both neighborhood associations have members who live in this area, and thus are content to share. It is important for the Drake Neighborhood Association to maintain open communication with the other associations that share portions of the neighborhood.

Shared areas can be problematic for the delivery of City services and programs, or for private developers who may propose a project. Service delivery in a shared area will be determined by the individual service provider. Whenever a project occurs in a shared area that requires the City to notify property owners, the City will attempt to notify all affected neighborhood associations as well. Certain projects may require the developer to hold a neighborhood meeting in order to seek comment on the project. In the event that the project is located in a shared area it should be expected that the developer hold one neighborhood meeting and invite representatives from each of the affected neighborhood organizations.

Map 6: Areas Shared with other Neighborhood Associations



## Crime & Safety

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Public safety is arguably the most important factor in the quality of life for a neighborhood and its residents. The Drake Neighborhood Association and the City of Des Moines believe in this and have worked together for years to ensure that Drake remains a safe and vibrant community.

### Neighborhood Based Service Delivery

The Neighborhood Based Service Delivery (NBSD) program started in 1999 with the purpose of enhancing the working relationship between residents and the City to resolve key issues. The Drake neighborhood was one of the first neighborhoods in Des Moines to receive the NBSD program. As a partnership between residents and the City, NBSD addresses the most critical service needs such as public safety and code enforcement, as well as infrastructure and Park services. NBSD teams include residents, neighborhood stakeholders, and city staff who work together to identify issues, establish priorities, and take appropriate action. Police officers, neighborhood inspectors, and staff from other city departments collaborate as a team with neighborhood leaders to find solutions for issues ranging from overgrown yards and junk vehicles to nuisance properties and crime.

***NBSD's mission is to revitalize and stabilize Des Moines neighborhoods by creating a city-citizen partnership to identify and resolve issues at the neighborhood level.***

The NBSD program has been successful not only in the Drake neighborhood but many other neighborhoods in Des Moines as well. With all its success the program has become institutionalized in Des Moines, yet there are still a number of residents who have no knowledge of the program or the services that are available to them. The Crime and Safety planning committee spent a significant amount of time discussing ways to make the most of NBSD, including strategies to better promote the program and engage residents and businesses that are unaware of the program.

The committee also identified the need for the Neighborhood Association to continue to reach out and partner with other entities who share common goals and interests in public safety. Drake University Security is an obvious partner along with non-profits such as Employee & Family Resources (EFR), whose office is located in the neighborhood. Working together to solve issues such as alcohol and drug related problems will be much more effective than working individually.

| Goal / Outcome   | Strategy  | Action Steps  | Responsible Party<br>(Primary in Bold)   | Timeline for Completion |
|--|---|---|--|-------------------------|
| 4.0 Improve safety and security in the Drake neighborhood. | 4.0.1 Reduce instances of alcohol and/or drug related disturbances and crimes in the Drake area.                      | 4.0.1a Work with NBSD Team and DMPD NARC division to address specific areas or properties of concern.   | <b>DNA</b> , City - NBSD, DMPD NARC      | Ongoing                 |
|  |   | 4.0.1b Partner with surrounding neighborhoods, Employer and Family Resources (EFR), and/or other non-profits to address common goals, such as liquor licensing. | <b>DNA</b> , EFR, Other non-profits      | Ongoing                 |
|  |   | 4.0.1c Explore options to improve/amend City and/or State policies on alcohol licensing and sales.  | <b>DNA</b> , EFR                         | Ongoing                 |
|  | 4.0.2 Utilize Des Moines Police Department Crime Free Multi-Housing Program.  | 4.0.2a Increase awareness of the program through the DNA newsletter, website, and/or direct mailing to landlords.   | <b>DNA</b>                               | 6 months                |
|  |   | 4.0.2b Encourage Drake landlords to participate in the Crime Free Multi-Housing Program. [See also Housing Goals].  | <b>DNA</b>                               | Ongoing                 |
|  |   | 4.0.2c Conduct a workshop for landlords to learn more about the program and sign up to participate.   | <b>DNA</b> , City - NBSD, DMPD           | 1 year                  |
|  | 4.0.3 Increase lighting in poorly lit areas in the right-of-way and on private property.                              | 4.0.3a Report faulty streetlights to the City's Traffic and Transportation Division and/or MidAmerican Energy.  | <b>DNA</b>                               | Ongoing                 |
|  |   | 4.0.3b Notify Public Works of trees in the right-of-way that block/interfere with streetlights so they may be trimmed.  | <b>DNA</b> , City - PW                   | Ongoing                 |
|  |   | 4.0.3c Encourage private property owners to improve lighting in poorly lit areas in order to deter criminal activity.   | <b>DNA</b>                               | 6 months                |
|  | 4.0.4 Support the Neighborhood Based Service Delivery (NBSD) Program in the Drake area through continued partnership. | 4.0.4a Collaborate with the NBSD Team and the Drake Security Office to address property and crime issues in the neighborhood.                                   | <b>DNA</b> , City - NBSD, Drake Security | Ongoing                 |
|  |   | 4.0.4b Increase awareness of the program through the DNA newsletter, website, and/or direct mailing to residents, landlords, tenants, businesses, etc.          | <b>DNA</b>                               | 6 months                |



# Infrastructure & Streetscape

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### Infrastructure Improvements

A key component of the Revitalization Program is the Neighborhood Infrastructure Rehabilitation Program (NIRP). This program targets infrastructure rehabilitation in Designated neighborhoods and provides improvements above and beyond the City's annual street and curb maintenance program. The funding for NIRP includes a combination of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds along with City of Des Moines Capital Improvement Program (CIP) funds.

In most cases the available NIRP funding is not able to meet all the infrastructure needs within a neighborhood. Because of this City staff relies on the neighborhood planning committee to assist in the allocation of these limited resources. Public Works staff provides a list of existing infrastructure needs in the neighborhood to the committee for consideration.

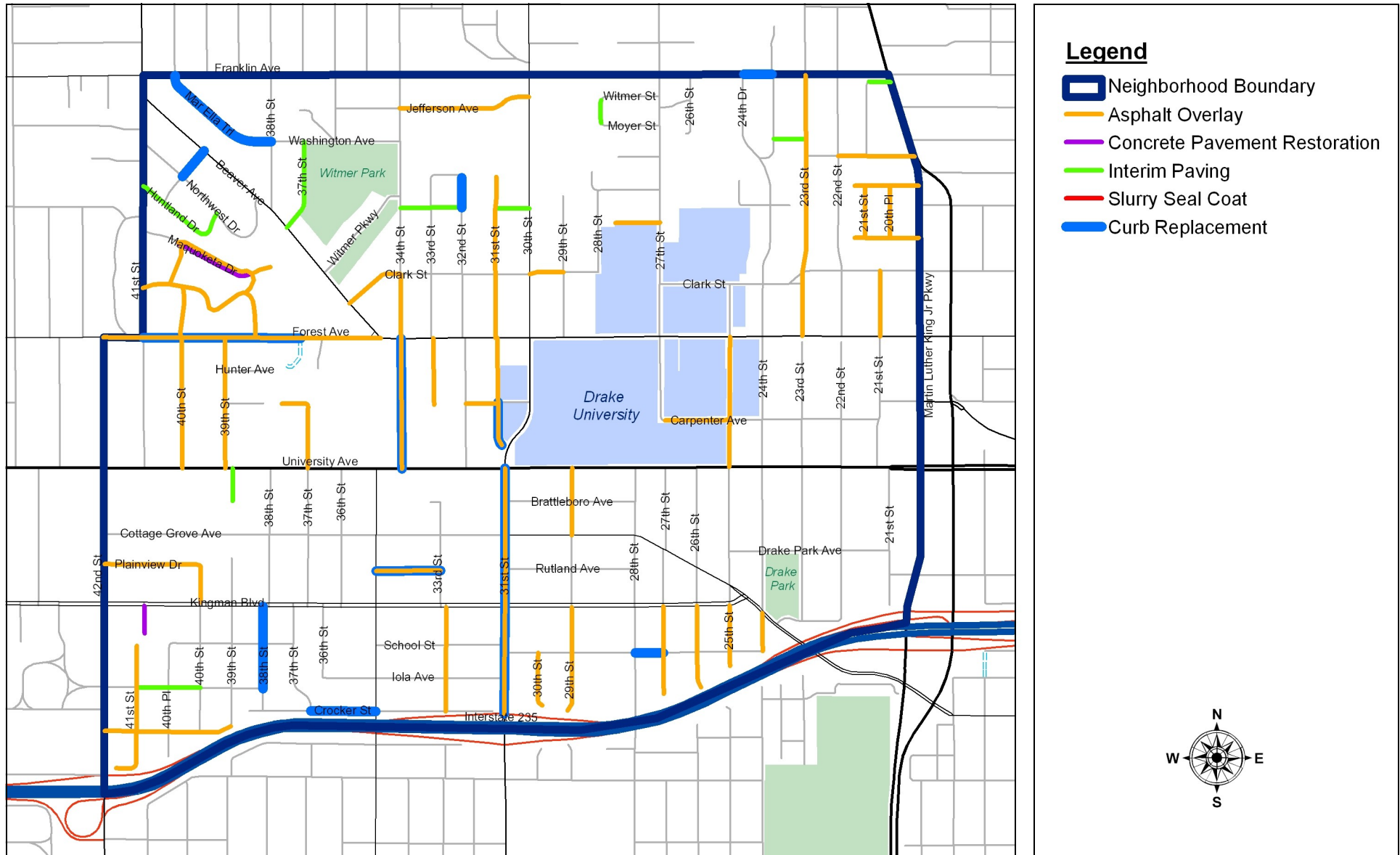


Due to the large size of the Drake Neighborhood and the age of the infrastructure in the area there was a significant amount of infrastructure needs. The Drake Neighborhood was allocated \$1.375 million in NIRP funds in 2010 to make repairs to streets, curbs, and sidewalks. Another \$1.465 million in NIRP funding is anticipated in 2011.

The Drake Infrastructure Committee favored a balanced use of NIRP funds with street asphalt overlay and sidewalk replacement along school and bus routes as their top priorities. The remaining NIRP funds were allocated to the replacement of deficient curbs. Unmet infrastructure needs remaining after NIRP will be considered for inclusion in future City-wide maintenance programs as conditions, priorities, and funding allow.

| Table 9. NIRP Improvements          | 2010               | 2011 (Anticipated) |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Asphalt Overlay (HMA)               | \$868,840          | \$741,580          |
| Concrete Pavement Restoration (CPR) | --                 | \$35,750           |
| Interim Paving                      | --                 | \$99,580           |
| Slurry Seal Coat                    | --                 | \$5,790            |
| Curb Replacement                    | \$308,220          | \$140,800          |
| Sidewalk Repair                     | \$198,000          | \$442,200          |
| <b>Total</b>                        | <b>\$1,375,060</b> | <b>\$1,465,700</b> |

Map 7: Infrastructure Improvements Completed in 2010 and Anticipated for 2011





## Streetscape Improvements

Streetscape refers to the design and condition of urban roadways, recognizing that streets, particularly in commercial districts, are public spaces. A unified streetscape design provides a distinct environment that sets one neighborhood commercial district apart from others through the use of elements such as pavement, lighting, plantings, signage, and street furniture. It can also have a significant impact on how people perceive and interact with their community.

The Infrastructure & Streetscape planning committee discussed streetscape improvements to commercial nodes along University Avenue and Forest Avenue. In 2007, Genus Landscape Architects prepared a conceptual streetscape plan for the Drake area. The development of the concept plan included direction and input from the Drake Neighborhood Association, Drake Area Business Association, Drake University, and the City of Des Moines. Since then little progress has been made on the project, however the neighborhood and business associations are interested in moving the project forward.

Both the Infrastructure/Streetscape and the Commercial Areas planning committees reviewed the findings of the concept plan and discussed the need to identify a starting point for the initial phase of streetscape improvements. Committee members selected the Dog-

town area, along University Avenue between 24th and 25th Streets, as the most appropriate place to begin streetscape improvements. This area was selected due to its central location within the neighborhood that serves neighborhood, business, and university interests; its compact size, making it manageable financially; its need for streetscape improvements; and its ability to implement a Self Supported Municipal Improvement District (SSMID) for ongoing maintenance. A SSMID is a tax levy applied to commercial property (residential property is exempt) to support capital improvement and maintenance expenses for streetscape improvements made within the district boundary. Goals and action steps related to streetscape project implementation are included in the Commercial Areas section of this plan.

In addition to the streetscape improvements planned for University and Forest Avenues, the Roosevelt Cultural District has also requested a streetscape project for their commercial node at 42nd Street and Interstate 235. The goals of their project include: improving vehicular traffic circulation, increasing pedestrian safety, and enhancing the aesthetics of the area. Located at an exit off of the Interstate, the Roosevelt Cultural District serves as a gateway into the Drake neighborhood and to other northwest Des Moines neighborhoods. A streetscape project offers the opportunity to balance vehicle traffic with pedestrian needs, create a sense of cohesion for the District, and highlight it as an inviting destination within the city.

## Commercial Areas

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The Drake neighborhood is fortunate to have several commercial areas within its boundaries, as shown in Map 5. These commercial areas serve the needs of residents and provide destination points for people from all over the Des Moines metro area. One of the most positive characteristics is the presence of unique local businesses that are only found in the Drake neighborhood. This, along with the compact scale of each commercial district, enhances the vibrancy of the neighborhood. Each commercial district is distinct, providing excellent variety. The various nodes are well-distributed throughout the neighborhood, with the more successful districts in proximity to either denser residential areas or major traffic thoroughfares.

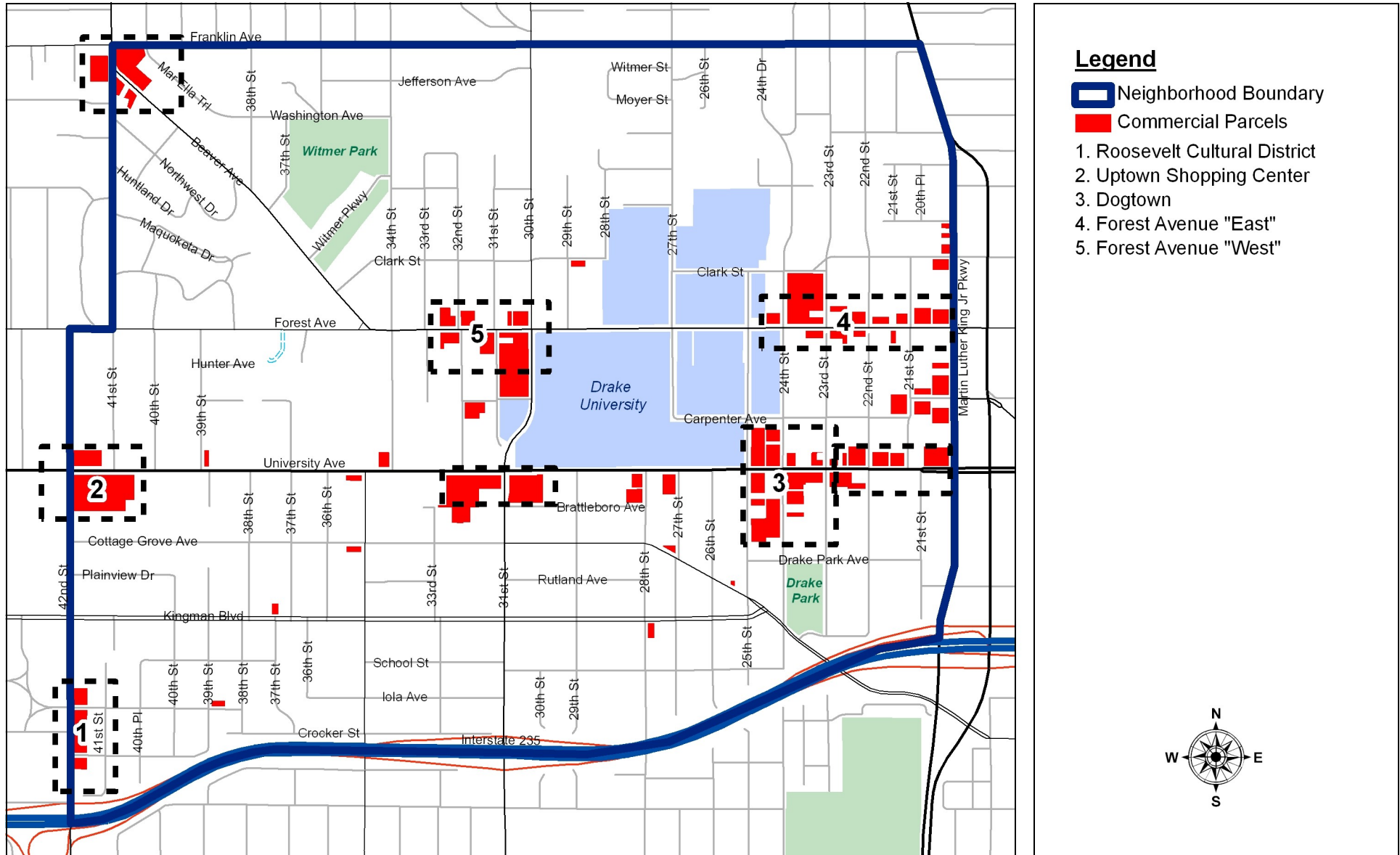
During the planning process, the Commercial Areas planning committee met with business owners in each area to identify issues and set goals. Some areas are healthy and require little in terms of revitalization. Other areas are blighted or a cause of concern to stakeholders and thus have more complex revitalization strategies. In general, stakeholders felt that all of the commercial areas should be pedestrian-friendly, compact, and activate the street. Denser pedestrian-oriented development is preferred over auto-oriented development. Locally-owned businesses are more desirable than national chains, and “destination” businesses are encouraged. In some areas, particularly in Dogtown and along Forest Avenue, denser multi-family residential

uses should be mixed in to support adjacent commercial uses. Stakeholders envision a future direct transit link between Dogtown and downtown Des Moines.

The Drake Area Business Association will take the lead on this section of the plan, with the Drake Neighborhood Association playing a supportive role. The Roosevelt Cultural District will take the lead on the streetscape project for their area. It will be necessary for these entities to formalize a method of communication and partner together to raise funds and advocate for projects included in the goals for this section. In addition, the Neighborhood Development Corporation (NDC) is a key partner for implementing this section of the plan. As a non-profit development corporation, the NDC’s mission is “to enhance neighborhoods and combat community deterioration through redevelopment efforts designed to create opportunities for housing, small businesses and jobs for residents of Polk County, Iowa”. The NDC already owns property within the Drake neighborhood. Their goal is to catalyze additional private investment.

For this section of the plan it is difficult to identify implementation timelines, as some projects are dependent on market conditions and private investment. Those identified represent the ideal timeframe for completing the action step.

Map 8: Drake Neighborhood Commercial Areas





### Roosevelt Cultural District

The Roosevelt Cultural District (RCD) is a commercial node located at the intersection of 42<sup>nd</sup> Street and I-235, straddling the boundary between the Drake and Waveland Park neighborhoods. However, with the presence of Roosevelt High School, Hubbell Elementary School, and the Des Moines Playhouse, the RCD serves much of Des Moines' west side. In addition to these anchors, the RCD features an array of small specialty shops, galleries, restaurants, and service businesses. The district is one of 23 certified Cultural and Entertainment Districts in the State of Iowa. Venues that promote the arts, such as galleries, museums, live-work studios, or dance studios, should be encouraged to locate in the RCD. In addition, the district should continue to host events that advocate and promote the arts. A Board of Directors, made up of business owners and interested residents from surrounding neighborhoods, manages special events and promotions for the Roosevelt Cultural District.

As a Cultural and Entertainment District, the RCD should be compact, pedestrian-friendly, and accessible to all. In 2008, the RCD Board submitted a vision plan to the City Council detailing streetscape improvement concepts designed to improve the appearance of the district, increase pedestrian safety, and improve vehicular traffic circulation. The implementation of this streetscape project is included as a goal in the Drake Neighborhood Plan.

### Uptown Shopping Center

Located at the intersection of two major traffic routes, University Avenue and 42<sup>nd</sup> Street, the Uptown Shopping Center is a busy, auto-oriented neighborhood commercial center on the western edge of the Drake neighborhood. Home to a HyVee Drugtown, Campbells Nutrition, a variety of dining establishments, medical services, and retail shops, the Uptown Center draws from a larger

market than just Drake residents. As a strip commercial center, there is a single owner who manages the property and leases space to business tenants. The Uptown Center serves as a major commercial anchor for Drake and other surrounding neighborhoods. Stakeholders discussed the need for networking opportunities among Uptown and other Drake-area business owners.

### Dogtown

The commercial district adjacent to Drake University is known as "Dogtown", referring to Drake University's bulldog mascot. Originally known as the University Place business district, it boomed in the early 1900s with several grocers, banks, drug stores, auto service stations, the Newens dairy, and a Coca-Cola bottling works. Today, this mixed-use district caters to the Drake University community and the neighborhood with an eclectic mix of retail shops, eateries, and historic anchors like the Varsity Theatre and the Drake Diner. Based on a 2005 study of market conditions and conversations with stakeholders during the planning process, Dogtown is the preferred location for retail commercial uses adjacent to Drake University.

Plans for Dogtown include implementing the Drake Streetscape Plan and developing the area as a Cultural and Entertainment District. The streetscape will help to better integrate the University with surrounding neighborhood and commercial areas, providing a sense of place and recognizable identity. It may also encourage property owners to invest in improvements to their own buildings. Dogtown has the opportunity to capitalize on the University's many cultural activities by partnering with the University to create a larger Cultural and Entertainment District. The planning committee would like to see artist studios or live/work spaces in Dogtown. Pursuing this designation from the State of Iowa can provide access to historic tax credits as well as statewide recognition for the area.

| Goal / Outcome  | Strategy   | Action Steps  | Responsible Party<br>(Primary in Bold)                                       | Timeline for Completion |
|---|--|---|--|-------------------------|
| 5.0 Create synergy among the various commercial areas in the Drake neighborhood while allowing each to retain their unique character. | 5.0.1 Utilize design elements to develop variations on a unifying theme that exemplifies "Drake neighborhood".   | 5.0.1a Implement the Drake Streetscape Plan [See Action Steps 5.2.2a-c].  | <b>DABA</b> , City - Various Depts.  | 5-7 years               |
|   |  | 5.0.1b Integrate elements of the streetscape into the various commercial areas, such as street lights, benches, or planters.                              | <b>DABA</b> , RCD, Uptown, Forest Ave  | 5 years                 |
|   | 5.0.2 Establish complementary market niches for each commercial district.  | 5.0.2a Utilize the Drake Neighborhood Plan as a guide for redevelopment or business attraction in each commercial district.                               | N/A  | Policy                  |
|   | 5.0.3 Offer networking opportunities for business owners.  | 5.0.3a Form a partnership among the DABA, DNA, RCD, Uptown Center, and Forest Avenue businesses to host quarterly Business After Hours events.            | <b>DABA</b> , DNA, RCD, Uptown, Forest Ave Business Owners                   | 6 months                |
| 5.1 Enhance the aesthetics and pedestrian-friendliness of commercial areas in the Drake neighborhood.                                 | 5.1.1 Develop and implement a streetscape plan for the Roosevelt Cultural District.  | 5.1.1a Submit a streetscape application to the City of Des Moines.  | <b>RCD</b>   | 6 months                |
|   |  | 5.1.1b Work with the City of Des Moines to develop a streetscape plan.  | <b>RCD</b> , City - Various Depts.   | 2 years                 |
|   |  | 5.1.1c Partner with the DNA and other surrounding neighborhood associations to raise funds for streetscape implementation.                                | <b>RCD</b> , DNA, DABA, NW NHoods, Roosevelt High School, Hubbell Elementary | 5 years                 |
|   |  | 5.1.1d Establish a SSMID for ongoing maintenance of streetscape improvements.   | <b>RCD</b> , City - CD   | 5 years                 |
|   | 5.1.2 Implement the Drake Streetscape Plan.  | 5.1.2a Form a stakeholder committee to work with the City of Des Moines on streetscape implementation.  | <b>DABA</b> , City - Various Depts.  | 6 months                |
|   |  | 5.1.2b Partner with the DNA and Drake University to raise funds for streetscape implementation.   | <b>DABA</b> , DNA, DU  | 5 years                 |
|   |  | 5.1.2c Establish a SSMID for ongoing maintenance of streetscape improvements.   | <b>DABA</b> , DU, City - CD  | 5 years                 |
|   | 5.1.3 Encourage property owners to invest in exterior improvements.  | 5.1.3a Promote the City's Façade grant and other economic development programs in the DNA newsletter and at DNA/DABA meetings.                            | <b>DABA</b> , DNA, City - OED  | 6 months; Ongoing       |
|   | 5.1.4 Encourage blocks along the north side of University Avenue between 23rd Street and 21st Street to redevelop with pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use buildings. | 5.1.4a Request that City Council initiate a rezoning from C-2 to C-1 and support rezoning to NPC on a case-by-case basis. [See Land Use & Zoning Section] | <b>DNA</b> , City - CD, City Council   | 2 years; Policy         |

| Goal / Outcome  | Strategy   | Action Steps   | Responsible Party<br>(Primary in Bold)      | Timeline for Completion |
|---|--|--|---|-------------------------|
| 5.2 Promote the Drake neighborhood as a cultural and entertainment destination. | 5.2.1 Attain Cultural & Entertainment District status for Dogtown.   | 5.2.1a Develop additional arts and culture venues and events in Dogtown.                                   | <b>DABA</b> , DU Dept. of Art & Design, DNA | Ongoing                 |
|   |  | 5.2.1b Submit an application to the State of Iowa for C&E District designation.                            | <b>DABA</b>                                 | 1 year                  |
|   |  | 5.2.1c Identify opportunities/locations for local artists to design/install public art.                    | <b>DABA</b> , DNA, City                     | Ongoing                 |
|   | 5.2.2 Explore expansion of the RCD southward to include the Art Center, Salisbury House, and Plymouth Gallery. | 5.2.2a Work with the State of Iowa C&E District Program coordinator to determine if expansion is feasible. | <b>RCD</b>                                  | 1 year                  |

## Forest Avenue Corridor

Forest Avenue is a major east-west connector in the City of Des Moines. In 2002, concerned with its blighted condition, former Councilman Vlassis initiated a study into the redevelopment of the corridor. This led to the Forest Avenue Corridor Strategy plan, adopted in 2004, a market study conducted by Economic Research Associates (ERA) in 2005, and an Urban Renewal plan, adopted in 2005 and amended in 2006. In the Drake neighborhood, the University campus splits the corridor into two distinct commercial areas, “east” and “west”.

The commercial segments along Forest Avenue are prime revitalization areas in need of new development to unify the corridor, rid the area of blight, and aggregate businesses into compact and walkable district nodes. The City of Des Moines and the Neighborhood Development Corporation (NDC) have already begun revitalization on the “east” end of the corridor. Additional redevelopment will require collaboration among the neighborhood, the business association, Drake University, the City, and private developers.

### Forest Avenue “East”

The Corridor Strategy identified particular blocks on the east side of Drake University to target for redevelopment. Currently two of the four options identified have projects underway. The corridor has seen recent investment by Anawim Housing with a 9-unit townhome project completed in 2009, and a mixed-use building that houses Anawim’s offices and six apartment units constructed in 2010. In addition, Iowa CCI, the Polk County Senior Center, and The Rose of Des Moines senior living facility are stable anchors along the corridor. These institutions, along with the Anawim projects, are clustered along Forest Avenue on the east

side of the Drake neighborhood.

Older commercial buildings and houses converted to commercial uses line segments of Forest Avenue. These spaces have difficulty attracting tenants that have a positive impact on the neighborhood, due to the functional obsolescence of the buildings. Parking in this area is also a challenge; many of the lots are not deep enough to provide parking on-site. Access to the corridor from the south is restricted by street closures intended to prevent crime. As the corridor redevelops, it will be important to restore this connectivity to increase traffic flow onto Forest Avenue. However, the first priority is to mitigate the negative impacts of certain businesses along the corridor. The planning committee envisions Forest Avenue “East” as a mixed-use corridor, with higher density residential development such as townhomes, row-homes, or apartments as well as neighborhood supportive businesses, such as offices, restaurants, or other services. The current income levels in this area do not indicate strong market support for retail uses in this area.

### Forest Avenue “West”

This commercial node on the west side of Drake University’s campus is slowly becoming a dining and entertainment destination. The proximity to campus, Drake Stadium, and student housing makes this a natural fit. Drake University is a major property owner in this area. The planning committee would like to see this node further developed as a walkable district with a “campustown” vibe. Dining and entertainment uses that complement the existing businesses and provide destination points for stadium-goers are encouraged to locate here.



| Goal / Outcome   | Strategy   | Action Steps  | Responsible Party<br>(Primary in Bold)                       | Timeline for Completion                    |
|--|--|---|--|--|
| 5.3 Revitalize the Forest Avenue "East" Corridor with a mix of housing and neighborhood commercial services.                 | 5.3.1 Continue implementation of the Forest Avenue Corridor Strategy.                                  | 5.3.1a Identify private development partners willing to invest in the Forest Avenue corridor.   | <b>DABA</b> , DNA, City - CD, City - OED                     | 1 year                                     |
|  |  | 5.3.1b Work to find good quality tenants to locate in redevelopment projects and stabilize the corridor.  | <b>City - OED</b> , DABA, DNA                                | Ongoing                                    |
|  |  | 5.3.1c Explore opportunities for additional redevelopment along the corridor.   | <b>NDC</b> , City - CD, City - OED                           | Ongoing                                    |
|  |  | 5.3.1d Develop the NDC-owned site at 2104 Forest Avenue.  | <b>NDC</b> , City - CD, City - OED                           | 3 years or as determined by market demand. |
|  | 5.3.2 Remove slum and blight.  | 5.3.2a Form a partnership with Anawim, Polk County, the City of Des Moines and Iowa CCI to encourage the property owners along the north side of Forest Avenue, between 21st and 22nd Street, to clean up their properties [See also Crime & Safety Goals]. | <b>DNA</b> , Anawim, Polk County, City - CD, City - OED, CCI | 1 year                                     |
| 5.4 Develop the area along Forest Avenue between 30th Street and 33rd Street as a pedestrian-friendly "campustown" district. | 5.4.1 Encourage redevelopment that activates the street and provides dining or entertainment venues.   | 5.4.1a The DNA and DABA will support the rezoning of property from C-1 to NPC on a case-by-case basis. [See Land Use & Zoning Section].   | DNA, DABA  | Policy                                     |
|  |  | 5.4.1b Restripe Forest Avenue with bicycle lanes, as outlined in the Drake Streetscape Plan. [See also Parks, Trails & Open Space Goals].   | <b>City - T&amp;T</b> , City - Parks                         | 1 year                                     |
|  | 5.4.2 Encourage redevelopment that provides additional housing density to support the area businesses. | 5.4.2a The DNA and DABA will support this type of development as it occurs.   | DNA, DABA  | Policy                                     |

## Land Use & Zoning

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Land use and zoning are two tools that local governments use to regulate development. The City of Des Moines' 2020 Community Character Land Use Plan sets an overall vision for development and may be used to define the character of an area. The land use plan is not parcel specific and does not give a parcel any legal rights for use. Zoning, on the other hand, is parcel specific and legally binding. By State law, changes to zoning designations must be based on the land use plan. The City of Des Moines regulates zoning through its zoning ordinance that has two parts, a written document and a map. The text describes what is allowed in each zoning district, while the map denotes a zoning classification for each parcel.

The Drake neighborhood is one of Des Moines' traditional neighborhoods, with several commercial districts that complement a healthy mixture of single-family and multi-family housing. The compact nature of the development encourages walkability. Historic landmarks and homes give the neighborhood unique character. As a result of the neighborhood's large size, Drake is comprised of several distinct areas that each has its own unique character. Two areas that were specifically addressed during the planning process were an area east of Drake University's campus that is recognized as the Carpenter Neighborhood and the area generally defined as south of University Avenue and east of 31<sup>st</sup> Street.

Over a period of several decades, a significant number of single-family residential dwellings in these two areas were converted into multiple-family residential structures. Impacts to the neighborhood have included

traffic congestion, illegal parking of vehicles due to lack of off-street parking areas, incompatible additions and exterior stairwells to structures, and a perception that the area is a less than desirable place to live. In 2001, the City Council initiated a rezoning in the area south of University Avenue from "R-3" Multiple Family Residential District to "R1-60" One-Family Low-Density Residential District in order to prevent additional conversions from occurring. Slowly, some of the previous conversions to multi-family residences are being renovated and converted back to single-family homes.

The Drake Neighborhood Association supports the continued reduction of density in these two areas, and prefers that the original single-family character be restored. However, because built-as multiple-family properties and conforming conversions are also present in these areas, the land use classification will remain "low/medium density residential", which allows for a mixture of single-family and small multiple-family structures. The current density of units per acre for both areas (9.27 units per acre south of University and east of 31<sup>st</sup> Street, and 11.04 units per acre in the Carpenter neighborhood) falls within the 6-12 units per acre range specified under the "low/medium density residential" designation. This density level is expected to continue into the foreseeable future. Site plan review standards for multiple-family dwellings ensure that any new construction or addition of units is of a scale and character that is compatible with the surrounding area.

With the adoption of this Action Plan, a more detailed future land use plan for the Drake neighborhood is established and included in this document, amending

the City's current 2020 Community Character Plan land use plan. Establishing the future land use is an important part of the implementation of this plan because it will serve as a guide for development and redevelopment in the neighborhood. It should be considered a guideline and not a strict determinant so that it can be flexible enough to allow for changing environments in acceptable development practices and other needs that cannot be foreseen at this time.

The following policies are included in the future land use plan for the Drake neighborhood:

- The Drake neighborhood recognizes the value of residential density, and the need for multiple family properties to house the University's student population as well as to serve a broad range of resident needs. Higher residential densities should be encouraged along the major corridors in order to support commercial districts and utilize mass transit routes. The Drake neighborhood supports the construction of high quality, multi-family development projects, particularly along University Avenue, Forest Avenue, and Martin Luther King, Jr. Parkway, as well as land adjacent to Drake University. The Neighborhood Association would like to participate in site plan review for multi-family development proposals, to ensure they are of a scale and character that blends well with the neighborhood.
- Mixed-use projects with commercial uses on the first floor and residential units on the upper floors are encouraged adjacent to Drake University, on University Avenue between 21<sup>st</sup> Street and 25<sup>th</sup> Street

(Dogtown) and along Forest Avenue. Retail uses should be clustered in the Dogtown Area. Along Forest Avenue, between Martin Luther King, Jr. Parkway and 24<sup>th</sup> Street, commercial uses of a general business nature, such as offices, medical offices, and business services, are more appropriate based on market conditions and lack of connectivity with University Avenue.

- Commercial areas in the Drake neighborhood have multiple purposes and are discussed in-depth in a separate section of this plan. In general, new commercial uses should have a positive influence on the neighborhood by serving the needs of residents or providing destination points that draw patrons from other parts of the City and Metro. New development should maintain the compact, pedestrian-oriented nature of the existing commercial buildings in order to activate the street and encourage walking and bicycling. Rezoning to "NPC" Neighborhood Pedestrian Commercial District is encouraged on a case-by-case basis as development is proposed, so that appropriate limitations may be included.

The Plan recommends several rezonings to support both existing uses and preferred future development patterns. It is the responsibility of the Neighborhood Association to request, in writing, that City Council initiate the rezonings contained in the plan. If the City Council initiates any rezonings, City staff will assist the Neighborhood Association throughout the rezoning process.



| Goal / Outcome  | Strategy   | Action Steps   | Responsible Party<br>(Primary in Bold) | Timeline for Completion | Map Key* |
|---|--|--|--|-------------------------|----------|
| 6.0 Protect & support existing residential development in the Drake neighborhood.   | 6.0.1 Ensure that the 2020 Community Character Land Use Plan designations are consistent with the existing land use. | 6.0.1a Amend 872, 874, & 878 41 <sup>st</sup> Street from "Pedestrian -Oriented: Neighborhood Commercial Center" to "Low Density Residential".   | <b>City - CD</b>                       | Upon Plan Adoption      | A        |
|   |  | 6.0.1b Amend parcels on the east side of 21 <sup>st</sup> Street between Forest Avenue and University Avenue from "Commercial Corridor" to "Low/Medium Density Residential", excluding 1301 21 <sup>st</sup> Street, 1245 21 <sup>st</sup> Street, parcels fronting University Avenue, and parcels fronting Forest Avenue.   | <b>City - CD</b>                       | Upon Plan Adoption      | B        |
| 6.0.2 The Drake Neighborhood Association will request that the City Council initiate rezonings to support the preferred land use. |  | 6.0.2a Rezone properties along the south side of University Avenue, between 23 <sup>rd</sup> Street and 21 <sup>st</sup> Street from "C-2" General Retail & Highway-Oriented Commercial District to "R-3" Multiple-Family Residential District, excluding 2222 University Avenue and 1161 23 <sup>rd</sup> Street. (Includes 2210, 2126, 2124, 2118, & 2100 University and 1170, 1169, 1168 & 1165 22 <sup>nd</sup> Street). | <b>DNA</b> , City - CD, City Council   | 2 years                 | 1        |
|   |  | 6.0.2b Rezone portion of 1162 22 <sup>nd</sup> Street from "C-2" General Retail & Highway-Oriented Commercial District to "R1-60" One-Family Low-Density Residential District.   | <b>DNA</b> , City - CD, City Council   | 2 years                 | 2        |
|   |  | 6.0.2c Rezone properties in the Carpenter Neighborhood that have an existing single-family, duplex, or non-conforming conversion structure from "R-3" Multiple-Family Residential District or "C-2" General Retail & Highway-Oriented Commercial to "R1-60" One-Family Low-Density Residential District.   | <b>DNA</b> , City - CD, City Council   | 2 years                 | 3        |
|   |  | 6.0.2d Analyze properties currently zoned "R-3" Multiple-Family Residential District in the area generally defined as south of University Avenue and east of 35 <sup>th</sup> Street to determine if additional properties can be rezoned to "R1 -60" One-Family Low-Density Residential District without creating a non-conforming use. Rezone properties to "R1 -60" as appropriate.                                       | <b>City - CD</b> , DNA, City Council   | 2 years                 | N/A      |

\*Letters correspond to the Land Use Map (Map 9); Numbers correspond to the Zoning Map (Map 10).

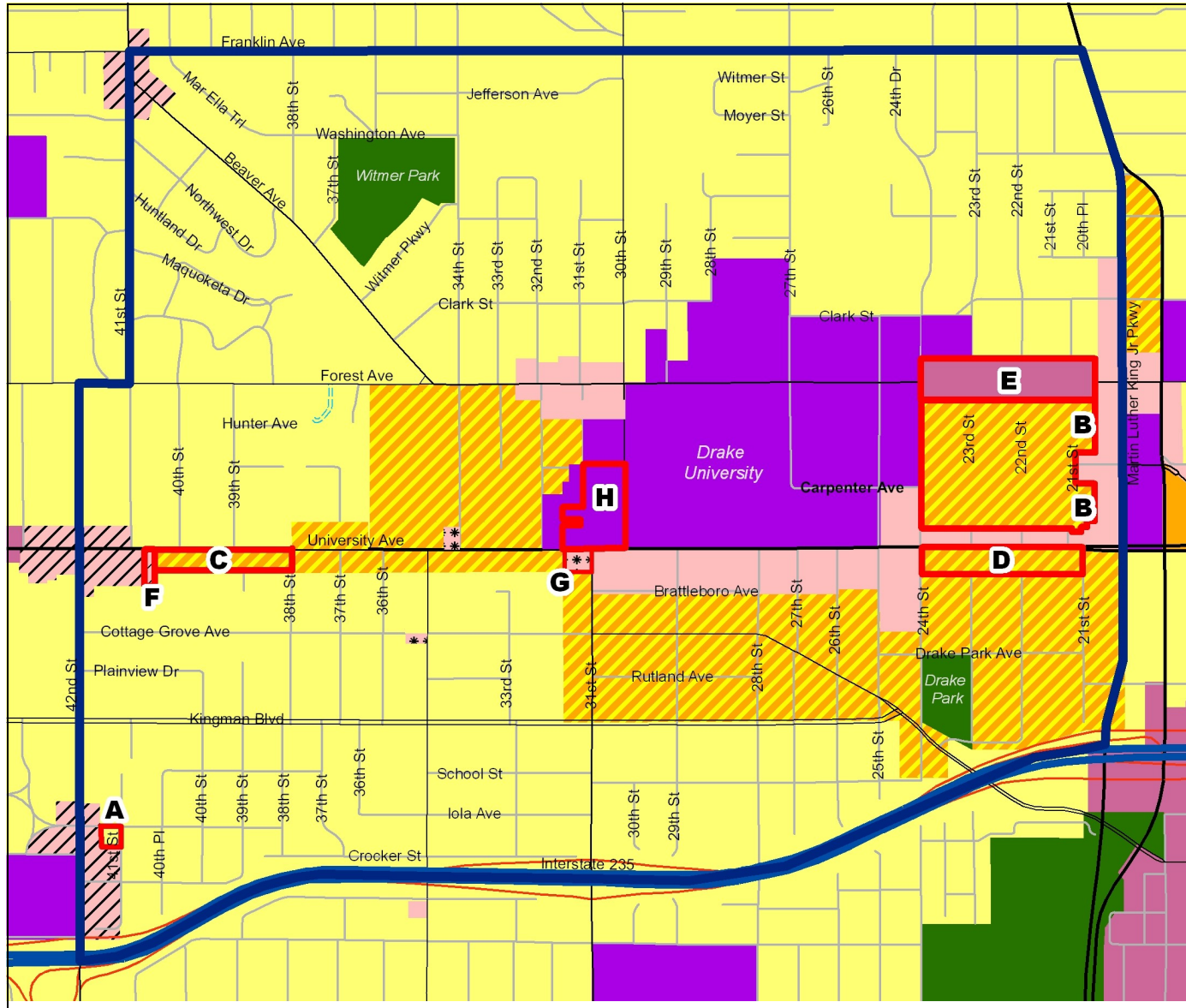
| Goal / Outcome  | Strategy   | Action Steps   | Responsible Party<br>(Primary in Bold) | Timeline for Completion | Map Key* |
|---|--|--|--|-------------------------|----------|
| 6.1 Promote quality, multi-family residential or mixed-use development along major corridors in the Drake neighborhood. | 6.1.1 Ensure that the 2020 Community Character Land Use Plan designations are consistent with the existing land use.             | 6.1.1a Amend parcels on the south side of University Avenue between 38 <sup>th</sup> Street and 4018 University Avenue from "Low Density Residential" to "Low/Medium Density Residential".   | <b>City - CD</b>                       | Upon Plan Adoption      | C        |
|   |  | 6.1.1b Amend parcels on the south side of University Avenue from 21 <sup>st</sup> Street to 23 <sup>rd</sup> Street from "Commercial Corridor" to "Low/Medium Density Residential", excluding 2222 University Avenue and 1161 23 <sup>rd</sup> Street.                   | <b>City - CD</b>                       | Upon Plan Adoption      | D        |
|   | 6.1.2 Encourage redevelopment along major corridors experiencing blighted conditions.  | 6.1.2a Amend parcels on both sides of Forest Avenue from the east side of 21 <sup>st</sup> Street to the east side of 24 <sup>th</sup> Street from "Commercial Corridor" to "Mixed Use and Density Residential". [See Commercial Areas Section for further information]. | <b>City - CD</b>                       | Upon Plan Adoption      | E        |
|   |  | 6.1.2b Support future rezonings along Martin Luther King, Jr. Parkway between I-235 and University Avenue for multiple-family residential development on a case-by-case basis as development is proposed.  | <b>DNA, City - CD, City Council</b>    | Policy                  | 4        |
| 6.2 Protect existing commercial properties in the Drake neighborhood.   | 6.2.1 Ensure that the 2020 Community Character Land Use Plan designations are consistent with the existing land use.             | 6.2.1a Amend parcel at 4018 University Avenue from "Low Density Residential" to "Pedestrian-Oriented Neighborhood Commercial Center."  | <b>City - CD</b>                       | Upon Plan Adoption      | F        |
|   |  | 6.2.1b Amend 3104 University Avenue from "Low/Medium Density Residential" to "Neighborhood Node".  | <b>City - CD</b>                       | Upon Plan Adoption      | G        |
|   | 6.2.2 The Drake Neighborhood Association will request that the City Council initiate rezoning to support the preferred land use. | 6.2.2a Rezone 1300 21 <sup>st</sup> Street from "C-2" General Retail & Highway-Oriented Commercial District to "C-0" Commercial-Residential District.  | <b>DNA, City - CD, City Council</b>    | 2 years                 | 5        |

\*Letters correspond to the Land Use Map (Map 9); Numbers correspond to the Zoning Map (Map 10).

| Goal / Outcome  | Strategy   | Action Steps   | Responsible Party<br>(Primary in Bold) | Timeline for Completion | Map Key* |
|---|--|--|--|-------------------------|----------|
| 6.3 Promote compact, pedestrian-friendly neighborhood commercial districts in the Drake neighborhood. | 6.3.1 The Drake Neighborhood Association will request that the City Council initiate rezoning to support the preferred commercial use types and development pattern. | 6.3.1a Rezone properties on the north side of University Avenue from 23 <sup>rd</sup> Street to Martin Luther King, Jr. Parkway from "C-2" General Retail & Highway-Oriented Commercial District to "C-1" Neighborhood Retail Commercial District. Support future rezoning requests in this area from "C-1" District to "NPC" Neighborhood Pedestrian Commercial District on a case-by-case basis. [See Commercial Areas Section for further information]. | <b>DNA</b> , City - CD, City Council   | 2 years                 | 6        |
|   |  | 6.3.1b Support future rezoning requests on the north side of University Avenue from 23 <sup>rd</sup> Street to Martin Luther King, Jr. Parkway from "C-1" Neighborhood Retail Commercial District to "NPC" Neighborhood Pedestrian Commercial District on a case-by-case basis. [See Commercial Areas Section for further information].  | <b>DNA</b> , City - CD, City Council   | Policy                  | 6        |
|   |  | 6.3.1c Rezone 1301 and 1245 21 <sup>st</sup> Street and properties on the west side of Martin Luther King, Jr. Parkway between University Avenue and Forest Avenue from "C-2" General Retail & Highway-Oriented Commercial District to "C-1" Neighborhood Retail Commercial District.  | <b>DNA</b> , City - CD, City Council   | 2 years                 | 7        |
|   |  | 6.3.1d Support rezoning requests along both sides of Forest Avenue between 30 <sup>th</sup> and 33 <sup>rd</sup> Streets from "C-1" Neighborhood Retail Commercial District to "NPC" Neighborhood Pedestrian Commercial District on a case-by-case basis as development is proposed. Drake University should be engaged in this discussion. [See Commercial Areas section for further information].  | <b>DNA</b> , City - CD, City Council   | Policy                  | 8        |
| 6.4 Protect existing "public/semi-public" land uses in the Drake neighborhood.                        | 6.4.1 Ensure that the 2020 Community Character Land Use Plan designations are consistent with the existing land use.   | 6.4.1a Amend parcels on both sides of 30 <sup>th</sup> Street between University Avenue and Carpenter Avenue from "Low/Medium Density Residential" to "Public/Semi-Public".  | <b>City - CD</b>                       | Upon Plan Adoption      | H        |

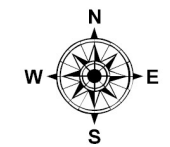
\*Letters correspond to the Land Use Map (Map 9); Numbers correspond to the Zoning Map (Map 10).

Map 9: 2020 Community Character Plan Land Use Map



**Legend**

- Neighborhood Boundary
- Land Use Amendments**
- Low Density Residential
- Low/Medium Density Residential
- Mixed Use/Density Residential
- Neighborhood Commercial Center
- Neighborhood Node
- Public/Semi Public
- Land Use Districts**
- Low Density Residential
- Low/Medium Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Mixed Use and Density Residential
- Neighborhood Node
- Neighborhood Commercial Center
- Commercial Corridor
- Park/Open Space
- Public/Semi Public





## Land Use & Zoning Terms

### [2020 Community Character Plan Land Use Designations](#)

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

**Low/Medium Density Residential**—Areas developed with a mix of single family, duplex and small multi-family units, up to 12 units per net acre.

**Medium Density Residential**—Areas developed with multi-family units, including those over 8 units, up to 17 units per acre.

**Mixed Use/Density Residential**—Areas developed with a mix of densities and some limited retail and office. Encourages a mix of single family, duplexes, small multi-family as well as developments over 17 units per acre.

**Neighborhood Node**—Small-scale commercial primarily serving the adjacent neighborhood. Building sizes range from 25,000 to 50,000 square feet.

**Neighborhood Commercial Center**—Small-to-moderate scale commercial serving adjacent neighborhood and specialty retail/services. Building sizes range from 75,000 to 100,000 square feet.

**Commercial Corridor**—Small-to-moderate scale commercial in a linear pattern that serves the adjacent neighborhood and passing motorists. Building sizes range from 2,000 to 35,000 square feet.

**Park/Open Space**—Uses include parks, golf courses, trails, zoos, and cemeteries.

**Public/Semi-Public**—Uses such as government facilities, schools, and hospitals.

### [Zoning District Classifications](#)

**C-0 Commercial-Residential** – Intended and designed to provide for the development of professional and low-intensity business offices in areas where residential dwellings predominate.

**C-1 Neighborhood Retail Commercial** –Intended to provide for the convenience shopping of persons living in residential areas and for general uses and activities of a retail and personal service character. In addition, low-intensity business and professional offices are permitted.

**C-2 General Retail and Highway-Oriented Commercial** – Intended to provide for major retail shopping areas, other than shopping centers in C-4 districts, outside the downtown

area. This district includes, as well, much of the strip commercial property existing along the major city streets and highways. The uses permitted are intended to accommodate both the general retail consumer and the needs and services of the automobile traveling consumer.

**C-1A Neighborhood Commercial Reuse** – Intended and designed to encourage the reuse and rehabilitation of existing structures which may be nonconforming with the C-1 neighborhood retail commercial district regulations.

**NPC Neighborhood Pedestrian Commercial** – Intended to aid in the preservation and stabilization of the commercial corridor along the primary commercial street by improving the pedestrian access, promoting retail density, protecting the adjacent residential districts, and protecting the character of the district. It is the intention that new buildings and exterior alterations of existing buildings be compatible with the predominant front yard setback, street entrance, fenestration and materials along the corridor.

**PUD Planned Unit Development** – Intended and designed to encourage large-scale and quality development of vacant or underutilized tracts of land throughout the city pursuant to a unified building and site development plan incorporating a comprehensive design based on a thorough application of professional standards of excellence. It is further the intent of this division to allow greater flexibility of standards and diversification of land uses than provided in the regulations of other zoning districts.

**R1-60 One-Family Low-Density Residential** – Intended and designed to provide for certain areas developed primarily with one-family detached dwellings and areas where similar residential development seems likely to occur.

**R-2 One- and Two-Family Residential** – Intended and designed to provide for certain low-density residential areas of the city developed with single-family and two-family dwellings, and areas where similar residential development seems likely to occur.

**R-3 Multiple Family Residential** – Intended and designed for certain medium-density residential areas developed with single-family, two-family, and multiple-family dwellings and areas where similar residential development seems likely to occur.

**R-4 Multiple-family Residential** – Intended and designed for certain high-density residential areas developed with single-family, two-family, and multiple-family dwellings and areas where similar residential development seems likely to occur.

**R-HD Residential Historic District** – Intended and designed to encourage the preservation and enhancement of the historic character of residential neighborhoods designated both as National Register historic districts and as local historic districts.



# Implementation

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This section is crucial to the success of the plan and the revitalization of the neighborhood. The implementation phase of the Neighborhood Revitalization Program requires an extensive commitment of time and resources. In order to be successful, it is essential that the present collaboration between the City of Des Moines and the Drake Neighborhood Association continue to exist and grow. It will also require the following:

- ◆ Strong and active leadership from the Drake Neighborhood Association and the Drake Area Business Association.
- ◆ Continued commitment and support from the Des Moines City Council and the Polk County Board of Supervisors.
- ◆ Technical assistance from Neighborhood Planning staff and other City staff when appropriate.
- ◆ Engagement and support from area non-profits, the private sector, and neighborhood institutions, particularly Drake University.
- ◆ Financial support and availability of resources.

The Neighborhood Revitalization Program is not intended to be a permanent commitment of resources to a specific neighborhood. The goal is to solve specific problems that require intensive work and return the neighborhood to a market-based, self-sustaining area. The Drake neighborhood entered the Revitalization

Program as a transitional-negative area based on housing conditions, property values, proportion of homeowners to renters, and home sales information. Due to the transitional nature of the neighborhood, as well as the diversity and complexity of issues identified in the plan, it will be important to place priority on projects that have a catalyzing effect and encourage further revitalization. It is acknowledged that in order to see results, the City of Des Moines and the Neighborhood Association must commit to a long-term partnership.

Now that the plan is complete, the leadership baton is passed from the City to the Neighborhood Association. For plan implementation, neighborhood stakeholders must take ownership of the plan and advocate for the many projects to be accomplished. It will be necessary to create the political will to support revitalization efforts, and also to solicit the help of other partners. In addition to leading the charge, the DNA has defined its role as a disseminator of information, a resource and advocate for residents and stakeholders, and an advisor to City of Des Moines staff for project prioritization. Due to the ambitious nature and scope of the goals and strategies outlined in the plan, the Neighborhood Association has already begun restructuring their organization to better handle the numerous activities. The Neighborhood Association Board recognizes that implementation of the plan will require the involvement of many residents and stakeholders in a variety of capacities, ranging from committee planning and oversight to assistance with one-time projects. Similar to the planning process

structure, various committees will be charged with overseeing a section of the plan, defining success measures, prioritizing activities, and recruiting volunteers. It is imperative that the Neighborhood Association communicates regularly with neighborhood stakeholders about upcoming activities and that they celebrate accomplishments.

While the Neighborhood Association is taking the lead as the point of contact and organizing entity for most plan activities, it is important to recognize the role of other partners in the implementation of the plan. The Drake neighborhood is fortunate to have other well-established, capable organizations and institutions within its boundaries. The Drake Area Business Association will take the lead responsibility for the Commercial Areas section of the plan, as well as implementation of the major streetscape projects along University and Forest Avenues. The Roosevelt Cultural District will be responsible for working with the City on the streetscape project proposed for their area.

In addition to neighborhood organizations, the City of Des Moines and the Neighborhood Association will continue to engage other partners from the public, non-profit and private sectors in plan implementation. This will include identifying financing mechanisms above and beyond the traditional resources. A coalition of housing providers will collaborate to implement the housing strategies, a task which may require creative partnerships. The Neighborhood Finance Corporation

may need to expand beyond its typical lending activities in order to assist with the rehabilitation of multi-family and investor-owned properties. The Neighborhood Development Corporation will be a critical partner in the redevelopment of the Forest Avenue Corridor and other commercial areas.

The Neighborhood Development Division will check in regularly with the Drake Neighborhood Association to assess progress on plan goals. Once the work plan has been substantially completed, neighborhood planning staff will recommend that the program be ended and the Drake neighborhood graduated to Charter status. Completion of a work plan does not mean that all items have been accomplished. It is possible that certain activities may be investigated and found not to be feasible or to require an unreasonable demand of resources. In addition, conditions and opportunities change over time, requiring that priorities be periodically reevaluated. Once the plan has been found to be substantially completed, a report will be prepared with input from the Neighborhood Association and presented 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

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| Acronym      | Full Name   | Description  |
|--------------|---|--|
| CCI          | Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement             | A non-profit organization that strives to empower and unite grassroots people of all ethnic backgrounds to take control of their communities, involve them in identifying problems and needs, and in taking action to address them.                                      |
| CD           | City of Des Moines Community Development Department | The City Department that is responsible for planning, promoting, developing, and maintaining Des Moines social, physical, and business environments.   |
| CDBG         | Community Development Block Grants                  | Federal funds that are allocated annually to the City of Des Moines to develop viable communities by providing decent housing, a suitable living environment, and opportunities to expand economic opportunities, principally for low- and moderate-income persons.      |
| C&E District | Cultural and Entertainment District                 | A designation granted by the State of Iowa for a well-recognized, labeled, mixed-use, compact area of a community in which a high concentration of cultural facilities serves as the anchor.   |
| CIP          | City of Des Moines Capital Improvement Program      | A short range plan that identifies capital projects and equipment purchases, provides a planning schedule, and identifies options for financing.   |
| COSC         | Center on Sustainable Communities                   | A non-profit membership organization that promotes sustainable building by providing education and connections to available resources.   |
| DABA         | Drake Area Business Association                     | A membership organization comprised of businesses located in the Drake area that allows members to network and collaborate to accomplish common goals.   |
| DART         | Des Moines Area Regional Transit                    | The public transit agency that serves Des Moines and other communities in Polk County and the surrounding Metro Area.  |
| DHC          | Drake Housing Coalition                             | A committee made up of Des Moines area non-profit housing agencies, developers, rehabbers, City staff, and others assisting with implementation of the housing goals.  |
| DMPD         | Des Moines Police Department                        | The Police Department for the City of Des Moines.  |
| DNA          | Drake Neighborhood Association                      | The neighborhood organization recognized by the City of Des Moines that serves the area bound by I-235 on the south, Franklin Avenue on the north, Martin Luther King Jr. Parkway on the east, and 42 <sup>nd</sup> Street on the west.                                  |
| DU           | Drake University                                    | A private, fully accredited, co-educational college located on a 120-acre campus in central Des Moines. For more information, visit: <a href="http://www.drake.edu">www.drake.edu</a> .  |
| EFR          | Employee and Family Resources                       | A local non-profit organization that serves the community by offering services and resources that address the emotional and behavioral well being of individuals, families, and communities. For more information, visit: <a href="http://www.efr.org">www.efr.org</a> . |
| HMA          | Hot Mixed Asphalt                                   | An engineered product composed of 95% stone, sand, and gravel along with 5% asphalt cement (a petroleum product) that is used to pave streets.   |

| Acronym | Full Name  | Description   |
|---------|--|---|
| NCS     | Neighborhood Conservation Services Division        | A division of the City of Des Moines Community Development Department that is responsible for implementing various affordable housing programs for low-moderate income families and individuals while expanding the City's housing stock and revitalizing neighborhoods.  |
| NDD     | Neighborhood Development Division                  | A division of the City of Des Moines Community Development Department that is responsible for coordinating the Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP).   |
| NESS    | Neighborhood Evaluation Self Survey                | A self survey tool offered by the Neighborhood Resource Office (NRO) that assists neighborhood organizations in identifying deficiencies within the public right-of-way.  |
| NDC     | Neighborhood Development Corporation               | A non-profit, community-focused organization that revitalizes distressed neighborhoods and encourages neighborhood sustainability. NDC fulfills its mission by offering commercial and residential options through building rehabilitation, new construction, and in-fill development. For more information, visit: <a href="http://www.ndcdesmoines.org">www.ndcdesmoines.org</a>  |
| NFC     | Neighborhood Finance Corporation                   | The NFC provides unique lending programs and related services to help revitalize targeted neighborhoods in Polk County through partnerships with residents, government entities, community-based organizations, and the business community. For more information, visit: <a href="http://www.neighborhoodfinance.org">www.neighborhoodfinance.org</a>   |
| NIRP    | Neighborhood Infrastructure Rehabilitation Program | This program targets infrastructure rehabilitation in Designated Neighborhoods, and provides improvements above and beyond the City's annual street, curb, and sidewalk maintenance programs.   |
| NITF    | Drake Neighborhood Improvement Task Force          | A group made up of representatives from Drake University, Drake area neighborhood associations, local non-profits, and City staff that meet 3-4 times a year to discuss current issues and work together to find solutions.   |
| NRB     | Neighborhood Revitalization Board                  | An appointed citizen board that advises the Des Moines City Council and Polk County Board of Supervisors on housing improvements and neighborhood revitalization efforts.   |
| NRP     | Neighborhood Revitalization Program                | The City of Des Moines and the Polk County Board of Supervisors created the NRP in 1990 to help stabilize and improve neighborhoods in Des Moines. The NRP uses a strategy that calls for neighborhood residents, City, County, local business leaders, and the Neighborhood Finance Corporation (NFC) to develop a public/private partnership that addresses revitalization issues. The NRP also gives citizens the opportunity to organize and create neighborhood groups that can be officially recognized by the City Council and County Supervisors. |
| NSP     | Neighborhood Stabilization Program                 | A federal program that was developed to help stabilize communities that have suffered from foreclosures and abandoned properties.   |
| OED     | Office of Economic Development                     | The City of Des Moines department that is responsible for assisting businesses to locate and expand in Des Moines.  |
| RCD     | Roosevelt Cultural District                        | A neighborhood retail node located along 42 <sup>nd</sup> Street, immediately north of I-235. The RCD is one of 23 certified Cultural & Entertainment Districts in the State of Iowa.   |
| RT      | Rebuilding Together Greater Des Moines             | A nonprofit organization that is dedicated to preserving affordable homeownership and revitalizing communities. For more information, visit: <a href="http://www.rebuildingtogether.org">www.rebuildingtogether.org</a>   |
| SHPO    | State Historic Preservation Office                 | Part of the State Historical Society of Iowa, a division within the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs. The organization is responsible for identifying, preserving, and protecting Iowa's historic resources.   |
| SSMID   | Self Supported Municipal Improvement District      | A tax levy to support capital improvements, maintenance, and/or department service, utilized in areas that receive streetscape improvements. This tax levy is only applicable to commercially zoned property, residential property is exempt. See Iowa Code Chapter 386 for details.  |