

FOREWORD

NEW DIRECTIONS FOR GROWTH IN INDIANOLA *ACTION DEVELOPMENT PLAN*

Strategic Planning for Encouraging Development

The City of Indianola hired the firms of Stanley Consultants Inc, Des Moines and Environmental Design Group, West Des Moines, to prepare this 2002 Comprehensive Plan Update. “Bridging Between the Comprehensive Plan Data and Landowners/Developers” was established as the central theme of the planning efforts. Growth was a consistent thought in the planning process. To that end, workshops in residential growth, commercial growth, and town center growth were held and development plans were prepared.

Planning efforts included the updating of the City mapping related to growth; the City zoning map, a zoning map for areas outside the corporate limits, a future development land use map, a year 2025 City expansion map, and various transportation related maps. The City’s streets and sanitary sewer systems were evaluated for their ability to provide current and future service to the residents.

As an outgrowth of the planning workshops, it appears that a new way of approaching development can be achieved. It takes a concerted effort by the City officials, business leaders, landowners, and potential developers/builders. Working together, development can occur faster, with higher quality, and achieve the civic goals of good design and a superior tax base.

When development is envisioned by all of these parties, it should first consider mixed-use as a viable option for residential, commercial, and business. Some projects will be more diverse than others, contain varied densities, mixed-uses within the same building, but in all cases better tax bases, more rapid construction, and excellent viability will be the ultimate results.

To begin this new direction, the following recommendations are made:

- Authorize an “Action Development Committee” at Planning and Zoning Commission meetings and at City Council meetings. Assign a Chair-person to act as the liaison to public bodies
- Organize the Action Development Committee to meet on a regular basis
- Members should include two Council-persons, two members of the Planning and Zoning Commission, City staff, two business-persons, two retail-persons, and one representative from Simpson College
- Select a set of projects to be initiated in the next 12 months
- Select some developers to attract to Indianola
- Select sites that could be available to project developers
- Assemble the incentives that could be available to accomplish various developments

This Action Development Committee should meet on a regular basis with a specific agenda each time.

After about six months, the Committee, along with City and County personnel and the Chamber of Commerce should host a “developer’s workshop” to present accomplishments over the previous six months and new plans for the next six months. Developers should always be encouraged to voice opinions and engage the entire group on the possibilities of new projects and ways to streamline the process.

After a few successful team efforts the approach will become clearer and the initiation of development will become a very common endeavor. It may become the favored way for most construction to take place. It will be perceived as “helpful” instead of “bureaucratic.”

Finally, the Action Development Committee should coordinate closely with the new Economic Development Group being formed in Warren County. This will be a great value to future development in Indianola.