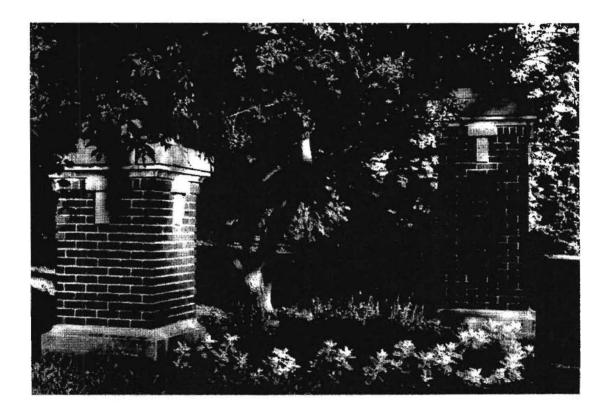
ACTION PLAN

For

THE UNION PARK NEIGHBORHOOD

A Housing Improvement and Neighborhood Revitalization Program



ACKNOWLEDGMENT: The Union Park Neighborhood Association, the Neighborhood Advisory Board, the City of Des Moines Plan and Zoning Commission, the Des Moines City Council, the Polk County Board of Supervisors, the City of Des Moines Community Development Department and the City of Des Moines Housing and Community Services Department.



INTRODUCTION

Essential to the success of any neighborhood revitalization program is the participation of the neighborhood residents in the actual planning process.

In February of 1990 the Des Moines City Council and the Polk County Board of Supervisors approved the amended Housing Improvement and Neighborhood Revitalization Program proposed by the consulting firm of Stockard and Engler, Inc. This revitalization program created a unique public/private partnership which combined the City and the County with Des Moines business leaders to address critical housing issues in residential neighborhoods within the metropolitan area.

Since the adoption of this program, nine residential areas have been selected by the Des Moines City Council as Designated Neighborhoods for participation in the Neighborhood Planning and Revitalization Process. Through regular neighborhood meetings and direct contacts with each neighborhood organization, the neighborhood planning process relies on the residents to identify critical neighborhood issues and needs in their area. A planning team headed by staff from the Des Moines Planning Department provides technical assistance and planning coordination. This planning team works in conjunction with the neighborhood group to develop appropriate goals and a feasible action plan.

This Neighborhood Action Plan provides for a comprehensive strategy which addresses the residential, public and commercial needs within the area and builds on the neighborhood strengths and assets.

This document, which is developed by the Union Park Neighborhood Association, is the result of such a neighborhood planning process.

NEIGHBORHOOD DESCRIPTION

Located to the northeast of the Des Moines downtown, near major health facilities and primary access (Interstate 235 and State Highway 69), the boundaries of this neighborhood are formed by E. Washington Avenue on the south, Hull Avenue on the north, the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad on the east and 2nd Avenue on the west (see Geographic Location Map on reverse side).

The Union Park neighborhood area consists of 96 blocks of land. Residential, mainly single-family dwellings, is the primary land use within the area. In addition, pockets of commercial properties are found in various locations in the neighborhood. A small area of industrial land is located in the western section of the neighborhood. Grand View College, which occupies 6 to 8 blocks of land, is the primary public amenity in the area. Another major land use within the neighborhood is the Union and Birdland Parks which cover 60 acres of open space and park land (see Existing Land Use Map)

The Union Park neighborhood is a residential area which serves a middle-class population. This is reflected through the quality and size of the housing and commercial building stock throughout the neighborhood area.

Active within the neighborhood is the Union Park Neighborhood Association (UPNA). Formed in 1987, this association through its Steering Committee, provides leadership and work with city staff in addressing residents' concerns and improving the quality of life within the neighborhood.

NEIGHBORHOOD HISTORY

On February 23, 1849, a land grant from the U.S. Government was given to Andrew McFadden Thompson. This land covered 200 acres (currently covers the entire Union Park area) from University Avenue to Guthrie Avenue, between East 14th Street and the Des Moines river.

Around 1866, many Scandinavian (e.g. Norwegian, Swedish and Danish immigrants who had settled in the City of Huxley in Story County) began to move into Des Moines. The majority of these settlers concentrated in an area of northeast Des Moines, roughly centering around E. 9th Street and Hull Avenue and extending in all directions. During these days, the area was called Snusville due to the alleged fondness of many old-time Scandinavians for "snus" or snuff. During World War II the name became Snooseville, a derivation from "Snooseville Snooper", then the neighborhood's newspaper.

Strong churches, a fine college, a residential center for the elderly, and other monumental establishments are reminders of the Scandinavian existence in the Union Park area. Grand View College, known in early days as the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church School, opened on September 27, 1896.

This neighborhood was the childhood place for many state and city officials, doctors, lawyers, scientists, teachers and successful business leaders. In the 20's, George Witmer, a former Des Moines mayor, claimed that the Union Park area was one of the most important political precincts in the city.

HOUSING DATA

The Union Park area is a predominately owner-occupied, singlefamily neighborhood. According to a housing condition survey conducted by the City of Des Moines Planning Department during Fall 1988, there are 2,296 residential structures in the Union Park neighborhood. Nearly 25% of these structures show the need for minor repair and improvement and about 15% of them need major rehabilitation programs. Approximately 2,239 (98%) of these homes are single-family dwellings, most of which were built prior to 1940. In addition, the 1988 survey revealed 44 duplexes and 13 multi-family structures within the area.

An ownership survey of the Union Park neighborhood conducted by staff from the Planning Department during the summer of 1992 found 203 certified rental properties within the area which represents approximately 8% of the 2450 total residential structures. This is significantly less than the City as a whole. According to the 1992 Comprehensive Housing Assistant Strategy (CHAS) study, 38% of the city's housing units are rental.

According to the 1988 survey, the conditions of the residential structures in the Union Park neighborhood were very similar to the housing conditions city-wide.

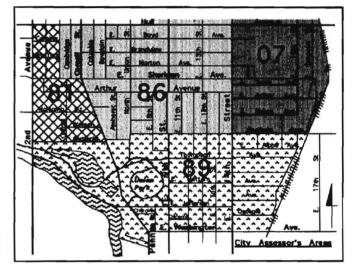
TABLE 1) HOUSING CONDITION COMPARISON					
CONDITION	(RATE)	UNION PARK	CITY-WIDE		
Sound	(1)	62%	67%		
Fair	(2)	25%	19%		
Deteriorated	(3)	12%	11%		
Dilapidated	(4)	1%	3%		

RESIDENTIAL SALES

In general, the City of Des Moines Assessor's Data revealed that the median sales price within the areas comprising the Union Park neighborhood (see City Assessor's Area Map) have increased between 1987 and 1992.

In comparison to the Des Moines area, which had an increase of 17% in residential sales price between 1987 and 1992, properties in City Assessor's areas #86 and #89 within the Union Park neighborhood have maintained comparable average selling prices (20% and 18% respectively) during the same period. In area #7, the median sales price has increased by almost 46% (from an average of \$33,800 in 1987 to \$49,500 during 1992). However, in area #81 the residential sales prices and number of sales have decreased since 1987. This can be attributed to the industrial encroachment on residential properties on the western edge of the neighborhood, along 2nd Avenue.

(TABLE 2) <u>RESIDENTIAL SALES</u>						
Assessor Area	Median (1987)	(# Sales)	Median (1992)	(# Sales)	Increase (%)	
7	\$33,800	(29)	\$49,500	(22)	46%	
81	\$21,000	(14)	\$15,780	(9)	25%	
86	\$30,400	(69)	\$38,000	(67)	25%	
89	\$34,000	(64)	\$41,250	(49)	21%	
D.M.	\$47,150		\$57,000		21%	



HOUSING UNITS

Statistical data provided by the U.S. Census for tracts within and near the Union Park neighborhood indicate that the area has experienced a slight decrease in the number of housing units between 1980 and 1990.

Most of this decrease occurred within the northern section (18 units in tract 5) and eastern section (10 units in tract 3) of the neighborhood. In tract 15, which comprises 48 blocks of the Union Park neighborhood, only 6 units were lost between 1980 and 1990. This change is considered comparable to the city-wide trend where a slight increase of 2.5% in the number of housing units in Des Moines occurred during the same period (see Census Tracts Map for the locations of the census tracts 3,5 and 15).

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Area	1980	1990	Change	%Change
Union Park	2,693	2,659	-34	-1%
Des Moines	79,891	81,921	2,030	3%

COMMERCIAL AREA

The residents and visitors of Union Park neighborhood can find a convenient selection of small neighborhood shops and business services. Fast food restaurants, grocery stores, dentists, pharmacies, and clothing shops, in addition to gas stations, car dealerships, and auto service shops, exist along several arterial streets which pass through and near the area, (E. 14th Street, Hull Avenue, E. Euclid Avenue and E. 9th Street).

The Union Park area does not contain a major shopping or employment center; however, shopping opportunities at Park Fair Mall and Downtown Des Moines are in the vicinity.

The Union Park residents believe that an economic development strategy should be developed to improve and preserve these commercial areas, and to create more neighborhood-related businesses throughout the area in order to offer a unique blend of services, and to serve the immediate community, downtown commuters and other nearby residential neighborhoods.

PUBLIC FACILITIES

The neighborhood area contains the beautiful Union Park and the adjoining Birdland Park. The Birdland marina is also in the area and its dock has been restored just recently. These sites offer bikers, joggers, boaters and other park users several amenities and recreational activities. Recently, the famous Rocket Slide on the Union Park ground which attract many children in the area, was repaired and refurbished.

Several schools and numerous churches are within and near the area. In particular, the new Cattell Elementary School plays a major role in attracting many children to the area and gives pride and a sense of commitment to the neighborhood residents. Wallace Elementary School was recently remodeled and expanded to offer better educational services and adequate recreational facilities to its pupils.

Other schools within the area include Findley Elementary School and North High School. Schools in the proximity of the Union Park area are Harding Middle School, Hiatt Middle School and East High School.

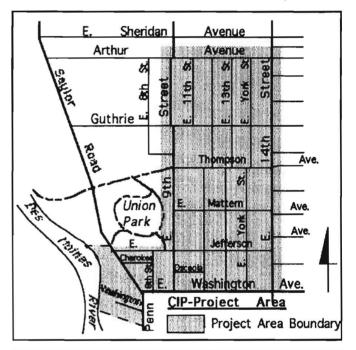
Grand View College, with its expanding campus to the east and west of E. 14th Street, is located on the northern edge of the neighborhood. This higher education institution works with the community residents and communicates with the neighborhood organization when formulating policies and developing projects that could impact the area. In addition, the college plays a major role in shaping the future of the area with its proposed building expansion and development plans.

Union Park residents enjoy the services of numerous fine churches within and near the neighborhood. Some of these churches have been active and supportive in dealing with community issues and concerns.

CIP - PROJECT AREA

After several meetings between members of the Union Park Planning Committee and city staff, a smaller area within the neighborhood was designated as a Capital Improvement Project Area (CIP) to concentrate on special public infrastructure improvements. Comprised of nearly 30 blocks and 800 residential properties, this area is bounded by E. Washington Avenue on the south, E. 9th Street on the west, Arthur Avenue on the north and E. 14th Street on the east (see CIP-Project Area Map).

Based on a site survey conducted by city staff, the CIP-Project Area needs repair and/or replacement of approximately 13,000 feet of curbs, sidewalks and retaining walls, in addition to installation of 105 alley and driveway approaches, and regular alley maintenance. These public improvements are estimated to cost \$300,000.



NEIGHBORHOOD STRENGTHS:

The residents of the Union Park area have identified the following strengths for their neighborhood:

- Easy access to Metro Bus System.
- . Good/strong church activities.
- Recreational amenities and availability of open space.
- . Visible entrances and easy access.
- . Mature trees and wildlife environment.
- Proximity to hospital and health care facilities.
- -Proximity to downtown and other services.
- Potential marina facility.
- Sound housing stock, public infrastructure and services. .
- Proximity to employment generators. .
- Rich neighborhood history. .
- Easy access to 1-235 and 1-80. .
- Strong and committed neighborhood organization. .
- . Excellent educational facilities. .
 - Excellent biketrail system.

STATISTICAL DATA & TRENDS

Statistical data from Census Tracts No. 3, 5 and 15 (see Census Tracts Map) were used to analyze the changes taking place within the Union Park neighborhood between 1980 and 1990.

POPULATION TRENDS

According to the 1990 Census Data, the total population in the Union Park area has changed from 6,761 in 1980 to 6,690 in 1990, a decrease of 71 persons (-1.05%). This is considered comparable with the city-wide population change where a slight increase of 2,184 (1.14%) has occurred in the City of Des Moines between 1980 and 1990 (Table 4).

(TABLE 4) POPULATION COMPARISON					
Area	1980	1990	Change	% Change	
Union Park	6,761	6,690	-71	-1%	
Des Moines	191,003	193,187	2,184	1%	

POPULATION BY RACE

By comparing the census data between 1980 and 1990, it appears that the white population in Census Tract 15 did not experience any substantial changes. In 1980 the white population in Tract 15 represented 95% of the total compared to 91% during 1990. Similarly, no major changes occurred in the Black or Hispanic populations as both races maintained the same level of distribution within the area. However, recent immigration movement and economic trends have led to an increase in the Asian populations (mainly Laotian, Vietnamese and Thai; shown as other in table S) within Tract 15. Between 1980 and 1990, these nationalities increased from 0.4% to 4.5% of the total population within the area. This is closely consistent with the City of Des Moines increase from 0.8% in 1980 to 2.4% in 1990.

(TABLE 5) Union Park Neighborhood Population Change					
Year	White	Black	Other	Total	(Hispanic)
1980	6,499	238	24	6,761	152
1990	6,138	248	304	6,690	144
Changes	-361	10	280	-71	-8
(%)	(-6%)	(4%)	(1,167%)	(-1%)	(-6%)

City of Des Moines Population Change

Year	White	Black	Other	Total	(Hispanic)
1980	172,618	13,054	5,331	191,003	3,523
1990	172,417	13,741	7,029	193,187	4,629
Changes	-201	687	1,698	2,184	1,106
%	(-0.12%)	(5%)	(32%)	(1%)	(31%)

POPULATION BY AGE GROUP

Comparison between the 1980 and 1990 census data shows that the age breakdown for the population of the Union Park area has remained virtually the same during the decade.

In 1980, the number of people of age 17 and younger was 23.61% and that of age 18 and older was 76.39% of the total population, and in 1990, this breakdown was 23.57% for the former and 76.43% for the latter.

This is remarkably similar to the city-wide trend where the number of people of age 17 and younger was 26% and that of age 18 and older was 74% of the total population, and in 1990, this breakdown was 24% for the former and 76% for the latter. Nationally and locally, this is attributed to smaller families, decline in household size and the elderly living longer.

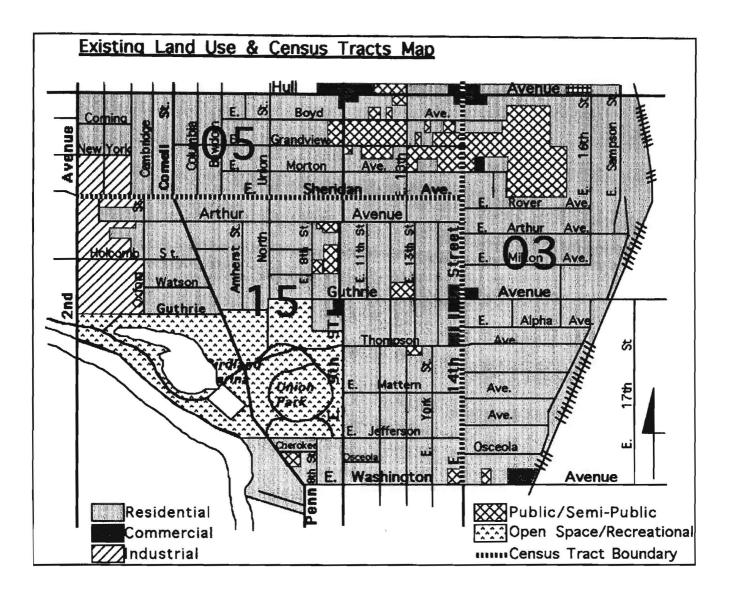
			-	
Area	1980	1990	Change	% Change
Union Park	1,596	1,577	-19	-1%
Des Moines	49,410	46,704	-2,706	-5%
18 YEARS	& OLDER	R POPULA	TION CON	IPARISON
<u>18 YEARS</u> Area	& OLDER 1980	1990	TION COM	MPARISON % Change
			100000	

MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME

Census data reveal that the median family income in Tract 15 (Lee Township section) has increased 76% between 1980 and 1990.

In comparison with the City of Des Moines, the median family income has increased by 59%. This trend reflects an impressive improvement in employment and income level sectors for residents living within the Union Park area.

TABLE 7) MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME COMPARISON						
Area	1980	1990	Change	% Change		
C.T.#3	\$19,301	\$28,026	\$8,725	45%		
C.T.#5(D.M.)	\$18,321	\$24,444	\$6,123	33%		
C.T.#5(Lee)	\$18,321	\$29,412	\$11,091	61%		
C.T.#15(D.M.)	\$18,965	\$31,389	\$12,424	66%		
C.T.#15(Lee)	\$18,965	\$33,458	\$14,493	76%		
Des Moines	\$20,665	\$32,772	\$12,107	76%		



NEIGHBORHOOD ISSUES & CONCERNS:	# Trittina e Francisco - Tritti
After several neighborhood meetings with city staff, the Union Park Planning Committee outlined the following issues and needs as major concerns to the area residents:	 Pockets of deteriorated properties throughout the area. Areas of poor housing condition immediately adjacent to the neighborhood. Encroachment of industrial uses on residential properties
 Aging residential structures discourage mortgage bank financing; Need to improve the image of the neighborhood. Aging population causing housing turnover. Enhance sense of pride among residents. Achieving comparable appraisal values for properties in the area similar to those in other parts of the city. Role/impact of Grand View College in the area. Deterioration of properties on E. 14th Street (commercial/ residential transition areas). 	 Develop a stronger relationship with the school system. Change zoning in most residential sections of the neighborhood to zone R1-60 (One-Family/ Low Density Residential). Continued improvement efforts for the parks area. Marketing the neighborhood (residential and commercial sectors). Upgrading commercial services within the neighborhood. Need for major shopping facility on the northeast side Lack of quality rental properties in the area. Pedestrian access to goods and services.

RESIDENTIAL

GOAL **PLAN OF ACTION**

RESPONSIBILITY (SCHEDULE)

 Rehab existing housing stock by providing funding assistance to owner- occupants throughout the neighborhood. 	 A. Provide funding for major rehab of dilapidated and deteriorated owner-occupant dwellings within the neighborhood during a three (3) year period. B. Provide funding for major rehab of owner-occupant dwellings within the neighborhood during a three (3) year period. 	NFC (1993-1995) NFC (1993-1995)
2. Identify pockets of dilapidated and deteriorated structures (conditions ratings #3 and #4) within the neighbor- hood for priority improvement programs.	A. Target out-reach efforts by city staff to identify all dilapidated and deteriorated structures within the neighborhood and to inform homeowners of the avail- ability of rehabilitation loans.	City (1993-1995)
3. Encourage new owner-occupant home ownership by offering a variety of funding programs that will provide mar- ket rate housing in the neighborhood area.	A. Support the purchase and rehab of single-fam- ily, investor-owned dwellings within the neighborhood by new owner-occupants during a three (3) year period.	NFC/ City (1993-1995)
4. Enforce the City of Des Moines Housing Code.	A. Identify non-compliance properties and follow up on resident complaints regarding violating properties	UPNA/ City/ NFC (Ongoing Process)
	within the neighborhood area. B. Monitor rental properties in the area and iden- tify any existing rental dwellings without Certificates of Compliance. Take proper actions against non-certified	City/ UPNA (Ongoing Process)
	units. C. Educate tenants and landlords about the hous- ing code and the beautification ordinance and their responsibilities to maintain good and sound rental prop- erties.	City/ UPNA (Ongoing Process)
5. Encourage the improvement of rental properties throughout the neigh- borhood.	A. Support a special funding program to assist landlords in upgrading and maintaining their rental properties in the area.	NFC (Ongoing Process)
	B. Encourage and promote conversion of rental dwellings within the neighborhood to new owner-occupied homes in a three (3) year period.	NFC/ City/ UPNA (1993-1995)
	C. Encourage and support strict housing code and beautification ordinance implementation against non- complying properties throughout the neighborhood.	City/ UPNA (Ongoing Process)
6. Provide financial and technical assistance to homeowners for minor re- pairs.	A. Support the development of a special funding program to assist homeowners with minor maintenance and upkeep of their homes.	New Horizon/ UPNA (1993-1995)
7. Encourage new multi-family de- velopment and elderly housing on parcels adjacent to the industrial use on the west	A. Support the assembly of land for a new, market rate, multi-family housing development project in the neighborhood.	City/ UPNA (1993-1995)
side of the neighborhood	B. Support the development of a market rate eld- erly housing project on some of the assembled land.	City/ UPNA (1993-1995)
8. Prevent conversions of large single-family homes (especially large and architecturally significant homes) to multi-family housing use.	A. Establish R1-60 zones, where applicable, throughout the neighborhood to reflect the existing single- family character of the area and to prevent future un- wanted conversions to multi-family use.	City (1993-1995)

GOAL PLAN OF ACTION

 Create buffer zones between residential properties and other uses.

10. Improve the image and perception of the Union Park neighborhood and attract new homeowners and investments in the area.

11. Identify and preserve architecturally/historic significant districts within the neighborhood area. **A.** New development projects should provide appropriate landscape plans for areas where industrial and commercial uses abut residential properties.

A. Develop a marketing strategy that focuses on the assets of the neighborhood and promotes the area as a livable place for young families, and a suitable location for new commercial development.

B. Work with the school district to help promote the public schools located within the area.

A. Support a survey of the architecturally and historically significant properties in the Parks neighborhoods.

B. Support the efforts to preserve and restore potentially historic and architecturally significant properties that are structurally sound and financially feasible for restoration.

C. Maintain and preserve existing architectural integrity and characters of large homes in the neighborhood.

Private/ City (Ongoing Process)

RESPONSIBILITY

(SCHEDULE)

UPNA (1993-1995)

UPNA (Ongoing Process)

City/ UPNA (Ongoing Process)

City/ UPNA (Ongoing Process)

City/ UPNA (Ongoing Process)

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PLAN OF ACTION

1. Repair/replace deteriorated curbs, sidewalks, driveway approaches and retaining walls within the designated CIP-Project Area.

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GOAL

2. Improve and maintain existing alleys throughout the neighborhood.

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3. Improve and support the repair and restoration of the Birdland Marina facility. W. C. LANSING CON

4. Improve the Union Park and Birdland Park facilities. Retain and enhance the Flower Gardens in the Union Park.

5. Extend Arthur Avenue west to 2nd Avenue in order to improve east-west traffic within the area.

6. Promote the continued viability of properties along E. 14th Street.

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A. Install 7.500 Lineal Feet of new curbs in designated sections within the CIP-Project Area.

B. Install 3.500 Lineal Feet of new sidewalks in designated sections within the CIP-Project Area.

C. Install 105 new driveway and alley approaches throughout the CIP-Project Area.

D. Remove and grade 1,200 Lineal Feet of deteriorated retaining walls along designated properties within the CIP-Project Area.

A. Provide concentrated enforcement efforts for the City Beautification Ordinance by city staff within the neighborhood.

B. Identify alleys with grading and gravel needs and refer them to the City's Public Works Department for maintenance consideration.

C. Encourage and support annual SCRUB DAY program by residents throughout the neighborhood area with assistance and coordination from city staff.

A. Support current activities by the city and private sector to improve the marina's facility.

A. Support current activities by the city and private sector to improve all recreational amenities within the parks area.

B. Encourage and continue to support the enhancement efforts of all horticulture and wildlife inhabitants of the parks areas (e.g., trees, plants, shrubs and flower beds).

A. Coordinate with the City's Traffic and Transportation Department to support and promote the extension of E. Arthur Avenue to 2nd Avenue.

A. Support proposed signalization and traffic improvements along E. 14th Street and the intersections of E. Washington, Guthrie and Hull Avenues.

B. As opposed to widening the existing right-ofway along E. 14th Street to add additional traffic lanes, the current 4-lane configuration should be retained to minimize traffic impacts on residential and commercial properties along the E. 14th corridor.

C. Support the pedestrian linkage and boulevard improvements at E.14th Street and Grandview Avenue intersection as proposed by Grand View College Master Plan.

City/ Property Owners (1993 - 1995)City/ Property Owners (1993-1995) City/ Property Owners (1993 - 1995)City/ Property Owners (1993-1995)

RESPONSIBILITY

(SCHEDULE)

City/ UPNA (Ongoing Process)

City/ UPNA (Ongoing Process)

City/ UPNA (Ongoing Process)

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City/ UPNA (1993-1995)

City/ UPNA (Ongoing Process)

> City/ UPNA (1993 - 2000)

City/ UPNA (1993-1995)

City/ UPNA (Ongoing Process)

Grand View College/ UPNA (Ongoing Process)

COMMERCIAL

GOAL PLAN OF ACTION (SCHEDULE)

 Develop a working relationship between the neighborhood community and businesses.

2. Develop a strategy to involve local-business owners in the Neighborhood Revitalization Program.

 Develop a strategy to encourage revitalization efforts by business owners to their commercial properties, and to promote neighborhood-oriented services and shopping opportunities within the area.

4. Develop and improve E. 14th Street and Hull Avenue commercial districts. A. Educate residents and local business owners about the vitality of supporting each other's interest within the neighborhood.

B. Promote and encourage local shopping by the neighborhood residents to support businesses located within the neighborhood area.

A. Encourage local business owners to become active members of the Union Park Neighborhood Organization (UPNA) and to participate in neighborhood meetings.

A. Work with the City's Office of Economic Development to obtain rehabilitation loans to restore commercial building facades.

B. Design and promote a marketing study which would focus on the neighborhood's assets, its proximity to downtown, and other shopping-generator establishments, in order to encourage new business investments in the area.

A. Encourage the retention and improvement of existing commercial nodes at E. 14th Street-Guthrie Avenue and E. 9th Street-Hull Avenue.

B. However, discourage additional encroachment of this commercial use into adjoining residential areas (e.g., E. 14th Street frontage properties).

C. Work and coordinate with existing business property owners to take the initiative in restoring and upgrading their commercial buildings and facades. UPNA (Ongoing Process)

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City/ Business Owners (Ongoing Process)

City/ Business Owners (1993-1995)

UPNA/ Business Owners (Ongoing Process)

UPNA/ Business Owners (Ongoing Process)

UPNA/ Business Owners (Ongoing Process)

