Creating A New Livable Neighborhood: Engaging New Partners, Influencers & the Public

NOVEMBER 12, 2018
HISTORY OF THE SITE

Norfolk Southern
An Urban Neighborhood

THE VISION

GRAY'S STATION
Livability Features & Benefits

- Compactness
- Integration of Land Uses
- Housing Diversity
- Transportation Options
Livability Score – Gray’s Station

Location Results

Current Location: 100 SW 11th St, Des Moines, Polk County, IA, 50309

Recent Locations: 1100 Martin Luther King Jr Pkwy, Des Moines, IA 50314  |  Des Moines, IA

TOTAL INDEX SCORE

67

Housing
Affordability and access

64

Neighborhood
Access to life, work, and play

76

Transportation
Safe and convenient options

57

Environment
Clean air and water

54

Health
Prevention, access and quality

66

Engagement
Civic and social involvement

59

Opportunity
Inclusion and possibilities

Map Layer: Total Index Score

GRAY’S STATION
Gray’s Station: Visioning & Process Overview

**Steering Committee:**
- Christine Hensley, *Des Moines City Council*
- Pete De Kock, *DSM Social Club Executive Director*
- Larry James, *Urban Land Institute Chair*
- Erin Olson-Douglas, *City of DM Economic Development Director*
- Rita Conner, *City of DSM Economic Development Coordinator*
- Kent Sovern, *AARP State Director*
- Stacy Hockaday, *Downtown Townhome Owner*
- Jon Thompson, *President of the Downtown Neighborhood Association* and 8 year old daughter
- Steve Niebuhr, Joe Pietruszynski, Susanne Roesch, Kris Saddoris, *Hubbell Realty Company*
- Davis Sanders, Justin Platts, Laura Kessel, *RDG*
Gray’s Station: Visioning & Process Overview

**Continued Outreach**
- Downtown DIG
- CREW Iowa
- Downtown Neighborhood Association
- Des Moines Waterworks
- City Council Members
- State of Iowa:
  - DNR
  - Economic Development
  - Agriculture

- Discussions with City Departments:
  - Engineering
  - Parks & Recreation
  - Economic Development
  - Traffic
  - Building
- Senator Grassley’s Office
- More…
Gray’s Station: Goals for the Effort – Cultural/Identity

WHAT WE HEARD
Gray’s Station: Visioning

Development Principles (Guides for Decision Making):

- **Connected**
- **Flexibility**
- **Innovation**
- **Phasing**
  - The first phase needs to achieve the Goals laid out by this group and tell the story.
- **Neighborhood Scale**
  - Reflected in scale of blocks, streets, buildings and open spaces.
- **Enjoyment over Efficiency**
- **Balance**
Gray’s Station: Visioning – Development Principles

• **Personality.** Not just a copy of somewhere else – something you can’t find in downtown
• **Create a sense of community / neighborhood.**
• **Land Uses**
  • Provide a mix of uses that fit with the connection of downtown
    • A mix of uses and product types.
    • A mix of people and ages.
• **Address and embrace the river.**
• **Construct a center of gravity.** A neighborhood has a center.
  • Try a public space that is designed where its activity draws others in
  • Gray’s Lake is an important piece – near the Pedestrian Bridge landing point
• **Civic/Community/Education Uses**
  • Des Moines Schools are looking to consolidate stadiums adjacent
  • Create a place/places for the community to come together – “small pieces of wonder”
• **Art**
  • Use the power of art to give identity and bring people together.
Gray’s Station: Visioning – Environmental & Recreation

• **Turn eyesores into amenities**
  - Storm water basins.
    - They are at the southern edge of this neighborhood and need to be better.
• Parks and playgrounds are needed to attract families.
• **Outdoor spaces should be inviting** and interesting as well as encourage organic social gathering opportunities.
Gray’s Station: Visual Listening

- Images that were liked by some in the group
- Comments:
  - Unique, urban open spaces
  - Area for families and all ages
  - Pedestrian Bridge to Gray’s Lake is critical
  - Pedestrian/bike focus and scale is critical. Consider bicycle boulevard connection to downtown.
  - Like moderate-to-high density with buildings close together and framing the street
  - Include green space
  - Needs to have character
  - Include uses with outdoor rooms & gathering spaces
Gray’s Station: Unlikely Stakeholders & Strategic Partners

• Atypical City Departments – Parks and Recreation
• Large Employers
• Local Chamber of Commerce
• Local School District
• Area Neighborhoods
• Current downtown residents
Gray’s Station: Environmental Mitigation

- Lead/Arsenic
- Dieldrin
- Petroleum (UST)
- Benzo(a)pyrene
Excess Railway Material
Regional Storm Water

Develop a regional stormwater approach that includes natural systems.

Protected natural resources and sensitive ecosystems, and clean air and water.
Gray’s Station: Master Plan
Building the Urban Community
Gray’s Station: Phase 1

PHASE 1

Tuttle Street
South 11th Street
Murphy Street
Gray’s Parkway
Plaza Connection
Townhomes

LINC
Linc at Gray’s Station

- 229 Units rental
- Set the corner
- First-floor Commercial
- Catch attention
- Something going vertical
Gray’s Station: Phase 1 Townhomes

- Rooftop Patios
- Private Courtyard
- Pocket Parks
- Bike-friendly Streets
Gray’s Station: Circulation

- Primary Greenways
- Secondary Connections
Vibrant, healthy, and walkable neighborhoods with a mixture of housing, recreational opportunities, public spaces, schools, and mixed-use commercial centers.
INCREASE THE CAPACITY AND DIVERSITY OF DOWNTOWN AMENITIES
FOSTER DEVELOPMENT OF CONNECTED, PEDESTRIAN-FRIENDLY DOWNTOWN ENVIRONMENTS
GREENWAYS
Selectively expand the network of parks, conservation areas, open space, and trails to build a fully-connected system of natural resource areas.
A sudden gust of wind blows the plastic daisy from his bike and across the street.

a. He turns to retrieve it.

b. He continues without it.
Gray’s Station: Roadblocks

- Norms – what’s not in the City’s playbook
- Tell the story 2X more than planned
- Environmental clearances – state and local
- Adjacent Stakeholders
- City staff experience
- City risk profile
- Private foundation donors
Gray’s Station: Unique Funding Sources

• Tax Increment Financing
• Tax Abatement
• Environmental Clearance funds
  • EPA, State, Local
• Unique state partnerships
  • Department of Agriculture – Water Quality Initiative
• Art Grants
Gray’s Station: Lessons Learned

- Expand the involvement
- Tell your story – early and often
- Tell it again
- Champions – it can’t just be the developer
- Engage the community
- Educate city officials and staff on the “Why”
- Challenge the norms
- AARP – Call to Action
THANK YOU

GRAY’S STATION

THANK YOU