

Iowa City Climate Action Commission Agenda

Monday, July 6, 2020, 3:30 – 5:00 p.m.

Electronic Meeting, Zoom Platform

Electronic Meeting

(Pursuant to Iowa Code section 21.8)

An electronic meeting is being held because a meeting in person is impossible or impractical due to concerns for the health and safety of Commission members, staff and the public presented by COVID-19.

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Meeting Agenda:

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of June 1, 2020 minutes
4. Public Comment of items not on the Agenda (Commentators shall address the Commission for no more than 3 minutes. Commissioners shall not engage in discussion with the public concerning said items).
5. Update from Juli Seydell-Johnson, Parks and Rec Director on tree removal and increasing prairie plantings
6. Staff Announcements
 - a. Action items from last meeting
 - b. Updates on actions in “Accelerating Iowa City’s Climate Actions” (see attachment). This will alternate with Climate Action and Outreach Office update.
7. New Business:
 - a. Review and discuss building, adaptation and sustainable lifestyle metrics
 - b. Public input on “Accelerating Iowa City’s Climate Actions”
 - c. Equity considerations for all climate actions
 - d. Update on working groups
 - i. Buildings (Krieger, Karr, Soglin)
 - ii. Transportation (Leckband, Giannakouros)
 - iii. Outreach (Krieger, Fraser, Holbrook, Bradley)
 - iv. Equity/Adaptation (Tate, Hutchinson)
 - v. Waste (Bradley, Sarsfield)
8. Recap of actionable items for commission, working groups, and staff
9. Adjourn

If you will need disability-related accommodations in order to participate in this meeting, please contact Brenda Nations, Sustainability Coordinator, at 319-356-6161 or at brenda-nations@iowa-city.org. Early requests are strongly encouraged to allow sufficient time to meet your access needs.

IOWA CITY CLIMATE ACTION COMMISSION
JUNE 1, 2020 – 3:30 PM – FORMAL MEETING
ELECTRONIC MEETING

Electronic Meeting

(Pursuant to Iowa Code section 21.8)

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MEMBERS PRESENT: Madeleine Bradley, Grace Holbrook, John Fraser, Stratis Giannakouros, Kasey Hutchinson, GT Karr, Matt Krieger, Jesse Leckband, Katie Sarsfield, Becky Soglin, Eric Tate

MEMBERS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT: Sarah Gardner, Wendy Ford, Brenda Nations

OTHERS PRESENT: John Barr, Sylvia Cassada

RECOMMENDATIONS TO CITY COUNCIL:

None

CALL TO ORDER:

Krieger called the meeting to order.

APPROVAL OF MAY 4, 2020 MINUTES:

Fraser moves to approve the minutes from May 4, 2020.

Giannakouros seconds the motion, a vote was taken and the motion passes 10-0 (Sarsfield not present for the vote).

PUBLIC COMMENT OF ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA:

John Barr noted since early January he and his neighbors over on the far east side, bordering on Scott Park, had been observing some tree removal along Ralston Creek and they've been engaging the parks department in ongoing discussion, and had a formal meeting with them in February. Barr stated the parks to prairies concept certainly seems to be a component of the

Climate Action Plan and it spills over certainly into the area of outreach where we're concerned about interacting and educating and engaging the public. The epiphany that they had in talking to the parks department was that aside from the prairie concept, they seem to be concerned about creek bed erosion and the tactic they're employing is to do radical tree removal along certain areas or adjacent to the creek. Barr noted the concern being with the concept of preserving canopy, canopy refers to mature trees that have a significant carbon offset, and he wanted to call this to the Commission's attention the fact that there are certain standard maintenance practices of the parks department adopting what he chooses to call radical tree removal of mature trees along the creek beds really doesn't seem to be congruent with the overall Climate Action Plan. Barr is wondering what steps the Commission has to bring these into harmony.

Giannakouros asked why does removing trees actually lessens erosion. Barr stated their contention is there are a number of invasive species encroaching in on the creek bed and that rationale did not really resonate with members of his neighborhood who have forestry background. They have removed whole sloths of trees along Court Street so a span of what formerly was about 70 trees has been reduced to 15 and that's not even within 25 yards of a creek bed. Another section along a creek bed has one mature tree remaining. So what he has seen is they're adopting a maintenance strategy to be able to get equipment in to mow along the creek beds unobstructed by trees. They have observed in the neighborhood there are trees that remain with roots protruding on the creek bed. The park department's explanation is they're going to plant prairies and other things along this area too but Barr noted in his experience, prairies planted in areas that flood, which is what part of lower Scott Park is intended for, really may show robustness for a couple of years and ultimately rot out due to the moisture. He thinks they're kind of flying under the radar with a hardcore maintenance plan here that really doesn't match very well with what should be the concept for canopy protection.

Giannakouros noted Barr was basically asking what steps the Commission is taking to assure that the standard maintenance practices of the parks department are congruent with accelerating Iowa City's climate actions and is encouraging steps be taken.

Krieger stated the Commission can hear the comments at this point and then explore those further as needed in future agenda topics, at this point they're not supposed to have discussion.

Sylvia Cassada noted Miriam Kashia was unavailable to make this meeting, so she offered to step in on behalf of 100 Grannies here from Iowa City. They wanted to approach the Commission with 100 Grannies idea project that they would like to engage the Commission in and receive like further guidance. They sent an email to Nations earlier asking her about their concern regarding the prairie expansion project in Iowa City. They are left wondering whether cover crops have an appropriate place in any of these types of prairie/conservation projects. They understand that Iowa City has some vacant lots that are owned by the City and they'd like to know instead of just having weeds growing on them, whether it be appropriate and prudent to start considering having cover crops added to those areas, and the beauty of having some of those cover crops added to these areas will improve the soil quality and adds nitrogen sequestering carbon. Cassada said they could turn this into an opportunity for unemployed youth to be a part of the conservation effort that's sponsored by the City. They also think that this would build up soil in areas that that public has come to enjoy, such as Wetherby park or Mosquito Flats. They'd really like to take this a step further in making sure that public spaces where the City controls the land is building up the soil as well. They are looking forward to

hearing back as to a possibility of partnering up with respective departments that could help them with 100 Grannies working together to make this happen and take the soil to the next level for a lot of good reasons.

STAFF/COMMISSION ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Discussion of updated work plan for “Accelerating Iowa City’s Climate Actions”: Wendy Ford introduced herself and stated her job at the City is Economic Development Coordinator and noted some of the goals and missions of the Commission cross over to what she is working on. She noted they have a number of urban renewal areas in the City and urban renewal areas simply enable the use of tax increment financing used in projects that City Council deems worthy. Sometimes there are projects, such as the Chauncey, that come to the City and ask for assistance in creating this building that wouldn't have been create otherwise. In this case, they want to target the industrial areas, and the area that fits between the Iowa Interstate railroad that heads out of town going east near southeast and Highway 6. Between those two tracks, they have several industrial areas and three of them have significant increment built up in them and really that means there is a pot of money that could be used for incentivizing industrial users to make energy efficiency improvements in their buildings. Ford stated they've been working on legislative process for this and that involves putting a plan together, bringing that before Council, having a public hearing and then the hard work begins which will be educating and making one-on-one visits with the industrial users, especially those they think could really benefit from a significant spur to help them make those energy efficiency improvements. What they haven't worked out yet are the nuts and bolts of deciding what kind of project or how a project should come to be. They want to bring a third-party evaluator in to look at the project from the company to determine whether or not that indeed would be worthy of public financing. Ford noted there are lots of details to be worked out that but they'll see those urban renewal area happen yet this month in June and that is the beginning of the process, the rest will take another four to six weeks or so. Ford noted as they look forward the model is fairly simple that they've written into the existing urban renewal areas to amend. It's simple enough that they could do the same thing in two other urban renewal areas that are not industrial but have enjoyed a significant increase in property tax base from which they could fund additional projects for energy efficiency in both downtown and Riverfront Crossings. Ford stated they've got a big year ahead of them in amending these urban renewal plans, but the industrial ones should have a significant impact in the carbon reduction goals.

Ford stated they have two other things they are working on. One, a tax abatement area that they're putting together which is designed for small business and property owners essentially along the Highway 6 corridor. The area between Sycamore Mall all the way out to the intersection of Highway 218 and Highway 1 south and then up into Gilbert Street a little bit and Riverside Drive. This is a tax abatement area that will allow for an abatement of taxes that would occur when a business makes an improvement in their building that raises the tax base of that building or taxable value by at least 50%.

The second is to provide an abatement for projects who are doing a certain level of energy efficiency. They are trying to hash through that, and they'll have more to come as they get those parameters figured out. Ford stressed the abatement of taxes is for three years to five years.

The third program they want to do and have been talking about for some time is a green business recognition program. What they had initially planned was to have businesses who wanted to participate in being recognized for their greenness sign up to participate in Portfolio

Manager, which is the online database that helps track improvements on energy use. This was a little bit slow going and they're making a little bit of a pivot here and want to something simpler, so they're still determining what that is now, but they will work closely with the Chamber of Commerce to reach a wide public and pull them in very quickly.

Tate asked for Ford to repeat the location of the proposed project and what kind of things would be used to help support energy efficiency. Ford replied that the three urban renewal areas that are established already that they would be amending to be able to do this program which is all the way up to Scott Boulevard and the area east of that bordered by the City limits of Iowa City. The next one in is Heinz Road urban renewal area which has Heinz Road running right up the middle of it and the third one is the Sycamore Mall/First Avenue area which includes the P&G buildings, the Sycamore Mall or Iowa City Marketplace area. The question was how the projects would be determined or what kinds of projects. Ford said the tax increment financing funds in an urban renewal area have to be reused in that area only. They can't take an increase in taxes from one area and spend it in another, the only exception is with affordable housing.

Krieger suggested sharing a summary of that proposal along with a map or a description of the zones for the Commission's further review, perhaps the buildings working group would want to look at that in more detail.

Nations thanked Ford and noted it's really exciting working on some of those larger buildings in that industrial area and thinks it can make a really big difference in using some of those funds to lower the energy. Looks forward to seeing the results of that.

Nations next noted since Monroe could not be here today, she wanted to give an update regarding financials and about recovery with the COVID crisis. In May, the City Manager gave an update for the financial picture for the City and although some of the funds have been impacted, primarily the parking fund, which has really been heavily impacted, they're still in pretty good solid financial shape. He did acknowledge they may have more impacts to the general fund in future years if property values drop, but they presented a recovery approach model at the mid-May meeting and Council is still deliberating on how they want to proceed. However, the emergency tax levy that's been dedicated to climate action is still allocated to the projects in the Plan, and that the recovery strategies actually might necessitate speeding up some of the later projects, some of the rebates and incentives, but all the approved projects are still moving ahead. Nations reiterated everything still is going straight ahead they'll continue to seek assistance from the Commission and the working groups for execution of these efforts. Also the federal funding for transit support will assist and provide funding that can really boost the efforts to implement the transit system improvements that will be recommended in the forthcoming study.

Nations next wanted to talk about Excel chart in the packet with all the 35 actions that are going to be initiated this year. She acknowledged this group talked about having a work plan for each of those actions. Nations noted this is not a complete work plan by any means, but they started putting dates to when they will initiate these, so for each of the 35 actions that they plan to initiate this year, they have added the month that they're going to initiate the work plan. For the next meeting she will organize it by month, which would be easier to read, and will add some

columns for what area the action is in. Nations reviewed what they have worked on as a city in the month of May. As they move forward, they can show the Commission what they've worked on each month and if they're behind or ahead of schedule. Nations acknowledged there was a request last meeting by somebody from the public wanting to know how they were going to update everyone on the successes, so hopefully this chart will accomplish that.

Krieger thanked Nations for putting this together and thinks this will be a good communication tool for the Commission and the working groups and it might also be a good communication tool for the public, to increase transparency. Is there a way this could be shared or developed as a tool on the website or in the newsletter or something as an attachment to be publicly shared that is easy to find.

Nations noted that is a really good comment and something that they have thought about. Since this is their first draft, they didn't feel it was ready for primetime, but it would be good to show people that they do take this seriously and are working on some of these things.

Krieger asked if Nations wanted any comments or feedback on any of the specific items at this point, or wait on that until they've had a bit more time to review within the working groups and individually, Nations said either is fine, if someone has input, she is happy to hear it at any time.

Soglin noted it's good to see the equity column there and was wondering if they had developed the equity co-benefit sheet. She wasn't clear whether that was something that needed to go to Council and be approved by them in order for the Commission to use it to keep track of things. Nations stated she and Monroe had talked about that, but from what she understands she didn't realize anybody thought it was going to go to Council and she doesn't think that's something that they need to go to Council for approval. Nations stated she was a little confused by the email because they had talked about the City using it in projects and if City staff was going to use it, then it probably would go to City Council. If this group wants to create something like that and use it, it doesn't need to go to City Council. Soglin asked if there was consensus amongst the Commission then to use the co-benefit sheet. Krieger replied there was consensus. Nations stated the confusion is the Excel chart will be used by staff and the Commission, but the co-benefit sheet is something that this Commission would use, not City staff. The co-benefit sheet can be made into a PDF and put on the Google Docs drive for the working groups to use.

Updates from Climate Action and Outreach office: Nations stated she has a few quick updates for other things that they're doing in the Climate Action and Outreach office. She showed a document with recent activity so the Commission could see what they're working on and focused on this month. She already went over the tracking and reporting of their actions, they are finishing up the climate action grants that they were awarded last year and should be finished by the end of this month. They awarded the grants for this next fiscal year and those recipients will be named in the sustainability newsletter that goes out this week.

Krieger asked how many were awarded this year. Nations stated there were 10, except some of them might get rescinded because of different situations. She noted they got a really interesting mix of grant applications and feel really good about those.

Nations has also been working on the metrics spreadsheet so they can track their progress. They've also been working on three festivals coming up, the Monarch Festival, which is going to

be virtual, the Farm To Street, they are still working on what that might look like in August, and then the Climate Festival which will be addressed during the outreach working group update.

REQUEST FROM COUNCIL FOR COMMISSION TO RESEARCH AND ADVISE COUNCIL ON THE CARBON FOOTPRINT OF BUILDINGS OF VARYING DENSITY AND SCALE:

Krieger noted this item has been assigned to the Building's Working Group for further review and they hope to have a detailed update at next month's meeting.

REVIEW AND DISCUSS TRANSPORTATION AND WASTE METRICS:

Nations stated one thing she has really been working on is that they'd like some metrics within the Climate Action Plan and within the specific actions to show the progress so they can see change and whether their energy is focused in the right places and where they need to tweak things. There are five groups and her goal is to come up with 15 to 20 approved upon metrics that can show more details about progress in the climate action work. She has been looking at other city's metrics and trying to figure out with our specific actions and our goals, how we can show progress in those areas. She has talked with the transportation working group and also staff and is feeling pretty good about the transportation metrics but wanted to run this by the whole group and see if there are any comments or suggestions.

So, with the transportation metrics, greenhouse gas emissions are calculated according to vehicle miles traveled for all the different vehicles within city limits. But what they want to do as a group is to encourage people to drive alone less, to ride the bus and walk and bike. They also want to promote electric vehicles. For each of these metrics in these areas, the City wants to have its own metric to show that they are working on that ourselves too. The metrics that came up were total vehicle miles traveled, which is given every year by the DOT and they could divide that by population. Transit every year provides the number for bus ridership and as previously reported they have a goal to double the bus ridership. Next was transportation mode split, which is a little bit more mushy. Data is estimated from the American Community Survey from the census. There are annual estimates, which are only estimated, but every five years there is a better number to find out how many people are biking and walking to work. They would like to get the number of registered electric vehicles, which would be countywide, and they might look at that by percentage of all vehicles or by population. Then the City wants to look at vehicle miles traveled per the amount of gasoline that they use for those vehicles and hope that improves as they have increased electric cars and efficient cars. So those are the type of things that they're looking at. If they see that our transportation amounts have gone up, they can understand why and note if they need to work on getting people to ride the bus more or walk.

Tate stated one of the things they talked about briefly last time was not just looking at these things schematically, but also maybe thinking about level of impact for some of these things, and it might be useful to start considering what projects to do or indicators to implement in the transportation metrics, one or two of these may be really more impactful than the others.

Nations agreed and stated perhaps one they have the new data person start they could look at those types of things to see where they are having the biggest impact, not just the number. Tate stated if they want to spatially disaggregate things, they have to take any indicators and start with total because they're not going to be able to map that.

Krieger noted however with bus ridership, for instance, they could see if they had improved ridership in certain segments of the community neighborhoods.

Nations stated the goal is to first work with staff and working groups to cover all the five sections of the Plan and then once they get it all firmed up then collect the last two years work. They completed the Plan in 2018, which would be a baseline. That will show the progress and show where we need to work. But also, the next Plan update, which we said we're going to do in five years, is now only three and a half more years.

Nations noted for example if they want to grow electric vehicles and support electric vehicles. Once they have a baseline if they want electric vehicles to be increased 25% of the passenger vehicles on the road, and they know if there is currently 5% or 10%, we can know what's reasonable and what the growth is expected, then have much more concrete goals. The more concrete numbers are to start with, the more concrete goals are, which is a lot better than having vague goals.

Soglin noted in the planning world they're reading a lot about the potential that mass and public transit are really going to be impacted by the virus. Maybe it'll just be a year or two, in a way that makes it all the more important to be measuring. She doesn't know if there's any new information out there on how the virus would impact these particular metrics in the sense and if this is something else they should be measuring? Because there's this new variable that we didn't really have in mind three or four months ago from a public health point of view.

Soglin also noted perhaps the American Bicycle Professionals will have suggestions on other data because of the use of mushy data. It's hard to get that data but it would be great if for non-motorized vehicles they had data that wasn't so mushy. Nations agreed and noted they have been talking about that internally and if anyone can come up with anything, they'd be happy to entertain other options. That's why they're vetting it with the different groups and with this Commission and with City staff and trying to come up with data that is relatively easy to get every year, and that's available so they can see progress. What they want to see through the years, even with the virus, are changes from the baseline data. They know these metrics are behavioral habits with what people do and so if they're not riding the bus, maybe we can see how people are getting around and how those changes are impacting the goals. They will also be able to see how things change because of things like this crisis.

Giannakouros noted there will be a data person that comes into the office one thing they can do in the future would be to normalize these metrics. If one really thinks about measuring metrics such as bus ridership, its avoided vehicle miles traveled as the common denominator. All of these five points can be expressed to some degree. If the goal is avoided emissions you can look at a one person's vehicle miles and that for one person, one car driving around, and that's the worst case scenario, you can compare that to the emissions from a bus ride versus a single transit. Then in terms of distributed impact, we can assume that if you are economically insecure, you're more likely to ride a bus, or you're more likely to have an old car with high emissions, high maintenance, and you're devoting a larger percentage of your income to transit. So thinking about that how do we on the back end think about these metrics as proxies for how to target those groups that can benefit. It does need to be done from a data perspective, to normalize all those first five metrics, and then think about who the groups are and how they're just differently impacted by these modes of transit. We want to help those groups, and climate

action as a vehicle to helping the underserved areas of Iowa City, go hand in hand. That's why this is a Climate Action Plan and not just an emissions reduction plan. The impact of the changes in transportation should also have an impact with those groups that we think we should be helping as a City. The City should start to target getting those old non-efficient cars off the road, and giving some kind of money incentives to get those cars off the road as the best bang for our carbon buck and because it helps those families to have an alternative or to get a better car. That changes the emissions profile. Students at University of Iowa or someone could start to unpack and figure out are these novel ways of rethinking about how we go after emissions in the context of energy insecurity, transportation insecurity, low income households, and money spent there has a disproportionate impact and then getting those emissions reductions. The goal is to have those people taking the bus, but it is different results from an emissions standpoint from someone with a fuel-efficient car versus an old, non-efficient car owner taking the bus.

Soglin wondered if it is worth getting information about the year of the vehicles registered here but realize you're going to pick up the older ones and probably some will be antique or vintage that somebody keeps for pleasure, that kind of thing, so that will not be a useful metric.

Nations stated they've looked at different things for transportation and also noted there's a large portion of the population that their vehicles probably aren't even registered in Johnson County. So while it would be really interesting to look at Johnson County vehicle registration, it will not show the whole picture.

Leckband noted that the State rules do have object specific exemptions for additional information about locations and registrations and it can be shared with municipal government employees that are doing their work. He doesn't know if there's any restrictions on how you store that identifying information, but for the purpose of summarizing and evaluating analysis, he thinks that would be able to be released.

Giannakouros suggested they could also look at the permits the City sells for parking downtown and track bus ridership and once the bike share program is going get the bike share ridership tracked as part of the metrics to see if that's increasing or not.

Nations stated that as far as waste metrics go, she has been working with internally with City staff to get the right ideas and threw out some ideas to them. If we were look at the total amount recycled or composted, then we aren't really looking at on reduction of consumption. We could increase recycling but also the consumption could still be increasing, which is not the goal. And same with composting, it could be just more food waste so they're trying to be really thoughtful in looking at waste as far as lowering consumption, not just increasing what one does with waste. The other thing that complicates waste is landfill totals as a rule across the country go down when the economy goes down and when the economy goes up landfill numbers go up too, so it's tied in with that. She noted there's all these little ins and outs and complexities that they're trying to make sure that they capture and then choose the right metrics. As soon as they get some metrics, she'd like to run them by the waste group and then next she would like to work on the building metrics with the building working group.

PUBLIC INPUT ON "ACCELERATING IOWA CITY'S CLIMATE ACTIONS":

Krieger stated they've had discussions on this off and on back in March, when they finalized the

feedback on the 100-Day Report and identified this agenda item to discuss what that public input process might look like. Through those past discussions, and with the working groups, they've heard discussions on what the content should be or what the format could be. Now that they have an engagement specialist, Sarah Gardner, she'll be focused on this effort as well so perhaps today's discussion could be about providing ideas to Sarah about that process or about what we as a Commission consider to be the goals for that effort. Nations added Sarah is already working on the ambassador program that's going to be get input back from the people that are in that and the Climate Festival (which is going to be a virtual event).

Giannakouros stated just really quickly to go back to the waste metrics for a brief second, and noted at The University of Iowa they're in the same situation where they had difficulty meeting the goals because as you get better at recycling, it's like a weird paradox where you just kind of its self-defeating in terms of an absolute reduction. So that's one piece. The other piece is that they're looking more intently at sustainable materials management. You all may be familiar with EPA's SMM program in the State of Iowa, and thinking about how to prioritize things, normally you prioritize it with what's the most toxic stuff, what's the most carbon intensive stuff, however in this case, you'd probably look at carbon intensity and then seeing how do we just target those things more clearly and stop saying we're going to catch all waste. They know with the 337 plastics they don't move the needle very much, but paper and food waste and other organics do. So, if the City wants to think about aligning waste goals with the Climate Action Plan, you go after CH₄ and CO₂ emitters that are the highest bang for your buck, and then quote those things and not absolute reductions and adopt a modified SMM approach for this Climate Action Plan.

Krieger returned to the public input topic and noted they can talk about general goals, things like transparency in the process, of working on the Climate Action Plan, gathering input for further planning as part of specific topics. One of the questions could be should public input focus on specific topics and projects as they arise rather than the whole plan so that it's easier to consume and partake.

Soglin stated regarding having some focus on specific projects, noted the Gazette had an editorial that called upon them as a Commission to basically do a better job though obviously, it's not just up to us of getting public input, some of that relates to the Council and beyond our control. Perhaps it's worth getting a better understanding of the process of public input and not for discussion right now but putting on a future agenda to better understand what has not worked well in the last couple months and get a little bit of a handle on that and maybe it can inform what we do going forward.

Krieger agreed and stated especially based on recent events, if Council is going to be voting on something that is reviewed by the Commission and there's public input process, transparency process around those issues to more fully vet them. Soglin agreed and noted for example, like even today, they had two comments from the public that essentially have to do with how staff is running projects and while she doesn't want to interfere and second guess them without them also being involved. So it's not just hearing from the public, this process will involve better understanding how staff are able to directly reach out and inform others and respond to the input.

Krieger stated there needs to be an ongoing process in place, and he thinks that's part of outreach and communication. They need to have a continuous method or a certain frequency of being able to ask for input, provide information, to get what people care about in a structured

format so people know what to expect.

Giannakouros asked if it is onerous to have City staff across departments think in explicit ways to have answers, for example, the trees in the in the creek bed, can City staff have an answer for someone on what's the environment or carbon impact and would they have thought of that. It becomes onerous if everyone constantly has to think of that, but there's probably certain projects that it might make more sense. If you're going to cut trees down, that's an environmental trigger, and there should be some way that departments in the City are prepared to react to that and say what's the rationale, to note they've considered the climate piece, the environmental piece, and the different stakeholder angles to a certain extent. It wouldn't be for everything all the time, because that would be onerous, but in cases of cutting a tree down or putting up a solar array, those things that will get the attention from people that are particularly concerned in terms of climate language, it should come back to the Commission in some form.

Krieger noted they now have full time staff working on this issue and thinks this is something that each of the Working Groups should address as part of their discussions in more detail.

ENSURING EQUITY IS CONSIDERED FOR ALL CLIMATE ACTIONS:

Nations noted that equity considerations were added in a column in the spreadsheet for their review and the Equity Working Group will also review and discuss what was added in that column.

UPDATE ON WORKING GROUPS:

Buildings:

Soglin noted their focus is on the building density issue. At this point they have like seven or eight things that they are keeping track of and noted that some things, such as the Iowa City School District data, are on hold due to the virus. She did note they are retroactively getting building data back to 2008.

Soglin also stated speaking on behalf of the County they have the Johnson County solar group launched and the first webinar will be on June 4th and can be viewed on the Solarized Johnson County.org website. Anybody within the city of Iowa City as well as any other city or the unincorporated areas is eligible to participate.

She noted one a member of the public had raised a concern about just how some residential energy was depicted in the report and read to address that, and she thinks they satisfied their inquiry on that.

Transportation:

Leckband noted their discussion was about the metrics and what are the impacts of COVID. He thinks most of their discussion was engaging. He invited the MidAmerican EV program manager and so they'll be interfacing with him and he's going to provide a little more information on programs and how they're helping with other cities.

Outreach:

Fraser noted The Climate Festival certainly is an ongoing topic as part of outreach and also the ambassador program, which he is little behind on because he hasn't had a person to person meeting with the folks that are doing the main work on that, but it's a big topic.

Fraser stated some good news and bad news for himself. He's just been asked to come back for a second shot at being the president of the Iowa United Nations Association. He almost turned it down but there are too many synergies with what he's doing and other aspects of his life and certainly the Climate Action Committee is one. The advocacy committee of the United Iowa United Nations has been really aggressive on their thoughts regarding climate action, all the way from national issues of lobbying to nationally to get back into the Paris Climate Agreement. Good luck with that under the present administration, but he thinks that could happen next year. The good news is they're also advocating for encouraging the governor to join the Climate Action Alliance and to encourage mayors and local officials to join the global covenant of mayors. When they're talking about Iowa City, they're already there but the good news is everyone in Iowa United Nations, all the members, all the board members, are focusing now on what they can do to reduce greenhouse emissions, reduce the carbon footprint, and do the right thing and support the local climate action plans. So he is going to be in a position to get some arms and legs to help us which will be good and that's frankly, the only reason he agreed to come back for another two year term.

Krieger noted with the climate ambassador program, Sarah has been working a lot on that and at the last outreach meeting she talked about creating a framework for online trainings, how that overall program might sort out as different tiers of ambassadors, climate ambassadors and climate leaders, so that that program is in development right now. With the Climate Festival planning, the festival will now be almost all virtual and spread out over a week rather than just one day.

Fraser had one more comment regarding the very large elephant in the room and it's got to do with our whole country being on fire right now with looting and protests and the hijacking of legitimate protests by unsavory groups that are going well beyond what is appropriate. He doesn't know if it's appropriate for us as part of the outreach committee or part of the Commission and maybe they do it through equity, but they need to be proactive. When they see people with their knee on someone's neck, they need to step up and say, get your knee off their neck. They can generalize that in all our equity efforts and wonders if it would be worthy or worthwhile or appropriate to draft some sort of a support statement supporting our mayor and all the people that are thinking and doing all the right things right now. He doesn't want to get political about it, but it's almost unsavory that they don't talk about it.

Equity:

Hutchinson noted during their last discussion they pretty much focused on Kuann's work and most specifically the spreadsheet that she developed that lists all the potential stakeholders in the community. That's the spreadsheet where she placed them in various quadrants, mainly based on the degree that they're impacted by climate change. So they want to start with that and also focus on information received by Nations on what Fort Collins has done because they've gone through some of these same exercises. Once they go through the documents they will figure out the mix of stakeholders that they would like to try and start to establish

relationships with and invite onto the equity working group to make sure that they come up with a mix that's going to be most effective at addressing the equity issues and making sure that they are effective with those efforts.

Tate noted it sounds like they have some homework for our next meeting to take a look at this equity column that Nations and her colleagues have added to the climate actions and give some feedback on that.

Waste:

Bradley noted they talked about how COVID has been really challenging for those easy fixes in regard to waste that usually engage people. For instance, people can't use reusable bags anymore or reusable mugs and things like that. Therefore they talked about brainstorming ways to overcome those problems and continue reducing waste in the community and encouraging people to come and take waste reduction a step further than just those. They are also working on reaching out to different community members in groups and getting them involved with the working group.

RECAP OF ACTIONABLE ITEMS FOR COMMISSION, WORKING GROUPS, AND STAFF:

- 1) Add to the agenda if something comes up during public comments, the Commission cannot comment at that time but can request it be added to the next agenda.
- 2) Nations will to answer the 100 Grannies about their email ideas and will also speak with the parks department as it is really a parks question and she will need to collaborate with them.
- 3) Soglin is going to use the co-benefits sheet and change that draft into PDF and upload it into Google documents and it will be in the next packet.
- 4) Nations will share that website for transportation and the change in different transportation how it offsets greenhouse gases.
- 5) Nations will share the Gazette story for all to read while they think about getting the process around public input on climate and how they can do better.
- 6) Nations will to talk to motor vehicles in Johnson County and look into different metrics that they might use their data.
- 7) Krieger asked for Nations send a summary of what Ford reviewed along with the map for zones.
- 8) Soglin requested exploration of making an online version of this year's action item list so the public could see that.
- 9) Working groups are to think about public input methods. Also, if anyone has ideas about the metrics let Nations know.

Nations noted she will send out this list of action items out to the Commission via email.

Giannakouros noted following up on Fraser's comments about recent events, perhaps they should put a placeholder in the next agenda as it is an endless discussion. Doesn't know what the limitations or the mandate of this Commission is, but on a personal level, he just feels it's sickening, the country is in turmoil right now and it's hard for any part of normal business to be normal and to ignore this. Perhaps for this Commission, the discussion should start offline in the working groups to figure out what does this mean. He feels it's worth as a public commission thinking about this.

Krieger added another item might be to get a Parks and Rec update based on the public comment at the beginning of the meeting. Perhaps they would be able to provide an update on intent and what's going on there.

ADJOURNMENT:

Krieger made a motion to adjourn.

Tate seconded the motion.

CLIMATE ACTION COMMISSION
 ATTENDANCE RECORD
 2019 - 2020

NAME	TERM EXP.	10/7/2019	11/4/2019	12/2/2019	1/6/2020	2/10/2020	3/9/2020	5/4/2020	6/1/2020	7/6/2020	8/3/2020
Madeleine Bradley	12/31/2022	--	--	X	X	X	O/E	X	X		
John Fraser	12/31/2020	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Stratis Giannakouros	UI Rep	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Grace Holbrook	12/31/2021	X	X	X	O/E	O/E	O/E	X	X		
Kasey Hutchinson	12/31/2022	--	--	X	X	X	X	X	X		
GT Karr	12/31/2020	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Matt Krieger	12/31/2020	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Jesse Leckband	MidAmerican Rep	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Katie Sarsfield	12/31/2020	X	X	O/E	X	X	O/E	X	X		
Becky Soglin	12/31/2022	--	--	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Eric Tate	12/31/2021	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		

KEY: X = Present
 O = Absent
 O/E = Absent/Excused
 NM = No Meeting
 -- -- = Not a Member

A vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

Progress update on "Accelerating Iowa City's Climate Actions"

Action	New/ Next Step	Plan Alignment	Month Initiate	to	Workplan	Equity Focus	Status
Buildings							
BPP-1	Solar Partnership with MidAmerican	New	1.5	April	Brought forward to City Council in April and was not approved. No next steps planned at this point. Will assess opportunities as locations or chances present themselves.		Closed
BE-3	Encourage the Local Realtor Community to Include Energy Performance in the Multiple Listing Services (MLS) Property Inventory	New	1.1 & 1.6	May	Buildings Working Group indicated initial conversations were in motion with local realtors about value of this action. Staff checked with the group members about where this stands. CAO/CMO can offer support as needed. Example programs elsewhere need to be presented. More research and education needed on realtor and homebuying/selling, paired with engagement with ICAAR. Concerns include an inability to sell inefficient properties.	Benefits for informed buying/selling, may need incentive assistance later on, if concentration of activity falls within only a few neighborhoods or stakeholder interest lacking. Education for all residents and renters about housing with energy efficiency and indoor air quality speaks to equity concerns. Commission and Working Group recommendations and feedback needed.	In Development
BI-4	Launch a TIF-funded climate action incentive program aimed at reducing industrial energy consumption *(New)	New	1.2 & 5.4	May	Economic Development finalizing requirements. Pursuing initial Council approval steps for establishing and approving Urban Renewal Areas in summer 2020.		Underway
BCP-1	Advocate for State Adoption of Advanced Energy Codes *(New)	New	1.1 – 1.4	May	Inquire at State about progress for rule making process. Determine whether additional actions necessary, including letters to elected officials. Covid-19 delayed meetings in spring 2020. Timing may require advocacy efforts expanded into 2021.	Could support these efforts with help from education and advocacy from underserved groups that directly benefit from housing improvements.	Underway
BCP-2	Advocate for Aggressive Energy Code Development and Adoption *(New)	New	1.1 – 1.4	May	Eligible staff voted for adoption of new IECC codes earlier in 2020. This action also requires letters to and engagement with elected officials. Advocacy efforts expanded into 2021.	Could support these efforts with help from education and advocacy from underserved groups that directly benefit from housing improvements.	Underway
BE-1	Promote Energy Efficiency and Performance Tips to the Public	Next	1.1 – 1.2, 1.6	June	Initiate planning and needs assessment; feedback from Commission working group. Identify resources, contacts, and content. Assess web access and source development, method of dissemination. Support eventual actions with strategy from communications plan (Action 5.1 - EDU)	Imperative. Review of equity report and assistance from EHR staff essential. Commission and Working Group recommendations and feedback needed.	In Development
BE-2	Partner with Stakeholders to Promote Green Building and Rehabilitation	New	1.1-1.4	June	Initiate introductions to organizations, CAO staff understanding of goals and example programs necessary. Meetings with City development staff. Develop group of stakeholders to discuss barriers and interest in pursuing green build strategies to better partner and build new alliances/education opportunities. Support eventual actions with strategy from communications plan (Action 5.1 - EDU)	Use equity report to ensure stakeholders from impacted groups are represented, and feedback is shared with development community, landlords, and builders. Commission and Working Group recommendations and feedback needed.	In Development
BI-2	Enhance Energy Standards for City Rehabilitation Projects	Next	1.1	June	Need updated report from NDS on current activity and efforts. Explore alternatives for rehab projects and ability for City to support incentives or supplemented energy efficient equipment if homeowners cannot/won't pay the difference to upgrade. Education components necessary - communications strategy outcomes.	Assisted households currently meet federal income requirements. Establish a mapped GIS inventory of energy efficiency assessments and investments. Ensure access to energy efficiency and other sustainable design elements in each project through education and engagement.	Underway

BR-1	Create a More Robust Energy Code Inspection Program *(New)	New	1.1 -1.2	June	Staff is enrolled in energy inspections training. Additional inspector budgeted in FY21. CAO to meet with NDS staff to understand what staff will be looking at and for, addressing through compliance checks.	Commission/Working Groups should assist with how they would like to measure equity and what should be reported to show progress.	Underway
BI-5	Develop or Partner with Local Stakeholders on a Comprehensive Climate Action Rehabilitation Program	New	1.1 – 1.4	July	JCED applied for a small grant for neighborhood pilot program. Must define GIA involvement, capacity and scheduling. Explore RFQ for external partner/s to implement a program.	Approach to populations served critical. Commission and Working Group recommendations and feedback needed for further development.	In Development
BR-2	Incorporate Stricter Energy Standards into Tax Increment Financing Policies *(New)	New	1.3 – 1.4	Aug	Begin review of options, develop revisions to policy, introduce for Council adoption. Stakeholder process required. Buildings Working Group and Commission involvement in policy review.	Greater equity can be achieved through a geographic distribution of benefits. Education and advocacy could benefit populations impacted and served by policy implementation.	Not Started
BI-1	Offer Free Home Energy Assessments through Green Iowa AmeriCorps	Next	1.1	Sept	Mid Summer - Meetings with AmeriCorps, bringing in new team. Work must be finalized and coordinated with JCED's conceptual expansion of AmeriCorps responsibilities. May need to explore non-ameriCorps team to perform additional assessments and weatherization services.	AmeriCorps is focused on certain groups - seniors, low income, veterans. Not sure how they track or report these demographics. May need to get creative in how audits are performed in light of Covid-19. Education delivery and equipment installation/provision alternatives probably needed in short term. Establish a mapped GIS inventory of energy efficiency assessments and investments.	In Development
BI-3	Coordinate Neighborhood Energy Blitz Events	New	1.1	Fall	Coordinate efforts with Neighborhood Planner, Recreation, and community organizations; Support actions with strategy from communications plan (Action 5.1 - EDU); will likely align this action with introduction of Climate Ambassador program. Earlier rollout of small projects with summer activities like Parties in the Park.	Assess equity report to determine any areas of focus. NDS can assist with housing/permit data that can help focus on neighborhoods with less efficient housing stock. Outreach to underserved groups may spur interest in blitz programs or projects. Working Group recommendations and feedback needed.	In Development
Action		New/ Next Step	Plan Alignment	Month to Initiate	Workplan	Equity Focus	Status
Transportation							
TPP-1	Complete the Transit Study and Implement Recommendations to Bolster Service and Increase Ridership	New	2.1	Ongoing	Due to be completed in summer, may be somewhat delayed from Covid-19. Primary implementation of recommendations to begin in 2021.	Dependent upon study recommendations and selected actions for implementation. Goal is to serve residents most needing transit service. Commission and Working Group recommendations needed.	Underway
TCP-1	Establish an Electric and Fuel-Efficient Vehicle Purchasing Policy	New	2.2	May	Actions already in place but written policy needed. Collect EV policy models and evaluate City purchasing policy for applicable language, staff coordinating applicable data for tracking, will begin drafting policy late May.		Underway
TCP-1	Track Adherence to City Idling Policy	Next	2.7	May	AVL equipment provides idling data. Staff will compile data and CAO will assist with reporting formatting. Transportation Working Group needs to define and clarify their recommendation before staff can pursue exploration of technology.		Underway
TE-1	Significant Transportation Education and Outreach Campaigns	New	2.3	August	Define Transportation metrics. Develop a video in fall for Climate Ambassador Program which will also be available to public. Identify how we will engage all residents.	Review equity Report to identify groups and locations to focus attention. Somewhat reliant upon recommendations of transit study. Explore language translations. Commission and Working Group recommendations and feedback needed.	In Development

Action	New/ Next Step	Plan Alignment	Month Initiate	to Workplan	Equity Focus	Status	
Waste							
WCP-1	Initiate a Methane Feasibility Study	Next	3.7-3.8	May	Report presented at of May. Staff will determine next steps. Final cost estimates and recommendations nearing completion in summer 2020.	Consideration will be given, after final recommendations, to impacts on fiscal health of Enterprise funds and needs to supplement with rate changes over time.	Underway
WE-1	Engage the Public to Compost Organic Waste	Next	3.2	June	Meet with Resource Management. Need to assess current level of engagement with proposed engagement. Determine how to tailor it with equity in mind. Expand opportunities with local businesses. Tie into carbon sequestration project. Develop unit for climate ambassadors that focuses on waste.	Focus is reliant upon meetings with staff, current efforts, working Equity Working Group, equity report, translations services available, and outcomes from Communications strategy.	In Development
WCP-1	Require All Park/Public Space Rentals to Recycle and Use "Green" Event Best Practices.	New	3.5	June	Reconvene staff working on this project and finalize project details. Community education, possible stakeholder review.	Must assess whether new requirements impact populations differently. Working Group recommendations needed.	In Development
WE-2	Education Campaigns for Neighborhoods to Reduce Waste/Consumption at the Source	Next	3.3	July	Meet with Resource Management to assess current materials that have been developed. Coordinate with Neighborhood Planner.	Focus reliant upon meetings with staff, current efforts, working Equity Working Group, equity report, translations services available, and outcomes from Communications strategy.	Not Started
Action	New/ Next Step	Plan Alignment	Month Initiate	to Workplan	Equity Focus	Status	
Adaptation							
AE-1	Develop Climate Amassador Team	New	4.2	May	Program is in development. Modules developed over the summer to be launched in the fall. Will coordinate with Outreach and Equity Working Groups and Communications staff.	Development of program includes application process not reliant upon technology to participate. If tech is necessary, will purchase tablets or other device to loan to ambassador participants for training activities. Special attention paid to connection with local groups that can recommend ambassador applicants.	Underway
APP-2	Continue Implementation of the Natural Areas Management Plan	New	4.5-4.6	May	Work agreement executed with AES in May. Significant follow up with neighborhoods required during process. Planned concentration on intensive maintenance in neighborhood park prairies. Education needed about purpose, need and care for natural areas; build community partnerships with advocacy groups. Explore possibility of extended community education accompanying prairie plantings. Proposal drafted and in staff review.	Geographic distribution, education variables dependent on groups impacted. Engage natural area advocacy groups that can assist with public education.	Underway
APP-4	Equity Review of Neighborhood and Population Outreach; Develop Outreach Plan for Populations Highly Impacted by Climate Change	Next	4.1-4.2	May	Equity Working Group will review Equity Report and determine further action. Commission review of project equity review tool for City and other community climate projects. Staff initiated coordination of mapping tools/resources requested by Equity Working Group.	Emphasis on highly impacted groups, targeted outreach and collaboration for development and implementation of each climate action.	Underway
APP-1	Flood Mitigation and Stormwater Management Programs/Projects; Buyouts	Next	4.5	June	Met with Stormwater Team. Collect and review current volunteer lists. Assess if we need to promote existing program. Assess creek clean up volunteer process.	Involving various community groups dependent on makeup of existing volunteer listing and schedules. Review equity report to verify benefits and participation equitable.	Underway
AE-1	Partner with Project Green on a Tree Planting Partnership; Incentives for Private Tree Planting	New	4.6	July	Schedule meeting to revisit ideas discussed last year. Education and promotional campaign development will be needed.	Need more information about plans from Project Green to better define how equitable dispersion or availability of trees will be possible. Post- meetings with PG, explore development/expansion of program rollout. Commission and Working Group recommendations and feedback appreciated.	Not Started

AR-1	Street Tree Ordinance	Next	4.6	August	NDS will draft ordinance. Outreach and communication needed to educate the public, make aware.	New Ordinance will apply to new developments.	Not Started
APP-3	Expand Public Tree Planting	Next	4.6	September	Report our proposed planting for upcoming year for municipal tree management. Identify stumbling blocks ahead of new plantings. Possible small group discussion with impacted groups - residents, landlords, City staff, businesses or development groups. Address negative perceptions through modifications or education.	Review inventory maps, locate areas in need, target workplan outreach accordingly. Emphasis on benefits of tree canopy in low-mod neighborhoods.	In Development
AE-2	Educate and Coordinate with Local Agencies on Health Impacts	Next	4.3	October	Outreach meetings with Johnson Co. Public Health, University of Iowa, etc.	Equity reach will become more clear with agency coordination and partnering. Can use equity scale/report to identify starting agency discussions.	Not Started
Action		New/ Next Step	Plan Alignment	Month to Initiate	Workplan	Equity Focus	Status
Sustainable Lifestyle							
SLP-2	Launch a Green Business Program: "Climate Action at Work"	Next	5.5	June	Pilot program initiated but rebooted with a modified structure (awards/recognition program). Awards program will introduce new program and seek first applications in summer 2020. Component of recognition program will also be to build a network of businesses with climate interests that can support additional demand and resources for infrastructure and policy upgrades. Networking model in development with partnering business advocacy groups.	Initial program relies heavily on voluntary participation. Potential for granted funding tied to participation. Will need to make a greater effort to identify and work with businesses with less access to resources. Geographic access and type of business should also be taken into account. Will map geographic participation. Need assistance from Economic Development staff, Equity & Outreach Working Groups, and other econ dev and small business assistance groups.	Underway
SLPP-2	Develop a Climate Action Strategic Communications Plan	Next	5.5	June	Build RFP for consultant to develop marketing plan; draft in review (June), plan for late summer release. Plan will be focused on Iowa City attributes, alignment with current initiatives, focused attention to branding, models for promotional rollout schedules, template materials for modification by project or program, equity and "language" for how to frame climate activities as broadly appealing content.	Encourage selection of firm to develop this plan/materials. Application of equity principles will be part of process. Feedback from Commission welcome prior to receipt of RFP responses.	In Development
SLP-1	Host Sustainability Forum and Events	Next	5.5	September	Climate Festival is in planning stages for an online event to be launched in September. Activities include digital and written storytelling, coordinated individual/community activities, and expanded local partnerships. Planning in May, outreach in June/July, finalizing steps in August, gear up for promotion late August - Festival in Sept.	Intentional outreach with underserved groups to ensure access to awareness, education, and participation. Staff, planning committee, and CAC Working Group to connect with local organizations willing to partner on activities, promotion, or hosting remote event. Efforts underway to include translated festival materials in digital and print formats.	Underway
SLPP-1	Community Garden Expansion/Additions	Next	5.5	September	Working with Parks Department to see if there are plans for additional community garden areas.	Equity mapping for plot rentals exists. Need to review 2020 rentals, identify gaps in geo coverage and gaps in possible access for certain groups. Need focused outreach to see where needs might be to connect unresourced individuals with plot availability in upcoming years; will assist in identifying needs/potential for pocket gardens in ROW.	Not Started

SLI-1	Expand Community Climate Grants	Next	5.4	November	Consider adding non-profit and business categories and define what the new program will look like next year. Identify how grant program ties into other City funding initiatives. Could move project earlier in the year to address direct and coordinated support for Covid-19 recovery.	Follow Equity Report recommendations to identify and connect with preferred applicant agencies from first tier needs. Community organizations geared towards underserved and disadvantaged groups could also fall into this expansion or, the next year's funding could be introduced specifically to certain groups from equity report and an info session can be held by invitation for these groups, like HRC and HCDC have done.	Not Started
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Action	New/Next Step	Plan Alignment	Month to Initiate	Workplan	Equity Focus	
Buildings: Education						
1	Promote Energy Efficiency and Performance Tips to the Public	Next	1.1 – 1.2, 1.6	June	Initiate planning and needs assessment; feedback from Commission working group. Identify resources, contacts, and content. Assess web access and source development, method of dissemination. Support eventual actions with strategy from communications plan (Action 5.1 - EDU)	Imperative. Review of equity report and assistance from EHR staff essential. Commission and Working Group recommendations and feedback needed.
2	Partner with Stakeholders to Promote Green Building and Rehabilitation	New	1.1-1.4	June	Initiate introductions to organizations, CAO staff understanding of goals and example programs necessary. Meetings with City development staff. Develop group of stakeholders to discuss barriers and interest in pursuing green build strategies to better partner and build new alliances/education opportunities. Support eventual actions with strategy from communications plan (Action 5.1 - EDU)	Use equity report to ensure stakeholders from impacted groups are represented, and feedback is shared with development community, landlords, and builders. Commission and Working Group recommendations and feedback needed.
3	Encourage the Local Realtor Community to Include Energy Performance in the Multiple Listing Services (MLS) Property Inventory	New	1.1 & 1.6	May	Buildings Working Group indicated initial conversations were in motion with local realtors about value of this action. Staff checked with the group members about where this stands. CAO/CMO can offer support as needed. Example programs elsewhere need to be presented. More research and education needed on realtor and homebuying/selling, paired with engagement with ICAAR. Concerns include an inability to sell inefficient properties.	Benefits for informed buying/selling, may need incentive assistance later on, if concentration of activity falls within only a few neighborhoods or stakeholder interest lacking. Education for all residents and renters about housing with energy efficiency and indoor air quality speaks to equity concerns. Commission and Working Group recommendations and feedback needed.
Buildings: Incentives						
1	Offer Free Home Energy Assessments through Green Iowa AmeriCorps	Next	1.1	Sept	Mid Summer - Meetings with AmeriCorps, bringing in new team. Work must be finalized and coordinated with JCED's conceptual expansion of AmeriCorps responsibilities. May need to explore non-ameriCorps team to perform additional assessments and weatherization services.	AmeriCorps is focused on certain groups - seniors, low income, veterans. Not sure how they track or report these demographics. May need to get creative in how audits are performed in light of Covid-19. Education delivery and equipment installation/provision alternatives probably needed in short term. Establish a mapped GIS inventory of energy efficiency assessments and investments.
2	Enhance Energy Standards for City Rehabilitation Projects	Next	1.1	June	Need updated report from NDS on current activity and efforts. Explore alternatives for rehab projects and ability for City to support incentives or supplemented energy efficient equipment if homeowners cannot/won't pay the difference to upgrade. Education components necessary - communications strategy outcomes.	Assisted households currently meet federal income requirements. Establish a mapped GIS inventory of energy efficiency assessments and investments. Ensure access to energy efficiency and other sustainable design elements in each project through education and engagement.
3	Coordinate Neighborhood Energy Blitz Events	New	1.1	Fall	Coordinate efforts with Neighborhood Planner, Recreation, and community organizations; Support actions with strategy from communications plan (Action 5.1 - EDU); will likely align this action with introduction of Climate Ambassador program. Earlier rollout of small projects with summer activities like Parties in the Park.	Assess equity report to determine any areas of focus. NDS can assist with housing/permit data that can help focus on neighborhoods with less efficient housing stock. Outreach to underserved groups may spur interest in blitz programs or projects. Working Group recommendations and feedback needed.

4	Launch a TIF-funded climate action incentive program aimed at reducing industrial energy consumption *(New)	New	1.2 & 5.4	May	Economic Development finalizing requirements. Program examples needed to finalize development of project framework. Beginning steps for establishing and approving Urban Renewal Areas initiating in summer 2020.	
5	Develop or Partner with Local Stakeholders on a Comprehensive Climate Action Rehabilitation Program	New	1.1 – 1.4	July	JCED applied for a small grant for neighborhood pilot program. Must define GIA involvement, capacity and scheduling. Explore RFQ for external partner/s to implement a program.	Approach to populations served critical. Commission and Working Group recommendations and feedback needed for further development.

Buildings Regulations

1	Create a More Robust Energy Code Inspection Program *(New)	New	1.1 -1.2	June	Staff is enrolled in energy inspections training. Additional inspector budgeted in FY21. CAO to meet with NDS staff to understand what staff will be looking at and for, addressing through compliance checks.	Commission/Working Groups should assist with how they would like to measure equity and what should be reported to show progress.
2	Incorporate Stricter Energy Standards into Tax Increment Financing Policies *(New)	New	1.3 – 1.4	Aug	Begin review of options, develop revisions to policy, introduce for Council adoption. Stakeholder process required. Buildings Working Group and Commission involvement in policy review.	Greater equity can be achieved through a geographic distribution of benefits. Education and advocacy could benefit populations impacted and served by policy implementation.

City Policy

1	Advocate for State Adoption of Advanced Energy Codes *(New)	New	1.1 – 1.4	May	Inquire at State about progress for rule making process. Determine whether additional actions necessary, including letters to elected officials. Covid-19 delayed meetings in spring 2020. Timing may require advocacy efforts expanded into 2021.	Could support these efforts with help from education and advocacy from underserved groups that directly benefit from housing improvements.
2	Advocate for Aggressive Energy Code Development and Adoption *(New)	New	1.1 – 1.4	May	Eligible staff voted for adoption of new IECC codes earlier in 2020. This action requires letters to and engagement with elected officials. Will proceed but timing may require advocacy efforts expanded into 2021.	Could support these efforts with help from education and advocacy from underserved groups that directly benefit from housing improvements.

Public Projects

1	Solar Partnership with MidAmerican	New	1.5	April	Brought forward to City Council in April and was not approved. No next steps planned at this point. Will assess opportunities as locations or chances present themselves.	
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Action	New/Next Step	Plan Alignment	Month to Initiate	Workplan	Equity Focus
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Transportation: Education

1	Significant Transportation Education and Outreach Campaigns	New	2.3	August	Define Transportation metrics. Develop a video in fall for Climate Ambassador Program which will also be available to public. Identify how we will engage all residents.	Review equity Report to identify groups and locations to focus attention. Somewhat reliant upon recommendations of transit study. Explore language translations. Commission and Working Group recommendations and feedback needed.
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Transportation: Policy						
1	Establish an Electric and Fuel-Efficient Vehicle Purchasing Policy	New	2.2	May	Actions already in place but written policy needed. Collect EV policy models and evaluate City purchasing policy for applicable language, staff coordinating applicable data for tracking, will begin drafting policy late May.	
2	Track Adherence to City Idling Policy	Next	2.7	May	AVL equipment provides idling data. Staff will compile data and CAO will assist with reporting formatting. Transportation Working Group needs to define and clarify their recommendation before staff can pursue exploration of technology.	
Public Projects						
1	Complete the Transit Study and Implement Recommendations to Bolster Service and Increase Ridership	New	2.1	Ongoing	Due to be completed in summer, may be somewhat delayed from Covid-19. Primary implementation of recommendations to begin in 2021.	Dependent upon study recommendations and selected actions for implementation. Goal is to serve residents most needing transit service. Commission and Working Group recommendations needed.
Action	New/Next Step	Plan Alignment	Month Initiate	to	Workplan	Equity Focus
Waste: Education						
1	Engage the Public to Compost Organic Waste	Next	3.2	June	Meet with Resource Management. Need to assess current level of engagement with proposed engagement. Determine how to tailor it with equity in mind. Expand opportunities with local businesses. Tie into carbon sequestration project. Develop unit for climate ambassadors that focuses on waste.	Focus is reliant upon meetings with staff, current efforts, working Equity Working Group, equity report, translations services available, and outcomes from Communications strategy.
2	Education Campaigns for Neighborhoods to Reduce Waste/Consumption at the Source	Next	3.3	July	Meet with Resource Management to assess current materials that have been developed. Coordinate with Neighborhood Planner.	Focus reliant upon meetings with staff, current efforts, working Equity Working Group, equity report, translations services available, and outcomes from Communications strategy.
Waste: City Policy						
1	Require All Park/Public Space Rentals to Recycle and Use "Green" Event Best Practices.	New	3.5	June	Reconvene staff working on this project and finalize project details. Community education, possible stakeholder review.	New requirements may impact equity groups. Working Group recommendations needed.
Waste: Projects						
1	Initiate a Methane Feasibility Study	Next	3.7-3.8	May	Report presented at of May. Staff will determine next steps.	
Action	New/Next Step	Plan Alignment	Month Initiate	to	Workplan	Equity Focus
Adaptation: Education						
1	Develop Climate Ambassador Team	New	4.2	May	Program is in development. Modules developed over the summer to be launched in the fall. Will coordinate with Outreach and Equity Working Groups and Communications staff.	Development of program includes application process not reliant upon technology to participate. If tech is necessary, will purchase tablets or other device to loan to ambassador participants for training activities. Special attention paid to connection with local groups that can recommend ambassador applicants.

2	Educate and Coordinate with Local Agencies on Health Impacts	Next	4.3	October	Outreach meetings with Johnson Co. Public Health, University of Iowa, etc.	Equity reach will become more clear with agency coordination and partnering. Can use equity scale/report to identify starting agency discussions.
Adaptation: Incentives						
1	Partner with Project Green on a Tree Planting Partnership; Incentives for Private Tree Planting	New	4.6	July	Schedule meeting to revisit ideas discussed last year. Education and promotional campaign development will be needed.	Need more information about plans from Project Green to better define how equitable dispersion or availability of trees will be possible. Post-meetings with PG, explore development/expansion of program rollout. Commission and Working Group recommendations and feedback appreciated.
Adaptation: Regulation						
1	Street Tree Ordinance	Next	4.6	August	NDS will draft ordinance. Outreach and communication needed to educate the public, make aware.	New Ordinance will apply to new developments.
Adaptation: Projects						
1	Flood Mitigation and Stormwater Management Programs/Projects; Buyouts	Next	4.5	June	Met with Stormwater Team. Collect and review current volunteer lists. Assess if we need to promote existing program. Assess creek clean up volunteer process.	Involving various community groups dependent on makeup of existing volunteer listing and schedules. Review equity report to verify benefits and participation equitable.
2	Continue Implementation of the Natural Areas Management Plan	New	4.5-4.6	May	Work agreement executed with AES in May. Significant follow up with neighborhoods required during process. Planned concentration on intensive maintenance in neighborhood park prairies. Education needed about purpose, need and care for natural areas; build community partnerships with advocacy groups. Explore possibility of extended community education accompanying prairie plantings. Proposal drafted and in staff review.	Geographic distribution, education variables dependent on groups impacted. Engage natural area advocacy groups that can assist with public education.
3	Expand Public Tree Planting	Next	4.6	September	Report our proposed planting for upcoming year for municipal tree management. Identify stumbling blocks ahead of new plantings. Possible small group discussion with impacted groups - residents, landlords, City staff, businesses or development groups. Address negative perceptions through modifications or education.	Review inventory maps, locate areas in need, target workplan outreach accordingly. Emphasis on benefits of tree canopy in low-mod neighborhoods.
4	Equity Review of Neighborhood and Population Outreach; Develop Outreach Plan for Populations Highly Impacted by Climate Change	Next	4.1-4.2	May	Equity Working Group will review Equity Report and determine further action. Commission review of project equity review tool for City and other community climate projects.	Emphasis on highly impacted groups, targeted outreach and collaboration for development and implementation of each climate action.
Action	New/Next Step	Plan Alignment	Month	to	Workplan	Equity Focus
Sustainable Lifestyle: Education						

1	Host Sustainability Forum and Events	Next	5.5	September	Climate Festival is in planning stages for an online event to be launched in September. Activities include digital and written storytelling, coordinated individual/community activities, and expanded local partnerships. Planning in May, outreach in June/July, finalizing steps in August, gear up for promotion late August - Festival in Sept.	Intentional outreach with underserved groups to ensure access to awareness, education, and participation. Staff, planning committee, and CAC Working Group to connect with local organizations willing to partner on activities, promotion, or hosting remote event. Efforts underway to include translated festival materials in digital and print formats.
2	Launch a Green Business Program: "Climate Action at Work"	Next	5.5	June	Pilot program initiated but reboot with a modified structure (awards/recognition program) in the works. Three businesses with current interest in energy data tracking. This elevated work load requires staff to work closely with businesses to enter energy information into Portfolio Manager. Will eventually use feedback from businesses to develop framework for future benchmarking program and business incentives.	Initial program relies heavily on voluntary participation. Potential for granted funding tied to participation. Will need to make a greater effort to identify and work with businesses with less access to resources. Geographic access and type of business should also be taken into account. Will map geographic participation. Need assistance from Economic Development staff, Equity & Outreach Working Groups, and other econ dev and small business assistance groups.
Buildings: Incentives						
1	Expand Community Climate Grants	Next	5.4	November	Consider adding non-profit and business categories and define what the new program will look like next year. Identify how grant program ties into other City funding initiatives. Could move project earlier in the year to address direct and coordinated support for Covid-19 recovery.	Follow Equity Report recommendations to identify and connect with preferred applicant agencies from first tier needs. Community organizations geared towards underserved and disadvantaged groups could also fall into this expansion or, the next year's funding could be introduced specifically to certain groups from equity report and an info session can be held by invitation for these groups, like HRC and HCDC have done.
Public Projects						
1	Community Garden Expansion/Additions	Next	5.5	September	Working with Parks Department to see if there are plans for additional community garden areas.	Equity mapping for plot rentals exists. Need to review 2020 rentals, identify gaps in geo coverage and gaps in possible access for certain groups. Need focused outreach to see where needs might be to connect unresourced individuals with plot availability in upcoming years; will assist in identifying needs/potential for pocket gardens in ROW.
2	Develop a Climate Action Strategic Communications Plan	Next	5.5	June	Build RFP for consultant to develop marketing plan; CMO drafting, will review with Communications and Legal. Plan will be focused on Iowa City attributes, alignment with current initiatives, focused attention to branding, models for promotional rollout schedules, template materials for modification by project or program, equity and "language" for how to frame climate activities as broadly appealing content.	Encourage selection of firm to develop this plan/materials. Application of equity principles will be part of process. Feedback from Commission welcome prior to release of RFP.

Economic Development and Sustainability working together
Summary of comments from 6-2-2020 Climate Action Commission meeting
Prepared by Wendy Ford, Economic Development Coordinator

The Economic Development and Sustainability Divisions are working together on three programs to raise awareness and incentivize changes that help reduce carbon emissions in the business community.

The first is a **Green Business Recognition Program**. We have spent months in research mode, worked with a University problems class to come up with a survey to determine green business, and started a program of participation in Portfolio Manager – all with limited success due to the staff time required to be timely and effective.

We are now pivoting and rethinking the Green Business Recognition program with two or three parts. We will design a less burdensome program; one that is focused on businesses self-reporting their efforts at improving sustainability, sharing information in a virtual meeting settings and webinars.

Climate Action Awards (year 1 & 2) – for Climate Festival, week of Sept. 19

- Goal: raise awareness/get publicity out about businesses investments in sustainability
- Call for Entries – solicit stories in application form from business community on recent Sustainability Projects (over last 2 years)
 - Create web-based application
 - Solicit submissions
 - Promote through Chamber, ICAD, City platforms
 - Call together committee to evaluate applications
 - Climate Action Commission member, Chamber staff member/s, ICAD staff member, City staff members
 - Staff to make personal visits to the short list of probable awardees to see in person, verify work done
 - Award categories from Climate Action Plan
 - Buildings
 - Transportation
 - Waste
 - Adaptation
 - Sustainable Lifestyle
 - Jack to film video and tell the story of each award category winner for Festival showing
 - Cash prizes for winners
 - Bonus prize for getting on Portfolio Manager uploading and tracking
 - Will research incentive for businesses with < 5,000 SF (due to Portfolio manager not having category for smaller SF businesses)

Learn from Local Contractors (through personal visits)

- Goal: gain understanding of local contractors that can do the work and the range of projects possible with local contractors
 - Include key City staff, key Chamber staff.

- Visit Local Contractors individually, for understanding of their scope, expertise and hear examples of their work and how it has impacted those businesses
 - Kelly Heating and AC (Start with this Trade Ally – only IC member?)
 - Muller plumbing and Heating
 - RMB Co., Inc.
 - Harris Boyz HVAC
 - Davis Heating and Air
 - Brandt Heating and Air Conditioning
 - Others...?
- Goal - learn what improvements are most cost effective for the investment necessary
 - Small business improvements
 - Industry or big business improvements
- Learn whether they have evaluative tools to guide larger investments in energy efficiency or if they simply plug and play new equipment.
- This can help guide development of Tax Abatement and URTE programs

Host (or CoHost with Chamber) Quarterly Sustainability Webinars/Zoom panels with Q&A

- Goal: Get Energy Efficiency and Sustainability top of mind in business community
- Select panel of Local contractors (from the ones visited above) OR from the businesses they have served to share stories of their improvements
- Needs a catchy name, good marketing
- Start in Fall 2020 and do 3 over cold months. October, January and April?
 - Can serve as promotional time for local contractors
 - Can rally support among businesses for energy savings they have made through this work
 - Promote URTE (Urban Revitalization Tax Exemption program)
 - Promote the 3 Industrial Areas Energy Efficiency through TIF financing
 - Promote Downtown and Riverfront Crossing Energy Efficiency through TIF financing

The second program is **TIF Funded Industrial Green Incentives**

Goal: To assist businesses in reducing carbon emissions and to serve as economic stimulus in the wake of covid.

This program will be funded by tax increment available in the 3 Industrial Urban Renewal Areas: Scott 6, Heinz Road and Sycamore & First Avenue.

TIF is a source of economic development funding available to cities through the formation of an Urban Renewal Area. New property values created by investment generate new property taxes paid by property owners. The tax increment is the difference between the before value and the after value and it may be used within the urban renewal area from which it is generated. It can be rebated back to the Property owner who created the increment or designated for projects within the district with a public purpose, or it can simply flow to the City's general fund. In some cases, a sizeable increment exists due to appreciation and investment in the area and the previous lack of need to use the increment for investment. The table below shows the potential tax increment available in each of the three areas.

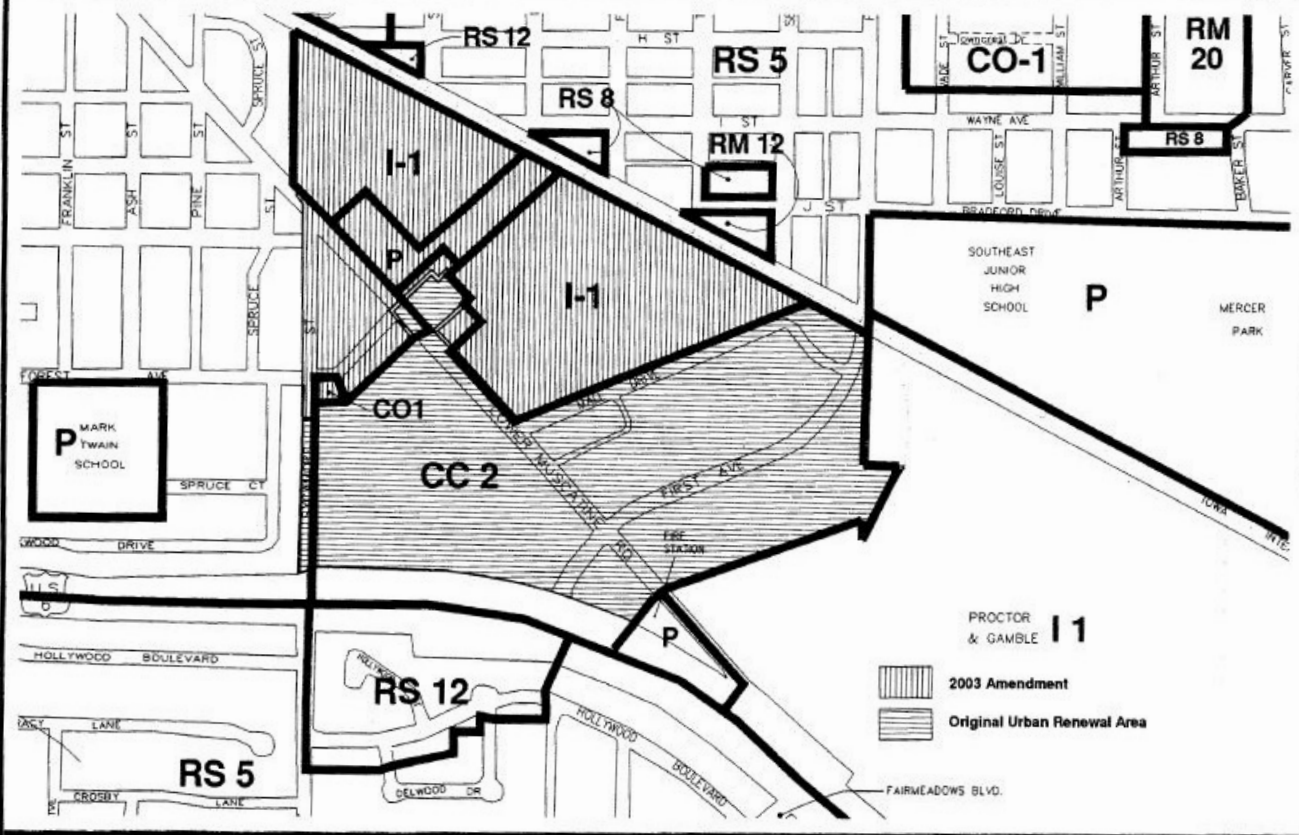
Name of Urban Renewal Area	Expiration date of URA	TIF potential
Scott 6	FY23	\$2,700,000
Heinz Road	FY25	\$2,500,000
Sycamore and First Ave.	FY22	\$425,000

To enable the use of the increment for Industrial Incentives, each area will be amended to include Energy Efficiency projects as an eligible use for TIF; this should begin in June. The amendment requires a Resolution of Necessity by City Council and a Public Hearing to adopt the amendments.

Staff is still determining the parameters for the program and the qualifications for eligibility. We will be considering minimum project size (likely above \$100,000), grant match percentage, and project types allowable (electrification, renewable energy generation, etc.). We will also be working with local and other contractors to determine optimal projects to fund.

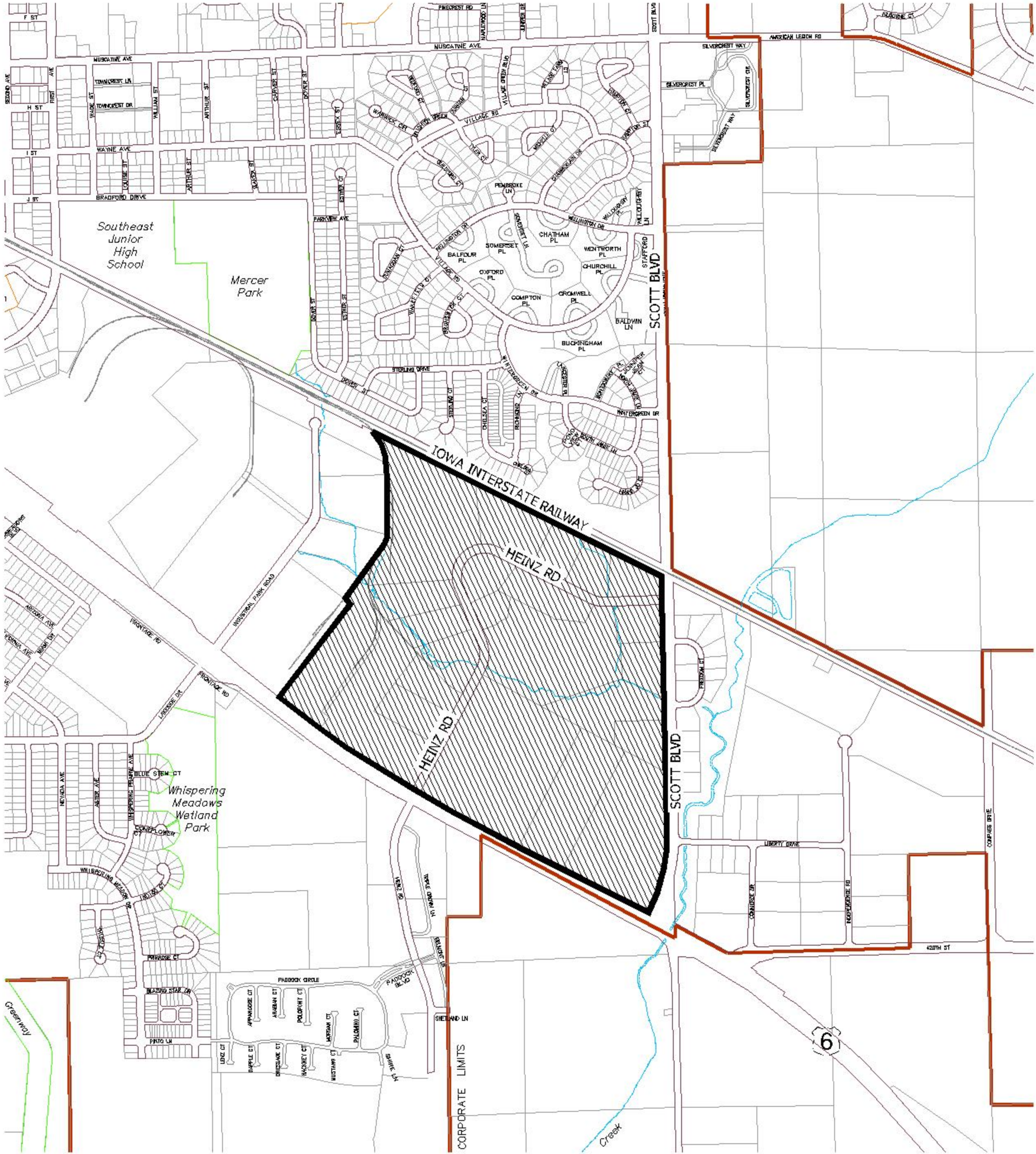
We plan to visit with each of the industrial companies individually to explain the goals of the program and how they could save money while helping reduce carbon emissions.



We also aim to replicate this model in the Downtown and Riverfront Crossings Urban Renewal Areas.



2003 Amendment to the Sycamore/First Ave. Urban Renewal Area

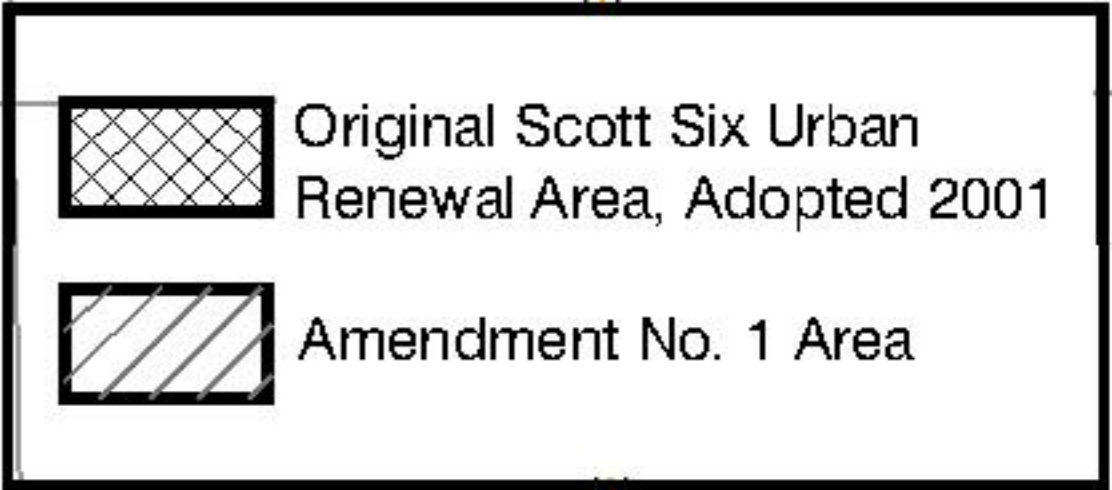
Heinz Road Urban Renewal Area



-  Urban Renewal Area Boundary
-  Urban Renewal Area

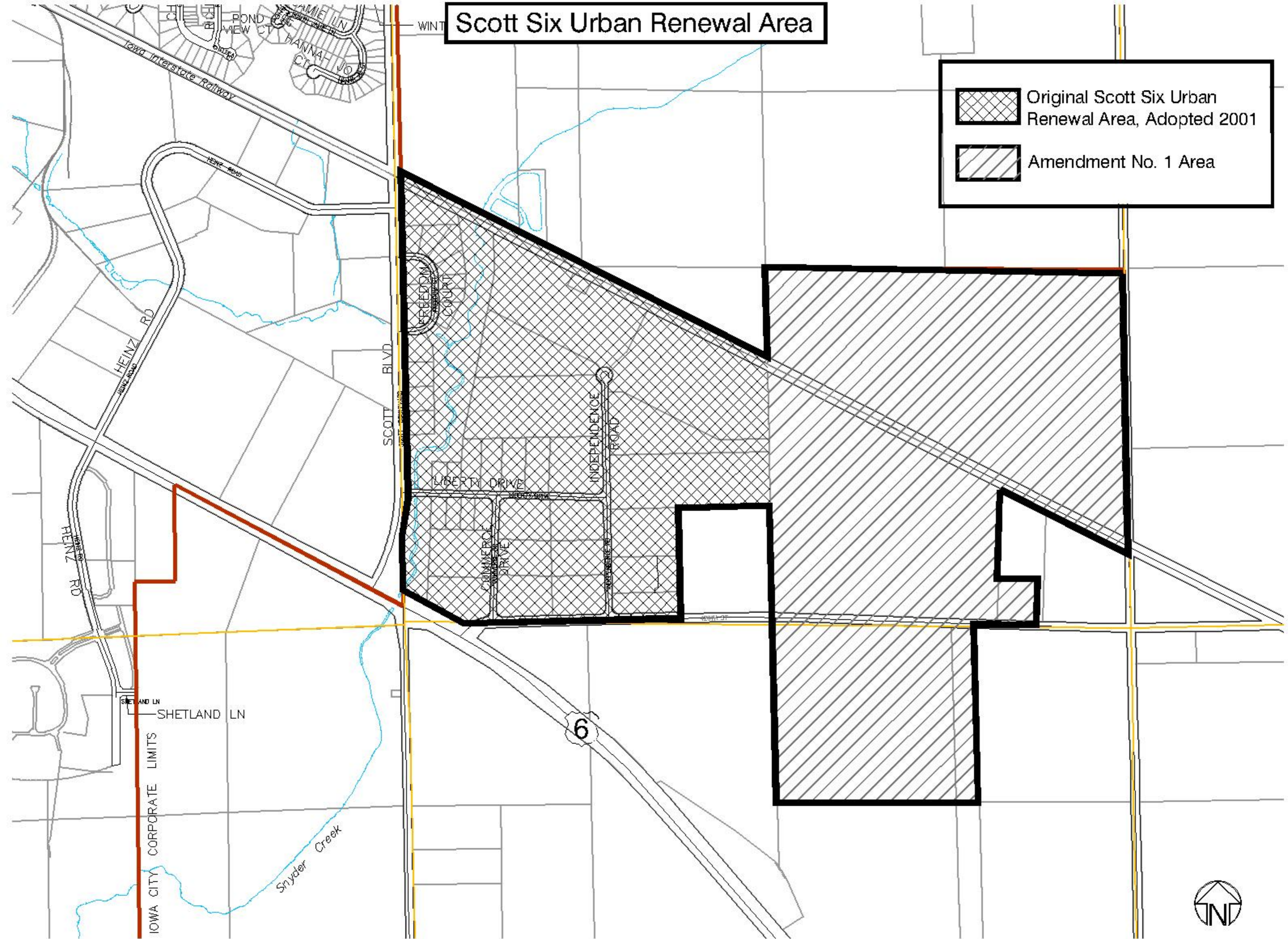


Scott Six Urban Renewal Area



Original Scott Six Urban Renewal Area, Adopted 2001

Amendment No. 1 Area



Proposed Highway Commercial Urban Revitalization Tax Exemption Area

Urban Revitalization Tax Exemption (URTE) is an economic development incentive tool that grants a property tax exemption on the new value created by improvements to existing or new buildings on qualifying properties within the URTE area. Neither the value of the land nor the original value of the building is eligible, and only improvements generating at least a 15% increase in building value are eligible. Council approves the Tax Exemption Plan and the applications, but it is a “by right” benefit for which any qualifying property may apply.

The URTE areas included in this plan are generally older commercial areas with local, small businesses that have not had access to economic development incentives in the past and generally do not attract the kinds of projects that would be appropriate for tax increment financing. There are a handful of vacant lots in these areas that could also qualify with new construction.

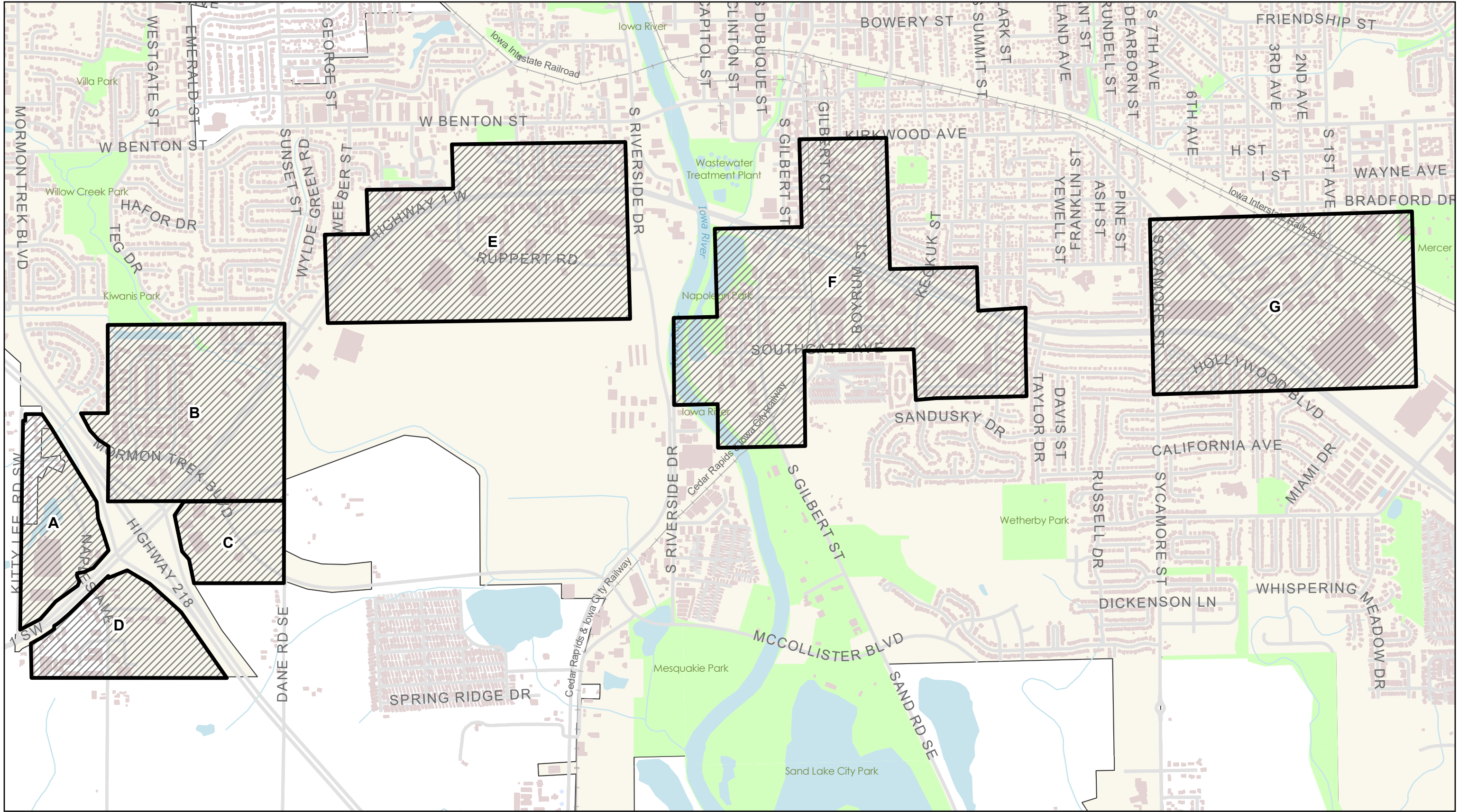
Staff is trying to tie energy efficiency improvements to this program. The investment required for eligibility (a 15% increase in taxable value) may be difficult to achieve for the small businesses typical of this area. This work is not completed yet and is complicated by the restrictions of state law that require a single standard for all eligible properties.

By state law, qualifying properties may be residential or commercial, however, the proposed Highway Commercial URTE is only for commercially-classified properties. In the case of a multi-residential property, where a portion is commercial, only the commercial portion of the property would be eligible.

The Highway Commercial URTE would be in effect for ten (10) years from the date of adoption.

There are differing tax exemption schedules cities may adopt (all with approximately the same net present value) We are proposing a 100% exemption on the taxes created by the new value for three (3) years, provided the new value is at least 115% of the old value. The value of land is not included in the calculation.

Future Land Use with Tax Abatement



 Tax Abatement

