

North Omaha

Development Project

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Karla Ewert - vice president of communications, Office: (402) 978-7942,
Cell: (402) 320-4559
Shannon Sherman, Bailey Lauerman, Office: (402) 514-9423,
Cell: (402) 617-8617

PRELIMINARY VISION FOR NORTH OMAHA DEVELOPMENT PROJECT PRESENTED

Three Areas Identified for Future Community and Business Investment

Omaha, Neb., July 19, 2007 – The North Omaha Development Project consultants and steering committee members shared preliminary concepts for future community and business investment with approximately 400 Omaha residents at a public meeting July 19. The initial recommendations, based on community input and market analysis, include three areas for development—the area surrounding 30th Street and Ames Avenue; the 24th Street and Lake Street Corridors; and the Adams Park area at 30th and Bedford streets.

“The initial recommendations support the steering committee’s goal for the North Omaha Development Project, which is to create an environment that promotes business and community growth throughout North Omaha,” said David G. Brown, president and CEO of the Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce. “These meetings in no way signal the finished proposal. The steering committee will be involved for some time to come and will be significantly involved as we bring ideas and concepts into reality.”

Community members who attended the meeting at Omaha North High School were invited to share feedback on the preliminary vision. Community input will be reflected in the overall business investment strategy for North Omaha, which will be announced in early October. The final plan will include recommendations for infrastructure improvements, community development opportunities and housing initiatives—all of which are geared toward creating job opportunities.

City Councilman Frank Brown, a member of the North Omaha Development Project steering committee, was among those who addressed the crowd at Omaha North.

“Today is a history making day – a day in which what you tell us will help to shape the economic future of this district,” Brown said Thursday night. “Your commitment to the future of the area is important to the ultimate success of business investment and job creation.”

Also at the meeting, David Brown announced that the Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce has created a new position—North Omaha Development Project Director. The director will work with the North Omaha Development Steering Committee to implement strategic action plans for community, business and economic development, infrastructure improvements, housing initiatives and neighborhood development. The job description is available online at www.ProjectNorthOmaha.org. Applicants should send resumes to jobs@omahachamber.org, or call (402) 346-5000 for more information.

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The North Omaha Development Project, which was first announced in October 2006, is a commitment of the Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce, corporate leaders, elected officials, African-American business leaders and the North Omaha community to make important investments in North Omaha. The initial study—conducted by RDG Planning and Design, Economics Research Associates and Alex Garvin & Associates—focuses on the area bordered by Sorensen Parkway on the north, Cuming Street on the south, 16th Street on the east and 52nd Street on the west.

When considering the framework for North Omaha development, consultants said, the key is to build inward from strategic assets that border the area—including Qwest Center Omaha, North Downtown, Creighton University, Metropolitan Community College and Midtown, among others.

“Our plan is to build a dynamic core that, with strategic investments, emerges naturally from growth around the edge of North Omaha,” said Dennis O’Neal, co-chair of the North Omaha Development Project Steering Committee and vice president of First National of Nebraska. “This will create momentum for growth in business, retail and housing developments.

“Another facet of the project is capacity building through training and education. When the project moves into the implementation phase, area residents will also receive training to ensure they have the skills and necessary competencies for the created jobs. We will continue to work with area businesses to build their capacity to respond to development opportunities.”

The three areas identified for future community and business investment include:

Area A: 30th Street and Ames Avenue

Focus: Business Park and Retail

The steering committee envisions opportunities for dynamic retail and business centers for the 30th Street and Ames Avenue area, which benefits from excellent access to Metropolitan Community College. The proposed strategy suggests three business centers—an office park north of 30th Street and Ames Avenue, a mixed use business development on the northwest corner of 30th and Sprague streets, and an industrial area near 24th Street and Ames Avenue. Additional development includes a community commercial and health village and a transit center.

30th Street and Ames Avenue encompasses the area around 30th Street and Ames Avenue.

New business and retail centers in the 30th Street and Ames Avenue can potentially lead to new employment opportunities in growth markets such as health services, culinary arts and technical services.

Area B: 24th Street and Lake Street Corridors

Focus: Cultural, Residential, Retail and Education

Distinctive local retail and urban residential developments highlight the strategy for the 24th Street and Lake Street Corridors. Urban housing is proposed along both sides of 24th Street, and retail villages are recommended near 24th and Cuming streets and 24th and Hamilton streets. A cultural and entertainment district, along with a museum block would build upon existing development at 24th and Lake streets.

The 24th Street and Lake Street Corridors are an area that includes 24th Street from Lake to Cuming streets, and Lake Street from 24th to 30th streets.

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“Redevelopment and beautification projects, along with exciting new development, are important for the 24th Street and Lake Street Corridors,” O’Neal said. “This is a vital urban corridor for the city, and it should serve as a front door that invites the entire community to do business in North Omaha.”

Area C: Adams Park

Focus: Residential

A vision to redevelop Adams Park would encourage residential growth along 30th and Bedford streets. Consultants foresee new and renovated residential development areas near Lake and Bedford streets along 30th Street.

Adams Park opportunity area includes the park and areas surrounding it.

Adams Park has the potential to serve as a vibrant central gathering place for Omaha.

Additional business and community development opportunities identified at the July 19 meeting include:

- 50th Street and Ames Avenue: Mixed-use redevelopment
- Fontenelle Park West: Housing redevelopment
- Nebraska School for the Deaf: New adjacent neighborhood investment
- Community Loop, connecting Lake Street to Grant Street along the former railroad corridor: Complete street and parkway connecting development opportunity areas.
- Beltline Greenway and Adjacent Development: Business and residential redevelopment along greenway connecting 30th Street and Ames Avenue to Midtown Omaha.

For more information about the North Omaha Development Project, e-mail info@projectnorthomaha.org, visit www.ProjectNorthOmaha.org or call (402) 346-5000.

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