

Healthy Time Check Built Environment Masterplan RFP

Overview

Time Check is one of the Cedar Rapids neighborhoods that has been caught in a cycle of disinvestment. Matthew 25 has spent a decade investing in flood recovery and neighborhood revitalization efforts in this area with tremendous success. The following efforts have helped stabilize the neighborhood.

- Pulling together thousands of volunteers to work on rehabbing thirteen blocks of homes
- Developing an urban farm that hosts educational classes, provides community gardening and holds weekly market nights with access to affordable, healthy foods
- Investing in re-developing rental quality, affordable workforce housing

Other developers have also invested in apartment buildings, row housing and new homes. These seeds are shooting up sprouts of life that are starting to take hold.

While parts of the neighborhood have stabilized, the southern end of Ellis Blvd and the surrounding areas are teetering on the edge. In some places, homes remain unhealthy and in disrepair. New home construction missed many vacant lots and has left gaps in the rebuilding process. While plans have been developed on paper for increased walking trails, updated streetscapes and bike lanes, gaps in implementation remain. This RFP serves to establish the framework for a Masterplan that would fill in these gaps and create a unified neighborhood fabric and outline a plan for future development in the neighborhood.

Healthy Time Check Initiative- ([Area Map](#))

Healthy Time Check is a collaborative initiative focused on propelling the neighborhood into the future as a healthy, resilient place with increased opportunity for its residents. As collaborators working in city and county government, non-profits, developers and residents, we recognize that none of us have the ability to move the neighborhood forward on our own.

Located on the edge of downtown Cedar Rapids, Time Check is unique in its combination of affordability, location, single-family and multi-family homes and businesses nestled into a lush area with many amenities. While the neighborhood has sometimes been overlooked, it has the potential to be one of the area's most sought after places to live.

In the past ten years, the neighborhood has had several investment initiatives. City led planning efforts have laid out a framework for connectivity and reinvestment.

- [Viable Business Corridor Plan](#)
- [Bike lanes plan](#)
- [Northwest Neighborhood Action Plan](#)

Developers have built new single-family and multi-family projects scattered throughout the neighborhood. While all of these plans have had an impact, there has been little collaboration among various entities investing in the neighborhood.

Our goal is to build upon the natural assets of the area, including parks, a golf course, the Cedar River, Cultivate Hope Urban Farm, available lots and existing affordable housing as well as the positive spirit of local residents to boost the investments in redevelopment while preserving affordability. If we are successful as collaborators, we will see a neighborhood developing that is:

- Increasingly connected with a crime rate below the city average
- A place where healthy choices of food and movement activities are increasing in availability and unhealthy activities are decreasing
- Steadily attracting developers who invest in properties while maintaining affordable housing stock

Stakeholders have identified the following three items as key to attracting reinvestment in Time Check:

- Incentive programs available from the City of Cedar Rapids for new construction and rehabilitation of existing properties
- Shared vision for the area with overarching master plan
- Being part of a team focused on the development of this area instead of a solo developer
- Identification of available lots that are developer ready

Scope of Work

The goal of this RFP is to create a framework for reinvestment within the designated geographic area. This master plan should incorporate the values of community health, walkability, connectivity and mixed income, sustainably built housing. A successful master plan will:

Create a neighborhood vision

- Build upon the assets of the community and previously completed plans to create a shared vision for a retrofitted, healthy community focused on the connection to nature, movement, sustainability and local foods which will be attractive to developers and potential residents. The plan should address neighborhood connections through bike and walking paths as well as roads.
- Develop small scale interventions that individuals and small businesses can implement with minimal cost and resources, which will begin to build a neighborhood brand and uniform design. Examples of this scale of intervention include designed front yard raised garden beds, a food tree planting program or front yard fence designs.
- Host community input sessions to receive feedback from residents. Foster shared ownership of the plan with the community and residents.

Develop the framework and potential schedule of feasible projects radiating outwards from the urban farm

- Inventory and highlight available land for owner-occupied, multi-family and mixed use housing. Include sample elevations of housing options that can be supported by market conditions.

- Special attention should be paid to Ellis Blvd, E & F Avenues. Plans should be based on current or potential zoning.
- Specific sample elevations should be shown for a multi-family housing project within the 400 block of E Avenue with design focused on tying it to the Cultivate Hope Urban Farm.
- Specific sample elevations should be shown for row-housing or multi-family housing that fits the following lots(803, 807 & 811 Ellis and 616, 618 & 624 G Ave NW)
- Research market to determine feasibility of suggested projects and whether gap funding is required. Give suggestions for incentives programs to provide gap funding that have been used in other markets.
- Develop examples of suggested best practices for necessary development incentives.
- Incorporate plans into 3D visualization that can be shared with future developers and easily updated as plans emerge.

Submittals

- Provide a sampling of previous work projects, complete with details and outcomes.
- Provide details on personnel assigned to the project and their experience on similar projects
- Demonstrate process used to meet project goals and schedule
- Include a schedule of fees for services described in the scope of work and an estimate of the total cost of the work.
- Demonstrate understanding of project and include proposal for how to carry out the scope of work
- The proposal should be signed by an official authorized to bind the offer and be valid for a period of 90 days from the proposal due date.

Proposals should be emailed to info@hub25.org by the end of the day on Friday, September 6. Please email info@hub25.org or call 319-362-2214 with any questions.