



City of
Urbandale
Iowa

Economic Development Newsletter

Growth in the Urban Loop

Momentum continues to grow in the Urban Loop. The corridor now counts 27 projects staking their roots in one of Iowa's most accessible areas. Some of the latest additions include:

- Lean TECHniques: 5,055 square foot Office: Tenant Finish
- MidAmerican Energy: 116,000 square foot Office Space Remodel Construction
- Johnstone Supply: 8,000 square foot Warehouse Expansion
- Primrose School of Urbandale: 13,500 square foot Preschool and Child Care
- HyVee Aisles Online: 900 square foot Grocery Pickup Facility
- Northpark Dental: 9,600 square foot Dental and Office building
- Broken Arrow Wear: 5,700 square foot Rehabilitation and Expansion of Office Building
- Unity Point Clinic: 13,800 square foot New Construction Medical Building

For a complete listing of projects located in the Urbandale Loop, [click here](#).

Construction continues on the flyover ramp and Meredith Drive interchange. View the latest 90 second [video](#).

City Council Approves Rezoning for Merle Hay Apartments Project; Another Step toward Housing Affordability in Urbandale

On December 17, the Urbandale City Council approved a formal request to rezone an area of land on Douglas Avenue at the southwest corner of Merle Hay Mall from "General Commercial" to "Planned Unit Development" at the Council meeting last night. The city is working with TWG Development, LLC and non-profit organization Dream Catcher to facilitate the construction of affordable, workforce housing in Urbandale.

In January of this year, a similar housing project at this site did not receive the necessary City Council support due to a number of site-related concerns. The developer has made changes to the original proposal, including the following:

- Increase the overall site/parcel to approximately 1.73 acres vs. the original 1.25 proposed
- Provide the originally proposed 43 units but in a 3-story rather than a 4-story building
- Shift the building footprint approximately 50' to the north providing a roughly 110' setback from Douglas Avenue
- Increase onsite parking from 54 to 61 spaces
- Provide approximately 0.8 acres (40+%) greenspace onsite

The City received a formal request from Elizabeth Holland, Manager of Merle Hay Investors, LLC to amend the Comprehensive Plan of the City of Urbandale and to rezone a parcel on Douglas Avenue at the southwest corner of the Merle Hay mall site from C-G General Commercial to Planned Unit Development. The request was presented—and unanimously approved—during a public hearing at the Planning and Zoning Commission meeting on Monday, November 11. The project then proceeded onto the Mayor and City Council at a public hearing on Tuesday, December 3, and received unanimous support. The second and final readings of the ordinance to approve the rezoning was approved at the Tuesday, December 17 Council Meeting.

Background Information on Housing Affordability in Urbandale:

Urbandale's [average rent](#) in October was \$867, the lowest of all Des Moines metro communities.

In 2016 Urbandale participated in an EPA Equitable Development study to evaluate housing options in our community. This study provided insights and information that contributed to the City Council's strategic plan.

In July 2018 the Radiant Point site plan was approved with smaller lot sizes facilitating housing purchases at a moderate price point. A similar rezoning of a portion of the Acadia development near 156th Street and Meredith Drive was rezoned from townhouse development to single family homes with a smaller lot size.

In 2016, the City worked with a developer on an affordable housing project at 156th Street and Waterford Road, but the project did not receive a tax credit award and thus did not proceed!

Urbandale Chamber of Commerce Citizen and Business of the Year

Several Urbandale businesses and citizens were celebrated for their dedication to our community at the Urbandale Chamber of Commerce's annual Sample Urbandale event. Tom Gayman was awarded [Citizen of the Year](#). Gayman, owner of Performance Realty, LLC, and Urbandale City Council Member, has served three terms on the council as well as in varying capacities for organizations across Urbandale and the greater Des Moines metro. [John Deere ISG](#) was awarded Business of the Year. John Deere ISG opened in Urbandale in 2000 with 10 employees and has since grown to expand into a \$32 million facility in Urbandale. Deere continues to disrupt the technology industry with innovation and seeks to nurture the next generation of STEM leaders by supporting educational programs like FIRST, Project Lead The Way & Introduce a Girl to Engineering Day. The two other nominated businesses were [LaunchIT](#) and [Superstorm Restoration](#).

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