Members present: Mayor Dean O’Connor, Altoona  
Councilmember Bobbi Benz, Ankeny  
Mayor Drew Merrifield, Carlisle  
Council Member John Edwards, Clive  
Council Member Eric Johansen, Grimes  
Council Member Robert Sarchet, Polk City  
Supervisor Matt McCoy, Polk County  
Council Member David Russell, Urbandale  
Council Member Kim Sacker, Van Meter  
Council Member Courtney Clarke,  
Council Member Russ Trimble, West Des Moines  
Mayor Dave Burgess, Windsor Heights

Staff Present:  
Kandi Reindl-Sullivan, Asst. to the City Manager, Des Moines  
Jeff Lester, Des Moines City Attorney

Guests Present:  
Robert Palmer, Iowa League of Cities  
Shelly Watkins, CISS  
Angie Arthur, Polk County Continuum of Care

Approval of the July 9, 2019 minutes were moved for approval by Dean O’Connor and seconded by Drew Merrifield. All voted in favor. Motion carried.

WORKFORCE HOUSING STUDY RESULTS

Nikki Syverson of Capital Crossroads presented on the attached powerpoint.
Questions:

David Russell – What is the current population of downtown Des Moines?

Nikki – About 10,000 and it is projected to increase. It is important for downtown to have a mix that is reflective of the region.

David Russell – We have heard that they are over building in the downtown.

Nikki Syverson – I would not agree that it is being over built. We are talking with the developers and there are filling up their units.

Eric Johansen – What are the current rent rates?

Nikki Syverson – They are really not that bad when you have two people renting. I can get those rent rates to you.

Dean O’Connor – Owner occupied homes priced below $175,000 will only be available if they already built.

Nikki Syverson – We might be looking at home ownership in different ways and that is going to be important as we plan our communities. We need to think outside of the box on housing. We are attracting many people from the coasts.

Robert Sarchet – You mentioned 150,000 new jobs. What is the breakdown of those jobs?

Nikki Syverson – I haven’t seen that breakdown.

Russ Trimble – Are those jobs based on historical growth of the economy or surveying employers?

Nikki Syverson - It was based on both.

Russ Trimble – I recently talked to a developer out in West Des Moines and he said he couldn’t build a single-family home for less than $225,000.

Courtney Clarke – What is your timeline for having strategies in place?
Nikki Syverson – It’s not an easy problem to solve and we will be bringing people together this Fall. I would also like to have MAC be involved.

Eric Johansen – Has the committee looked at how smaller houses on smaller lots create more stormwater runoff? How do we blend the two together?

Nikki Syverson – Capital Crossroads is also working on regional stormwater runoff. We are thinking collectively on those issues. There has been a case study in Seattle that was very interesting that looks at both of those issues.

Eric Johansen – These smaller houses also present a parking issue and mobility issue because the sidewalks are smaller.

Russ Trimble – Des Moines is looking at design standards for construction and it’s a delicate balance. I applaud them for having some standards.

Nikki Syverson– It is a very fine balance and that is why we have to get creative on these solutions.

John Edwards – What strategies have you looked at on the costs?

Nikki Syverson – We are looking at all the funding tools.

Russ Trimble – We have another initiative in West Des Moines that looks outside of the box such as TIF to provide some sort of subsidy. It is a very difficult issue. A quality of life subcommittee has been formed. We can’t have low income housing concentrated in just one area, but a lot of people have the NIMBY syndrome. It is a tough issue.

Courtney Clarke – I’m anxious to see the strategies. I was just recently in Seattle and their homeless population is increasing and getting out of hand.

Russ Trimble – Coming out of MAC, I would like to know how much affordable housing is being planned in all of our communities.

Nikki Syverson – I think that would be incredibly helpful to have all of the communities on board.

**MAC PRIORITIES**

Air Bnbs/Rental Property Regulations: No update provided.
Stormwater Mitigation Strategies: Report will be given in September.

ROUND TABLE DISCUSSIONS

Congratulations on all the communities who passed the local option sales tax.

CBD Regulations:
There was a suggestion that we should discuss the CBD regulations since there seems to be differing regulations around the metro.

Drew Merrifield – CBD would benefit me since I am in a wheelchair. I’ve been out to Denver and the CBD there works for me, but the CBD percentage allowed here in Iowa does not. This needs to be controlled by the doctors, not the legislators. Illinois just passed their recreational law. MetPharm is concerned that there will not be enough funds and they will go bankrupt. I don’t want to break the law, but Iowa needs to change their laws so I can get what I need and what helps me. I think if our Boards come forward supporting this, it would help.

Kim Sacker – I don’t think the medical community is even on board on this issue. I have a sister who breaks the law and goes to Colorado because it helps her, but I am very conflicted.

Drew Merrifield – I have to pay $75 a year for a medical card. You don’t have to pay $75 for other prescription drugs. Why are we singled out on this?

Matt McCoy – There’s a lot of issues here, but the reality is the bill that passed nearly unanimously, was vetoed by the Governor.

Dean O’Connor – What are we expecting MAC to do?

John Edwards – I think we should form a working group and maybe this could be one of our priorities.

Russ Trimble – This is absolutely on the front of everyone’s mind. The Legislature will try to get another bill going. West Des Moines did take the issue up with the dispensaries. I don’t think this is a role for the MAC to take.

Eric Johansen – This is a federal issue that should have been resolved a long time ago.
Drew Merrifield – We are having Lucas Nelson of MedPharm at MILAG and maybe it would be a good idea to have him come to MAC as well.

Bobbi Benz – They also provide tours of their facilities. But I agree with Russ, this isn’t a policy issue that MAC should bring up.

Robert Sarchet – I think where the grassroots can be applied is with us as citizens and for us to disseminate the information.

Drew Merrifield – The idea is to educate and whether or not the MAC comes forth with a recommendation, and the more they are educated, the more they will be talking to their legislators. It is demoralizing when you think you get somewhere and then the Governor shoots it down.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:27 a.m.