



**City of Inver Grove Heights
Meeting Via In Person or Virtual Zoom**

**City Council Work Session
Monday, February 1, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.**

NOTICE TO RESIDENTS: If you are interested in participating, please contact Rebecca Kiernan prior to this meeting via telephone (651) 450-2513 or email (rkiernan@ighmn.gov) to inform her - your name, address and to what you wish to speak on. Individuals may submit written public comments in advance of the meeting by emailing comments to Rebecca Kiernan (rkiernan@ighmn.gov). Comments received prior to 4:00 p.m. on Monday February 1, 2021, will be provided to the Council at or before the February 1, 2021 Work Session.

A G E N D A

A. Call to Order - Mayor Bartholomew

1. Goats for Invasive Species Management.
2. Weather Warning Siren
3. Ordinance Change Considerations
 - a. Front Yard Fence
 - b. Mini Storage
4. Interim City Administrator & Interim Public Works Director
5. Meeting Management

B. Adjourn

**Request for Council Action****TITLE:** Goats for Invasive Species Management

		Fiscal/FTE Impact	Mark all that apply
Meeting Date:	February 1, 2021	None	
Item Type:	Work Session	Amount included in current budget	
Contact:	Ally Sutherland, 651-604-8511	Budget amendment requested	
Prepared by:	Ally Sutherland	FTE included in current complement	
Reviewed by:	Allan Hunting	New FTE requested - N/A	
		Other	

PURPOSE/ACTION REQUESTED:

Inform City Council of goat grazing technique for invasive species control and determine if Council would like staff to draft an ordinance allowing for temporary keeping of goats in residential, city parks and open space areas.

BUCKTHORN

Common and glossy buckthorn is an invasive species that poses land management challenges in areas of Inver Grove Heights such as yards, parks, and natural spaces. Buckthorn infestations form dense growth in these areas that outcompete and destroy native vegetation such as tree and shrub species and therefore habitat for native insects, birds and mammals.

An invasive species is an organism that is not native to a particular area. Invasive species can cause great economic and environmental harm to the new areas due to having no natural method of control. Because growth of invasive species is uninhibited, it is up to the humans to manually manage the spread of the invasive species.

GOATS FOR MANAGEMENT

Management of invasive species, such as buckthorn, can be challenging, expensive and labor intensive, and often requires a variety of land management tools. Prescribed grazing with goats is popular tool being used nationally to manage buckthorn and other unwanted vegetation. Over the past few years there have been occasional residential inquiries regarding the use of goats for buckthorn management.

Benefits of using goats for buckthorn management are that they thoroughly clear the area of buckthorn, the cost is comparable to conventional methods, they reduce use of pesticides, and they can easily address areas of challenging geography for humans and equipment such as steep slopes. However, it is also known that annual treatment of buckthorn is required to limit establishment of new seedlings, which may include annual use of goats, controlled burning, herbicide and mechanical treatment.

CURRENT CITY CODE

Goats are currently defined as farm animals by city code. Under City Code 10-5-7A2, goats are allowed only in Agricultural and E-1 zoning districts.

ORDINANCES EXAMPLES

Government agencies such Dakota County and cities such as Minneapolis, St. Paul, Burnsville, Lakeville, Minnetonka and more have utilized goats for buckthorn management on public land. Other cities such as Eagan, Cottage Grove, Burnsville, Maplewood have recently developed ordinances that allow the temporary keeping of goats for prescriptive grazing in residential zoning districts. The following parameters are typically discussed in city ordinances that allow for temporary use of goats for invasive species management in residential, city parks and open space areas:

- Allowed use
- Lot size
- Zone
- Approval process including application, site plan review, and proof of licensed contractor
- Number of goats
- Timeframe and time of year
- Goat breed
- Liability insurance
- Daily monitoring
- Noise levels
- Odor
- Enclosure area
- Distance from property lines
- Notification process

RECOMMENDATION

Staff believes there would be value to homeowners and the city in providing an ordinance that allows the temporary use of goats for invasive species control in residential, city parks and open space areas.

Staff seeks further direction from City Council. With Council's direction, staff will research ordinances and will come back with a proposed draft ordinance.

**Request for Council Action****TITLE:** Front yard fence discussion

		Fiscal/FTE Impact	Mark all that apply
Meeting Date:	February 1, 2021	None	X
Item Type:	Worksession	Amount included in current budget	
Contact:	Heather Botten 651.450.2569	Budget amendment requested	
Prepared by:	Heather Botten	FTE included in current complement	
Reviewed by:		Other	

PURPOSE/ACTION REQUESTED:

The Council is to provide direction on a possible ordinance amendment for fences located in the front and corner front yards.

SUMMARY:

Over the last couple months, the Council has seen a couple different fence variances relating to properties on corner yards. At the January 11, 2021 City Council meeting Council directed staff to review the current city ordinance relating to fences located in the front and corner front yards of residential properties.

Currently the fence code (Section 10-15-12), has the following requirements for fences located on corner lots.

10-15-12B.1. Fences in the front yard area shall provide no less than 75% clear visibility within 42 inches of the ground and shall be no higher than 42 inches. All fences constructed in other areas than the front yard and corner lot side yard clearance areas may be no more than seven feet (7') in height.

10-15-12C. Traffic Visibility²:

1. No fences, walls or structures exceeding 30 inches in height shall be located where they would obstruct safe view from any driveway, and there shall be no solid fences closer than 15 feet from the face of the curb.

2. The outside corner of any corner lot shall be free from any fence unless it provides 75% clear visible opening. The "outside corner" shall be defined as the area bounded by the property line (street right of way line) and a line between the points 30 feet in each direction from the block corner (lot corner) along said property lines.

During the most recent variance request a question came up on why the code has a 42-inch maximum height allowance for fences in the front yard and if this should be changed. Staff researched the height standards from MnDOT, other cities, and a couple fence companies.

Staff believes the maximum height requirement stems from the MnDOT Road Design Manual (September 2019) which states: the assumed height of both the driver's eye and the object to be seen are 3.5 feet above their respective roadway surfaces. This number correlates with the 42-inch maximum height requirement in code.

Other cities have the following front yard fence requirements:

Eagan: Fences in the front yard must not impair traffic visibility or exceed 42 inches in height.

A fence shall not exceed 30 inches within a 30-foot visibility triangle measure from the street.

Rosemount: Fences shall not exceed 42 inches in front yards or 48 inches in street side yards of corner lots that abut another front yard, provided that no structure shall interfere with sight distances for vehicles approaching intersections.

No fence is allowed within the 25-foot visibility triangle measure from the lot corner.

West St. Paul: Fences in the front yard shall not exceed 48 inches in height.

South St. Paul: Fences in the front yard shall be a maximum of 42 inches if you cannot see through at least 50% of the approved material. A fence in the front yard can be up to 48 inches high if you can see through at least 50% of the approved material.

Fridley: Fences in the front yard shall not exceed 48 inches in height.

A fence shall not exceed 30 inches within the 40-foot visibility triangle measured from the street.

Staff reached out to Midwest Fence and Dakota Unlimited Fence, both companies stated that 42-inch fencing is available, but 48 inch is a more standard height. Both companies also said that based on their experience a 48-inch height is a more common height allowed within the front yard setbacks.

Over the past five years the City has seen eight fence variances, six of them have been for properties located on a corner lot. All the corner lot requests the applicants were asking to exceed the 42-inch height requirement on the corner side yard.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff continues to find a benefit for the maximum fence height of 42 inches with 75% clear visible opening within the “normal” front yard setback based on the recommendation from the MnDOT road design manual. Staff would be in support of an ordinance change to allow a 48-inch fence, with 75% clear visible opening for the street side of a corner lot that abuts another front yard, similar to the Rosemount language.

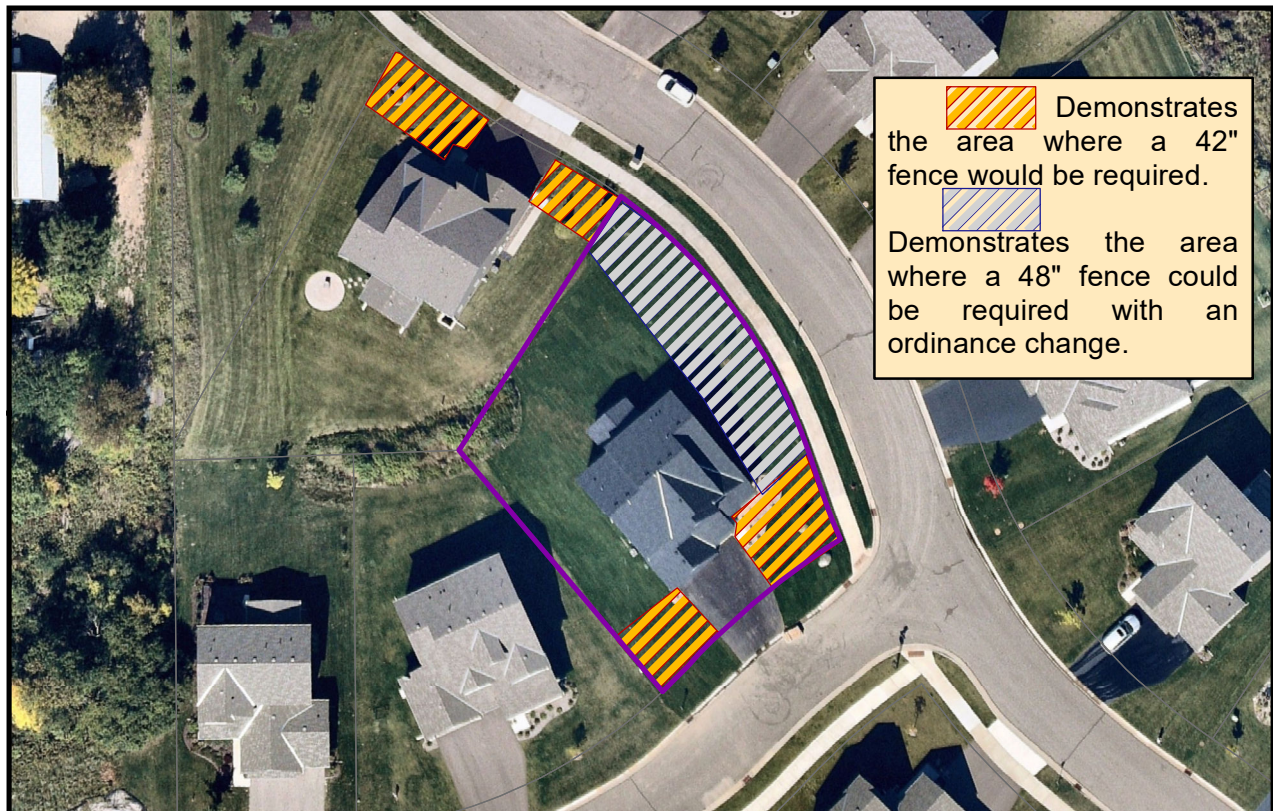
Attachments:

Aerial photo with current and proposed fence height

Aerial photo of corner lot and cul-de-sac



corner lot abutting a front yard



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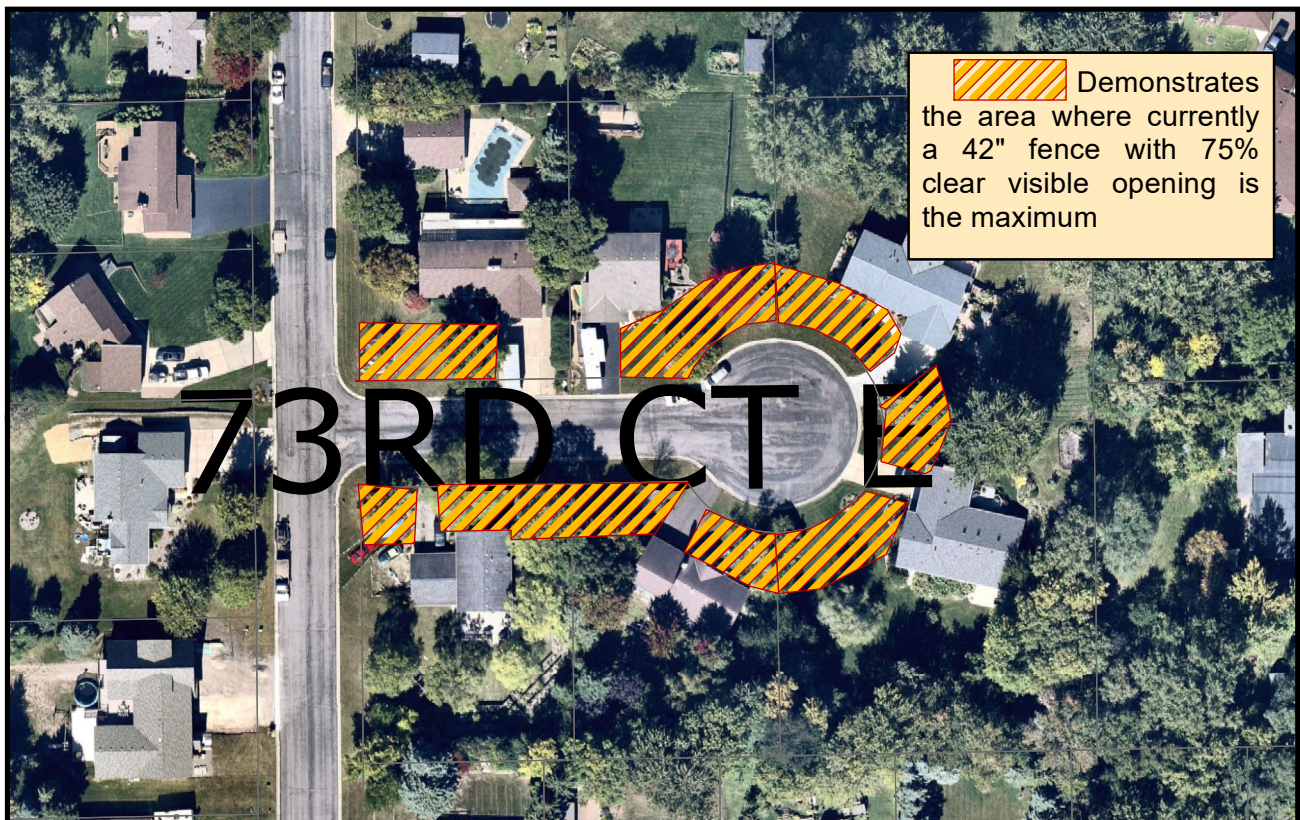
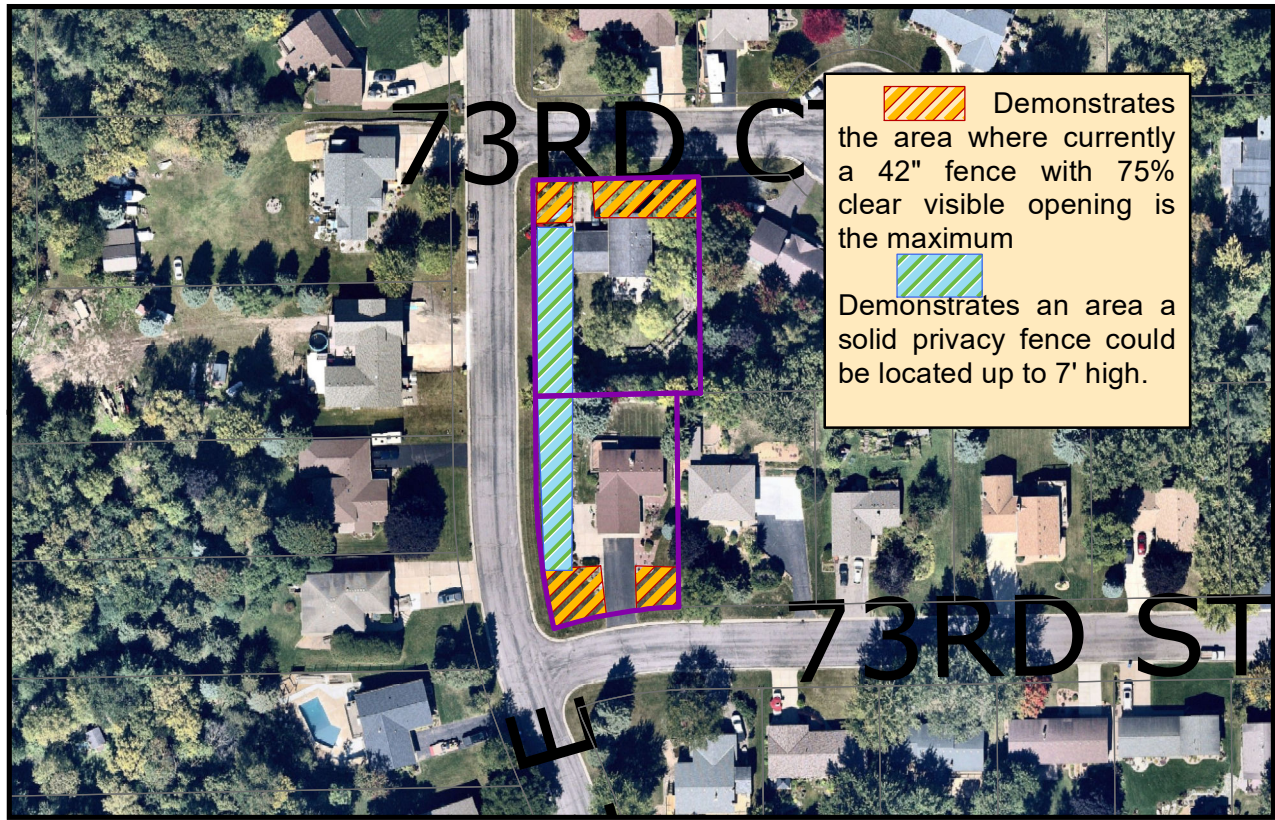


Zoning and Location Map

Map not to scale



corner lot abutting a rear yard



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Front yard fence requirements in a cul-de-sac

Map not to scale

**Request for Council Action****TITLE:** MINISTORAGE ORDINANCE REVISION DISCUSSION

		Fiscal/FTE Impact	Mark all that apply
Meeting Date:	February 1, 2021	None	
Item Type:	Work Session	Amount included in current budget	
Contact:	Allan Hunting 651-450-2554	Budget amendment requested	
Prepared by:	Allan Hunting	FTE included in current complement	
Reviewed by:		New FTE requested - N/A	
		Other	

PURPOSE/ACTION REQUESTED:

Council is asked to provide further direction on possible amendments for mini-storage operations in the B-3 zoning district.

SUMMARY:

The City Council last discussed this item at the October 5 work session. The Council continued to discuss whether to remove mini-storage as an allowed use in the B-3 District. Mini-storage inside and outside would continue to be allowed in the I-1 and I-2 districts.

There were two properties discussed because those landowners expressed their desire leave mini-storage in the B-3 District. One property was on the north side of I-494 along 50th Street by Hwy 52. There is an existing mini-storage to the east of this property. The other is along the west side of Hwy 52/55 just north of the Inver Grove Storage facility. Council asked staff if these properties can be treated separately from other B-3 properties or provide some unique standard for these lots.

Staff discussed this with the City Attorney and result is all properties with the same zoning must be treated the same. You cannot have special criteria for certain lots.

RECOMMENDATION:

The direction for changes to mini-storage in the B-3 is a policy question for Council to determine. Staff sees four alternatives:

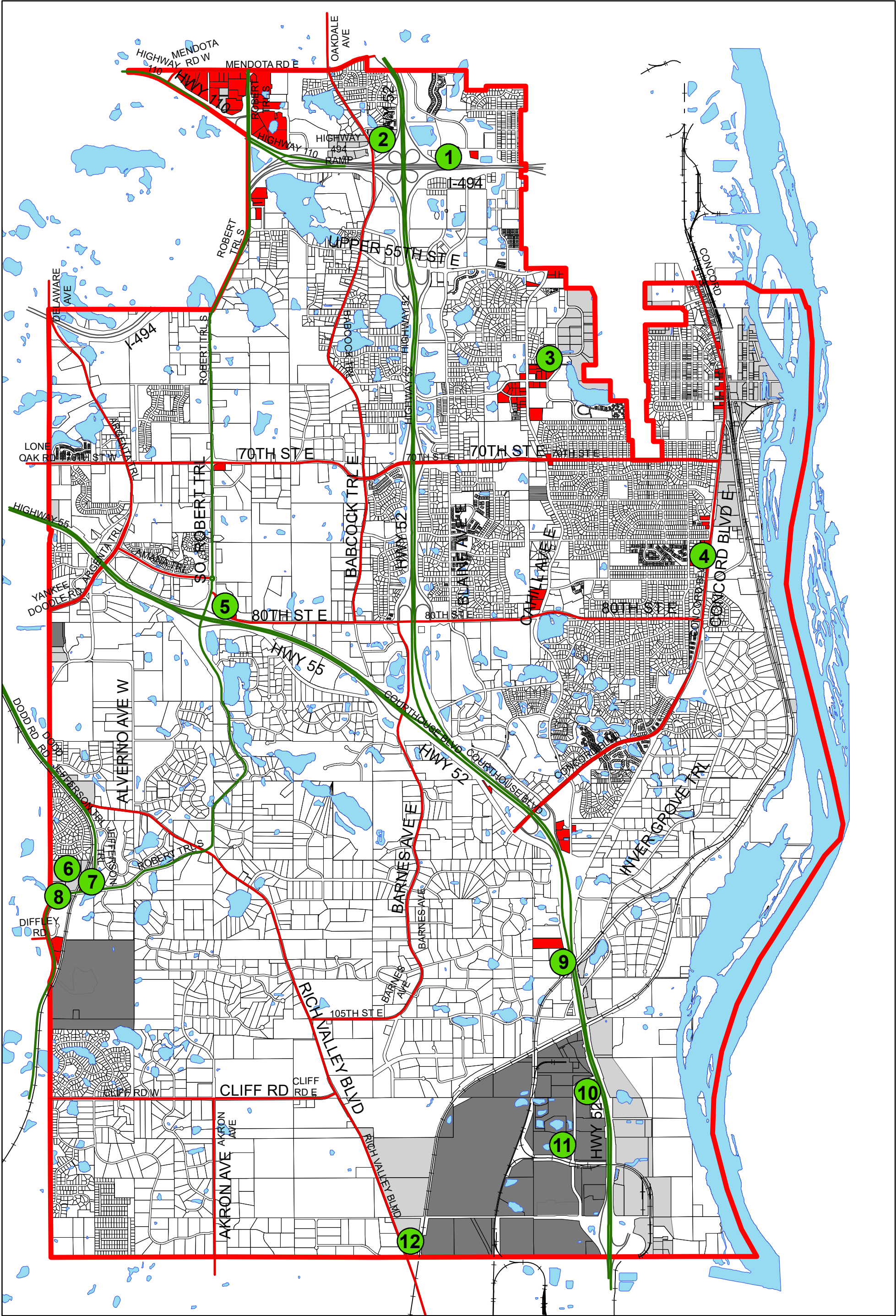
1. Eliminate mini-storage facilities (indoor and outdoor) in the B-3 District.
2. Allow mini-storage in the B-3 District as is with outdoor storage.
3. Allow mini-storage in the B-3 District with limited outdoor storage.
4. Allow mini-storage in the B-3 District indoor only with no outdoor storage.

The City Council acted on the first reading of an ordinance amendment to eliminate mini-storage altogether in the B-3 District on July 13, 2020. The Council tabled the second reading of the ordinance on August 10, 2020 to have further discussion on options to allow in some cases.

Since outdoor storage can be unsightly and does not provide any tax base, staff would recommend Council continue with an ordinance amendment to allow mini-storage in the B-3 District as indoor only with no outdoor storage allowed.

Attachments: Maps of mini-storage locations

Mini-Storage Locations



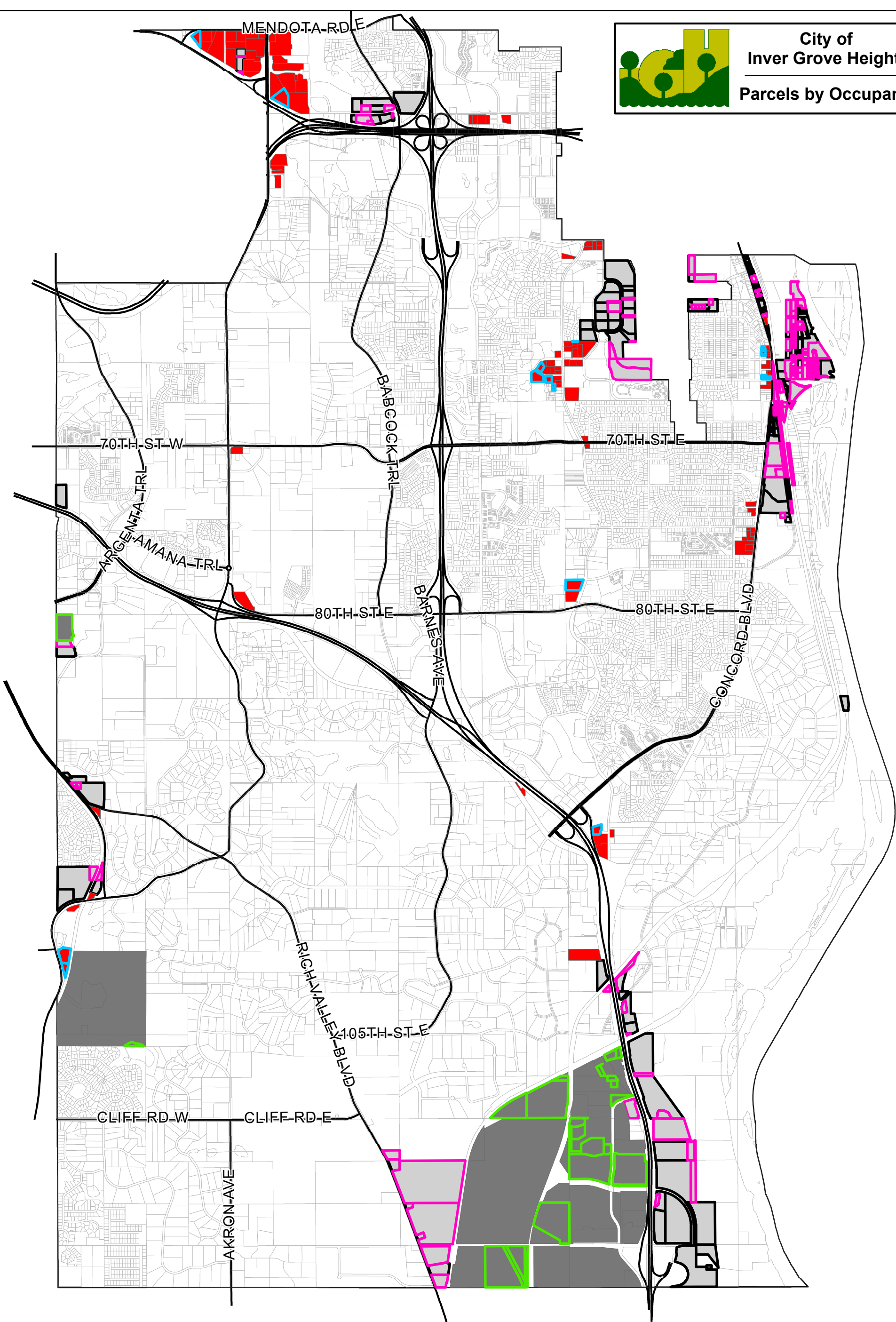
	Storage Facility Name	Address	Total Acres	Zoning	Indoor Only	Outdoor Only	Indoor & Outdoor	Building Valuation*	Total Valuation
1	US Storage Centers	2500 50th Street East	4.5	B-3			Yes	\$966,400	\$1,409,600
2	Acorn Mini Storage	5000 Babcock Trail	11.12	I-1			Yes	\$3,071,800	\$4,162,000
3	Greenwood Mini-Storage	6311 Carmen Ave	4	I-1	Yes			\$1,685,100	\$2,247,700
4	Stagecoach Storage	7565,7649 Concord Blvd	7	B-3			Yes	\$227,800	\$1,392,000
5	Sure Lock Storage	1181 80th Street	4.6	B-3		Yes		-	\$7,229,900
6	STOR Self Storage	9725 Robert Trail	19.31	I-1			Yes	\$187,300**	\$1,529,000**
7	River Heights Landscape & Storage	9601 Jefferson Trail	3.24	I-1		Yes		-	\$317,400
8	Inver Grove Storage	9735 South Robert Trail	5.4	I-1			Yes	\$2,373,000	\$2,824,100
9	Inver Grove Storage & Rental	10125 Courthouse Blvd	5.5	I-1		Yes		-	\$485,100
10	Sure Lock RV Storage	10900 Clark Road	8.1	I-1/I-2		Yes		-	\$660,000
11	Clark Road Storage	11305 Clark Road	12.3	I-2		Yes		-	\$1,100,200
12	Hilton Self Storage	11900 Rich Valley Blvd	4.8	I-1			Yes	\$430,000	\$850,100

* Values per Dakota County

**Project not yet complete



City of
Inver Grove Heights
Parcels by Occupancy



Occupied and Vacant Parcels

- B-3 - Vacant - 21 Parcels
- B-3 - Actively Occupied - 96 Parcels
- I-2 - Vacant - 25 Parcels
- I-2 - Actively Occupied - 34 Parcels
- I-1 - Vacant - 126 Parcels
- I-1 - Actively Occupied - 122 Parcels



0 0.3 0.6 0.9 1.2 Miles

Date: 4/27/2020

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Memorandum

TO: Mayor & City Council

FROM: Joe Lynch, City Administrator

SUBJECT: Interim City Administrator & Interim Public Works Director

DATE: January 29, 2021

CC: Scott Thureen, Heather Rand, Janet Shefchik

BACKGROUND:

Council directed that the discussion and consideration on what to do about any interim services for the positions of City Administrator and Public Works Director return to the February 1, 2021 Work Session.

OVERVIEW:

Council is asked to determine a direction on what to do about an Interim City Administrator and Interim Public Works Director. These positions are needed to give oversight, management, supervision and help make decisions for the period between the departure of the current incumbents in these positions until they can be filled on a permanent basis.

Interim City Administrator

At your Special meeting on January 19th, Council heard two options for consideration of interim City Administrator.

One option was to consider a service provided by the League of Minnesota Cities that gathers the name, experience and contact information of individuals who are willing to serve in an Interim role to assist cities during periods such as this. Council has received that list. You can determine if you would like to bring one or more of those individuals in to interview for this position. Council would then determine if you wanted to select one of them to provide the Interim services and try to negotiate terms with that individual.

The other option for Council is to consider if there is an individual who is capable, qualified, and interested in providing this service to the City. As you learned at the January 19th meeting, there is an individual who meets these criteria: Community Development Director Heather Rand. This recommended solution is supported by the management team, as you heard at your Special meeting.

In consultation with the department heads, Ms. Rand, and the HR manager, I still recommend you appoint Ms. Rand as the Interim City Administrator and the Council work with her on the terms and conditions for the position.

Interim Public Works Director

Council directed staff to bring forward information on solutions for the Interim Public Works Director at this meeting for discussion and direction.

The duties that we would need from these firms would be as follows:

- Timely preparation and submission of materials for the City Council agenda
- Oversight and coordination with Utility and Street Maintenance Superintendent on any operational or policy issues and bringing them forward to the City Administrator/Interim Administrator
- Coordinate invoice payment.
- Communicate with and ensure all customer concerns/complaints are addressed in a timely manner.
- Coordinate with other consultant firms with ongoing projects, studies, or programs currently in place to ensure they are making progress.

We would contract with these firms to provide an individual to be on site up to 20 hours a week. They would be a part of the Department Head meetings and would attend City Council meetings as needed and on topics of the Public Works Department.

The Public Works Director was able to get two proposals, with a secondary option on one of the proposals for the Council to consider.

The first option is to utilize the services of an Engineer with the Bolton & Menk firm. This person has the experience on working with our current engineering staff on several projects. The hourly rate is proposed at \$184/hr. This is a \$3,680 cost per week. This would compare to the current cost of \$3,000 per week for our FT Public Works Director.

The second option is from the firm of WSB. They have an individual who has previous experience in a Public Works Director role with previous cities. The hourly rate proposed is \$110/hr. This would be a weekly cost of \$2,200.

Within this option, the firm has offered to charge the city a flat retainer rate of \$4,750/month. If there are other services needed above and beyond those specified, they would charge the individual out at the agreed upon rate of \$110/hr.

If we compare the two options from WSB, the second one of a flat, fixed fee seems to make the most sense. The first option at the \$110/hr. rate would cost us \$8,800 for a month compared to the \$4,750/month fee.

Scott Thureen and I recommend that the Council accept the flat fee arrangement and contract with WSB to provide Interim Public Works Director services.



Memorandum

TO: Mayor & City Council
FROM: Joe Lynch, City Administrator
SUBJECT: Meeting Management
DATE: January 29, 2021
CC:

BACKGROUND:

During the Mayor/Council comments segment of the January 25th meeting, Council Member Murphy brought up his desire to talk about how the Council and staff may be able to better manage City Council meetings. He talked about an earlier start time, better organized and more succinct presentations and trying to cut down on the amount of time it takes Council to deal with issues and make decisions.

I had an opportunity to have a conversation with Council Member Murphy about this and I am not speaking for him here, but what I gained out of that conversation is that he would like to achieve the following objectives;

- Make meetings more efficient
- Get a work/life balance for staff, residents, and Council – earlier start time, earlier finish time and no need for staff to be “at work” for 12+ hours
- Standardize staff presentations to allow for maximum information with more time for interchange/communication between the Council and the applicant/resident

History & Context

I find that it is helpful to give some history and context to these types of considerations so all are on the same page and know what has been tried or done in the past to help with this situation.

The City Council has one Work Session meeting per month, designed to introduce topics of concern or consideration for the first time and seek discussion and direction on going forward, policy or ordinance development and talk about timing and schedule. The Council also meets in two, regular sessions per month. These are meetings to deal with decision making items whereby the Council needs to try to move forward with an application, a plan, a project or adopt an Ordinance. These are driven by and done in accordance with State Statute.

Council has tried several things to deal with the meetings to conduct the business of the city.

One such attempt was to meet four (4) times a month. Two Work Sessions on the 1st and 3rd Mondays and two Regular Sessions, on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month. This was done because there was a lot of city business happening and some planning efforts were underway,

such as the Northwest Area planning and development, City Hall/Public Safety building planning, etc.

Another attempt was to only hold two meetings per month, but the meetings would begin at 5:00 p.m. with a Work Session followed by a Regular Session at 7:00 p.m. This was done to reduce the number of meetings per month but made for a longer night due to meetings starting at 5:00 and running until 10:00 p.m. or later. This reduced the number of meeting per month but extended the length of time for meetings.

The Council meeting start time is contained in City Code, which indicates a 7:00 p.m. start time.

Council has two options here.

Change city code to reflect the agreed upon new start time for Council meetings and go through the Ordinance reading process. The other option is to adopt a temporary measure, for say up to 6 months, that would allow you to try a different start time and then you could decide if you wanted to make that a permanent change.

Council could also establish a curfew for meetings. Some City Councils have established a timeframe after which no new business can be discussed. For example, no new business will be started after a certain hour – 10:30/11:00 p.m. The concern with this is it is artificial and if the Council is engaged with the public on a particularly hot topic, you need to stop to take a vote of the majority. You would then have to determine a date certain on which you would return to complete the unfinished business of the meeting. Not many City Council's do this.

We can certainly standardize our city staff presentations. Besides now getting everyone on the same page in terms of an official PowerPoint presentation slide set, we could introduce a prescription that the Memorandum contain a certain set of points that Council can refer to quickly to gain a sense of the purpose of the item, objective, 3-5 main points and what the costs are, if any. We do not want to shorten the presentation of information because it does set the stage for background, history, regulation or requirement and recommendation of staff, an advisory body or both.

I look forward to more discussion and determination of a direction by Council on managing meetings to do the business of the city more efficiently and effectively.