

Memo

To: CICC committee members

From: Central Iowa Code Consortium (CICC) Executive Committee

Re: Summary of the 2015 Central Iowa Code Consortium (CICC) Activities

Date: January 15, 2016

Purpose:

Central Iowa communities are currently on different building and maintenance code cycles and have different code provisions that can make it difficult and confusing for businesses, developers and residents to understand and follow code requirements. The purpose of the Central Iowa Code Consortium (CICC) is to provide a process whereby government and business/industry work together to improve consistency among metro communities in the development, adoption and enforcement of construction and maintenance codes. Through the CICC code review process a metro “model” code that promotes uniformity and consistency for all participating communities will be created. This project does NOT intend to make recommendations on the permit process, code administration, appeals processes, or local amendments deemed necessary by local code officials. Participating Communities will have the final say on the code and code provisions that are adopted for their community.

The Code Consortium will provide the following benefits to Participating Communities and business/industry:

- a. Government and the private sector working together toward having a common voice in code development
- b. Similar and consistent code provisions among Participating Communities
- c. Assure key stakeholders are involved in the discussion regarding city codes
- d. Utilization of local subject matter experts representing the public and private sector in reviewing and recommending code provisions
- e. More efficiency and consistency regarding code interpretation and enforcement among Participating Communities
- f. More consistency and less confusion among businesses, developers, designers, architects and residents that work in multiple jurisdictions

The key to the success of the CICC is the involvement of business/industry and government officials in an open and honest dialog in the code review process.

History:

Capital Crossroads is a planning effort to assure the central Iowa region (defined as a fifty mile radius from Des Moines) can grow and prosper. It began with eight organizations (including Bravo Greater Des Moines, Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines, Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, Greater Des Moines Partnership, Iowa State University, Prairie Meadows, and United Way of Central Iowa) joining together to sponsor the planning process. 50 residents participated in the

steering committee and the effort engaged more than 5,000 people participating through one-on-one interviews, focus groups and online surveys.

One of the Capital Crossroads focus areas, called 'Capitals', is Governance. The purpose of the Governance Capital is to encourage local governments to sustainably manage growth without sacrificing essential public services by considering high-value, consensus based strategies to effectively serve our communities. In the summer of 2012 representatives from many central Iowa governments met to discuss opportunities for greater cooperation and ways to provide more efficient and effective service. As a result of that meeting local governments were asked to approve a *Resolution in Support for Local Government Collaboration*.

A pilot program was established to identify ways to increase the amount of formal collaboration between cities and counties. 15 cities and three counties partnered with the Taxpayers Association of Central Iowa and Des Moines Area Community College's (DMACC) Business Resources (DBR) in the pilot program. Two functions of government were selected for the pilot; Public Works and Fire/Emergency Medical Services (EMS).

One of the focus areas for the pilot was the fire code and related code adoption processes. A 'Unified Code Team' was established that consisted of volunteers representing fire service and city administration. The Unified Code Team reviewed the fire codes from many metro communities and identified the similarities and differences. As the team evaluated the fire codes it became evident that all construction and maintenance codes must work together to make them more efficient and effective. The Team's discussion expanded to include the building, residential, electrical, energy, fire, mechanical, and plumbing codes. Over time the conversation was expanded to include the property maintenance, existing building, swimming pool and spa, and the fuel gas codes.

The Unified Code Team researched models for providing a unified code approach and found a successful model in southern Nevada. The idea is to create a process where codes will be reviewed and discussed by government and industry leaders with the goal of reaching consensus on code provisions and making recommendations to participating communities. The more consistency there is among central Iowa communities in adopting and enforcing building and maintenance codes, the fewer barriers there are in growing the regional economy. Presentations regarding the committee findings were presented to city councils that participate in Capital Crossroads in December 2013 and January 2014. The idea of creating more consistent codes and involving business and industry in the code review process received a favorable response.

In late 2014 the Unified Code Team regrouped and expanded by inviting metro area building officials into the discussion. A Steering Committee was established that met every other week for many months to discuss a process of how to develop more effective and consistent building and maintenance codes in central Iowa. The committee created a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which committed metro governments to participate in the code review process.

Progress in 2015:

- March/April/May - The Steering Committee completed work on the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and presented it to metro area city councils. After a significant number of communities approved the MOU the Executive Committee was formed. The Executive Committee consists of:

- ✓ Six code/building officials
 - ✓ Three fire officials
 - ✓ Two representatives of local government administration (e.g. city/county manager/administrator, planning/community development director)
- April/May - The Executive Committee established a partnership with the Capital Crossroads Office of the Greater Des Moines Partnership. The office was established to coordinate and monitor the implementation of the Capital Crossroads initiatives. It is critical to the success of the CICC project to have a central location for the purpose of distributing committee and public information about the project. A web site was created and the Capital Crossroads office distributes and archives committee agendas, minutes and information.
 - May/June - The Executive Committee worked on a process to solicit, review and select volunteers from government and industry to serve on the Code Committees. An application was created and sent out to business/industry, trade organizations and local governments. Once applications were received the Code Committee members were appointed. In selecting individuals to serve on the Code Committees care was taken to select members that have subject area expertise and represent large and small communities as well as a geographic balance across central Iowa. Also selecting business/industry representatives from large and small companies as well as companies that work in many communities in central Iowa. The seven code committees are:

- ✓ Electrical/Energy Code
- ✓ Fire Code
- ✓ International Building Code (IBC)/International Existing Building Code (IEBC)
- ✓ International Residential Code (IRC)
- ✓ Mechanical/Plumbing/Fuel Gas
- ✓ Pool/Spa/Property Maintenance (residential)
- ✓ Fire/Building Joint Committee

To assure integrity of the code review process the Executive and Code Committees are considered public bodies which requires them to follow the open meetings/open records requirements.

- June/July - The Executive Committee created a form and process by which communities, business/industry and the public could submit proposed changes to the codes. 462 proposals were received (including duplications). The committees are considering the proposals as they review their respective codes.
- July - Once the committees were established the Executive Committee conducted orientations to cover such issues as open meetings/open records requirements and the code review process.
- September - present - Code Committees are actively meeting and are in the process of reviewing existing codes, significant changes in the proposed 2015 codes and proposals submitted through the code proposal submission process. The only Code Committee that is not currently active is the Pool/Spa/Property Maintenance (residential) committee since there were not enough applicants to form the committee.

The Executive Committee established a deadline of March 1, 2016 for the code committees to complete their review of the codes and have their recommendations to the Executive Committee, The Executive Committee will complete their review and plan to have a draft code for final public comment and review available to the participating communities in May/June 2016.

This effort would not have progressed without the vision of the Capital Crossroads initiative, the support of the Mayors and City Council members and Board of Supervisors from the Participating Communities and the dedicated committee members representing government officials and business and industry on the Executive and Code Committees.

Participating Communities (communities that have adopted the Memorandum of Understanding):

City of Altoona, City of Ankeny, City of Bondurant, City of Carlisle, City of Clive, City of Des Moines, City of Grimes, City of Johnston, City of Norwalk, City of Osceola, City of Pleasant Hill, City of Polk City, City of Urbandale, City of Van Meter, City of Waukee, City of West Des Moines, City of Windsor Heights, Polk County