



CITY OF URBANDALE **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT NEWSLETTER**

January 2022

City Council Creates New TIF District for Merle Hay District Revitalization

This week the Urbandale City Council took another step forward to support the redevelopment and revitalization of the 75 acre Merle Hay campus. The project will include repurposing the former two-level Younkers department store to a 3,500 seat hockey arena and entertainment venue, convert the current Kohl's store to a multi-sport training and competition center, construct a new Kohl's store on the east side of the campus and see the construction of a hotel, among other investment projects on the site.

The City Council amended the existing Downtown Urbandale Tax Increment Financing district and created a new TIF district comprising approximately the western third of the Merle Hay campus. The Mall and campus is within the city limits of both Urbandale and Des Moines. This new TIF district will financially support the planned reinvestment projects. Construction is expected to be underway this year.

Record Breaking Year for Urbandale Building Permits

The City of Urbandale's Community Development Department issued a total of 1,388 residential and commercial building permits in 2021, with a total valuation of more than \$220.6 million. This is the highest valuation on record, surpassing the previous record from 2003 of \$188 million. Urbandale saw the construction of 417 single-family homes and 25 new commercial buildings in 2021 which helped set the new record for permit valuation.

Urban Loop Named one of 2021 Top Ten Bridges in US

Roads and Bridges magazine, a transportation construction industry trade magazine, listed the Urban Loop Iowa 141 flyover bridge as number five on its annual "best of" project list. [The article in Roads and Bridges](#) describes the project's impact on safety, efficiency and economic development.

Urban Loop Development Projects Map Updated and Now Interactive

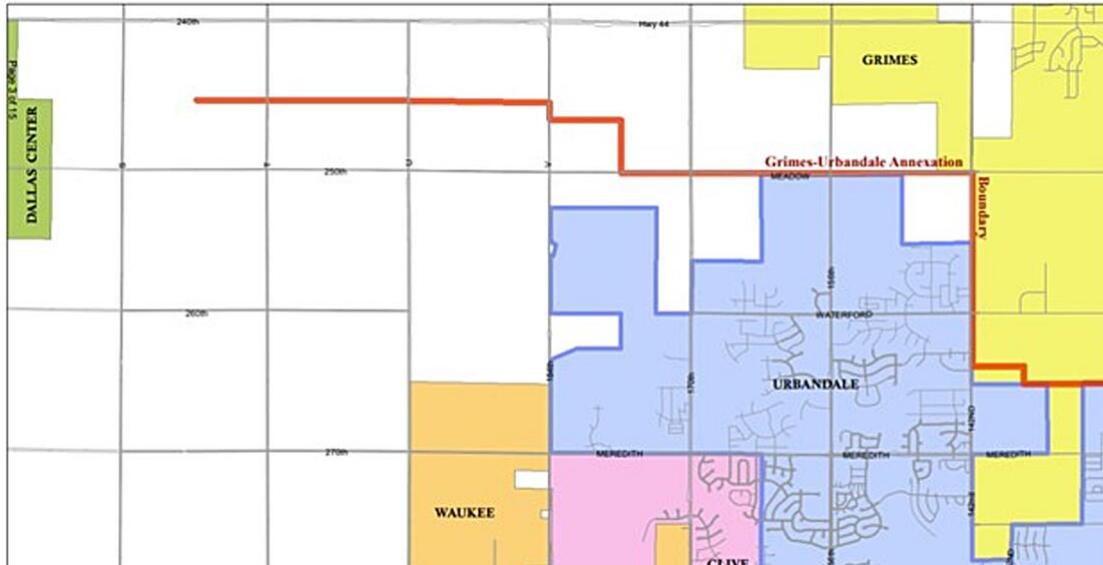
There have been over 30 private investment projects in the Urban Loop development area since the brand launched in late 2017. [This interactive map](#) provides locations, information and photos of the major projects.

Change in Weight Ordinance Adjusts Local Truck Routes

The City Council approved an ordinance restricting overweight vehicles on 100th Street/104th Street/Aurora Avenue in Urbandale. Trucks over 26,000 pounds empty vehicle weight are restricted from traveling between Plum Drive and NW Urbandale Drive on 100th/104th Streets/Aurora Avenue. Local deliveries are allowed, but through-traffic should use Plum Drive and NW Urbandale Drive to access I-35/80 interchanges.

Urbandale and Grimes Approve New Annexation Boundary

The City Councils of Urbandale and Grimes approved a new agreement governing westward expansion of both growing cities. The agreements establish an east-west line north of which Urbandale will not annex and south of which Grimes will not annex. The line is illustrated below in red. Both communities continue to see strong residential and commercial investment which will drive westward expansion. This new agreement applies for ten years and will guide orderly annexation and community development.



State Offers a New Business Designation to Attract and Retain Talent

Employers of all sizes are invited to gain the state's new [Best Place for Working Parents® designation](#). This week, the Iowa Economic Development Authority announced a program that recognizes employers' investments in working families and encourages workforce attraction and retention.

Employers qualify for the Best Place for Working Parents designation through a free and confidential online business self-assessment, which highlights the top 10 research-backed family-friendly policies proven to benefit working parents and businesses' bottom line. An instant dashboard of results provides employers with digital badging to promote their designation on websites, social media and in print, along with a real-time snapshot of how their workplace fares against others of like size and industry.

Recently Approved Projects in Urbandale

The City Council approved several new developments and projects the last two months. The following is a list of the rezonings, plats and site plans which have recently moved forward:

- Approved Bentley Ridge Plat 1 (170th Street and Plum Drive) Preliminary Plat for 197 single family lots
- Approved Center Pointe Business Plat 3 Lot 2 (west of Northpark Drive and 100th Street) Site Plan for a 212,500 square foot industrial building
- Approved a Final Plat for Worldwide Logistics new headquarters building at 12400 Meredith Drive
- Approved Barret Estates Plat 2 (150th Street and Springbrook Trail) Final Plat for 56 single family lots

Staying in Touch with Urbandale's Economic Development Team

We have built this newsletter and distribution list to stay in close contact with the valued business leaders, partners and stakeholders that help the City advance its economic development goals. If you think someone would value receiving this, please forward it. Archived editions and an opportunity to sign up to receive the newsletter directly are [here](#).

A great way to receive updates faster is to connect with the City of Urbandale on our various social media channels.



Curtis Brown, CEcD

Asst. City Manager/Director of Economic Development

cbrown@urbandale.org



Aaron DeJong

Assistant Director of Economic Development

adejong@urbandale.org



View our online [Available Site and Building Database](#)

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City of Urbandale, Iowa, 3600 86th Street, Urbandale, Iowa 50322, 515-278-3900

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