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Norwalk a development rainmaker

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Big news hit Norwalk in May, when the City Council and the Iowa Economic Development Authority approved incentives for [Windsor Windows and Doors](#) to build a new manufacturing plant in an industrial park on the south side of town.

But the City Council also took action last month on another project that points to the upward trajectory the city is poised to take in coming years, all of which will be summed up in a tidy package at the State of the City ceremonies July 20, during the heart of Home Builders Association of Greater Des Moines' annual home show, which is taking place for the second time in recent years at Echo Valley Country Club.

The event itself is good news for a growing community, but development projects abound.

On May 18, the City Council gave final approval to a stormwater fee district that features a 12-acre park with more than 6 acres spread over two lakes gouged out of land donated by the Holland family. This is a project that coursed in recent years with the rapid ebb and flow of a torrential rain, but was eased by a city decision to allow property owners to opt into fees.

CBRE|Hubbell Commercial's Craig King represented the Holland family and he noted that the outcome was "phenomenal" for landowners and taxpayers alike.

A city staff report notes that dirt excavated for the creation of the large detention ponds that will be a centerpiece of Elizabeth Holland Park was used to create or enhance an additional 14 acres of development ground in the district as well as the grading of the new Turnberry Drive.

Over time, the city expects the fees to cover about 10 percent of the \$3 million cost to create the system. So far as development land, City State Bank plans a new branch in the area, located east of Iowa Highway 28 and north of Beardsley Drive.

The fee for connection to the district is \$5,000 per acre of property that is zoned for commercial uses and \$3,000 per acre of land that is zoned for residential. The fee is scheduled to increase \$90 a year for each property type after July 1, 2018.

In all, the district covers nearly 80 acres and includes the City State Bank project as well as a Hy-Vee Inc. food store that is planned at Highway 28 and Colonial Parkway, near the southernmost extension of the district. Several exemptions are built into the ordinance and can be found by clicking [here](#).

The State of the City address will be held during the second week of the Des Moines Builders Home Show Expo.

In addition to future build-out of the Ancell Acres industrial area, a site certified by the state of Iowa for immediate development, Norwalk is anticipating additional residential and commercial development, including a town center, on more than 128 acres of property that Peoples Co. has mapped out east of Highway 28 and south of Colonial Parkway.

And more projects are planned, including development near Lake Colchester near Iowa Highway 5 and Highway 28.

Older retail centers also are gaining attention. Cannon Clark and partner Scott Cutler plan to demolish an aging retail site on the west side of Highway 28 and replace it with a neighborhood retail center called Sunset Crest. They also have plans for development on the east side of the highway.

Meanwhile, homebuilding is showing no signs of slackening.

Hollie Askey, the city's economic development director, said the community has become such a draw for young families that it is running out of recreational areas. A new elementary school will be built over the next two years.

In the last two years, 433 residential lots have been platted, adding 1,170 residents. Permits for new single-family homes are expected to increase nearly 9.5 percent by 2025, adding 2,469 new houses and boosting the city's population to 16,802 from its current 11,000.

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