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## PRESS RELEASE

### **From Parking Lot to Park: Papillion Aims to Improve Downtown**

PAPILLION, Neb., February 21, 2012 – The City of Papillion is advancing plans to continue renovating the community’s downtown. The first step will be converting a seldom-used parking lot into a “water garden” park concept that will attract both residents and visitors to the downtown area.

The idea calls for the parking lot on the corner of 1st and Washington Street (84<sup>th</sup> Street) to be converted into a multi-use plaza. It will feature a moving water feature, as well as a plaza with outdoor tables, enough space for small events, vendors and passive use as well as a structure with a restroom facility. Any lost parking from the conversion of the parking lot will be replaced by enhancing the use of angled on-street parking on both 1st and Adams Streets.

“Our downtown area is critical to our community – it connects us to our history and can be a vital business area,” said Mayor David Black. “The goal for this plan is to make an attraction for both residents and visitors. Making our downtown a destination will benefit existing businesses, as well as help attract new businesses.”

#### **Public Meeting and Input**

Tonight’s Papillion City Council meeting will include a public hearing and vote on adopting an addendum to the City’s Comprehensive Plan, specifically to address the downtown area. Public input is welcome at the meeting. The meeting is at 7:00 p.m. on the third floor of City Hall – 122 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street.

The City received extensive public input during the comprehensive planning process, collecting residents’ thoughts, direction and feedback during public meetings, using online portals and by conducting surveys. The downtown portion of the plan has been before the public as well, and downtown business owners have been contacted directly for their feedback.

#### **Timeline and Budget**

If approved at the meeting, the plans for downtown can start to take shape immediately. The overall funding for all downtown improvements was accounted for in the City’s 2012 fiscal year budget. No new funding source is needed for the project. The estimated total costs for the project are \$1.2 million.

Construction for the park can begin as early as this June. The City aims to have the park open to the public by Fall 2012.

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