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Citizens advisory group approves downtown urban renewal program

By **BOB FELL**
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The Citizens Advisory Council for urban renewal in Rapid City approved the concept of the downtown urban renewal program as presented by Bill Schneider, urban renewal projects coordinator, Tuesday night.

The concept is just a little less than the city's original plan for a Neighborhood Development Program (NDP) which had been applied for prior to the June flood of 1972.

The idea, said Schneider, is to acquire the two half-blocks on the north side of Main Street between Sixth and Rushmore

Road. The structures would be leveled and the property offered to private development for the construction of new businesses in the downtown area.

In the meantime, after the property has been cleared and until a developer expresses an interest, the land could be used for temporary off-street parking lots, said Schneider.

This idea has been suggested before and the present urban renewal program includes the two half-blocks as part of the acquisition program.

Schneider reported the urban renewal budget had been revised recently to provide for

acquisition costs and relocation benefits for the downtown properties based on estimates. There is not enough money for acquisition of the north half-blocks, however, it is expected, he said, that private developers interested in the Main Street property would acquire the northside property for parking.

He said appraisals have not been made on the 22 parcels.

Gordon Wicks, council member, asked if all the property along the floodway and in the sites for the new high school and civic center have been acquired.

Schneider said offers have been made on all the properties

in these areas but all property owners have not accepted nor has all the property been acquired.

Schneider said tentative plans call for starting acquisition with the fire station, which is city-owned, and to the west. The urban renewal department is considering leaving the building at Sixth and Main if it is determined to be structurally sound.

Schneider said the Local Public Agency (LPA) will be asked to consider setting July 22 as a date for a public hearing on the project at a meeting with downtown businessmen and city planners Wednesday night.