



**Council Communication No. 97-321**

**SYNOPSIS –**

The Iowa Department of Transportation (IDOT) has an annual program to provide funds for Traffic Safety Fund (TSF) Improvements. The deadline for this year’ s applications is July 1, 1997. Staff has reviewed various high accident locations and has developed three projects for submittal: 31st Street and Kingman Boulevard intersection traffic signal modifications; University Avenue at the 19th/ML King, Jr. Parkway intersection traffic signal modifications; and Merle Hay Road widening between Ovid Avenue and Douglas Avenue to provide raised channelization and left-turn lanes. The first project was approved for submittal by City Council on February 17, 1997 (Roll Call No. 97-450). Council is requested to authorize the City Manager to submit the remaining two projects to the IDOT for this year’ s funding.

**FISCAL IMPACT –**

1. *University Avenue at 19th Street/ML King, Jr. Parkway Intersection*

State TSF Funds	\$	80,000	
City Portion		8,000	(Engineering and Inspection)
Total Project	\$	88,000	

2. *Merle Hay Road Widening - Ovid Avenue to Douglas Avenue*

State TSF Funds	\$	500,000	
Other State Funding		415,000	
City Portion		415,000	
Total Project		\$1,330,000	

City funding would be requested through a future Capital Improvement Program if these projects are approved by the IDOT.

**RECOMMENDATION –**

**Approval and authorization to submit an application to IDOT for Traffic Safety Funds for these two projects.**

**BACKGROUND –**

In 1988, the IDOT implemented an annual program to provide funds for traffic safety

improvements. To date, the City has been successful in receiving approval of 21 projects and \$4.8 million of State funding. These include the Penn-University intersection widening, traffic signal upgrades, and other intersection improvements. Staff has reviewed various high accident locations and opportunities for funding and recommends the following projects:

### **1. University Avenue at the 19th Street/ML King, Jr., Parkway Intersection**

The proposed project consists of upgrading the east-west traffic signals at this intersection to eliminate the median-mounted poles. A left-turn phase will also be added for University Avenue at each intersection. Interconnect conduit and cable would be installed south along 19th Street to the Day Street intersection. The proposed project cost is \$88,000.

Between July 1993 and June 1996, there have been 58 accidents at these two intersections of the type that may be alleviated by the proposed improvements with a total dollar loss of over \$500,000. It is estimated that this project will reduce these accidents by approximately ten percent with a benefit/cost ratio of 2.33:1.

### **2. Merle Hay Road between Ovid and Douglas Avenues Widening and Raised Channelization with Left-turn Lanes**

This project consists of widening Merle Hay Road from south of Douglas to Ovid Avenues to a 65- foot width. Raised channelization would be installed with left-turning lanes at designated locations. Additional right-of-way is required, but most of the businesses in the area have been developed to accommodate this.

This area is ranked eleventh in the IDOT' s “ top 200” high accident areas statewide. Between July 1993 and June 1996, there were a total of 59 accidents with a total dollar loss of \$238,000. It is estimated that this project will reduce these accidents by approximately 40 percent with a benefit/cost ratio of 2.08:1.