



**Council Communication No. 97-338**

**SYNOPSIS –**

The Enterprise Community Employment Consortium (ECEC) was formed in response to the High Quality Jobs benchmark in the Enterprise Community (EC) Strategic Plan. Current partners in the Consortium include Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC), the Des Moines Chamber of Commerce, Iowa Comprehensive Human Services (ICHS), and the Next Step Self-Sufficiency Collaboration (Mid-City Vision, Children and Families of Iowa, OSACS [One Self Actualizing Communication Skills] and Proteus). These partners will collaborate to administer outreach, training, and employment programs.

**FISCAL IMPACT –**

Enterprise Community Social Service Block Grant (SSBG) entitlement funds in the amount of \$424,608 will be used.

**RECOMMENDATION –**

**Approve contract with Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) who will coordinate direct services of the ECEC by negotiating three subcontracts with ICHS, Next Step Self-Sufficiency Collaboration (Next Step), and the Des Moines Chamber of Commerce to administer outreach, training, and employment programs.**

**BACKGROUND –**

On November 20, 1995, by Roll Call No. 95-4424, the City Council approved the Memorandum of Agreement between the City of Des Moines, the State of Iowa, and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development which incorporates the EC Strategic Plan and the benchmarks which measure the progress of major projects contained in the EC Strategic Plan.

In August of 1996, the Request for Technical Proposal was extended to the community; as a result, three proposals were submitted to the Enterprise Community Office on September 30; two of the proposals met the necessary qualifications.

In November of 1996, the Work Group reviewed the two proposals. One was from a collaborative group called Next Step (Children and Families of Iowa, Mid-City Vision, OSACS and Proteus), led by Mid-City Vision; the other proposal was from ICHS.

After the review of the proposals, the Work Group asked the two applicants to present a joint proposal.

After the two applicants met, they sent a letter to the Work Group stating they would not be able to work together as a single group. They recommended funding of both of their individual projects.

In December of 1996, the Work Group sent a letter to the two applicants declining their requests for individual funding for the following reasons:

- The Work Group had chosen to embrace the one-stop-shop concept for the High Quality Jobs project, and funding the proposals individually would not meet that purpose.
- Neither proposal fully addressed the ECEC's goals, and neither outlined concretely how they would work with the business community.
- The Work Group desired a greater degree of input from the business community in developing the project design than either applicant had outlined.

In February of 1997, the Work Group decided to work with the two applicants to create an acceptable project design. As a result of numerous meetings and discussions, the ECEC project design and partnerships were developed. The summary and outline of the proposed contract, detailed below, was completed in April and approved by the EC Steering Committee in May:

**SUMMARY**– The ECEC is being formed in response to the high quality jobs benchmark in the DMEC strategic plan. Current partners in the Consortium include DMACC, the Des Moines Chamber of Commerce, ICHS, and Next Step.

Up to \$424,608 is recommended to carry out this project for the first year if all components are implemented as described below. It should be noted that the proposed budget is seed money or start-up funding only, and it is expected that the program will be self-sustaining after the first year; if it is not, all partners in this collaborative effort have stated they will work to seek funding to sustain the program beyond its first year.

**LEAD AGENCY**– **DMACC** will be the primary contractor and be responsible for fiscal and administrative oversight, project coordination, and evaluation of the project. Up to \$65,000 will be available for these activities.

DMACC will convene an Employment Consortium Advisory Board that will meet regularly to assess needs and monitor progress of the project. The EC Economic Environment will be represented on this Advisory Board.

The lead agency will coordinate direct services by subcontracting with ICHS and Next Step to provide assessments, training, and job placement services to EC residents.

The lead agency will also be responsible for the development of a plan to leverage additional resources that will provide for sustainability of the project after EC funding ends.

**BUSINESS ROLE**– DMACC will subcontract with the **Des Moines Chamber of Commerce** to coordinate job carving activities to identify or create specific job opportunities for the Employment Consortium project. The Chamber will contact area businesses and negotiate the allocation of job positions for EC residents participating in the project. Up to \$40,000 will be available for this subcontract.

The Chamber will serve as a liaison between employers and direct service partners, and will develop and maintain a data base that tracks job opportunities and participant placements.

**DIRECT SERVICE**– DMACC will subcontract with **ICHS** to provide comprehensive employment related services to 100 EC residents that result in placement of high quality jobs or career paths. Up to \$181,145 will be available for this subcontract.

As part of its comprehensive services, ICHS will conduct intakes and assessments, provide ongoing case management for participants to access appropriate training and resources, work with participants and their families on issues related to child care, transportation, public assistance ramifications of employment and employee benefits, and help access other appropriate services.

ICHS will also coordinate job placement with the Chamber and will provide ongoing support to project participants for at least six months after job placement. This will include serving as a liaison to private businesses to ensure that EC residents are aware of and considered for job opportunities available in the area.

**OUTREACH**– Systematic outreach efforts will be coordinated by the ECEC through **Next Step**, with **Mid-City Vision** as the lead subcontractor for these services. Up to \$34,100 will be available for outreach activities.

Outreach will include the development and distribution of informational material about the project and coordination with public and private agencies and neighborhood organizations to publicize the project.

**CLERICAL/COMPUTER TRAINING**– Up to \$104,363 will be available to implement a clerical and computer training component of the project for 80 EC residents. Next Step will subcontract for this activity. Participants indicating an interest in this type of training during ICHS intake will be referred to this component.

Next Step will be responsible for conducting specific assessments of clerical and computer skills and for providing training in the clerical and computer fields. The subcontractor will also participate in the job placement activities in coordination with the Chamber, and will provide support and assistance to project participants during training and after placement.