

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER
DES MOINES, IOWA

ITEM 60-A

CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION 97-455
SEPTEMBER 8, 1997 AGENDA

SUBJECT:	TYPE:	SUBMITTED BY:
PURCHASE OF DES MOINES LATENT FINGERPRINT ANALYSIS AND RECORDING APPARATUS FROM THE SOLE SOURCE VENDOR, HENRY LOUIS, INCORPORATED	◆ RESOLUTION ORDINANCE RECEIVE/FILE	WILLIAM MOULDER CHIEF OF POLICE

SYNOPSIS —

In an effort to improve crime investigation fingerprint techniques and provide courtroom evidence in a more intelligible method, an electronic fingerprint analysis system was developed by Police Department personnel and a commercial vendor. The commercial vendor is now willing to sell the system to the City at a reduced price for the Police Department's assistance.

FISCAL IMPACT —

System cost \$17,523.59. To be purchased with seized funds.

RECOMMENDATION —

Approval.

BACKGROUND —

The initial development of this system was generated by the Chief of Police who observed an optical system used to assist medical doctors with microscopic surgery. Chief Moulder envisioned this equipment as a tool capable of enlarging latent fingerprints for better visual inspection. Identification Section personnel began working with Henry Louis Incorporated of Iowa City to investigate the scope of possibilities the equipment could provide. Separate equipment was added and modified which eventually led to a final configuration applicable to Department needs. The new system allows the Identification Section to magnify fingerprints 40+ times greater than existing equipment. The system allows technicians to make notes directly on the monitor, flag similarities of fingerprint features, and print the completed visual as an aid to the District Court. In the past, marginal latent prints obtained at crime scenes were of little use to investigators. Those same prints are now identifiable pieces of evidence which have resulted in recent homicide arrests. As a result of this development, the Des Moines Police Department's Identification Section is the only forensic lab in the country with this capability. Identification Section personnel have been unable to locate any other integrated system with the features required.