

**CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION 97-526
OCTOBER 27, 1997 AGENDA**

SUBJECT:

**TREE DEBRIS REMOVAL—
CONTRACTED ASSISTANCE**

SUBMITTED BY:

**JOHN BELLIZZI
PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR**

SYNOPSIS —

On October 26, 1997, the City of Des Moines experienced an intense wet snowstorm which resulted in city-wide damage on leaf covered trees. The tree damage was extensive on both public rights-of-way and private property.

The amount of city-wide damage has been determined to contain an estimated 20,000-25,000 tons of tree debris, or approximately 6,000 tandem truckloads of material for disposal. Solid waste collection personnel began removing small debris on the parkings today. In addition, City crews began removal of street tree debris.

A systematic collection of tree debris will begin November 3, 1997, at which time City crews will be augmented with contracted assistance estimated in the amount of \$200,000.

In addition, an estimated \$30,000 will be needed to be reimbursed to enterprise accounts for assistance in the tree debris cleanup program.

FISCAL IMPACT —

It has been determined that contracted assistance can be retained at a cost of \$70 per hour for loaders with operators and \$50 per hour for haul units with drivers. The total estimated cost for contracted assistance is \$200,000. An additional \$30,000 may be necessary to reimburse City enterprise accounts for their participation in the cleanup. The total estimated out-of-pocket expense for contractors and enterprise accounts is estimated to be \$230,000.

RECOMMENDATION —

Authorize a rate of \$70 per hour for tree/log mechanical loaders with operator and \$50 per

hour for tandem or equivalent box size haul trucks with drivers.

BACKGROUND —

The Public Works Department previously conducted massive tree debris cleanups. Based on the experience gained, the City has developed the following initiatives:

Tree Debris Disposal

A news release (copy attached) was developed and dispatched today to inform property owners that they may cut and use their large tree debris for firewood or place it on their parkings for collection by City crews. Systematic collection of tree debris will commence November 3, 1997. It is anticipated that residents will require at least one week to get their material cut and placed on their parkings for collection. Residents requiring assistance from a contractor may call the City of Des Moines' Action Center for a copy of a brochure titled " Tips for Residents on Hiring a Tree Care Service" which was developed by the tree trimming task force authorized by the City Council last year.

Proposed Plan for Tree Debris Cleanup

A total of 12 crews will be organized to begin the systematic cleanup of tree debris. Nine crews will be provided by the Public Works Department and one respectively from Parks, the Des Moines International Airport, and the Wastewater Reclamation Facility. A crew will generally consist of a loader with operator, six haul trucks with drivers, two chain saw operators, and three laborers. The crews will be dispatched to specific areas of the city which correspond with one of the City' s 34 snow removal districts. The enterprise funds involved will require reimbursement at the rate of \$175 per hour for the personnel and equipment assigned to these crews. An estimated \$30,000 will need to be reimbursed to the enterprise accounts.

Contracted Tree Debris Cleanup Assistance

Although the majority of the tree debris cleanup program will be accomplished with City crews, contracted assistance will be necessary to complete the program in a timely manner. It is estimated that contract loaders with operators can be retained at the cost of \$70/hour while haul units with drivers may be retained at a cost of \$50/hour. Based on these rates for a four-week program, the total estimated contracted cost would be \$20,000. In combination with anticipated reimbursements to the City' s enterprise accounts in the amount of \$30,000, the City' s out-of-pocket expense will be \$230,000.

Burn Site

To minimize the economic impact on Des Moines property owners for the disposal of their tree debris, we have requested a permit to burn the tree debris at the undeveloped Hubbell Park site which lies southeast of the City along Highway 46 in the vicinity of the old Iowa Power station. The site has been reviewed by the Air Quality Division of Polk County and verbally approved

for burning. Security will be provided on a 24-hour basis and actual burning will be conducted under the surveillance of the Des Moines Fire Department. We anticipate that the burning operation will commence November 3, 1997.

All tree debris collected by City crews will be disposed of at the burn site. Private tree services serving Des Moines property owners will be authorized to dispose of their tree debris at the site as well. In addition, individual Des Moines property owners may bring their tree debris to the site for disposal. Every precaution will be taken to ensure that the burn is conducted in such a manner as to provide maximum safety.

Attachment