

**CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION 98-002
JANUARY 5, 1998 AGENDA**

SUBJECT:

**SALISBURY HOUSE FOUNDATION' S
APPLICATION FOR TRANSPORTATION
FUNDS**

SUBMITTED BY:

**RICHARD CLARK
DEPUTY CITY MANAGER**

SYNOPSIS –

Resolution of co-sponsorship in the submittal of the Salisbury House Foundation' s application to the Iowa Department of Transportation (IDOT) for \$750,000 in transportation enhancement funds.

FISCAL IMPACT –

As co-sponsor, we have no financial obligations or requirement for matching funds. We must, however, allow the funding and bills to be channeled through the City. The City will also ensure the funds are spent properly.

RECOMMENDATION –

Approval.

BACKGROUND –

The 42-room Salisbury House, located at 4025 Tonawanda Drive, was built by well-known cosmetic manufacturer Carl Weeks between 1923 and 1928, and is patterned after King' s House in Salisbury, England. It is filled with an eclectic collection of rare art, tapestries, books, and furnishings. Based on 1994 attendance lists, Salisbury House ranked the 11th largest attraction in central Iowa. Projections indicate attendance figures could reach 30,000 to 50,000 annual visitors if the mansion would become a full-time museum. Salisbury House can play a major role in Iowa' s tourism, economic development, and educational programs, especially given its proximity to Interstate 235.

The Salisbury House Foundation was founded in 1993 with the mission of acquiring this historic property for the public good from the Iowa State Education Association (ISEA), and developing its use as a full-time museum and cultural center. This acquisition would insure the safety of the artwork and valuable collections, the preservation of the virgin woodlands which landscape the property, and the historical architecture of the house itself.

The Salisbury House Foundation was encouraged to seek funding from the IDOT, as the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991 requires 10 percent of each state's Surface Transportation Program funds be directed toward "transportation enhancement activities". But nonprofit organizations seeking funds must have a public agency serving as a co-sponsor, and the City of Des Moines was asked to be the co-sponsor for this project.

The application materials were received and the Salisbury House submitted a funding request for a \$750,000 grant. The funding would be provided through ISTEA, and was requested specifically from those funds allocated by the State (not the local Metropolitan Planning Organization). Because of the October 1, 1997, deadline, a letter of support and intent from the City Manager was submitted with the project proposal. IDOT anticipates official confirmation to be submitted after the co-sponsorship and project ideas are presented and approved by the City Council.

The funds are requested under the "Historic Preservation" category and will be used in the acquisition of Salisbury House from ISEA, as well as the renovations and upgrades needed. The application will be reviewed on a State-wide basis by IDOT.

Should the grant funds be provided, the City will enter into a contract with the Salisbury House Foundation, which establishes the parameters of administering the funds.

Individual donors, corporations, and other public sources of funding have also been approached to aid the Foundation in preserving the historical treasure, Salisbury House.

In a separate but related matter, staff is working with the ISEA to find a new location for their association within the City of Des Moines, perhaps with the Gateway East area in the downtown.