CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION:

98-281

AGENDA:
JULY 13, 1998

SUBJECT:
APPLICATION FOR FEMA REIMBURSEMENT

TYPE:
RESOLUTION
ORDINANCE
RECEIVE/FILE

SUBMITTED BY:
JOHN BELLIZZI
PUBLIC WORKS
DIRECTOR

## OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER
## CITY OF DES MOINES, IOWA

**SYNOPSIS –**

Following declaration of disaster by President Clinton, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is prepared, under its Public Assistance Program, to reimburse the City for expenses associated with severe rain and wind storms, commencing June 13, 1998 forward. FEMA will reimburse substantiated expenses incurred with regard to overtime, equipment costs, reconstruction of infrastructure, contracts, and other miscellaneous unbudgeted expenses.

**FISCAL IMPACT –**

Public Works Director John Bellizzi estimates the City's cost of recovery and restoration at approximately $13.6 million. In most instances, when appropriate records are kept of expenses incurred, FEMA will reimburse up to 75 percent of City costs, which is coupled with 10 percent State reimbursement. These reimbursements will help offset the expenses incurred by departments for cleanup and repairs following the severe weather.

**RECOMMENDATION –**

**Approval of FEMA reimbursement application and designation of Marshall Grabau, Finance Department, as the City's authorized representative and Pamela McAdams, also of the Finance Department, as the alternate to negotiate reimbursement with FEMA.**

**BACKGROUND –**

On June 13, 1998, the City began battling a series of severe

weather events, initially by mobilizing for flood control and constructing levee closures. Fleur Drive was initially closed by 4 PM on June 15. On June 18, the City sustained another rainstorm, which severely impacted the City's roadways, culverts, and the sanitary sewer system. It is estimated that 8,000 - 10,000 basements within the City experienced some form of water problem. High river levels, intense rainfalls, and saturated ground conditions set the stage for further flooding with additional rainstorms. Fleur Drive was closed for the second time on the 18th.

On June 29, 1998, the City experienced intense 70-mph peak winds, which resulted in extensive tree damage and resulting power outages. The northeast one-third of the City was the hardest hit. The Citywide damage from this event is estimated between 35,000 —40,000 tons of tree debris and left approximately 100,000 customers in the metropolitan area without electricity. On July 1, City crews and independent contractors began the systematic collection of tree debris. The City Council approved contracted assistance for tree debris removal at an estimated total cost of $400,000 on July 1, by Roll Call No. 98-2104. All available City crews not assigned to critical tasks and restoration requirements of the recent flood and rain events were assigned to tree debris removal. Des Moines Water Works, the City of Ames, the Iowa Department of Transportation, and MidAmerican Energy have also provided assistance in debris removal and cleanup.

On July 6, 1998, the City experienced the most recent storm. Rivers rose and additional street closings were needed, including preparation for the third Fleur Drive closing in three weeks.

Due to the extent of the damage, local, county, and state representatives worked collectively to seek a federal disaster declaration. Based on that request, President Clinton declared the situation a disaster and, in turn, qualified the City for FEMA review and reimbursement of personnel overtime, equipment costs, reconstruction of infrastructure, and contracts. In preparation for making application for reimbursement, the City is required to designate an authorized representative to coordinate with FEMA representatives. Due to his previous experience in handling FEMA reimbursement matters, Marshall Grabau is recommended to be the City representative, with Pamela McAdams as the alternate.