

**CITY COUNCIL
COMMUNICATION:**

ITEM _____

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

99-037

SYNOPSIS -

AGENDA:

FEBRUARY 1, 1999

Congress has given the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) authority to carry out a national pre-disaster mitigation initiative entitled "Project Impact: Building Disaster Resistant Communities."

SUBJECT:

SUBMISSION OF
FEMA PROJECT
IMPACT GRANT
APPLICATION

Des Moines has been recognized by FEMA as one of 60 communities-nationwide-that is both committed to the Project Impact objectives and working, on an on-going basis, to mitigate future disaster damage.

TYPE:

RESOLUTION
ORDINANCE
RECEIVE/FILE

The City has been informed by FEMA that up to \$300,000 in federal assistance is available for local governments to carry out Project Impact objectives. Accordingly, we are requesting City Council authorization to submit an application to FEMA for Project Impact funding. The application must be received by February 15, 1999. If funded, this grant will serve as the catalyst for developing a coordinated, broad-based, city-wide disaster response effort that focuses on identifying the significant natural perils impacting our community, assesses our vulnerability to those threats, and develops mitigation strategies designed to minimize potential damage, should disaster strike.

SUBMITTED BY:

RON WAKEHAM
FIRE CHIEF

The initial intent is to build upon the planning efforts now underway, emphasizing the involvement of the Downtown Emergency Planners group, which draws upon representatives from leading employers, utilities, and hospitals in Des Moines. We will expand that core group to draw in other entities and groups that should be involved in developing a community-wide plan. Our goal is to create partnership alliances that help build a more disaster resistant community. Our challenge is to make sure every participant benefits from this partnership so that we can build community support and awareness for disaster planning and mitigation efforts. The hope is that success in identifying, addressing, and mitigating potential risks will also generate community support that enables us to

leverage additional public and private sector funding to assist in this effort.

FISCAL IMPACT -

Up to \$300,000 will be available to eligible communities to assist with implementing Project Impact objectives. The City of Des Moines will be requesting the maximum potential funding (\$300,000). The required local match (\$100,000) will be in-kind funding only, with credit being given for flood control, mitigation, and planning activities now already underway in Des Moines.

RECOMMENDATION -

Approval of the Project Impact grant application, and authorization for the City Manager to sign and forward the application to FEMA officials by the initial February 15, 1999, submittal deadline. After the initial application is received, FEMA staff will meet with City staff to negotiate an approved scope of work. When the final scope of work is complete, we will resubmit the total grant application, including the completed Program Narrative section, subject to City Council approval. The final, complete Project Impact application must be submitted by May 15, 1999.

BACKGROUND -

Project Impact is based upon three principles: preventive actions must be decided at the local level; private sector participation in that process is vital; and investments in prevention measures is essential. The project's national goal is to bring greater emphasis and focus to activities that communities can take to reduce their vulnerability to disaster losses.

Des Moines is recognized nationally as a community that is taking an aggressive, proactive approach to dealing with federally-declared disasters. FEMA and State Emergency Management officials recognize these efforts, make references to Des Moines when speaking and writing of mitigation and disaster response efforts, and encouraged our participation in

Project Impact.

During the 1990s, we have moved to strengthen and expand the City's flood control system. We have developed a coordinated, hazardous materials response effort that utilizes the resources of the Des Moines Fire Department to respond to calls for service in a nine county area of Central Iowa. We are working to implement a long-term, systematic buy-out program for flood-prone, residential properties throughout our City. And, we have implemented a long-term project to rebuild and/or replace inadequate portions of the City's existing drainage and sewer system.

To expedite the grant application process, FEMA Region VII (Kansas City) will authorize the "conditional award" of grant funds, based upon the receipt of a properly completed Application for Federal Assistance. City staff will work with FEMA officials to formulate an effective implementation strategy. Said strategy will be outlined in the yet-to-be-completed Program Narrative section of the Application. Our initial thrust will be to nurture and develop an expanded community-wide planning process to assist in this effort. Any funding not committed to that process will be utilized to purchase equipment and software that identifies event-specific risk areas within Des Moines.