

**CITY COUNCIL
COMMUNICATION:**

ITEM _____

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

00-032

SYNOPSIS -

AGENDA:
JANUARY 24, 2000

On the January 24, 2000 agenda is a roll call that requests the Iowa Department of Transportation (IDOT) to advance the installation of traffic signals at the I-235 off-ramps with Guthrie Avenue to begin in 2001 instead of the scheduled 2002.

SUBJECT:

SIGNALS AT
GUTHRIE AVENUE
AND I-235 EXIT
RAMPS

FISCAL IMPACT -

None.

TYPE:

Approval.

RESOLUTION
ORDINANCE
RECEIVE/FILE

BACKGROUND -

SUBMITTED BY:
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CITY ENGINEER

At their December 20, 1999 meeting, Council received a request from Mrs. Robert Mahaffey, 2220 East 32nd Street, asking that traffic signals be installed on Guthrie Avenue at the I-235 exit ramps. Concern was expressed over significant delays and accidents at these intersections, which are the primary routes to the Guthrie Avenue Business Park. By Roll Call No. 99-3832, this item was referred to the City Manager and the Traffic Safety Committee for review and recommendation.

The two exit ramps from I-235 onto Guthrie Avenue are currently controlled by stop signs. Staff has reviewed these locations for the possibility of traffic signals several times over the past 10 years, most recently in 1997. At that time, the City and IDOT identified both of the Guthrie Avenue off-ramps as locations for future traffic signals as part of the I-235 reconstruction. IDOT plans for installation of these signals in 2002 at an estimated cost of approximately \$200,000.

Although there is some traffic delay at these intersections, especially during the morning and evening peak periods, the accident history is relatively low. There has been an average of less than three right-angle accidents per year over the past five-year period. The accident rate at each of these intersections is between 0.30 and 0.40 Accidents per Million Entering Vehicles (Acc/MEV). We do not consider a location as a "high-accident location" unless the rate is over 2.25 Acc/MEV. The Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices indicates that traffic signals are not warranted, or justified, based on accident history if there are less than five right-angle accidents per year. This warrant considers that traffic signals may reduce one type of accident while at the same time increase other types of accidents. This low accident history indicates that safety funds would not be warranted for early installation of these signals.

Because of the ongoing development within the Guthrie Avenue Business Park, staff should request that IDOT consider advancing the installation of signals at these intersections ahead of their current 2002 year schedule.

At their January 18, 2000 meeting, the Traffic Safety Committee concurred with staff's recommendation that the City contact IDOT to see if the installation of these signals can be advanced from the current schedule.

