

**CITY COUNCIL
COMMUNICATION:**

ITEM _____

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

00-360

SYNOPSIS -

AGENDA:

AUGUST 7, 2000

The Categorical Assistance Progress Report for the period of January 1, 2000 to June 30, 2000 will be submitted to the U.S. Department of Justice/Executive Office for Weed and Seed upon Council approval.

SUBJECT:

WEED AND SEED
CATEGORICAL
ASSISTANCE
PROGRESS REPORT

FISCAL IMPACT -

N/A

RECOMMENDATION -

TYPE:

Approval.

RESOLUTION
ORDINANCE
RECEIVE/FILE

BACKGROUND -

SUBMITTED BY:

JAMES GRANT
COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT
DIRECTOR

The Department of Justice and other federal agencies are implementing Operation Weed and Seed, a comprehensive and integrated multi-agency approach to addressing violent crime, drug abuse, and deteriorating social and economic opportunities in low-income neighborhoods.

On August 17, 1998, by Roll Call No. 98-2614, Council accepted a \$175,000 grant award from the Executive Office for Weed and Seed. On August 23, 1999, by Roll Call No. 99-2648, Council accepted an additional \$175,000 grant award from the Executive Office for Weed and Seed.

The Des Moines Weed and Seed site continues to implement the strategic plan that was developed by the community. The Des Moines Enterprise Community Steering Committee (ECSC) continues to serve as the advisory committee for Weed and Seed. Citizen involvement in the Weed and Seed strategy has been and will continue to be extensive.

The categorical assistance progress report is organized into five Weed and Seed elements: (1) Law Enforcement; (2) Community Policing; (3) Neighborhood Restoration; (4) Prevention, Intervention and Treatment; and (5) Special Emphasis Projects.

Law Enforcement

The Des Moines Police Department operates four-six officers per watch in marked vehicles answering calls for service. The Narcotics Section continues to work with state and federal agencies on drug complaints in the area. Two drug task forces have been formed, part of their efforts is spent in the Weed and Seed area.

Community Policing

The Police Department continues to assign off-duty officers to the primary Safe Haven at the Grubb YMCA. Their presence continues to deter incidents at the facility and provides an opportunity for more positive interaction with the residents of the community.

The Department will also continue the part-time Bicycle Mounted Patrol program that was initiated in 1997. The Bicycle Mounted Patrol operates during the warm weather months and is a valuable asset to the community.

Neighborhood Restoration

Once again, the Park and Recreation Department has contracted for the graffiti removal program. Residents and business owners call a designated phone number to request graffiti removal services.

The Weed and Seed Committee, in collaboration with Iowa State University, has developed a consumer survey to discover the goods and services residents use and want in the Weed and Seed community. The goal of the survey is to assist the community in identifying businesses that may have an interest in locating in the area.

Prevention, Early Intervention, and Treatment

The Safe Havens are major components in the Weed and Seed efforts. There are four designated Safe Havens: Grubb YMCA, Moulton Elementary, Urban Dreams, and King Elementary.

As part of their Safe Haven efforts, John R. Grubb YMCA will be providing a safe and structured activity around aquatics for at

least 15 youth for six hours per week for 22 weeks. The purpose of the program will be to increase the knowledge and skills associated with aquatic safety and general swimming.

As part of their Safe Haven efforts, Moulton Elementary has provided young children with activities during their Bonus Days (two, two-week optional sessions) during the school year. Youth participated in field trips to Amboy Trail Ranch in Newton, Iowa; visited the Animal Rescue League in Des Moines; and traveled to Geode State Park near Mount Pleasant, Iowa. Youth also participated in a "Wonders of Water" program, where they were provided with swimming lessons at Grubb YMCA, and visited the Science Center, Metro Ice Arena, and the Iowa State Historical Building.

Special Emphasis Projects

Weed and Seed subcontracted with various vendors to administer special emphasis projects. The special emphasis areas are: Jobs for Asset Building, Prevention Through the Arts, and Mentoring.

The Weed and Seed Committee selected Spectrum Resources to administer the Jobs for Asset Building program. The goal of the program is to provide job training and assistance to 25 low-/moderate-income youth in grades 7-9 that reside in the Weed and Seed area. The program will be six months in length and consist of three phases of development: employability skills training, skills for retaining a job, and supervised job placement.

The agency selected to administer the Prevention Through the Arts program is the Boys and Girls Club of Central Iowa. The goal of the program is to provide 80 youth between the ages of 6-16 living in the Weed and Seed area with arts education modules. The project will be an eight-week program consisting of at least six, 90-minute modules. At the culmination of the program, the Boys and Girls Club will host a community celebration spotlighting the art pieces and performances developed by the youth.

Core City Planning Group was the agency selected to administer the Mentoring Special Emphasis program. The goal of the program is to establish a math and science-mentoring program for 27 youth ages 12-16 that reside in the Weed and Seed area. The program is scheduled to be year round and open to youth after school twice a week. The program will have guest speakers and will offer field trips to Iowa State University and other agribusiness entities.

Lastly, another related activity occurring in the Weed and Seed area is a tutoring program administered by Children and Families of Iowa (CFI). Each year Weed and Seed provides CFI with funding to support their tutoring services for youth in the community. The goal of the program is to provide at-risk grade school youth with structured, supervised, and productive educational activities. The tutoring sessions are held during the school year at the Forest Avenue Library, King School, and the Child Development Center.

Staff recommends the City of Des Moines, in its capacity as a recipient of Weed and Seed funding, approve the required Categorical Assistance Progress Report for submittal to the U.S. Department of Justice.