

**CITY COUNCIL
COMMUNICATION:**

ITEM _____

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

00-423

SYNOPSIS -

AGENDA:
SEPTEMBER 11, 2000

On August 28, 2000, by Roll Call No. 00-3623, the City Council received a request from Citizens for Community Improvement (CCI) Environmental Task Force regarding the cleanup of Dean's Lake and adjacent property. Staff has now completed a site inspection and commenced cleanup of the area. Work is continuing at the site and a follow-up meeting is scheduled with CCI members at their center at 2301 Forest Avenue at 5 p.m. on Friday, September 15, 2000. Long range solutions to illegal dumping may range from closing off the entire area, allowing access for the remaining property owners only, to total clearance of both trees and debris on the City-owned property to open the area up to visual inspection and to promote development.

SUBJECT:
CLEANUP OF
DEAN'S LAKE AREA

TYPE:
RESOLUTION
ORDINANCE
RECEIVE/FILE

FISCAL IMPACT -

SUBMITTED BY:
JOHN P. BELLIZZI
PUBLIC WORKS
DIRECTOR

A combination crew of solid waste, stormwater, and street cleaning personnel is performing the cleanup of debris at the Dean's Lake area. Funding for the cleanup crew and equipment is currently available in the Public Works Department's operating budget. However, crews assigned to the cleanup effort are being pulled from their regular duties.

STEVE GUNSON
ASSISTANT TO THE
CITY MANAGER

RECOMMENDATION -

Receive and file.

BACKGROUND -

Historically, the Dean's Lake area has been subject to frequent flooding. A flood buy-out program was established and many of the parcels were purchased by the City of Des Moines. The lack of residents in the area and obscure vision due to vegetation now have given rise to ideal conditions for illegal dumping. Moreover,

recent dry weather and silting have exacerbated the appearance of Dean's Lake.

On Monday, August 28, 2000, representatives of Citizens for Community Improvement addressed the City Council requesting the following actions: 1) Remove a chain link fence along Dean's Lake on the north side of Maury Street; 2) Clear trees impeding street lighting; 3) Remove trash in and around Dean's Lake; and 4) Remove and mow vegetation on adjacent City properties.

Immediately following the Council meeting of August 28, 2000, the Public Works Department requested a map showing ownership of the properties adjacent to the Dean's Lake area (see copy attached). An on-site inspection on August 31, 2000, of the area from Scott Avenue to Maury Street and SE 23rd Court to SE 25th Street revealed scattered debris and vegetation overgrowth on both public and private property. Several street sections previously barricaded remained clear of debris; however, those that remained open were littered due to illegal dumping. Community Development Neighborhood Inspection personnel have been requested to inspect the private property adjacent to Dean's Lake and Public Works' crews have commenced cleanup of the public property.

On Friday, September 1, 2000, Scott Avenue was closed to traffic from SE 22nd Street to SE 25th Street to restrict access to the area in order to facilitate the cleanup. The roadway remains closed at this time. Additional street closures are not possible at this time because of the access requirements of the few remaining private property owners in the area. In addition to temporarily closing Scott Avenue, the Public Works Department has initiated the following actions:

1) The chain link fence on the north side of Maury Street along Dean's Lake has been cleared of overhanging debris. Removal of the fence is not recommended as it protects pedestrian traffic from accidentally falling into the lake and provides some protection to dumping.

2) Two trees that were restricting illumination from street lights have been removed. Other trees restricting north/south vision have been removed or trimmed. Further tree and brush trimming is planned.

3) Over 80,000 pounds of trash has been removed from the area. Additional cleanup efforts have included: One tandem truckload

of tires, one tandem truckload of appliances, two boatloads of debris from the lake, and one tandem truckload of scrap metal.

On September 5, 2000, Public Works Director Designee William Stowe met with representatives of CCI to review progress to date and to identify any additional concerns. Public Works' crews are continuing their cleanup efforts at this time. A follow-up meeting with CCI representatives is scheduled for Friday, September 15, 2000, at their center at 2301 Forest Avenue at 5 p.m.

Historically, the Dean's Lake area has been subject to illegal dumping. City crews have routinely cleared debris from street rights-of-way and adjacent City-owned parcels. The following options are offered to reduce the occurrence of illegal dumping:

- Permanently restrict access to the area while allowing only key entry by remaining property owners
- Site clearance of vegetation and debris from City-owned parcels to reduce cover for illegal dumping
- Promote development to increase overall activity in the area which will serve as a deterrent to illegal dumping.