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CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION:	ITEM _____
01-089	OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER CITY OF DES MOINES, IOWA
AGENDA: FEBRUARY 26, 2001	SYNOPSIS - Approval of the Categorical Assistance Progress Report for the period of July 1, 2000 to December 31, 2000 to be submitted to the U.S. Department of Justice/Executive Office for Weed & Seed.
SUBJECT: WEED & SEED CATEGORICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRESS REPORT	FISCAL IMPACT - None. RECOMMENDATION- Approval.
TYPE: <u>RESOLUTION</u> ORDINANCE RECEIVE/FILE	BACKGROUND - On August 17, 1998 by Roll Call No. 98-2614, the City Council accepted a \$175,000 grant award from the Executive Office for Weed and Seed, and on August 23, 1999, by Roll Call No. 99-2648, the City Council accepted an additional \$175,000 grant award from the Executive Office for Weed and Seed.
SUBMITTED BY: JAMES GRANT, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR	The Department of Justice and other federal agencies have implemented 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. The Des Moines Weed & Seed site continues to implement the strategic plan that was developed by the community. The Des Moines Enterprise Community Steering Committee (ECSC) serves as the advisory committee for Weed & Seed. Citizen involvement in the Weed & 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 uses four to 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 and part of their efforts is spent in the Weed and Seed area.

Community Policing

The Des Moines Police Department continues to assign off-duty officers to the primary Safe Haven, 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 also uses the part-time Bicycle Mounted Patrol Program that was initiated in 1997 which operates during the warm weather. This program is a valuable asset to the community.

Neighborhood Restoration Element

Once again, the City of Des Moines Parks and Recreation Department has contracted to implement 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, need 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 a major component in the Weed and Seed efforts. There are four designated Safe Havens: Grubb YMCA, Moulton Elementary, Urban Dreams and King Elementary.

John R. Grubb YMCA, as part of their Safe Haven efforts, provided a safe and structured educational tutoring service project. The purpose of the program was to serve 50 youth in an after-school program. The program emphasized three major areas: academic improvement, social competence and recreation.

Moulton Elementary, as part of their Safe Haven efforts, utilized the funds to train teachers and build support staff to implement a building-wide character education program. The training was facilitated by the Institute of Character Development entitled, "Character Counts!" The initiative rests on a community-based model and centers on six pillars of character: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship. The initiative will be implemented this semester.

Urban Dreams, as part of their Safe Haven efforts, conducted an ex-offender program. As an outreach support network working with the Fifth Judicial System, Urban Dreams monitored and assisted in integrating ex-offenders back into mainstream society. The program assisted ex-offenders with housing, food, clothing and employment opportunities. The program assisted 69 of 175 clients that are registered in the program to maintain employment.

King Elementary provided a Safe Haven Extended Learning Center. The extended learning center sought to address three important needs within the neighborhood: provide a safe learning environment for children, assist parents in developing skills in supporting their child's learning, and provide a mentoring program that benefits both high school students and their elementary partners.

Special Emphasis Projects

Weed and Seed subcontracted with various vendors to administer the 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 was to provide job training and assistance to 25 low/moderate income youth in grades 7th through 9th that reside in the Weed and Seed area. The program was six months in length and consisted 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 was the Boys and Girls Club of Central Iowa. The goal of the program was to provide 80 youth between the ages of 6 to 16 living in the Weed and Seed area with arts education modules. The Boys and Girls Art Project was not initiated as proposed. The Boys and Girls Club was undergoing administrative and staff changes and was unable to initiate the Prevention Through the Arts Program.

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

The mentoring program was a huge success. The program assisted youth in improving their overall math, computer science and agriculture test scores by five points. The students enjoyed the practical experiences and the real life excursions. At the culmination of the program, the students held a brunch and recognition program. The menu for the breakfast consisted of products they had studied throughout the mentoring session.

Lastly, other related activities 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. Through this funding cycle, the tutoring program served 56 youth and provided over 200 hours of tutoring assistance. The Weed and Seed Committee plans to continue collaborating with CFI in the future.

Staff recommends the City Council, 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.

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