

Meeting Agendas/Info

**CITY COUNCIL
COMMUNICATION:**

ITEM _____

01-432

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

AGENDA:

AUGUST 20, 2001

SYNOPSIS -

Approval of the Categorical Assistance Progress Report for the Weed and Seed Program for the period of January 1, 2001 to June 30, 2001. This report is submitted to the U.S. Department of Justice/Executive Office.

SUBJECT:

WEED AND SEED
CATEGORICAL
ASSISTANCE
PROGRESS REPORT

FISCAL IMPACT -

Not applicable.

TYPE:

RECOMMENDATION -

Approval.

**RESOLUTION
ORDINANCE
RECEIVE/FILE**

BACKGROUND -

SUBMITTED BY:

JAMES GRANT
COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT
DIRECTOR

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.

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.

The Des Moines Weed and Seed site continues to move forward 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 Police Department operates 4-6 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, 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 Police Department also continues the part-time Bicycle Mounted Patrol program that was initiated in 1997. The Bicycle-Mounted Patrol operates during the warm weather and is a valuable asset to the community.

Neighborhood Restoration Element

Once again, the Park 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, publishes and distributes a community newsletter entitled COPC (Community Outreach Partnership Center) newsletter. The newsletter focuses on community issues, upcoming programs and projects, and spotlights residents of the community. In an effort to effectively distribute the newsletter, the Weed and Seed Committee provided funding to assist with the cost of distribution of the newsletter to the five neighborhoods. Over 1,500 copies are printed and distributed on a bi-monthly basis to Weed and Seed residents.

Prevention, Early Intervention, and Treatment Element

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. The following is a brief summary of three of the four designated safe havens:

John R. Grubb YMCA, as part of its 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 its safe haven efforts, utilized the funds to provide young children a nurturing environment and enrichment activities during their Bonus Days. Planned activities for this contract program occurred from March 27-April 6, 2001. The Bonus Days activities were as follows:

- Creative Movement and Dance (various cultural dance forms)
- Rain Forest (explore wildlife in the rain forest at the zoo)
- Outside Experiences (explore various places around Des Moines)

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 benefited both high school students and their elementary partners.

Lastly is the 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 approximately 50 youth and provided over 200 hours of tutoring assistance. The Weed and Seed Committee plans to continue collaborating with CFI in the future.

Special Emphasis Projects

Weed and Seed subcontracted with various vendors to administer the special emphasis projects. The special emphasis areas are: Re-entry Program for Offenders and Prevention through the Arts.

The Weed and Seed Committee is still in the process of administering the special emphasis projects. The Committee is working with the

Child and Family Policy Center, which is a technical assistance clearinghouse of the National Center for Service Integration and a data warehouse for the country to perform a needs analysis for the Re-entry Program.

In an effort to provide a quality Prevention through the Arts Program, a Request for Proposals (RFP) will be developed and interested entities may submit a proposal for consideration. The program proposes to provide Weed and Seed students with arts education modules.

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.
