

**CITY COUNCIL
COMMUNICATION:**

03-224

AGENDA:

MAY 19, 2003

SUBJECT:

AMERICORPS
GRANT APPLICATION

TYPE:

RESOLUTION
ORDINANCE
RECEIVE/FILE

SUBMITTED BY:

DONALD M. TRIPP
PARK AND
RECREATION
DIRECTOR

ITEM_____

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

SYNOPSIS —

To approve submittal of AmeriCorps grant application to the Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service for the management and coordination of ten members at 1,700 hours per member. Authorization for the Park and Recreation Director to sign grant acceptance.

FISCAL IMPACT —

\$4,000 in grant revenue (GE001/PKS108200).

RECOMMENDATION —

Approval.

BACKGROUND —

Over the past three years, the City of Des Moines has applied for and received grant funding in the amount of \$6,000 annually from the Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service.

The total grant request of \$4,000 reflects a reduction in the allocation from \$500 to \$400 per member. In addition, the positions have been reduced from 12 to ten members.

The AmeriCorps program is comparable to an Urban Peace Corps. Members are recruited to provide 1,700 hours over a 12-month period. In exchange, members receive development training and can earn an educational award of \$4,725, provided by the Corporation for National Service to be placed toward future education expenses or payment toward student loan debts.

The primary objectives for the AmeriCorps grant are:

- To recruit and coordinate volunteer efforts in bringing members of the community into the City of Des Moines' park and open space system to enhance the quality of life and leisure experiences of the residents of Des Moines.
- To develop members in identification of environmental and

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beautification strategies within the City of Des Moines' park and open space system.

- To enhance maintenance within the system that is not being addressed by City employees.
- To expand partnerships with local neighborhoods in cooperation with Des Moines Independent School District and local neighborhood associations for educating and assisting with neighborhood community gardens.

Accomplishments of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2001 – 2002 AmeriCorps Service Project include:

- 15,228 service hours from AmeriCorps members.
- Recruitment of 1,417 volunteers who provided over 33,245 hours of service.
- Served 120 youth at the Evelyn K. Davis Summer program, a collaborative effort between neighborhood associations, churches, Des Moines Police Department, Forest Avenue Library, and Trinity Methodist Church.
- Supported 58 Partner in Parks groups with projects in parks and green space areas; cleaning illegal dumping sites, building new and painting old picnic tables, cleaning vacant lots and alleys, planting and maintaining flowerbeds and gardens, mowing vacant City lots.
- Coordinated in-house classroom activities at Blank Park Zoo resulting in 190 volunteers providing services to over 5,981 participants.
- Implemented Sheriff Work Alternative Program into Park and Recreation Department.
- Coordinated community building events such as:
 - National Night Out: serving over 550 residents.
 - Make a Difference Day: 120 volunteers cleaned and cleared 51 vacant lots within the Mondamin-Presidential Neighborhood Association. City of Des Moines, Polk County, AmeriCorps, Drake students, National Civilian Community Corps, 5th Judicial, and residents participated in this effort.
- Gathered and delivered 1,000 holiday food baskets for low-income families and seniors citizens.

- Distributed over 180,000 plants through the neighborhood plant distribution program and over 20,000 bulbs through Keep Des Moines Beautiful.
- Worked ten neighborhood SCRUBs (Spring Clean-up and Removal of Urban Blight) that collected over 714 tons of garbage.
- AmeriCorps members trained in: First Aid/CPR (Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation), Damage Assessment, Intro to Mass Care, Disaster, Family Services, Disability Awareness, Safety, Teambuilding, Diversity/Colors.

The 2003 AmeriCorps grant application to the Iowa Commission on Volunteer Services is on file in the City Clerk's Office.