

**CITY COUNCIL  
COMMUNICATION:**

**03-531**

**AGENDA:**

NOVEMBER 17, 2003

**SUBJECT:**

INNER CITY  
FORESTRY  
GRANT/PROJECT

**TYPE:**

**RESOLUTION**  
ORDINANCE  
RECEIVE/FILE

**SUBMITTED BY:**

ERIC A. ANDERSON  
CITY MANAGER

**ITEM** \_\_\_\_\_

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

**SYNOPSIS —**

Approving the City's support for the U.S. Forest Service—Inner City Forestry Grant application and project entitled, "Revitalizing Neighborhood Forestry in Des Moines."

**FISCAL IMPACT —**

- U.S. Forest Service—Inner City Forestry Grant (\$70,000)
- City of Des Moines (in-kind match of \$53,000 for technical staff support)
- Iowa Department of Natural Resources (cash match of \$9,500)
- Iowa State University (in-kind match of \$8,500)

**RECOMMENDATION —**

**Approval.**

**BACKGROUND —**

During the 1990's, Urban Trees, a 501c(3) organization, was established and began neighborhood forestry activities involving landscape planning and planting programs. This organization, with extensive private utility funding, successfully established over 3,000 landscape trees worth over \$225,000. Urban Trees laid the groundwork for implementation of a successful residential tree distribution program in the Des Moines metro area called the Polk County Arbor Society. Over the years, private funding was greatly reduced, Urban Trees contact with City departments waned, and membership eventually dropped. The organization dissolved, and today no volunteer urban forestry organization exists in Des Moines.

This Inner City Forestry Grant represents an opportunity to revitalize the urban forest. The "Revitalizing Neighborhood Forestry in Des Moines" project will be part of a comprehensive approach that involves input and cooperation from various City departments (Community Development, Park and Recreation, and Public Works), the Iowa Department of Natural Resources – Forestry Bureau, Iowa State University Extension, the City Neighborhood Revitalization Board, and neighborhood residents. This project will be developed and implemented in Capital East, King-Irving, and Woodland Heights

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neighborhoods, and will entail professional tree surveys of public/private trees, organized tree planting and distribution programs, and focused tree care. In addition, a Neighborhood Tree Steward training program for neighborhood leaders will be established to encourage residents to network with their neighbors to increase citizen participation and care for new and existing trees on public and private lands. Efforts will be documented, refined, and shared with other neighborhoods through bilingual presentations, websites, publications, and formal reports to Des Moines City Council and others.

The outcome of the grant proposal will not be known until the beginning of the new year.

**Timeline:**

Spring/Summer 2004

- City schedules tree maintenance activities and documents expenses for Capitol East, King-Irving, and Woodland Heights neighborhoods.
- All partners meet to discuss project details and plan the tree inventory.
- Recruit and establish Neighborhood Forestry Council.
- Begin neighborhood tree inventory work.
- Accomplish needed tree maintenance and removals.
- Initial training session for volunteers/community members (Neighborhood Tree Steward program).

Fall/Winter 2004

- Continue/complete neighborhood tree inventory work.
- Assimilate data and write Urban Forest Management Plans.
- Accomplish needed tree maintenance.

Winter/Spring 2005

- Meet with all partners. Plan neighborhood tree plantings. Hold educational forums.

Spring 2005

- Plant neighborhood trees.

Summer/Fall 2005

- Provide care for the newly planted vegetation.
- Plant neighborhood trees.
- Accomplish needed tree maintenance – focusing on removals.
- Evaluate project.

Winter 2005

- Complete and submit final project report.

**Outcomes:**

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- Development of a neighborhood forestry action plan in cooperation with the City Neighborhood Revitalization Board.
- 100 percent inventories of public and private trees in the Capitol East, King-Irving, and Woodland Heights neighborhoods will be completed.
- Comprehensive neighborhood tree plans for reforestation and maintenance will be completed on individual properties and on public property.
- Two initial neighborhood tree-training sessions will be conducted, one in each neighborhood. These sessions will train approximately 50 volunteers who will provide, at a minimum, 24-hours per person of community service.
- A total of 300 landscaped-sized trees and shrubs will be established on public areas in the three neighborhoods. Private fund-raising will provide approximately 100+ trees for private land reforestation.
- Neighborhood forestry management plans will be implemented to conduct maintenance and removal of trees identified as public safety hazards and eyesores.
- A bilingual four-colored publication in English and Spanish will be developed that explains the model process in a step-by-step format. Efforts to communicate needs, results, and recommendations to Asian-American immigrants will also be established.
- Neighborhood evaluation efforts will be held in order to develop audio/visual aides, publications, and other tools to demonstrate the process accurately and share the model with others. Neighborhood leaders will be recruited to assist in sharing the process and results to other Des Moines neighborhood leaders, statewide, and in the region.

