



Agenda Item:

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COUNCIL COMMUNICATION City Manager's Office

GENERAL INFORMATION

Agenda Date: 04/05/04

Communication

No.: 04-170

Agenda Item Type: Resolution

Roll Call

No.:

Submitted by: Donald M. Tripp, Park and Recreation Director

SUBJECT—

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Seed Donation for the Urban Prairie Project

SYNOPSIS—

Approve an Agreement and Plan with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for the donation of prairie seed from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, through the Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge and Private Lands Department, for prairie restorations in local schools and parks as a part of the Urban Prairie Project.

FISCAL IMPACT—

Value of the prairie seed is \$12,000. This donation is a portion of the \$73,568 of in-kind service, equipment and materials committed to the Urban Prairie Project by a coalition of conservation-related agencies. The City of Des Moines' 40.3 percent project cost share includes \$255 cash outlay and \$80,064 in-kind staff and office space value for a total commitment of \$80,319. The remainder of the \$199,287 project cost has been underwritten through grants and donations.

RECOMMENDATION—

Approval

BACKGROUND—

The Urban Prairie Project will educate citizens about the ecological importance and historical significance of prairie lands and will establish prairie plantings in park properties, schools and other sites within the City of Des Moines. This will result in greater public understanding of the value and beauty of prairie plantings, leading to a secondary, cost-saving benefit to the City Parks and Recreation Department of removing additional acreage from routine mowing and maintenance expense.

A partnership including the Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge, Polk County Conservation Board, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Des Moines Public School system, Drake University and the City of Des Moines has developed and will carry out the Urban Prairie Project.

The project involves planting new and expanding existing prairie segments. In particular, the Urban Prairie sites targeted to receive the specific prairie seed mix being donated by the Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge are: Moulton, Hillis, Capitol View and Cowles Elementary Schools; Merrill, Brody and Weeks Middle Schools; Sargent and Greenwood Parks; James W. Cownie Soccer Complex; Greater Des Moines Softball Complex; Grand View Golf Course; and Glendale Cemetery.

Contingencies of the seed donation are the City signing the Fish and Wildlife Service's Project Plan and Partners for Fish and Wildlife Habitat Development Agreement, which are on file in the City Clerk's Office.