



Agenda Item:

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COUNCIL COMMUNICATION City Manager's Office

GENERAL INFORMATION

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Roll Call

Submitted by: Jeb E. Brewer, P.E., City Engineer
Larry Hulse, Community Development Director

SUBJECT—

Resolution approving a Programmatic Agreement with the State Historic Society of Iowa and Advisory Council on Historic Preservation for archaeological work associated with construction of detention basins in Riverpoint West (SW 14th Street near Raccoon River).

SYNOPSIS—

Use of Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funds for construction of detention basins in the Riverpoint West area requires conformance with Section 106 of the Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (as amended). Because of the amount of concrete and debris on the site of the detention basins, preliminary geomorphological work was inconclusive as to the presence of archaeological resources. The attached Programmatic Agreement stipulating additional geomorphological testing and archaeological monitoring during construction of the detention basins ensures the city satisfies its historic and archaeological responsibilities.

FISCAL IMPACT—

Estimated cost of the geomorphological and archaeological work is \$20,000, and will be included as part of construction phase services. This cost can increase if archaeological resources are discovered or inclement weather hampers archaeologists.

Funding for this Programmatic Agreement, construction phase services, and construction of the Riverpoint West Detention Basin includes Economic Development Initiatives – Special Project, 543030, SP040, CMO980719, EISP2001001, being \$400,000 in HUD Economic Development Initiative Grant funds for construction (plus \$56,964 for Contract Administration) from the VA-HUD Independent Agencies Appropriations Act of FY2000 (PL-106-74) as specified in Conference Report (HR106-379): with \$925,100 in HUD Neighborhood Initiative Grant funds for construction (plus \$72,700 for Contract Administration) from the VA-HUD Independent Agencies Appropriations Act of FY2001 (PL-106-377) as specified in Conference Report (HR106-988) available in Account 543030, Fund SP040, Org CMO980719, Project NEIN2001001, Neighborhood Initiatives.

RECOMMENDATION—

Approval

BACKGROUND—

Detention basins are a crucial piece for the development of River Point West. As a part of an EDI Special Grant to the City of Des Moines under HUD funding, detention basins are to be constructed at the south end of SW 14th Street on a point bar of the Raccoon River. The federal dollars require conformance with Section 106 of the Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (as amended) that regulates determination of effect of federal projects on historic and archaeological resources.

Last fall, the city hired the archaeological firm of Great Lakes Archaeological Research Center (GLARC) to conduct preliminary geomorphological work in the area of the proposed basins. The site is covered with concrete fill and rubble so the “geoprobe” generally used by archaeologists to help determine the presence of archaeological resources was unable to be utilized. The archaeologists recommended that additional testing and monitoring be conducted during construction when the original soils are more accessible.

The State Historic Society recommended a phased approach to historic resource identification that would allow archaeological sampling to take place concurrently with project excavation. The Programmatic Agreement outlines the approach to identifying historic resources and allows the city to proceed with the project in spring 2005.

Fourteen Indian Tribes were notified that the city would be doing archaeological testing and construction work in this area. Two tribes have responded that they have an interest in this site because of ancestral tribes.

Executing the Programmatic Agreement and implementing each of the steps will insure that the city has satisfied federal requirements on protecting historic, architectural and archaeologically significant properties.