



**Council
Communication**
Office of the City Manager

Date

May 22, 2006

Agenda Item No. 8
Roll Call No. 06-
Communication No. 06-301
Submitted by: Jeb E. Brewer, P.E.
City Engineer

AGENDA HEADING:

Authorization to submit Application for Approval of a Traffic Control Device to the Iowa Department of Transportation for Installation of a Traffic Signal on Merle Hay Road between Douglas Avenue and Madison Avenue.

SYNOPSIS:

Authorize the City Traffic Engineer to submit an Application for Approval of a Traffic Control Device to the Iowa Department of Transportation (IDOT) requesting installation of a new traffic signal on Merle Hay Road (Iowa 28) between Douglas Avenue and Madison Avenue. This signal has been requested by Bankers Trust Bank and other businesses on the east side of Merle Hay Road and the Merle Hay Mall on the west side of the road to improve the safety and reduce the difficulty for traffic from the businesses trying to enter or cross the heavy traffic on Merle Hay Road.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Amount: \$150,000 Estimate for new signals plus driveway modification costs.

Funding Source: The businesses have indicated they will fund the driveway modification costs and a portion of the traffic signal costs, if approved by IDOT, but request the City to seek other non-City matching funds for the signal construction costs. If a signal is approved and installed, the City will be responsible for ongoing energy and maintenance costs, from the Traffic and Transportation Division operating budget.

2006-07 Operating Budget: Engineering Department – T&T Signal Installation and Maintenance, GE001, ENG100410, P. 83

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

The businesses along Merle Hay Road have a shared driveway at the median opening between Douglas Avenue and Madison Avenue, and experience difficulty in entering or crossing Merle Hay Road because of the heavy traffic, especially during peak traffic periods. Construction of the new Target Store and a

new Starbucks Coffee shop as part of Merle Hay Mall has created an increase in traffic at this median opening and driveway on the west side. In addition, the median opening and east driveway are used by traffic from Bankers Trust and other businesses.

The businesses have hired a local engineering firm, Snyder and Associates of Ankeny, to prepare a traffic study of the existing conditions at this location and the traffic impacts of a proposed signal installation. This study recommended that the two existing driveways on the east side of the road that share the median opening should be consolidated into a single shared driveway prior to any installation of a traffic signal. The study also found that the existing traffic volumes meet two of the warrants for installation of traffic signals contained in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), and that installation of a signal at this location would not create a significant detriment to the flow of traffic on Merle Hay Road. Because Merle Hay Road is a state highway, IDOT must approve the modifications to any driveways and the installation of any signals or other traffic control devices.

The businesses have indicated they will fund the driveway modification costs and a portion of the traffic signal costs, if approved by IDOT, but request that the City seek other matching funds for the signal costs. Since both side connections that would be served by a signal at this location are private driveways rather than public streets, it is recommended that the City not pay any portion of the signal installation costs. If a signal is approved and installed, the City will be responsible for ongoing energy and maintenance costs, from the Traffic and Transportation Division operating budget.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S): NONE

Date:

Roll Call Number:

Action:

BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S): Traffic Safety Committee

Date: May 9, 2006

Roll Call Number:

Action: Concurred with the request to submit an application for approval of a traffic control device.

ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS:

If the application is approved by IDOT, Council approval of an ordinance designating the traffic signals and Council approval of a project agreement for the installation of the signals.