



Council Communication

Office of the City Manager

Date

November 10, 2008

Agenda Item No. 55

Roll Call No. 08-

Communication No. 08-676

Submitted by: Larry Hulse, Director

Community Development Department and Jeb
E. Brewer, P.E., City Engineer

AGENDA HEADING:

Authorization to submit a Hazard Mitigation Grant Project application to the Federal Emergency Management Agency in order to fund a voluntary hazard mitigation acquisition program for eligible flood damaged properties in the Four Mile Creek area.

SYNOPSIS:

Recommend authorization to submit a Hazard Mitigation Grant Project (HMGP) application to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in order to fund a voluntary hazard mitigation acquisition program for eligible flood damaged properties in the Four Mile Creek area. If authorized, the City will apply for funds for a voluntary buy-out program for flood-damaged residential properties. Council authorization provides the ability to act expeditiously when funding becomes available and to let citizens know that the City intends to request funding for a voluntary buy-out program.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Amount: \$900,000 estimated for acquisition, closing costs, relocation, and demolition (\$135,000 City-CDBG)

Funding Source: 75% by FEMA, 10% by State of Iowa, 15% by City as the local applicant using CDBG funds.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

City staff has completed assessments of structures in the Four Mile Creek area that were impacted by the recent flooding. Staff has also contacted property owners to determine their willingness to participate in a buy-out program. As a result, seven properties have been identified that could participate in a voluntary buy-out program. These properties are zoned "U-1" Floodplain District or "FW" Floodway District. These zoning districts were developed to protect the health and welfare of the public from the impacts of frequent flooding. Development in these districts is severely limited as a result of this mission. The reconstruction of these seven properties would be restricted and possibly prohibited by the City's zoning ordinance. Staff believes a buy-out program would prevent future losses due to frequent flooding in the area. Acquired properties would be cleared of all structures and include a deed restriction limiting their use to green space only. This will allow the land to return to its natural state and restore its floodplain functions.

City staff initially identified properties that sustained flood damage in the Four Mile Area, and those properties were enrolled in the City-sponsored buyout program. The available funding for that program was expended. As time passed, additional property owners were identified that had sustained damages, but had not contacted the city regarding their needs. These properties were identified as potentially eligible for the state HGMP, and were contacted regarding their potential inclusion in the state program. These properties are located in the floodway or the regulatory flood plain, and have either sustained substantial damage, or are located such that they may be at risk for future flooding.

The HMGP provides grants to State and local governments to implement long-term hazard mitigation measures following a Presidential disaster declaration. This allows measures to be implemented during recovery that will limit damages in the future.

On September 19, 2008, the City of Des Moines submitted a Notice of Interest (NOI) to the Iowa Homeland Security & Emergency Management Division in order to be eligible for consideration to apply for HMGP funds.

On September 29, 2008, the City of Des Moines received a formal invitation to complete and submit an HMGP application.

Due to the severity and extent of the floods in 2008, the Iowa Homeland Security & Emergency Management Division and FEMA are reviewing and approving grants in the order in which they are received. Typically, preference is given to communities with the largest amount of damage. Because of this, the State Mitigation Project Officer has recommended expeditious submittal of the application in order to proceed in a timely manner.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S): NONE

BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S): NONE

ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS:

Acceptance of Grant and Authorization to Proceed

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