

**CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION 97-507
OCTOBER 6, 1997 AGENDA**

SUBJECT:

**OPERATION DOWNTOWN–
STREET SAFETY PATROL**

SUBMITTED BY:

**ERIC A. ANDERSON
CITY MANAGER**

SYNOPSIS –

The Downtown Partnership has been working with downtown property owners, including the City of Des Moines, Polk County, and the Federal Government to develop a project called Operation Downtown that will provide a Street Safety Patrol. The Street Safety Patrol would act as Downtown Ambassadors and would provide additional cleaning and security services in the downtown area, including the Skywalks and parking garages. The City has been asked to provide a first year allocation of \$23,230 in parking system revenues. In return for receiving the funds, Operation Downtown will augment security and cleaning now provided, by making bike passes through all downtown parking ramps, riding garage elevators, and providing escorts for downtown employees who park in public facilities. Operation Downtown staff will also pick up trash and litter in parking garage elevators, skywalk connections, and around the periphery of the facilities.

FISCAL IMPACT –

Funding for the Operation Downtown project is based on a fee of \$1.00 per \$1,000 of assessed property valuation. The City Assessor has provided estimates of taxable value for the City's parking garages which established a basis for the annual fee. The source of the City's \$23,230 payment will be Parking System revenue. While there is currently adequate revenue to cover this cost, additional expenses in the Parking system will hasten the need to reevaluate parking rates.

RECOMMENDATION –

Approval, in concept, of the request by the Downtown Partnership for the City of Des Moines to provide contribution of \$23,230 for the first year of operation. Direct the City Manager and Corporation Counsel to prepare for Council's consideration a formal contract with Downtown Partnership. The proposed contract would include the points

outlined below.

BACKGROUND –

The Downtown Partnership has been working with downtown property owners, including the City of Des Moines, Polk County, and the Federal government to develop a project called Operation Downtown that will provide a Street Safety Patrol. Owners of nearly 80 percent of the assessed valuation of downtown property have indicated they support Operation Downtown and will sign the petition to the City of Des Moines supporting creation of the improvement district. Many property owners have also agreed to make a voluntary contribution to Operation Downtown to support the first year of operation, beginning August 1, 1997.

Operation Downtown will provide the following services:

- Manage a highly skilled and organized Street Safety Patrol.
- Train and equip Street Safety Patrol to act as Downtown Ambassadors.
- Contract with the Skywalk Association to provide Street Safety Patrol services in the Skywalk.
- Hand sweep downtown sidewalks and Skywalks two times every day.
- Monitor and measure downtown crime and cleanliness levels.
- Provide escort services between office buildings and parking facilities.
- Provide assistance at all downtown events.

The primary City-owned properties in the downtown are the parking garages. In addition to the services mentioned above, the Street Safety Patrol will also provide mobile security in the parking garages and will provide multiple bike passes through the garages. A similar “Downtown Visions” project in Wilmington, Delaware, decreased crime in parking garages by 80 percent in the first year.