

Meeting Agendas/Info

CITY COUNCIL
COMMUNICATION:

ITEM _____

01-508

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER CITY OF DES MOINES, IOWA

AGENDA:

SYNOPSIS -

OCTOBER 8, 2001

On the October 8, 2001 Council agenda is a proposal for a \$100,000 grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to assist in redeveloping potential petroleum-contaminated sites associated with leaking underground storage tanks in the Drake neighborhood.

SUBJECT:

The area of focus is the commercial corridor that encompasses 19th to 29th Streets along Forest and University Avenues. The USTfields Program, a new EPA initiative, involves a joint venture that the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) will administer for the City of Des Moines. Grant funds will be used to conduct research on sites that may have a petroleum release, perform site assessment and risk-based corrective action (RBCA) analysis, monitor and/or cleanup sites to a limited extent, and encourage community participation.

USTFIELDS PILOT
PROPOSAL FOR
DRAKE
NEIGHBORHOOD
REVITALIZATION

TYPE:

Extensive efforts will be made to use USTfields pilot funds to leverage a wide range of state and private resources for cleanup. Ellen Walkowiak with the City's Office of Economic Development is coordinating the City activities relative to this project.

RESOLUTION
ORDINANCE
RECEIVE/FILE

FISCAL IMPACT -

SUBMITTED BY:

The EPA requires a 10 percent match to obtain the \$100,000 grant. The City will contribute \$10,000 in matching funds from its Office of Economic Development budget to support this initiative.

ERIC A. ANDERSON
CITY MANAGER

RECOMMENDATION -

Approval.

BACKGROUND -

The EPA recently developed the USTfields Program, which is a new initiative designed to address potential petroleum contamination associated with leaking underground storage tanks. The EPA was precluded from addressing petroleum releases through its existing

brownfields assessment and cleanup programs. The USTfields Initiative will assist in removing an additional environmental barrier to redeveloping potentially contaminated sites.

The Forest and University Avenue commercial corridors between 19th and 29th Streets are proposed as a pilot project. The goals of this project are to:

- “ Revitalize the Forest and University Avenue commercial corridors by redeveloping the land for high quality productive re-use.
- “ Protect surrounding residential areas from environmental health concerns and encourage additional residential development.
- “ Form a unique partnership between the neighborhood and Drake University that will be the foundation for future collaboration.
- “ Develop a national model that urban neighborhoods and small towns may use to enable redevelopment projects, especially with limited resources.

The objectives of this project are to:

- “ Identify, assess, and remediate, as needed, properties along the Forest and University Avenue commercial corridors to remove environmental barriers to redevelopment.
- “ Create an inventory of developable commercial and residential sites.
- “ Draft a work plan that the neighborhood and Drake University will implement to encourage area revitalization.
- “ Evaluate project process and outcomes and share findings with the EPA and the State of Iowa in order to assist other neighborhoods and communities.

Several partners have provided letters of support for this project. In addition to the City of Des Moines, partners include the Drake Neighborhood Association, Drake University, the Neighborhood Development Corporation, James Development Group Inc., Lenz Environmental Inc., and Polk County.

This project complements the City of Des Moines' Showcase Initiative, which will be involved in approximately \$200,000 of uncontrolled site assessments within this pilot area and citywide to remove environmental barriers and generate redevelopment.

Furthermore, the project will assist in protecting the public health, increasing the tax base, creating jobs, revitalizing the neighborhood, and enabling other areas to use resources and build partnerships more effectively.

The State of Iowa, as applicant, will forward the City's USTfields proposal to the EPA by October 22, 2001. The EPA will select approximately 40 pilots nationwide in December 2001 to participate in this program.
