



COUNCIL
COMMUNICATION Agenda
City Manager's Office Item No.:

GENERAL INFORMATION—

Agenda Date: 1/12/04 Communication No.:
04-017

Agenda Item Type: Resolution Roll Call No.:

Submitted by: Donald M. Tripp, Park and Recreation Director
Terry Rich, CEO, Blank Park Zoo Foundation

SUBJECT—

Application for Iowa Department of Natural Resources recreation infrastructure grant for Blank Park Zoo directional signage

SYNOPSIS—

Approve the Blank Park Zoo application to the Iowa Department of Natural Resources for a Recreation Infrastructure Grant (RIG) in the amount of \$16,650 to assist with funding to provide external directional signage on major traffic routes to the Zoo in the Des Moines metro area, and to provide on-site directional and informational signage to guide Zoo visitors to exhibits, programs and services.

FISCAL IMPACT—

Total Zoo Signage Project cost is \$66,650, consisting of street signs and point of entry sign at Zoo, \$33,983; internal pathway directional and exhibit point of entry signage, \$27,876; and design costs of \$4,791. Funding sources are City of Des Moines CIP funds of \$30,000 (from a total FY 2004 appropriation of \$250,000); private donation from Myron Blank, \$20,000; and RIG funds of \$16,650. Anticipated annual operating costs for periodic repair and maintenance will be covered by Blank Park Zoo Foundation.

RECOMMENDATION—

Approval

BACKGROUND—

There is a significant need to provide residents and visitors to the Des Moines area with effective "way finding" to the Blank Park Zoo. The Zoo receives approximately 25,000 public information requests per year. The predominate questions are regarding visitor hours, prices and directions to the zoological park.

While there are some exit ramp signs on I-235, I-35 and the new Hwy. 5 by-pass, additional traffic directional signs are needed on major city routes to guide visitors to the Zoo. Design and installation of approximately 25 signs in the metro area will be in accordance with local municipal specifications and ordinances.

Internal Zoo signage dates back to 1986 and needs to be updated to reflect development at the Zoo. New directional and informational signage and graphics will enhance the visitor experience with guides to exhibits, guest services, education presentations, facilities and handicap access points.

All signage will be permanent, constructed of durable materials, with an attractive integrated Zoo theme.

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources(DNR) Recreation Infrastructure Grant application deadline is January 15, 2004. The DNR has emphasized priority to project requests that can be carried out this winter and spring. The Zoo anticipates that the new sign system will be completed 120 days after an award notification.

With 300,000 visitors annually, the Blank Park Zoo is the second highest attended attraction in the state of Iowa, after the State Fair. Residents and tourists will benefit from a user-friendly directional sign system.