

- March Project Highlights -

2017



ELECTRIC

- At Council's direction, Electric Services has now engaged a consultant specializing in **Community Solar** projects. Millennium LLC brings a wealth of experience to this project. Their tasking for Ames includes site selection for the solar installation, the development of a Request for Proposal to solar vendors, and the development of a community participation program.
- Several departments within the City have been working with the Department of Energy to improve the City's **customer solar program**. Through a program called SolSmart, the City of Ames continues to make improvements to make installing solar easier and faster. The DOE has been impressed with the City's programs, which will be recognized later this month.

LEGAL

- The Legal Department welcomes Ann Braland to the City Legal Department. She is our Paralegal, and comes to us from Chicago, where she worked for 10 years as a paralegal with a firm that had 100+ attorneys.

LIBRARY

- **New ISU Campus Bookmobile Stop:** The Library recently opened a new "branch" on the ISU campus by introducing a Thursday Bookmobile stop. The new location is near the Hub on the east side of Parks Library, where the Bookmobile now parks every Thursday from 11am – 1pm. ISU students, faculty, and staff are expressing appreciation for the new service, which allows for browsing, "delivery" of materials put on reserve, and convenient returns. The Library is grateful to Beth McNeil, Dean of ISU Library Services, and the ISU Facilities Planning and Management Department for their support in establishing this new partnership.
- **NAACP Ames Branch President's Award:** On February 17, the Library received the President's Award from the Ames Branch of the National Association for the Advancement



of Colored People. The award states that it was presented “with appreciation for the Library’s culturally relevant, intellectually-challenging, community building work that is benefitting the citizens of the Ames Community and the surrounding area.” Library Director Lynne Carey, Adult Services Manager Mary Logsdon, and Youth Services Manager Jerri Heid accepted the award at the NAACP’s annual Freedom Fund Banquet.

Director Carey said receipt of the award “was truly a humbling and thrilling experience. (...) It is extremely meaningful to have our efforts recognized by a local institution.” Noting that the theme for the NAACP Banquet was "promises," she said “Ames Public Library can confidently make the promise that we will continue to dedicate ourselves to ensuring freedom of access for everyone, creating an inclusive and welcoming environment for all, and celebration of diversity. These are among our foundational principles as a public library.”



NAACP Ames Branch President Edna Clinton (left) presented the award to Library Director Lynne Carey, along with Library staff members Mary Logsdon and Jerri Heid.

POLICE

- During February, all Police Department employees completed a four hour training session in **Fair and Impartial Policing**. This training focused on understanding implicit bias and implementing strategies to counter implicit bias.
- In March, the Story County E911 Board is expected to issue an RFP seeking a consultant to assist in evaluating **new radio technology** for first responders.

FIRE

- Firefighters visited about **fire safety** with 75 children at the ACPC children’s center and assisted ISU with a table top training session regarding **hazardous materials safety**.
- In February Inspections **issued permits** for 23 new single family homes, four multi-family structures and one new office building.
- Inspections staff attended training for **new permitting software** which began its go-live implementation on March 6th.

FLEET

- On February 23, 2016, Fleet Services informed City Council that a study had been done **comparing police sedans to the crossover utility vehicles**. During that study staff became aware of **the influence of idling on the fuel efficiency** of the units. After that study, it was decided to implement a pilot project to examine idle management devices on new vehicles to see if they would be able to reduce the idling and in turn increase the fuel mileage of the vehicles.

The Pilot Study began last September and was recently reviewed to make some recommendations. Two idle management devices were used in the study. The lowest cost option showed no tangible benefits while the higher cost unit, with an extra heater and battery, did show improvement for the vehicle. However, while reducing idling, the unit also created some officer safety issues due to operating incorrectly. One example of this related to the windows frosting over due to issues with the heater fan. Fleet Services staff feels that these issues relate to the vendor’s equipment not being able to communicate correctly with a newer version of the vehicle.

Based on the results of the study, along with the safety and efficiency of the utility vehicles, Fleet Services has made the following recommendations to the City Manager and Police Department:

- That all patrol vehicles be utilities without any anti-idling devices installed.

- That all police officers operating a patrol car have yearly training on best management practices for idle reduction. Fleet Services will provide quarterly performance reports of idling to command staff.
- That new technology available to offset idling implemented by Ford should be considered for implementation when available. (Ford has announced that pursuit rated hybrids will begin being offered in 2020.)

WATER & POLLUTION CONTROL

Water

- Things are getting exciting at the new **Water Treatment Plant**. The contractor continues to assure staff that they intend to turn over the keys ahead of the May 17, 2017 substantial completion deadline. It is frustrating, but not all that surprising, that there are a number of details arising that require a change to the original contract to achieve the final product. At the start of March, the project contingency fund contains a little more than \$2.1 million. Council will be presented with a small change order in early March, and there will be at least two more individual change orders in excess of \$100,000 each that will still be necessary.

One great sign that construction is nearing its conclusion occurred in late February when the Solids Contact Units began being filled with water! (See the photo to the right.) These basins are undergoing their final leak testing, then will be disinfected in preparation for their start-up testing. During the leak test, the contractor intends to put painters in a boat and float them out to paint the undersides of the walkway structure.



- Staff is still working to resolve claims against a separate contractor for the **Water Plant Pipeline Project**. The claims stem from the following issues:
 - Two unpaid insurance claims for damage (the water main break in October 2015 that resulted in a boil water advisory for most of the NE part of the City, and a damaged control cable that connects the Power Plant to a main electrical substation);
 - Excessive material and labor expenses associated with repeatedly flushing and disinfecting the pipelines before they were bacteriologically safe; and
 - Liquidated damages incurred due to the contractor’s failure to complete the work in a timely manner. Mediation was scheduled for March 6, but needed to be postponed at the request of the mediator. Staff hopes the mediation can be rescheduled soon.



Staff learned that another grant application for the **Low Head Dam Improvements Project** was successful. An additional \$112,901 will be awarded to the City from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources in March.

This brings the total value of grants received for the project to \$288,901. Yet another grant application for the project was submitted on March 3, and the results of that application will be announced in mid-April.

A considerable amount of time is being spent **monitoring legislative activity** at the statehouse, as there are many bills being discussed that could have a tremendous impact on municipal water and wastewater utilities.

A Request for Proposals for Engineering Services has been issued to prepare plans and specifications for **pump, piping, and valve replacements at the Water Pollution Control Facility**. After all proposals have been evaluated and a scope of work negotiated with the successful firm, a contract for services will be brought to Council for approval.

On March 15, the start of the permit-designated “summer disinfection period” begins, meaning that the Water Pollution Control Facility will restart its **ultraviolet disinfection system**. This system will operate until the end of the summer recreation season, which by permit lasts through November 15.

PUBLIC WORKS

- **Construction season** is picking up with several projects already approved. Follow this link throughout the year for updates: <http://www.cityofames.org/construction>.
- Construction on the **Airport Terminal** continues to make progress with the scheduled completion date of July 1, 2017.



- The **Airport Hangar** will have a ribbon cutting on April 8th in conjunction with the Fly-in Breakfast hosted by the Iowa State Flying Club. Breakfast will be from 7:00-11:00 a.m., with the program at 9:00 a.m. Also, Central Iowa Air Service will begin work as the City’s Fixed Base Operator (FBO) on April 1, 2017."
- The **City Hall Parking Lot project** will commence in mid-April. Eric Cowles will be releasing information on parking in the coming weeks so employees and other City Hall users can plan ahead.
- The City’s annual **Eco Fair** will be March 25th at the Community Center Gym in City Hall. The Fair will be open to the public from 9 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

PLANNING & HOUSING

Planning

- The Landscape Ordinance has been under review by the Planning and Zoning Commission and is scheduled for their final review on March 15. A draft ordinance will be presented to the City Council on March 28. Background information is available on the Planning Division website.
- City Council will hold a workshop on March 21 to discuss interests and ideas for use of the parking area (Lot X) located between Welch Avenue and Hayward Avenue. City Council has invited property owners, business owners, and other stakeholders to attend the workshop.
- The final draft of the Lincoln Corridor Plan will be available for public comment in March. City Council is tentatively scheduled to review the final draft at its March 28 meeting.

- The Planning Division hosted a general Neighborhood Association Leaders meeting on February 28. The meeting was a chance to meet Julie Gould as the new Neighborhood Planner and to discuss neighborhood issues with staff and other leaders. Approximately 14 neighborhoods were represented at the meeting.

Housing & Community Development

- Staff will soon be preparing the 2017-18 CDBG Annual Action Plan for public review.
- The Request for Development Proposals for 321 State Avenue will begin this month.
- Staff will be preparing to close on the purchase of 321 S. Franklin Avenue (aka Franklin Park) from Iowa State University.