



February 2020 Project Highlights

City Manager's Office

- Data collection continues as City departments work with PaleBLUEdot, the City's consultant for the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Inventory. In addition to an inventory, PaleBLUEdot is working on completing two additional reports: a climate vulnerability assessment and a renewable energy potentials study. A cross-section of staff representing several departments is assisting with the data gathering. Because the information will need to be collected every two years, procedures are being documented for uniformity. Additionally, the City is working with other utilities that serve Ames including Alliant Energy, Midland Power and Consumers Energy Cooperative.

The GHG Inventory will provide benchmarking of citywide greenhouse gas emissions. The data generated will follow the recommendations of three organizations that have recognized standards in GHG Inventory data collection (Global Covenant of Mayors, STAR Community Rating System, and City Inventory Reporting and Information System CIRIS). The GHG data will be used to increase the awareness and understanding of Ames citizens regarding our city's carbon footprint, to forecast projections if no community changes are made, and to identify opportunities for emissions reduction in the future.

- The "Claim Ames" campaign to support Census 2020 launched on January 13 with a press conference featuring Iowa State University President Wendy Wintersteen and Mayor John Haila. The City has partnered with Model Farm, the student-run, professionally managed creative agency at Iowa State University to reach out directly to Iowa State students.

Work continues on the campaign through video, social media, bus boards, print and radio advertisements. Census 2020 information is being included in editions of the monthly City Side newsletter and is being shared with other organizations to include in their newsletters. Also, a Claim Ames link has been placed on the front page of the City's website (Also available at www.CityOfAmes.org/ClaimAmes). Outreach includes having a Claim Ames table at several existing events. The Claim Ames table and photo booth was featured at the MLK Day celebration at the Ames Middle School and the first EcoChats. In the next few weeks, speaking engagements are scheduled with the League of Women Voters, the Collegiate United Methodist Church, and Green Hills. The calendar continues to fill with many cross-promotional activities.

- In celebration of two anniversary milestones this year, EcoFair 2020 will be bigger and better than ever. First, the 50th anniversary of worldwide Earth Day will be recognized on April 22. Second, the 10-year anniversary of the City of Ames EcoFair will be celebrated on Saturday, April 25, in the City Hall Community Center Gym. In recognition of these April milestone anniversaries, several activities, challenges, and educational opportunities are being planned leading up to EcoFair 2020.

One of these educational opportunities will be once-monthly EcoChats. The first EcoChat was held on Jan. 28, and there are more planned for February 26 and March 30. Each month's EcoChat will have a different environmental theme and will include a vendor and community organization open house followed by short lectures presented by local experts and City staff. These lectures will touch on four separate topics related to that month's theme. After each session, participants will be able to talk to presenters, as well as browse the open house and enjoy refreshments.

Environmental speaker Chad Pregracke, founder of the river clean-up organization "Living Lands and Waters" will be the keynote speaker leading up to the EcoFair. Pregracke will provide a free lecture beginning at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 21 in the City Auditorium, 515 Clark Ave.

Library:

- The Ames Public Library hosted its first ever Preschool Fair on Saturday, January 11. Fifteen preschools participated and Library staff shared info on their early literacy programs and resources. 142 participants attended and received a free book. Preschools and families appreciated the event and another fair is already scheduled for next year.

- The library hosted a discussion and workshop with Dr. Jennifer Harvey around her book Raising White Kids on Sunday, January 12. There were 75 participants for the presentation and 65 stayed for a “Q&A” for the final hour of the workshop. There were handouts and active discussion, and participants expressed interest in meeting up again for peer support and conversation on racial injustice.
- The library has received positive feedback from patrons in need and the broader community regarding the Supply Kits available at the Library that include free essentials such as diapers, wipes, hand warmers, etc. This is part of the library’s welcoming efforts and started as a staff innovation idea funded by the Ames Public Library Friends Foundation. The kits also have information on other organizations and resources in the community that provide support to those experiencing housing instability, hunger, and other needs.
- The library is partnering with Iowa Child Care Resource & Referral, Iowa Works, the Ames Chamber of Commerce, and BooSt Together for Children to offer a multi-session training series, Child Care Ready, for individuals who want to work in the childcare field. There is an orientation session at the Library on February 19th from 7:00- 8:00 p.m. The program is free but registration is required for the training series.

Planning and Housing:

Planning

- The Historic Preservation Commission is seeking nominations for the 2020 Preservation Awards Program. This program recognizes a variety of historic preservation activities including work on building exteriors, site work, and other notable contributions to preservation in Ames. Nominations will be accepted by the Planning and Housing Department through February 24, 2020. The nomination form is available on the City website.
- The City is actively seeking applications for both the Downtown and Campustown Façade Grant Programs. The deadline to submit for a matching grant of up to \$15,000 is February 21, 2020. More information can be found at the Planning Division website.
- The owner of the Haunted Forest site at 1400 S. 4th Street desires to improve the ground at the site to eliminate muddy conditions during event parking at ISU. They are seeking a Flood Plain Development Permit to accomplish this work within the Floodway and Floodway Fringe. Activity may occur in the coming months on the site if a Flood Plain Development Permit is approved.

Police:

Animal Shelter

- The recent change in State standards for animal shelters has highlighted a couple deficiencies at the Animal Shelter. Although this is being addressed as work continues on options for a new shelter facility, the inspection results have dictated that some changes need to be addressed more quickly. The most challenging change is establishing a fully separate isolation area for incoming or ill animals. In addition, dog kennels must meet new standards, so they will require replacement. Staff members are exploring near-term solutions that will bring the shelter into compliance.

Public Works:

Resource Recovery

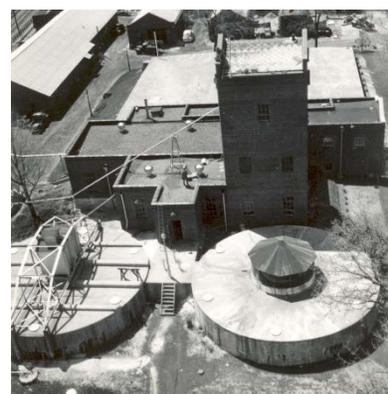
- Early planning meetings have already begun for Rummage RAMPage 2020. The fifth annual event will begin on Friday, July 24 and run through Monday, August 3. In just four years, the event has diverted 340,839 pounds of furniture and household items from the landfill. The event is organized by the City of Ames and Iowa State University, and the majority of the workers are from non-profit organizations that split the proceeds from the event. Rummage RAMPage would not be possible without the donations from the citizens, the buyers, and the fantastic volunteers!
- Resource Recovery staff has been assisting the awesome Public Works snow and ice crews utilizing equipment from the plant to plow streets and haul snow. This equipment includes two Hybrid wheel loaders, a skid loader, a pickup and blade, and a roll off truck that can haul 40 yards of snow at a time. The roll off truck can haul more snow than two dump trucks; decreasing the number of trips that need to be taken, which decreases the carbon footprint of the operation.



- Resource Recovery staff continues to work on recommendations from the consultant’s report on landfill diversion. Some of the latest continuous improvements have included modifications to the plant focused on recovering a higher percentage of RDF material and sending it to the Power Plant. These modifications have been designed, fabricated, and installed by the employees of the Resource Recovery Plant. Modifications include an extension of the air knife deflection vane to allow more precise control of the air flow separating the RDF, an automated cleaner installed on the extension to allow programmed cleaning of the vane, and extensive modifications to the air density system and plant dust control system to allow for recovery of fine or light-fraction RDF. These continuous improvements allow us to maximize the recovery of RDF and reduce the amount of material going to the landfill while continuing to send the highest quality RDF to the Power Plant.
- Resource Recovery and Electric Department staff are working together on several potential programs, program improvements, and a public education campaign designed to reduce the amount of municipal solid waste (MSW) being brought to the Resource Recovery Plant. Repairs at the Ames Power Plant have decreased the capacity for refuse derived fuel. Reducing the amount of garbage produced in Story County is an important goal for long-term sustainability. Producing less waste will help the City better plan long term waste management. By targeting both individual and large customers with different solutions, staff hopes to measurably increase participation in food and glass diversion while reducing overall garbage by as much as 10 percent.

Water & Pollution Control

- A big theme for the month is “recruitments.” Due to a mix of retirements, graduations, and promotions, the Department is currently looking to fill nine positions: (2) Water Plant Operators; (3) Treatment Plant Maintenance Workers (one at Water and two at WPC); (1) Laboratory Technician; (2) Student Operators; and (1) Marketing Intern.
- The Request for Proposals was released during the last week of January for design services related to the demolition of the old Water Treatment Plant. The initial scope will include conceptual design for a new conference room and vehicle storage space that will be constructed in the footprint of the old plant. The scope of services for the consultant will include, among many other tasks, a



1949 aerial view of the old Water Treatment Plant

public outreach and neighborhood engagement effort.

- Staff is continuing to pursue opportunities to partner with other organizations on watershed-based water quality improvement projects that would provide a measure of nutrient reduction. An important consideration is to obtain written confirmation from the Iowa DNR that it is willing to grant credit for these projects in the future, should the nutrient targets for the Water Pollution Control Facility become more stringent. Staff held a conference call with IDNR staff to discuss the proposed content of a Memorandum of Understanding that would provide assurance of the future credit. It is important to understand that the watershed projects will not reduce the cost or magnitude of the planned \$40 million nutrient conversion at the WPCF; but they will be a hedge against needing to come back at a later time and construct even more nutrient removal capacity.
- In late January, Public Works presented an opportunity for W&PC to partner with Public Works along with Story County Conservation and Prairie Rivers of Iowa on a grant proposal to undertake two oxbow restoration projects. An oxbow is a curved meander in a river that has become cut off from the main river channel over time as the river meanders. W&PC pledged \$20,000 from the Watershed-base Nutrient Reduction CIP account as an in-kind cash match for the grant. If successful, the restored areas would offer: increased recreational opportunities; an increase in upstream flood storage volumes; improved habitat; public education opportunities; and nutrient reduction. Both restoration projects are located north of Ames; one is just north of Story City and one is just south of Story City.