
Iowa City 2018-2019

Strategic Plan Summary Report

February 2020



Sunset over Linn and Washington Streets downtown.

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SEVEN GOALS

for a more **Inclusive, Just and Sustainable** Iowa City:

1



Promote a **Strong and Resilient Economy**

2



Encourage a **Vibrant and Walkable Urban Core**

3



Foster **Healthy Neighborhoods** throughout the City

4



Maintain a Solid **Financial Foundation**

5



Enhance **Community Engagement** and **Intergovernmental Relations**

6



Promote **Environmental Sustainability**

7



Advance **Social Justice** and **Racial Equity**

Introduction & Overview

City of Iowa City Organizational Profile

City Council

Iowa City is governed by an elected City Council of seven members: four Council members at-large and three District members. The Council is responsible for appointing the City Manager, City Attorney, and City Clerk.

City Manager

The City Manager serves as the chief administrative officer for the organization. The City Manager implements the policy decisions of the City Council, enforces City ordinances, and appoints City officials, as well as supervises the directors of the City's operating departments.

City Staff

Iowa City employs approximately 600 full-time staff members to execute the City Council's policies and provide public services to over 75,000 residents. These include water, sewer, stormwater, garbage and recycling utilities, as well as public services like police, fire, building and housing inspections, parks and recreation, street maintenance, engineering, development services, transportation, communication, and senior services.



City Council members are, from left:

Mazahir Salih, At-Large

Bruce Teague, At-Large

Pauline Taylor, District A, Mayor Pro Tem

Jim Throgmorton, At-Large, Mayor

Susan Mims, District B

Rockne Cole, At-Large

John Thomas, District C

Executive Summary

Beginning in January 2018, City Council engaged in a strategic planning process to define the City's top priorities, address significant new projects and initiatives, and establish a broad vision for the City's future. A resolution to formally adopt the 2018-2019 Strategic Plan priorities was approved on March 20, 2018 and update reports were released in November 2018 and June 2019. City staff has been responsible for coordinating implementation and execution of these Council goals over the two-year period. The following offers highlights from recent Strategic Plan accomplishments.

LOCAL FOODS

2019 Farmers Market:

212

Community garden plots

Leased in spring 2019



\$ 4,241

Double Up Food Bucks

\$ 4,750

SNAP Benefits

Greater purchasing power

Opened "Simple & Free" food pantry at Senior Center

HISTORIC PRESERVATION



59

Local landmarks

15

Grants/loans

Issued for exterior home preservation in **historic neighborhoods**

\$ 1,000,000

For historic building upkeep

Contribution to Englert Theatre and Film Scene capital campaign

HEALTHY NEIGHBORHOODS

\$ 2,000,000

dedicated to affordable housing efforts in FY2019 and FY2020

22

Park and bicycle projects completed and under construction (Between 2018 and 2019)

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



LIVE

816

City Council Meetings

Hours viewed
From July 1, 2018 to June 4, 2019

FINANCIAL FACTS



City Emergency Fund returned to

\$ 5,000,000

Aaa

Moody's Bond Rating retained



\$ 15.833

Tax levy
(Proposed FY2021 reduction to \$15.77)

Economic Protocol Agreement

reached by Iowa City, Coralville, and North Liberty to establish positive regional business recruitment tactics

SUSTAINABILITY

4 Electric vehicles

3 Electric hybrids

1 Electric utility vehicle/truck

+2 more ordered

5 Charging stations

1500

Trees planted since 2016



\$ 75,000

in Climate Action Grants

Awarded over three fiscal years

45 attendees at 3 Household Hazardous Materials collection events (fall 2018 & spring 2019)

SOCIAL JUSTICE / RACIAL EQUITY

\$ 644,000

Aid to Agencies

Awarded in FY2020

\$ 11.50/hr

New starting minimum wage

Effective July 1, 2019 for all City of Iowa City hourly positions

Children's and Teen Library material **late fines waved**

(As of June 1, 2019)



Residents were able to give feedback on the future of the city's transit system during an open house meeting for the Iowa City Area Transit Study in late 2019.

1

Promote a Strong and Resilient Local Economy

- a. Undertake a comprehensive assessment of the current public transit system and implement changes to assure that the service best meets the needs of the entire community
- b. Effectively market and grow the local food economy
- c. Through cooperation with the Iowa City School District, Iowa Workforce Development, Kirkwood Community College, Iowa Works, and others, increase opportunities for marginalized populations and low-income individuals to obtain access to skills training and good jobs
- d. Work with Procter & Gamble and impacted supply chain companies, local economic development organizations, and labor unions to respond effectively to the company's decision to terminate its local production of beauty care products



Promote a Strong and Resilient Local Economy



Transportation director Darian Nagle-Gamm collects public feedback at the first Transit Study open house event.

Accomplishment Updates

1a Bus Transportation

A Transportation Study officially kicked off on August 27, 2019 with the City of Coralville and the University of Iowa as partners in a coordinated effort to improve area transit services. Nelson Nygaard was selected to perform the study and the process involves significant public engagement over the next year. The first round of public meetings and a “Build Your Own Transit Service” survey were completed by December 2019 and a second round of meetings were completed in late January 2020. Further engagement and the final recommendations should be complete in summer 2020. After the transit study is complete, possible revenue streams that can enhance transit access and service will be identified. Preliminary discussions about alternative revenues took place in August 2019 during the Council’s initial budget Work Session.

Enhancing current transit services

City staff added and replaced ten bus shelters along routes that will likely stay within the system’s operating schedule regardless of transit study findings. These shelters have expanded pads and seating, making them accessible to all riders, and are lit with solar-power. Another six shelters are slated for installation or replacement in spring 2020. Further shelter upgrades will take place after the completion of the route study.

1b Community Gardens

Growing seasons were busy in the City’s community gardens. In the four gardens, 202 plots were rented in 2018, and all 212 plots were rented in 2019. A series of public meetings were held with Backyard Abundance in summer 2018 to gather input on a new configuration for garden plots at Chadek Green. Final designs are complete which include additional paths, a gathering space, and varied garden plot sizes. Improvements are expected in early 2020.



Blossoming community gardens are shown in the heart of Chadek Green Park.



Promote a Strong and Resilient Local Economy

Accomplishment Updates

Supporting local food systems

Sustainability staff sought project requests from organizations promoting and serving the regional local foods system. Of the four proposals received, the City chose to fund \$45,000 in startup costs for a local food hub run by Field to Family. Council approved funding at the June 4, 2019 meeting. The food hub began operations in mid-June 2019, providing high volumes of quality, local food to regional institutions and supporting a market for local foods.

The City also continued support of the SNAP at the market and the Double Up Food Bucks program. Use of these programs has grown over the last several years, as Farmer's Market sales have also grown considerably since 2017.



Hundreds of diners, and many more plates of food, helped raise \$45,000 for a local food hub at the Farm to Street Dinner on August 15, 2019.

Additionally, the Farm to Street Dinner continues to perform well, year after year. This quickly sold-out congregate meal raises up to \$10,000 for local foods organizations, builds community, and educates participants about local foods and restaurant efforts to source locally. The City has contributed \$5,000 each year of the event, supporting event coordination and setup. Each year, event revenues have also contributed \$5,000 to the Parks and Recreation Foundation for support of local foods projects, like installing water access at City community gardens.

Exploration of a community kitchen

The Center provided a summary of the needed improvements for its commercial-grade kitchen. In early August 2019, Council agreed that waiting until a full building needs analysis is complete in 2020 would be the best approach, rather than making significant investments before knowing what other priority improvements may be more urgent.

1c Workforce efforts

Economic Development staff has generated an inventory of local and regional efforts to identify gaps in services and potential collaborations, and a summary of findings was shared with Council in September 2019. Staff has continued to work with private businesses to identify workforce needs and barriers to employment. ICAD, ICR Iowa, and Kirkwood Community College are involved in this effort to better connect minority and immigrant populations with small business and general employment resources.



Promote a Strong and Resilient Local Economy

Accomplishment Updates

Staff has presented a variety of resources and opportunities for both job seekers and potential entrepreneurs. Multiple job fairs, sponsored by the City of Iowa City and Iowa Works, have been held at the Robert A. Lee Recreation Center. Each year, one fair is directed at positions for young workforce and one is directed at entry, part-time, and permanent work for unemployed and underemployed individuals. A workshop called “So You Want to Start a Business?” was given in partnership with Kirkwood Community College in 2018 to give individuals basic knowledge to turn their business idea into a reality. This program is being evaluated for a change in format in the upcoming year.

The City partnered with the Iowa State Building and Construction Trades Council in 2019. The City contributed \$5,000 to the development, printing, and distribution of an inaugural Building Trades Apprenticeship Planning Guide. The guide assisted high school students, their guardians, school faculty, and non-profit organizations in raising awareness about apprenticeships in the building trades. Thirty-five hundred students in the Iowa City Community School District and Johnson County received the guide.

Reducing employment barriers

In summer 2019, Council agreed to support two years of an annual contribution of \$25,000 for Kirkwood Community College’s expansion of its English Language Learner program. Enhancing the ELL program with additional course availability will increase employment opportunities for community members and support businesses seeking skilled workers.

1d Procter and Gamble transition

Since the news of Procter & Gamble’s announcement to transition a portion of their operations out of state, staff has engaged with their officials and connected them with local and state resources to assist with any employees that may be displaced. Although this transition has slowed, staff has continued work with ICAD to express strong support for growing Procter & Gamble’s remaining operations and to position the community for attracting new lines of business within the company. Collectively, these groups are also working to aid supply chain companies, which includes helping to determine if new business partnerships can be established to help overcome potential loss in Procter & Gamble business.

Opportunity Zones

In 2018, the State and Federal government approved two Opportunity Zone designations which provide federal tax advantages for property investments. These Census tracts encompass most of the physical locations of Procter and Gamble, their suppliers, and the Towncrest area. The Chamber of Commerce, ICAD, and ICR assembled and have been sharing promotional information about these areas to spur investment interest.



The house at 608 Rundell St. is shown after it was renovated with Historic Preservation funds (pre-renovation images follow on page 11).

2

Encourage a Vibrant and Walkable Urban Core

- a. Collaborate with the University of Iowa on its redevelopment of University-owned property located in the Riverfront Crossings District, and on improving the quality, accessibility, and use of the Iowa River Corridor
- b. Preserve important parts of Iowa City's history by considering the designation of additional buildings as historic landmarks, and, by considering the creation of an historic preservation district for part of the downtown after consulting with stakeholders
- c. Evaluate existing strategies and consider additional actions to address the need for reinvestment in the city's existing private housing stock



Encourage a Vibrant and Walkable Urban Core

Accomplishment Updates

2a Highlighting the Iowa River

Staff meets regularly with University of Iowa personnel to discuss planning topics, including the RFC campus and the river corridor. Staff from Iowa City and City of Coralville are working with the University of Iowa to align current master plans along the rivers and identify ways to strengthen existing plans or fill missing gaps between the three entities. Staff has continued to work with community partners and the University of Iowa on the upcoming Big Splash event and Theme Semester planning. The Big Splash activities and Theme Semester “Flow”, will include education, outreach, and programs in 2020. The celebration will serve as pivotal point in time for the community to come together to celebrate and care for the river. Staff will work with the University and Coralville to further align river planning efforts after the master plan compilation is completed spring 2020.

2b Historic Preservation Grants

In FY2018 and FY2019, the Historic Preservation Fund grant program has awarded 15 matching grants and no-interest loans up to \$5,000. Of the 15, the City has given 13 grants and two loans. The continuation of this popular new program was included in the FY2020 budget and proposed again in FY2021.



Damage is visible to the exterior of the house at 608 Rundell St. before its renovation with Historic Preservation funds.

Recognizing a historic downtown

The Downtown Historic Survey was completed and made available to the public in October 2018. The Historic Preservation Commission invited public comment on the survey that October and presented its recommendations to Council on October 23, 2018. Council decided to pursue a national landmark designation of the downtown. The City retained AKAY Consulting, a historic preservation consultant, to nominate the historic downtown, for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The nomination submission is expected in spring 2020.



Encourage a Vibrant and Walkable Urban Core

Accomplishment Updates

Local landmarking activity

Iowa City currently has 59 individual local landmarks including twelve that were designated since January 2018. The Historic Preservation Commission designated the City Park Cabins, the Ned Ashton House, and the Senior Center (28 S. Linn St.) as local landmarks. Overlay zoning requests were brought to City Council and approved in spring 2019. Landmark designation was approved for 225 and 229 N. Gilbert. In summer 2019, the City sold these two properties to Public Space One and provided down payment assistance. PS1 is in the process of transforming the houses into a community arts campus.

City Park Cabins restored

City Park cabin restorations were completed in 2018. Historic Preservation and Parks and Recreation will work together to showcase the restored cabins. The landmarking of these structures came just in time to plan for a celebration marking an anniversary of nearby City Park Pool in May 2020. The engineer, Ned Ashton, whose home the City also landmarked was the designer of City Park Pool.

Sanxay-Gilmore House

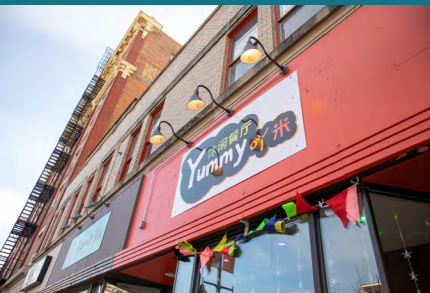
Staff continues to work with the University of Iowa to understand their timeline for the potential demolition of the Sanxay-Gilmore House. The City received a small emergency grant to study the movability of the house. The City will continue to work with the University to explore ways to preserve the structure in the future.

Preserving historic buildings through cultural arts support

Council approved a \$1 million contribution to the Englert Theater and Film Scene capital campaign that will in large part enable the historic renovation of the Englert building and make key investments in the Packing and Provisions Building that currently houses the original Film Scene ped mall location. Some of Film Scene's renovations are underway and Englert's renovations are expected in 2020.

Building Change Program

Economic Development staff reviewed five and approved three applications (total of \$121,000) for the Building Change Loan Program. Building Change is a cooperative effort between the City and local banks to allow commercial building owners to update facades and improve underutilized interior space to allow for residential or office use. The awarded properties (111-115 E. Washington, 119-123 E. Washington, and 16 S. Clinton) are considered 'contributing' properties to the downtown historic district, therefore requiring historic preservation review. The buildings were examined and ultimately due



Exterior signage is complete at 119-123 E. Washington Street.



A freshly painted entrance at 111-115 E. Washington St. downtown.



Encourage a Vibrant and Walkable Urban Core

Accomplishment Updates

to the condition of the original historic facade, designs for the buildings on E. Washington were altered to preserve historic elements. The project on S. Clinton is complete and projects on Washington Street are underway, expected to finish in 2020.



Pedestrians cross in front of 16 S. Clinton, now for lease.

2c Rental properties renovated and sold as owner-occupied

Changes were made to the UniverCity program to allow for the purchase of duplex properties. Although it has been more challenging to feasibly purchase suitable homes for renovation, the program renovated and sold five homes between 2018 and 2019. In 2018, Council directed staff to identify rented duplexes on Taylor and Davis Streets and approach property owners and current tenants who may have interest in homeownership. The City successfully purchased a duplex at 1232 and 1234 Sandusky Ave., selling in early 2020, and at 2129 and 2131 Taylor Dr., currently under renovation. Staff will continue to pursue opportunities to secure additional properties in the area that meet desired criteria for this program. These projects encourage homeownership by current District residents without involuntary displacement of renting tenants. The proposed budget for this program in FY2021 will allow for more duplex unit purchases.



Former duplex and UniverCity property at 522 N. Dodge St., sold as owner-occupied in summer 2019.



Paths are in place and soil is prepped for planting in the new orchard and community garden area at Creekside Park.

3

Foster Healthy Neighborhoods Throughout the City

- a. Modify the existing Affordable Housing Action Plan to include new strategies to improve the availability and affordability of housing in Iowa City
- b. Embed the “Missing Middle” concept into the City’s land development practices by adopting a Form Based Code for at least one (preferably two) of our neighborhoods
- c. Ensure the next two budgets contain sufficient funds to make meaningful progress toward achieving the goals of the Bicycle Master Plan and Parks Master Plan
- d. Complete an analysis of traffic accident data and identify actions to improve the safety of our roadways for motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians



Foster Healthy Neighborhoods Throughout the City



The completed buffered bike lane
on Governor Street.

Accomplishment Updates

3a Increased funding for affordable housing

For the last three fiscal years, Council increased proposed affordable housing budgets from \$650,000 annually to \$1 million commitments. This increase in dedicated funding has enabled greater leverage of dollars for affordable housing by housing agencies receiving funding from the City. Since 2016, the City, through federal CDBG/HOME, City General Fund, and other leveraged dollars, Iowa City has contributed over \$8 million towards affordable housing projects.

Policy direction supporting affordable housing

Council adopted an Affordable Housing component to the City's annexation policy in July 2018. Also that July, Council approved a development agreement for the Foster Road extension and development area that leverages an estimated \$2-3 million in affordable housing funds over the next ten years. Construction on part of this project and Foster Road began in 2019 and road construction is complete. The City's Affordable Housing Action Plan, presented to City Council in 2016, recommended fifteen actions to further affordable housing in Iowa City. 2018 and 2019 saw application or expansion of a majority of these actions, including the incorporation of an affordable housing line item in the annual budget, strategically allocating low-income housing tax credit funding, and pursuing a form-based code in the South District. In 2019, new recommendations supporting these efforts include a security deposit program and modified eligibility requirements for rehabilitation assistance. The City has devoted a significant amount of time and funding directed at housing affordability.

3b Form based codes and neighborhood planning

A form-based code for the South District is under development with Opticos. So far, a market study was done, stakeholder meetings held, and draft code was provided for review by staff, the development community, and the public. Opticos will return to Iowa City in early 2020 to finalize the code draft. The project is estimated for completion in spring or summer 2020.

Council directed staff to pursue an agreement for a "visioning" for the Northside Marketplace, along with a parking study for the Northside neighborhood. The agreement is being finalized and will commence in spring 2020.

3c Playground, park, and bicycle network improvements

Bicycle Master Plan and Parks Master Plan projects continue to be addressed with each construction season. In 2018, accessibility improvements were finished at Highland, Pheasant Hill, Tower Court, and Mercer Parks. College Green was updated in 2019, and accessibility improvements are planned for Brookland and Hunter's Run Parks in 2020.

Significant progress was made at Willow Creek Park and at the site of the Lower City Park Adventure Playground. Final improvements are anticipated in spring 2020, along with new playgrounds at Fairmeadows, Scott, Wetherby, and Napoleon Parks. Creekside Park opened with a new playground, paths, and sport court, and just finished the orchard and community garden path area, ready for planting in 2020. Villa Park and playground improvements were finished in 2019.



Foster Healthy Neighborhoods Throughout the City

Accomplishment Updates



Progress has been made on the new playground at Willow Creek Park.

In 2018, Cardigan Park was outfitted with a new playground, shelter, and the first fire ring in a City park. Phases 1 through 3 of Riverfront Crossings Park were completed between 2018 and 2019. Phase 4 of the project, the last of near-term stages for Riverfront Crossings, saw the installation of the Snelson sculpture and park entry signage, paving, and landscaping, and should be finalized in spring 2020.

Several new bicycle facilities, including Clinton, Mormon Trek, Myrtle and Greenwood, Camp Cardinal Blvd, Dodge Street, and portions of Governor, were completed, between the 2018-2019 construction seasons. A trail extension along Highway 1, between Sunset Street and

Mormon Trek was also installed in 2019. With the completion of an asphalt resurfacing project on Governor from Ralston Creek to Jefferson, bike lanes will be added in spring 2020. The Gateway Project and Park Road Bridge was completed in 2019, with final touches and punch list items anticipated in spring 2020.



Riverfront Crossings Park

The relocated Snelson sculpture greets visitors at the entrance to Riverfront Crossings Park.

3d Traffic accident analysis

Staff presented community-wide traffic accident data analysis findings and preliminary recommendations at the April 23, 2019 Work Session. At this session, Professor Jodi Plummert, of the University of Iowa also gave a presentation on traffic and child pedestrians. The MPO is nearly finished with an analysis of countermeasures and intends to follow-through with appropriate corrections in early 2020.



4

Maintain a Solid Financial Foundation

- a. Continue to monitor the impact of the 2013 property tax reform and evaluate alternative revenue sources as determined necessary
- b. Continue to build the City's Emergency Fund
- c. Monitor potential changes to Moody's rating criteria and maintain the City's Aaa bond rating
- d. Continue to reduce the City's property tax levy
- e. Maintain healthy fund balances throughout the City's diverse operations



Maintain a Solid Financial Foundation

Accomplishment Updates

4a Property Tax Reform impacts

Property tax reform is consistently monitored as the 2013 changes impact the City tax base. Full implementation is anticipated in FY2024. Careful budgeting practices will be needed to see the City through the end of the FY2013 tax reforms measures. City Council added a discussion of Local Option Sales Tax to their pending Work Session topics and plans to analyze it in 2020.

4b Emergency Fund spending

Since January 2018, Emergency Fund expenditures totaled approximately \$511,000 for the purchase of three properties in the flood plain adjacent to Lower City Park. The Emergency Fund balance was returned to just over \$5 million in the FY2020 budget and fund use is continually monitored. In early February 2020, Council approved a \$329,251 Emergency Fund land purchase of a portion of the Elks Club property south of Foster Rd. The acquisition of the land will support the Idyllwild Stormwater Diversion project.

4c Maintained Moody's Aaa bond rating

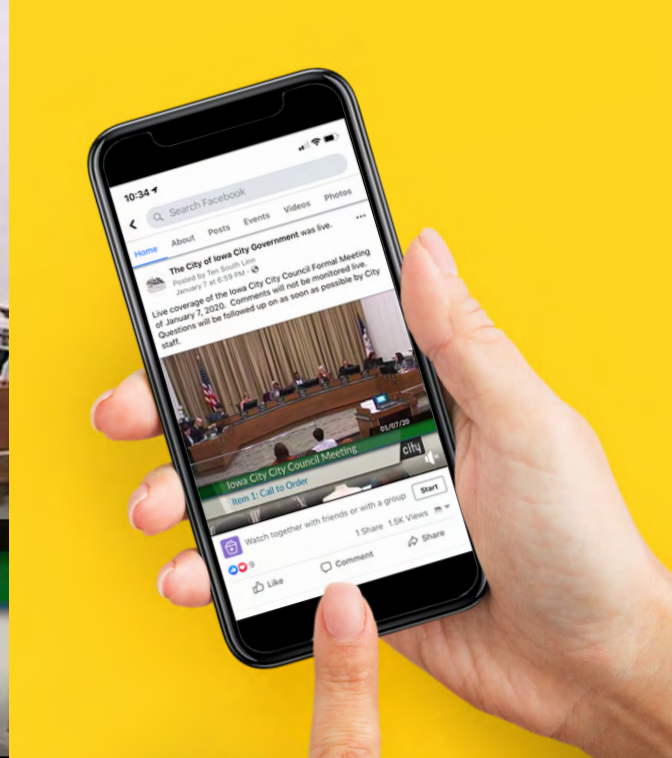
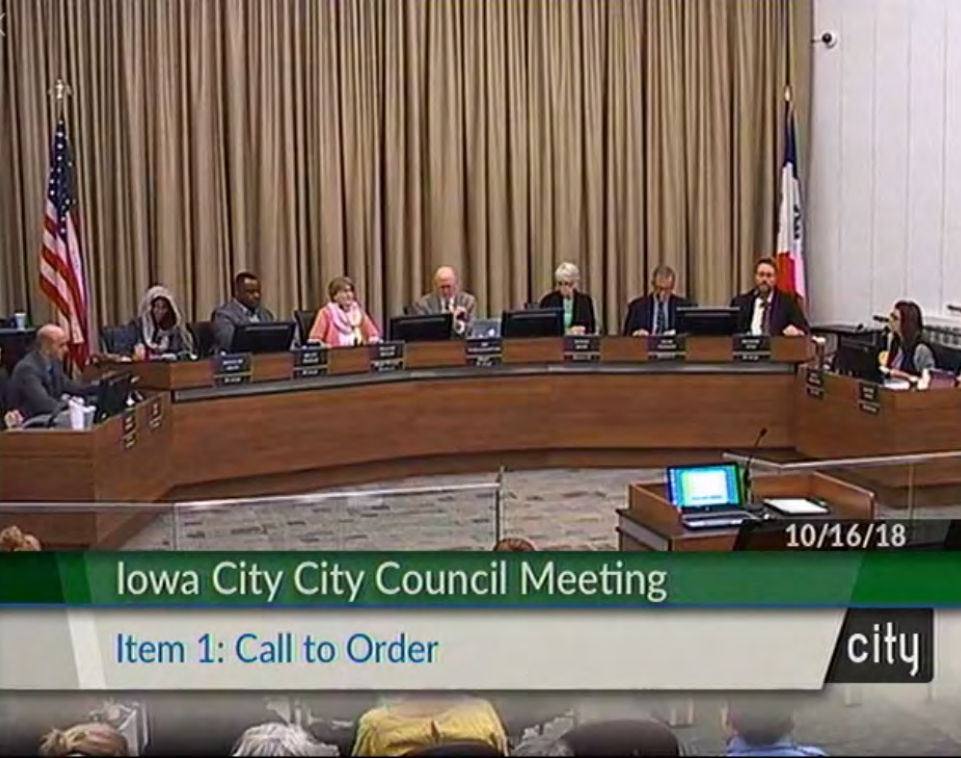
The City experienced third-party bond rating calls in spring 2018 and 2019 with Moody's rating service. From those calls, Moody's maintained the City's Aaa rating. Within this Strategic Plan period, Moody's began reviewing how communities are addressing and planning for climate adaptation. Therefore, Iowa City's climate mitigation and adaptation strategies were included in the ratings presentations. Moody's is a premiere institution and earning the top rating of Aaa is rare. Iowa City is one of only three Iowa cities with an Aaa rating, and one of 238 (9.15%) of cities nationally, with this exceptional general obligation bond rating. This top bond rating allows Iowa City to borrow funds at lower interest rates, reducing the total cost of borrowing and debt service.

4d Continued reduction in total property tax levy rate

The City reduced the property tax rate in FY2019 and again in FY2020 primarily through decreasing the City's debt service levy. Responsible borrowing and early repayment of debt, along with strong taxable growth, has permitted decreases in the debt levy. Through FY2020, the debt service levy was reduced for eight consecutive years and resulted in a combined decrease of \$0.50 in FY2019 and FY2020 property tax levy. A spike in property assessments and further debt service adjustments will make it possible to make additional small debt service levy reductions in the next couple of years. The FY2021 budget has proposed another \$0.06 decrease in the overall city tax rate.

4e Maintaining healthy fund balances

FY2018 and FY2019 year-end fund balances were positive and healthy for most funds. In FY2019 and FY2020, the City implemented a 5% increase in water rates to preserve a fund balance that keeps up with necessary annual capital infrastructure maintenance. In FY2020, a \$0.50 monthly storm water increase was also approved. Each year, the City reviews its fund balances to determine whether a change in user fees is necessary; when an increase is proposed, the City attempts to implement a modest increase to avoid a large jump in service fees.



Communications staff began live-streaming City Council meetings and other events to new audiences on Facebook.

5

Enhance Community Engagement and Intergovernmental Relations

- a. Experiment with innovative ways of engaging with diverse populations in person and on social media
- b. Improve collaborative problem-solving with governmental entities in the region on topics of shared interest
- c. Improve relationships with the executive branch and legislature by reaching out to legislators and other elected officials and working with City lobbyists



Enhance Community Engagement and Intergovernmental Relations

Accomplishment Updates

5a Exploring the digital frontier

In early 2018, the City began streaming City Council meetings and a variety of other programs on Facebook Live. Making meetings and events accessible in this way provides an additional way for folks to stay informed of the topics they are interested in, even if they can't make it to City Hall. Additionally, a podcast series called "Iowa City Matters" was introduced in 2019. The new medium is available 24/7 on major podcast platforms. Iowa City Matters has featured local experts in focused discussions on issues specific to the Council's Strategic Plan, including historic preservation, crisis intervention, transportation and bicycling, accessibility and inclusivity, and housing rehabilitation. Human Rights hired a Communications intern to help promote equity issues and provide educational information to the public. The Human Rights Commission also added a Facebook page, Instagram account, and newsletter The Lens, in 2019.



Budget transparency and engagement

In January 2018, staff elevated transparency in City budget planning and education by holding events called, "Breakfast on a Budget," and "Budget 101" (a Facebook Livestream Q&A), and a summer event called "Chip In." The three new engagement concepts encouraged residents to learn about the budget process, engage actively in question and answer with staff, and share their priorities, ideas, and suggestions for community improvements and spending. Breakfast on a Budget has become a staple activity before presentation of the annual City budget, and a variation of Chip In was repeated with a wide-reaching community survey and engagement at public events. Feedback about resident priorities received from the Chip In activities were presented to Council in August Work Sessions and considered throughout the development of the annual budgets.

Grants supported community wellness and connection

Neighborhood PIN Grants were issued for programs like Friendsgiving in fall 2018, where neighborhoods in the South District gathered for a potluck meal. Invest Health grants allowed for a small cultural music festival at the Pepperwood Plaza in April 2018.

Police community outreach

In 2019, the Iowa City Police Department re-envisioned the role of its newest Community Outreach Assistant. This staff interacts, educates, and relates to community members who may be less familiar or comfortable with the Police

5

Enhance Community Engagement and Intergovernmental Relations

Accomplishment Updates

Department. They provide tours, speak with groups, and visit schools and community venues, to encourage and build trust between residents and public safety services. The value of this effort has been quickly recognized by the public.



Community Outreach Assistant Daisy Torres visits with the Friendship Community Project, a nonprofit offering free English and life skills classes to Iowa City area adult immigrants and refugees.

Expanding social and educational connections

The Senior Center and Parks and Recreation Departments are developing relationships and new partnerships with less-engaged community members and groups. These efforts continue to broaden resident exposure and meaningful access to recreational services.

The Senior Center has partnered with Film Scene, The African American Museum, and other organizations to infuse current programming areas with more culturally inclusive and relevant materials and displays. These events and educational forums are sited in The Center and at City-sponsored events held throughout the community. The Center has also been spearheading the gathering of Senior Service directors and coordinators at local government entities to ensure that efforts to reduce senior isolation and encourage community engagement are effectively shared between agencies.

Parks and Recreation is expanding programming opportunities to a broader base of community members with special needs, focusing on activating parks across Iowa City neighborhoods with social gathering opportunities and special events, and further developing its relationship with before-and-after-school programs to provide free swim lessons to elementary students.

5b Intergovernmental cooperation

In 2018, a Council-initiated regional discussion on I-380 planning led to a meeting on August 2nd. Iowa City and Coralville elected officials and leadership agreed at



Enhance Community Engagement and Intergovernmental Relations

Accomplishment Updates

the meeting to cooperate further on future corridor public transportation efforts. Council continues to be active participants in the quarterly joint government meetings. Council held a joint meeting with the Johnson County Board of Supervisors in late 2018. Council also held a joint meeting with the University of Iowa Student Government in February 2020.

Regional economic development protocol

A regional economic development protocol agreement was approved by City Council in late 2018. The Cities of Iowa City, Coralville, and North Liberty agreed to communicate with each other and avoid incentives encouraging developers and businesses to relocate from one of the three cities to another.

Iowa City provides refuse billing services for University Heights

As of July 1, 2019, the City's Revenue Division took on the billing activity for University Heights residential refuse service. Iowa City already provides University Heights utility billing for water and sewer, and due to a change in services provided by their refuse hauler, it was agreed that Iowa City could assist by adding refuse billing to approximately 360 existing customer accounts.

Renewed Fire Mutual Aid Agreement

Although a 28E fire mutual aid agreement has been in-place and exercised regularly for decades, a new automatic aid agreement was approved early in 2019 and implemented April 1 between Iowa City, Coralville, and North Liberty. The automatic aid agreement between the three communities allows the Joint Emergency Communications Center (JECC) to automatically and simultaneously dispatch partnered agencies to building fire incidents. It was acknowledged by the leadership of all three agencies that the departments could reinforce one another in challenging response areas, resulting ultimately in improved safety for responding firefighters and more effective service to those requiring emergency aid.

5c Activity with the Iowa State Legislature

During the 2018 and 2019 state legislative sessions, Iowa City worked with lobbying firm Carney and Appleby to monitor and advocate the Council's legislative priorities in Des Moines. At the end of the 2018 session, most major concerns, such as preserving the backfill had positive or neutral outcomes for the City. By the end of the 2019 session, the legislature had taken away the City's ability to use rental permit caps and modified property tax laws which impact the way Iowa municipalities budget.

Property tax reform legislation passed at the State in 2019 impacted preparation for the FY2021 budget. State legislation limits annual property tax growth to 2%. Any proposed levy that shows higher than 2% growth is required to give extra notice, hold an additional public hearing and achieve a super-majority Council approval. In a growing community, it will be very rare that the city would not experience 2% growth in tax revenue. Therefore, for FY2021, City staff has prepared for this altered time frame for approvals and public hearings.



Enhance Community Engagement and Intergovernmental Relations

Accomplishment Updates

Legislative relations

On Sept. 7, 2018, staff conducted an Iowa City tour with area legislators and Council members. The tour shared the latest improvements to parks, facilities, and notable development projects, related to State financial support and local needs. Relationships with local legislators remain productive and several contacts were made with current legislators as well as with district candidates during the 2018 campaigns. In 2018 and 2019, staff participated in Iowa League of Cities and Corridor Chamber Day events at the Capitol. The City continues to build relationships with newly elected legislators at state and federal levels, visiting with them in town, Des Moines, and Washington DC. On a national level, City Council stayed engaged with other elected officials through the U.S. Conference of Mayors and the Mayors Innovation Project. Ideas and challenges presented through the eyes of other local leaders confirmed that other cities have experiences like Iowa City, and examples can be explored.



Iowa City's state legislative delegation tours Riverfront Crossings with staff and council members.

Response to occupancy and rental legislation

In response to the 2019 approved rental cap legislation, Council approved a moratorium on new rental permits in certain areas of the community while staff explored additional approaches to maintaining the balance and character of impacted neighborhoods. Changes to City Code were presented and approved by City Council before the end of 2019. A few methods to help manage the health and safety of concerned neighborhoods include expansion of the City's rental inspection program, required radon testing, altered parking area allowances, and required open space. The moratorium was lifted early, in January 2020.

Exploring opportunities to secure grant funds

The City will release an RFP in 2020 to consider hiring a lobbying firm to work on behalf of the City to help secure federal funds for a new transit facility and generally build stronger relationships at the federal level.



Two of the City's four electric cars are shown in the Chauncey Swan Parking Ramp.

6

Promote Environmental Sustainability

- a. Adopt an effective Climate Action and Adaptation Plan and ensure the next two budgets contain sufficient funds to facilitate achieving its goal
- b. Support efforts to increase the reach of the Parks and Recreation Foundation



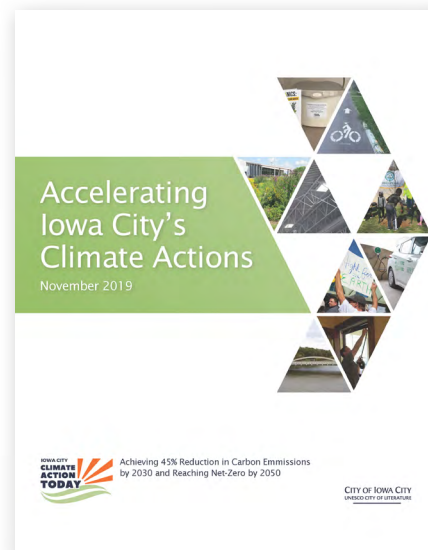
Promote Environmental Sustainability

Accomplishment Updates

6a Climate Action Plan Progress

City Council adopted the Iowa City Climate Action and Adaptation Plan in September 2018 which includes 35 actions for the community and municipality to undertake to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. These actions were identified and quantified so when implemented, Iowa City can achieve the 2025 and 2050 greenhouse gas reduction targets set by City Council.

Following the adoption of the Plan, community and Council discussions pushed the City to revisit and set carbon emissions targets at the International PCC levels of 40% reduction by 2030 and net zero emissions by 2050. City Council adopted these new goals in summer 2019 and established a formal Climate Action Commission to help the City reach these goals. Council also requested a report that would accelerate community and City actions to address climate change. City staff delivered a report within 100 days of the request, on November 14, 2019. Staff moved ahead with a FY2021 budget proposal that addresses needs identified in the “Accelerating Iowa City Climate Actions” 100 Day Report, and the City’s Climate Action Commission is reviewing it. The Commission will make recommendations to Council prior to the formal adoption of report actions.



City staff care about climate action

A representative group of City staff meets regularly with a dedicated focus on reducing waste, encouraging transportation alternatives, and improving the efficiency of city facility operations. This committee is primarily tasked with internal organization climate actions and supports public-facing climate programs as appropriate. They began development of a “best practices for city operations” guide in late 2019.



Establishing a new City Division

With the FY2021 budget, a newly-created Climate Action and Outreach division of the City Manager’s Office, is proposed. This three-person division will be focused on implementation of the City’s Climate Action and Adaptation Plan, reducing carbon emissions, and integrating climate action efforts throughout the community and City operations. Positions will be staffed with current and new hires, and work collaboratively with the new Climate Action Commission, City staff, and the public. This dedication of resources will further the activities proposed in the Climate Action Plan and the “100 Day Report”.



Promote Environmental Sustainability

Accomplishment Updates

Grants for community climate action projects

The City awarded 12 new Community Climate Action Grants in 2019 and opened the FY2021 grant application period in early February 2020. Through this program, organizations are provided up to \$5,000 for projects addressing a spectrum of Climate Plan objectives. These grants began in 2017, as a positive way of engaging the community, supporting climate work, and funding worthwhile projects in Iowa City. In July 2020, \$50,000 is slated for funding community group projects that will reduce carbon emissions and support the City's climate goals. Details about the awarded FY2019 and FY2020 projects are included in the Climate Plan Highlights section in subsequent pages of this report.

Celebrating climate action

Staff has been involved with event planning faculty and students at the University of Iowa, along with other stakeholders to plan for the City's first-ever Climate Festival, scheduled in September 2020. This public festival will include opportunities for educational forums, activities, and information sessions with community organizations and businesses in support of climate action.

6b Furthering goals of the Parks and Recreation Foundation

Efforts to expand the reach of the Parks and Recreation Foundation have been focused primarily upon working with individual donors. Staff has been building relationships with those who express interest in park related improvements and has been working with a group of swimmers for fundraising related to swim scholarships. The department is currently updating a record of donations from the past year. Additionally, in-kind work on a vision for the Foundation, including graphics and branding have been in development.

Climate Action and Adaptation Plan Progress Highlights

Implementation of the Iowa City Climate Action and Adaptation Plan is underway. Here are progress highlights from the first sixteen months after adoption:

General Updates

- ▶ With the aid of oversight and guidance from the new Climate Action Commission, City staff is working to communicate annual progress on implementation of the Climate Action Plan. Updates will include an annual community-wide greenhouse gas inventory, progress on all thirty-five actions in the Plan, and materials will be generated for public awareness.
- ▶ The City awarded twelve new Community Climate Action Grants in 2019. Organizations and groups will be reimbursed up to \$5,000 for projects addressing a spectrum of Climate Plan objectives. This program, started in 2017, has been a positive way to engage the community, support climate work, and fund worthwhile projects in Iowa City that will reduce our emissions. Details about projects supporting specific Climate Action Plan objectives are below.
- ▶ Staff has been involved with event planning faculty and students at the University of Iowa, along with other stakeholders to plan for the City's first-ever Climate Festival, scheduled in September 2020.

Plan Progress



Buildings

Action 1.1

As of February 1, 2019, participants in the City's owner-occupied housing rehabilitation program receive an energy assessment by the City's affiliated Green Iowa AmeriCorps (GIA). Participant homes also receive weatherization to improve energy efficiency and lower energy. Between September 2019 and February 1, 2020, the City's partnership with GIA performed 91 energy assessments. There have been over 300 audits conducted since 2016.

The newly formed Johnson County Clean Energy District organization was awarded a 2019 City Climate Action Grant for launching the planning phase of an initiative to increase residential energy efficiency audits and retrofits in Iowa City over the next five years. This group has identified a pilot neighborhood for weatherization and basic energy efficiency improvements and is developing a website.

1.2

A Climate Action Grant was awarded to non-profit Old Brick for installation of digital, programmable thermostats and installing solar lighting in the parking lot. The projects are expected to yield a 20% energy savings and be an example for commercial spaces.

1.3

A Climate Action Grant was awarded to Iowa Valley Habitat for Humanity for providing high efficiency, low emissions air source heat pumps for three newly constructed homes. One house also received solar panels. This effort is a pilot to reduce emissions while improving energy efficiency affordability for low-income homeowners.

1.5

Resulting from the solar feasibility study and direction from Council, staff is pursuing two solar array projects. The Public Works facility, completed in late 2019, will have a rooftop solar installation installed in 2020, along with an installation at the Terry Trueblood Recreation Area. The projects are combined and sought proposals in February 2020.

Climate Action and Adaptation Plan Progress Highlights (*continued*)

On a related note, the City Manager's Office and Sustainability staff met with both MidAmerican Energy and Eastern Iowa Light and Power to talk about partnering on potential opportunities for solar or other energy saving projects. MidAmerican Energy and the City are working toward an agreement to install utility-scale solar in a portion of Waterworks Park, near the Iowa City Water Plant. To move forward with a project like this, zoning changes were needed in order to allow solar projects on one or more acres of publicly owned land. City Council approved these changes in fall 2019.

- 1.7** Improvements implemented in City facilities include a Building Automation System (BAS) at City Hall and the Robert A. Lee and Mercer Recreation Centers along with a new boiler system and HVAC work. A BAS, now in 11 City facilities, allows staff to monitor and optimally operate the building HVAC systems with the intent of lowering energy use and costs.

Approximately 2,400 bulbs at City facilities were converted to LED lights since September 2018. These projects include parking ramp stairwells and office areas, the Transit building, the household hazardous waste room at the Landfill, Cable TV offices, an IT server room, the MPO offices, and exterior lighting at City Hall, the Equipment shop, the Parks shop, the Napoleon baseball fields, and the Refuse building. Additional indoor pool and outdoor LED lighting conversion is planned at Mercer Recreation Center.

City staff have been tracking municipal natural gas and electricity utility data for the past 11 years, but a more effective software program was purchased in 2018 to analyze facility data with the intent of prioritizing energy efficiency improvements. The City actively monitors utility usage and prioritizes energy efficiency projects at City facilities.



Transportation

**Action
2.1**

A community-wide Transportation study conducted by Nelson Nygaard is in progress. The study has already incorporated significant community engagement in determining possible routes, services, and other factors that could lead to greater use of the City's transit services. The consultant team and staff conducted several open houses and used digital platforms to collect feedback and present route and transit amenities. The study will be complete in summer 2020, and staff is planning for how to roll out improvements selected by the community.

2.2

The City vehicle fleet now has three electric utility vehicles, five electric passenger cars with a sixth arriving soon, and three hybrid vehicles, with two more on order. Free electric vehicle charging stations are available for public use at Capitol St, Dubuque St., Court St, Harrison St, and Chauncey Swan parking ramps. Further, Transportation Services spent 2019 researching and actively investigating options for electric buses and applied for a grant for the purchase of an electric bus.

Iowa City is leading other communities and planning agencies in Eastern Iowa in the implementation of a grant from The Iowa Economic Development Authority to create a local readiness plan for electric vehicles. The project includes the recommendation of practices cities can undertake to promote the integration of electric vehicles in our community, including policy and code changes and incentives. A request for consultant proposals was released in January 2020 and the project should commence in spring 2020.

Climate Action and Adaptation Plan Progress Highlights (*continued*)

- 2.3** Between 2018 and 2019, bike lanes were striped on 1st Ave (Bradford to Hwy 6), Dodge and Governor Streets (Burlington to Summit), Mormon Trek Blvd (Hwy 6 to Melrose), Clinton (Benton to Church), Dodge (Governor to Kirkwood), Foster Rd (Dubuque to Prairie Du Chien), and Camp Cardinal Blvd. McCollister Rd construction (Gilbert to Sycamore) will be started in 2020, with bicycle facilities installed at the completion of the project. The Southeast side of Iowa City will see new bicycle facilities in 2020 on Keokuk, Southgate, Sandusky, and Taylor, and due to significant University of Iowa construction, Madison St. (Burlington to Market) is likely to be added in 2021. These new bicycle facilities continue to make safe pedestrian and bicycle connections throughout town, reducing necessary car trips.

Two Climate Action Grants issued in 2018 encouraged bicycling and bicycle education. Iowa City Bike Library and Neighborhood Centers of Johnson County partnered to offer 60 helmets, light safety equipment, and refurbished used bicycles to children who were enrolled in after-school bicycle safety programming with the Neighborhood Centers of Johnson County. Pedals for People was made possible through a partnership between United Nations Association of Johnson County, Refugee & Immigrant Association, Bicyclist of Iowa City, University of Iowa College of Public Health, and the Iowa City Bicycle Library. The project provided a bicycle, safety equipment, and basic bicycle maintenance and bike safety for participants sent from the Refugee & Immigrant Association.

- 2.7** Refuse and Engineering staff worked with the City's GIS platform to devise a revised plan for Refuse truck routing. Solid Waste, Recycling, and Organics pickup have had standard routes for years, adding streets to routes as neighborhoods were built out throughout Iowa City. In early 2019, staff modified all routes to rebalance the number of stops, and reduce excess vehicle miles traveled, all while keeping resident pickups on the same day of the week. Staff is monitoring impacts of this change. Additionally, City staff implemented an idling reduction policy for non-emergency City fleet cars in summer 2019 and is monitoring fuel and carbon emissions savings.



Waste

Action 3.1

Code changes made in 2017 require that recycling must be available to multi-family residential buildings with 4 or more units. In some cases, groups of buildings may share nearby recycling and solid waste locations but all must have it available near the building. City staff is working on increasing proper use of these containers, and will be pursuing more clear signage and additional recycling education.

3.2

Large, 95-gallon recycling containers were distributed to all Iowa City residential customers in late 2018 and early 2019. The bulk of the 95-gallon organics carts requested by residents followed after the recycling carts. Additional organics cart purchases were made during 2019 to keep up with high resident demand. In addition to increased communications with residents, the larger carts also inspired a larger volume of recyclables and yard waste/organics for pick up.

City recycling collection experienced an impressive 45% increase in curbside recycling volumes between 2017 and 2019. Staff believes this surge in recycling is an outcome from the 2017 ban on landfilled cardboard and from increased use of the 95 gallon containers. Curbside organics collection saw even more growth with the use of larger containers,

Climate Action and Adaptation Plan Progress Highlights (*continued*)

resulting in an increase of 94.5% between 2017 and 2019. The diversion of these materials from the landfill maintains future available space in the landfill, reducing some long-term costs, and yard and food waste collection provides abundant fresh compost materials for use in the community, reducing the amount of landfill-sourced methane

3.3 City Climate Action Grants were awarded in 2019 to Houses into Homes and to Salvage Barn, for diversion of community-donated household items and donated housing construction materials from the landfill. These items either furnish homes of families and individuals in need and/or transitioning out of homelessness in Iowa City and nearby communities, or provide a valuable resource for community members to find vintage, historic, or useful home repair materials, rather than buying new. These grants supported storage and shelving space, as well as technology to help organize donations, deliveries, and inventory. In late 2019, Houses into Homes requested an additional \$25,000 directly from City Council and was granted funding to keep the organization in operation. A portion (\$10,000) of these funds will be paid from a state solid waste management grant, applied for by City Resource Management staff.

Two Climate Action Grants were awarded in 2018 for diversion of waste. One small grant went to a panelist addressing “fast fashion” for Flyover Fest attendees, and the other was issued to partners STEAM Fab Lab, NISAA African Family Services and Home Ec. for a sewing cooperative project that provided job skill training, childcare, transportation as participants learned to reuse materials for grocery bags, feminine hygiene products, and others.

3.4 Work on an education campaign for diversion of construction materials is in progress. Recycling and reuse workshops headed by the Resource Management Division were held throughout 2019.

3.5 Staff rolled out compost programs at five City facilities and the program is popular. Adding composting to additional facilities is in discussion.

3.6 Staff is engaged in a methane-capture study for the Landfill and Waste Water Treatment Facility. An RFP for consultant study on the Landfill and Waste Water Facility was awarded in fall 2019 with a completion goal by spring 2020. The study outcome will provide options for the City to mitigate, harness, or productively use methane emissions from these two facilities.
3.7



Adaptation

Action
4.1
4.2

The Urban Sustainability Directors Network (USDN) awarded grant funding to hire a full-time fellow over summer 2019 to further equity and sustainability work and Iowa City was one of seven communities nationally chosen to host an Equity and Diversity Fellow. The scope of work in Iowa City is focused on outreach and getting a better sense of the needs of underserved and under-represented communities who may be disproportionately impacted by climate change. A final report is anticipated in spring 2020.

4.4 The City approved the adoption of the Johnson County Emergency Management Agency Hazard Mitigation Plan in May 2019. Staff provided information to the County and their consultant as the Plan was developed to ensure inclusion of climate-sensitive issues. The City will continue to cooperate with other agencies and communicate this through the planned climate communications plan.

Climate Action and Adaptation Plan Progress Highlights (*continued*)

- 4.5** A new Stormwater Technician position is being recruited in early 2020. This person will assist the Stormwater Engineer facilitate neighborhood stormwater projects and residential stormwater management assistant programs. Additionally, in 2019, the City added an Assistant Parks Superintendent to support management of natural areas maintenance. City-owned natural areas, like Riverfront Crossings Park, sequester carbon, reduce runoff, and help control flooding. The City has made and will continue to make progress in maintaining these areas with help from the position changes.

A 2018 Climate Action Grant was issued to the Iowa Institute of Hydraulic Research (IIHR) and University of Iowa College of Engineering for a comprehensive bathymetric survey of the Terry Trueblood Lake bed geometry. This data makes it possible for engineers and scientists to develop an adaptation plan that will enhance the lake as habitat for fish and other wildlife and improve water quality.

- 4.6** In addition to the 1,500 trees that have been planted in the past three years, approximately 75 trees will be planted in 2020 to buffer the railroad along 420th St. By expanding the public tree canopy, these trees will assist in eliminating CO₂ from the air, reducing stormwater runoff, removing air pollutants and providing shade for years to come. Additional discussions with Project Green are underway, to establish programs to substantially increase public and private tree plantings.



Sustainable Lifestyle

Action 5.1

Backyard Abundance was awarded a Climate Action Grant to fund “garden gurus” at the Edible Classroom, Wetherby Park Edible Forest, and Chadek Green Community Garden. In summer 2019, gardening experts were available at regularly scheduled hours to assist gardeners and answer gardening questions while educating about the benefits of climate-friendly gardens.

5.2

In 2019, the City rented 221 community garden plots in varying sizes. In 2020, Creekside Park will add a community orchard of approximately 26 fruit-bearing plantings (6 trees; 20 bushes), Walden Pond will add 10-15 plots, and Chadek Green will be reconfigured to include varying garden sizes and additional pathways. In addition to increasing community gardens and gardening programs, the City issued a \$45,000 grant to Field to Family in support of starting a local food hub.

The City awarded 2019 Climate Action Grants to the Women, Food & Agriculture Network to match aspiring women farmers with seasoned farm mentors in the Iowa City area, to the Iowa Valley Resource Conservation and Development for a “Community Food Sovereignty Initiative”. The projects support local farmers in the Iowa City area and identify food preferences of immigrant and low-income community members finding it challenging to access familiar and affordable produce. The University of Iowa Student Governments were also awarded a 2019 Climate Action Grant for a “Local Foods Passport” project, encouraging students and community members to try plant-rich menu items and get local produce at the Iowa City Farmer’s Market.

5.3

A 2018 Climate Action Grant was awarded to a partnership between Iowa Interfaith Power & Light, First United Methodist, First Presbyterian and Wesley Student Center. This non-denominational educational and active-participant forum was held on a rotating basis at

Climate Action and Adaptation Plan Progress Highlights (*continued*)

faith-based community spaces. The series focused on programs to assist Iowa City residents in reducing their contribution to climate change, including reducing energy use through commitment to a year-long program, examining how food choices can have an impact on climate, and learning about how our “stuff” contributes to climate change.

- 5.5** Willowwind School has been awarded a Climate Action Grant for their “Children-to-Children Climate Actions: Composting, Gardening, Infiltrating, and Growing Healthy” project. The year-long program will further integrate environmental education. Kids at the school will have learning experiences in the classroom and also create materials, productions, and presentations to be shared with the public – primarily other children - in community spaces.
- 5.6** City staff has been developing a voluntary “Climate Action at Work” recognition and energy benchmarking program for businesses and organizations in Iowa City. Efforts to pilot energy tracking have started with several local organizations. These examples from a variety of business and building types will provide support for further rollout of this important program.
- 5.7** In 2019, the City staff-led Climate Action Committee began development of an internal sustainable operations guide. Ultimately, this guide will be available as a template for use by outside organizations that want to establish their own sustainable operations plan.



This summer, the Iowa City Public Library got rid of late fines from books in their children and young adult collections. That means young readers like those shown above can checkout books without fear of incurring a late fee.

7

Advance Social Justice and Racial Equity

- a. Support organizations and efforts that provide services to people experiencing and recovering from trauma and crisis related to mental health and substance abuse
- b. Consider a policy to limit city business to vendors that pay all employees a wage of \$10.10 or higher
- c. Explore expanded use of a racial equity toolkit within City government, embedding it within city department and Council levels
- d. Consider elevating hourly staff wages to \$15/hour or more within two years



Advance Social Justice and Racial Equity

Accomplishment Updates

7a **Activities supporting individuals experiencing trauma or homelessness**

Council budgeted funds to be active partners in the Johnson County Behavioral Access Center planning. The County has purchased land for the project in Iowa City, and zoning amendments were approved by Council in 2019. A 28E agreement is still being finalized. Cross Park Place, the FUSE housing first initiative opened its doors to 24 low-barrier apartments in early 2019. The project, backed with data from the Police Department's Data Driven Justice Initiative has provided stable housing for a population with challenges often addressed through emergency services or detention. Continued use of the Police Department's crisis intervention training paired with health, counseling, and housing services at Cross Park Place have led to a significant decrease in related calls for service.



Members of the Iowa City Police Department attend Crisis Intervention Training.

Aid to Agencies

City Council responded to a request from the Housing and Community Development Commission to increase the FY2020 budget allocation to the Aid to Agencies grant program. Council approved for a single year, \$625,000, to fully fund requests made by Legacy local service agencies. In summer 2019, the City Manager's Office held meetings with a group of Legacy agencies to discuss the needs of the agencies to plan appropriately for the Aid to Agencies budget in FY2021. Council reviewed the Legacy and Emerging Aid to Agencies funding process at a Work Session and responded to HCDC's request to meet jointly and discuss increasing the base level of funding for the Aid to Agencies program. City Council met with the Commission members during their January 21, 2020 Work Session and subsequently approved FY2021 funds at \$675,000.

The Social Justice and Racial Equity Grants program has grown in popularity and funding amount. The Human Rights Commission was tasked in FY2020 to allocate \$75,000 in grants to community organizations furthering social justice and racial equity. This year, sixteen groups, most of them requesting funding for the first time, asked for over \$186,000 in funding. Ultimately seven were awarded funds, supports ranging from workforce and labor, immigrants, youth, and individuals returning from incarceration.

7b **Policy of preference for vendors paying above minimum wage**

Staff provided an introductory memo to Council in May 2019, regarding options for a vendor wage policy. Council concluded on May 21, 2019, that the City should develop a wage preference policy that gives additional credit to local vendors



Advance Social Justice and Racial Equity



City staff participate in GARE implicit bias training in March 2019.

Accomplishment Updates

paying an hourly wage of \$10.10 or more. The Finance Department has addressed this within a revised purchasing policy.

7c Equity Toolkit use

The Human Rights and Equity Office has led most City departments through use of the equity toolkit. This resource took the departments through a process of evaluating current and potential programs and services, to assess for equity. Post-process, departments have continued to integrate these practices into daily operations and decision-making. Examples include Revenue's implemented utility discount program, Neighborhood and Development Services' assessment of housing program options for the South District, Parks and Recreation evaluation of community garden locations, and the Iowa City Public Library's adoption of fine waivers for late children's materials.

Implicit bias trainings

City staff have been active participants in a variety of trainings, including Government Alliance for Racial Equity (GARE), and police department trainings. The Iowa City Fire Department took this interest a step farther and conducted three implicit bias trainings led and for ICFD employees. Staff has been encouraged by open dialogue on how they're managing issues specific to the Iowa City community and emergency services.

Increased City minimum wage

A cost analysis was provided to Council for a Work Session discussion on Sept. 18, 2018. Council gave direction to increase minimum starting wage for hourly and temporary employees to \$11.50 per hour, beginning July 1, 2019. The FY2021 budget proposes another hourly wage increase to \$13.25. Further annual increases will be reviewed each year, with an end goal of reaching \$15/hr by July 1, 2021.

Approved new ordinance addressing hate crimes

In April 2019, the City Attorney's Office was contacted by University of Iowa law students under the supervision of Law Professor Daria Fisher Page. The students had been retained by the Johnson County Interfaith Coalition (JCIC) "to work with its Safe Communities Task Force to create ordinance proposals that could address the increased frequency of hate crimes and hate incidents in Iowa City." Since April, the City Attorney and Chief of Police met with the students and JCIC to discuss proposals and identify a solution that is supported legally and by law enforcement. The ordinance, approved in summer 2019, was crafted using the State of Iowa harassment statute and state hate crimes ordinance. As passed, the ordinance makes a hate crime of harassment or trespass with intent to harass because of a person's protected characteristic. Hate crime under this definition will be an enforceable offense which includes a fine and jail time for each incident.