

Our CR

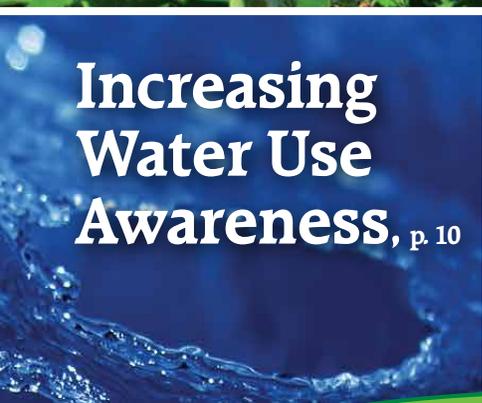
Living 5 Seasons



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Inside!

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CITY OF CEDAR RAPIDS
City Manager's Office
101 1st Street SE
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52401

iGreenCR
investing in Cedar Rapids' next generation

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About Our CR Magazine

Our CR magazine is published four times a year by the City of Cedar Rapids, Iowa. It is distributed to over 66,500 households and businesses in Cedar Rapids, Robins, Hiawatha and surrounding communities that benefit from City services.

The magazine is printed by Walsworth Publishing of Michigan because the company provided the lowest bid in a competitive bidding process with local and national printing companies. Each magazine costs approximately \$60,000 to design, produce, print and mail, which means each edition costs about 90 cents per household or business location. Our generous advertisers offset a portion of those costs.

Contact the City Manager's Office at **319-286-5080** or **CityManager@Cedar-Rapids.org** about this publication. To read previous editions, visit **www.CityofCR.com/Magazine**.



From the City Manager



The City of Cedar Rapids is a community focused on sustainability. Encouraging sustainable practices and creating long term solutions is engrained in our organizational culture, and is a key focus for every City department.

In an effort to demonstrate our continuing commitment to making Cedar Rapids a more sustainable community, the City launched the iGreenCR initiative to invite a joint effort for a wider impact. The "i" represents our City's investment in making more sustainable choices, as well as the commitment made by each individual to making more sustainable decisions in daily lives.

One key element of iGreenCR focuses on Community Development. This element took center stage over the last several months as we created our City's comprehensive plan, EnvisionCR, which was finalized and adopted by council in January. The goals set forth in the comprehensive plan will serve as a blueprint for prioritization, funding considerations, and long-term city planning – all emphasizing the importance of creating ongoing sustainable, renewable, practices.

In this issue, you will learn more about EnvisionCR, iGreenCR, and many more projects and programs currently underway. None of these initiatives would be possible without the collaboration and participation of the community we serve. Witnessing our citizens' enthusiastic engagement as we blaze new trails has been energizing and inspiring. I look forward to continuing to build on the momentum, and working with each and every one of you as we improve our community for today and for the next generation.

Jeffrey Pomeranz
 Jeffrey Pomeranz
 Cedar Rapids City Manager



Like it then love it

A mortgage loan that builds in money for home improvements.

Here's how it works:

- ✓ We take into account the value of the house
- ✓ Look at the value increase with proposed home improvements
- ✓ Provide financing for your purchase and potential all at once

Contact the Home Team, today!
 319-395-6454 or www.collinscu.org

Take that bag and stuff it!

Plastic grocery bags ARE recyclable.
 Look for the drop site container labeled **PLASTIC BAGS** at these locations:

Cedar Rapids/Linn County Solid Waste Agency
 ▶ 2250 A Street SW, Cedar Rapids
 ▶ 1954 County Home Road, Marion

Republic Services
 ▶ 901 Ingleside Drive, Cedar Rapids

Recycle More. More Stuff. More Often. More Places.
RecycleMoreLinnCounty.com

Join the iGreenCR TEAM and Ditch Your Doses at the Police Station.

Medications that are improperly disposed of can enter and stay in our water supply.

Keep our water clean by properly disposing of your old medications. Drop them into the secure drop box in the vestibule of the Cedar Rapids Police Department at 505 1st Street SW.

iGreenCR

investing in Cedar Rapids' next generation

Do U?

www.iGreenCR.com www.facebook.com/iGreenCR

iGreenCR Nine Initiatives for a Sustainable Community

iGreenCR TEAM

The iGreenCR team welcomes all residents to join and create a more sustainable and greener community! The City of Cedar Rapids contributes to the team by investing in more sustainable practices. You can contribute by taking the individual actions identified in each iGreenCR initiative or by taking the monthly team challenge. Below is an overview of each iGreenCR element. You can learn more by visiting the City's website at iGreenCR.com.



Forestry protects and maintains Cedar Rapids' urban forest. Trees can reduce air and noise pollution, conserve water, reduce soil erosion, save energy, enhance landscapes, and much more.



Energy Management implements cost-saving, energy-efficient measures throughout City facilities, in addition to educating and assisting the community with their own energy-saving activities.



Water Wise implements cost-saving, water-efficient measures throughout City facilities, in addition to educating and assisting the community with their own water-saving activities.



Bike CR encourages residents to bike for fun, fitness, and transportation by developing safe and convenient bicycle access to all parts of the community.



CR Transit provides reliable, affordable, and environmentally friendly bus service to the residents of Cedar Rapids, Marion, and Hiawatha.



Stormwater works to reduce the volume of stormwater runoff by implementing practices designed to reduce runoff and convey less polluted water into our creeks.



Clean Up CR provides residents and organizations with the resources to keep Cedar Rapids a clean, healthy place to live. This includes programs like curbside recycling, litter collection efforts, cleaning the Cedar River, illegal dumping enforcement, and nuisance structure demolition.



Parks & Gardens provide opportunities for residents to engage with their natural environment and focuses on land conservation. Cedar Rapids' parkland helps maintain biological diversity, improve water quality, provide wildlife corridors, and create recreation opportunities.



Placemaking ensures new building projects meet or exceed the City requirements to manage stormwater runoff, tree preservation and replacement, street tree plantings, and other environmental factors.

It's More Than Shade



While people often think of buildings, roads and power supplies as the infrastructure of a city, its urban canopy is a necessary component to sustainability. To demonstrate the importance of trees in Cedar Rapids, Trees Forever, in partnership with the Holloway Family Environmental Trust, worked with the Coe College Biology Department to conduct tree inventories and estimate the impact of the urban forest. With the support of Marilyn Magid, they determined that Cedar Rapids has an estimated 35,000 publicly maintained street trees.

They used i-Tree software developed by the USDA Forest Service, along with Geographic Information System (GIS) technology, to put the trees and City budget to the test to determine if the benefits of Cedar Rapids public trees outweighed the costs. "Our studies concluded that for every \$1 spent on trees, taxpayers received \$4 back in public benefits," said Shannon Ramsay, founding President and CEO of Trees Forever.

The Forestry division spent \$1.2 million annually on pest management, tree planting, removal, maintenance, and canopy management. In return, the analysis determined that the community received \$5 million in air quality, energy savings, carbon sequestration (removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere), storm water retention, increased property values and reduced water treatment benefits.

"We know that the value of trees is substantial. It is essential that we are good stewards of the trees we have and that we replace any

that are removed to maintain these benefits for the public," said Cedar Rapids City Forestry Todd Fagan.

The study also determined the composition of street trees in Cedar Rapids. Ash trees represent approximately 28 percent, or 10,000 of Cedar Rapids' street trees. With Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) devastating states like Michigan and Illinois, and found in many counties across Iowa, a loss of a large percentage of ash trees would have devastating economic, environmental and social impacts.

City staff have been preparing for EAB for ten years by planting a more diverse stock of trees – which would reduce the impacts felt during an infestation – and removing trees that met DNR criteria. In addition, forestry crews have been trained on EAB identification, and inspect every ash tree they remove that show signs or symptoms of a possible EAB infestation. Public meeting and educational opportunities have been held over the past three years. Current prevention and protection plans are posted on the City's website at: CityofCR.com/EAB. •

The Parks and Recreation Department will receive grants from Alliant Energy and Trees Forever for over \$14,000 in tree projects in 2015.



Additional EAB information can be found at:

- EmeraldAshBorer.info
- The Department of Natural Resources: Iowadnr.gov/Environment/Forestry/ForestHealth/EmeraldAshBorer.aspx
- The Iowa State University Extension Service website is: Extension.IAState.edu/pme/EmeraldAshBorer.html



Community Tree Programs

Alliant Energy's Operation ReLeaf program offers residential utility customers in Iowa the opportunity to purchase landscape trees at discount prices. The trees, which retail for \$65 to \$125, are sold at Operation ReLeaf events for \$25 each. For more information go to: Alliantenergy.comCommunityInvolvement/CommunityOutreach/OperationReLeaf/index.htm.



Mid American Energy's Plant Some Shade® program also provides customers and homeowners high-quality landscape trees at discounted prices. These trees, ranging from 3 to 8 feet in height and selected by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, are offered for \$30 each during spring and fall Plant Some Shade events. For more information to to: MidAmericanEnergy.com/ee/ia_res_trees.aspx.

Benefits of Trees

An urban forest can reduce annual storm water runoff by 2 to 7 percent, and a mature tree can store 50 to 100 gallons of water during large storms.

Street trees prolong the life of pavement. **Shaded roads can save up to 60% of repaving costs.**

Shoppers will travel further and longer to visit a district with high quality trees, and spend more time there once they arrive.

Planting big enough trees and earth berms can cut traffic noise by up to half.

The presence of trees in a suburban landscape significantly reduced the cruising speed of drivers by an average of 3 miles per hour. Faster drivers and slower drivers both drove slower with the presence of trees.

In buildings near trees, people report significantly better relations with their neighbors

Apartment buildings with high levels of greenery had 52 percent fewer crimes than those without any trees. Buildings with medium amounts of greenery had 42 percent fewer crimes.



Amphitheater Prairie

A prairie is a type of grassland with deep and extensive root systems. They are made up of mostly perennial plants and are generally classified by the height of the dominant grasses. The dense network of roots is very efficient at holding soil in place. Prairies also increase beneficial insects that perform an ecosystem service and create a habitat for wildlife and songbirds.

Forward thinking Parks and Recreation departments are now including native prairie into both natural and formal landscapes. The restoration or establishment of these native grasses and wildflowers serves to capture runoff, filter sediment and chemicals, and reduce the use of pesticides and fertilizers. It also enhances urban wildlife diversity, lowers maintenance expenses, assists with waterfowl overpopulation, and enhances the aesthetics of a park.



Volunteers help plant prairie grass along the riverfront.

conduct controlled burns along the Sac & Fox Greenway. Burns allow for the conversion of the ITC easement from non-native cool season grass and brush to warm season prairie. Controlled burns prepare the soil for seeding prairie and maintain the ecosystem into the future.

Each year native prairie seed is collected during October through a partnership with the Indian Creek Nature Center and Linn County Conservation and Secondary Roads. Harvests have resulted in the annual collection of up to 175 pounds of native seed saving the City from purchasing prairie mixes ranging in cost from \$25.00 to \$150.00 per pound.

With the assistance of partner organizations and volunteers, the Parks and Recreation Department has focused on establishing prairie landscapes throughout the park system. Prairies currently cover over 4 million square feet of Cedar Rapids parks. They have been planted at the Cedar River Trail, Beverly Park, Huntington Ridge Park, Squaw Creek Park and the Prairie Park Fishery among others. Seasons of color and texture can be viewed year round from vivid summer wildflower displays to more muted dormant aesthetics during the winter.

To identify and plan for prairie restoration, the Parks and Recreation and Information Technology Departments have developed accurate GIS mapping layers for areas currently in prairie, or that are mowed within the park system. The layers will be useful to visually represent strategic conversion options of regularly mowed acreage to either native prairie or simply a low mow management program. This tool will be beneficial in communicating mowing conversion plans as they are determined in the future.

Parks staff trained in wild fire management, in coordination with the Cedar Rapids Fire Department,

Urban Prairies Achieve Sustainability Goals



Before Iowa was settled, prairies covered most of the state and central United States. More than 95 percent of tall grass prairies that developed more than 10,000 years ago have slowly disappeared.

Prairies are important because there is almost no erosion from land covered with prairie vegetation. Incorporating prairie into a watershed can reduce periods of peak water flow and increase the amount of water held in the soil.

Squaw Creek Prairie

To Incorporate Prairie Into Your Landscaping

- Residents are allowed to use low growing varieties of prairie grass.
- Implementation of private prairie landscapes must be planned carefully and well maintained.
- They cannot create a fire hazard, encroach on the right of way or neighbor's property, be invasive or cause sight obstructions.
- It cannot have non-purposefully planted trees, noxious weeds or vines.



Find more information at:

- IndianCreekNatureCenter.org/Sustainability/Land/Restoring-the-Land/
- Iowadnr.gov/Environment/LandStewardship/PrairieResourceCenter.aspx





Cedar Rapids Leads Project to Improve Watershed

Cedar Rapids City leaders recently announced the launching of a \$4.3 million project focused on improving water quality, water quantity and soil health in the Cedar River Watershed. The project will be possible thanks to funding from the USDA's Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) and community partners.

Led by the City of Cedar Rapids, the Middle Cedar Partnership Project (MCPP) will focus on working with

local conservation partners, farmers and landowners to install best management practices to help improve the Cedar River Watershed.

Project partners will provide outreach to producers and landowners to enhance the adoption of conservation practices on 13,400 acres, including planting of cover crops, nutrient management, bioreactors, saturated buffers, wetland creation, and wetland easements. A primary focus of the

project is producer education on the benefits of less widely adopted conservation practices that hold promise for improved soil health and nutrient reduction. •

For more information about the Middle Cedar Partnership Project, visit www.cedar-rapids.org. To learn more about other RCPP projects, visit www.ia.nrcs.usda.gov.



Biking Toward Healthier, More Sustainable Communities



Residents have more opportunity than ever before to successfully integrate cycling habits into their daily lives. With the addition of more on-street biking facilities and locations to safely store bikes downtown, it's never been easier to enjoy biking.

While biking may seem specific to just one iGreenCR initiative, it plays a crucial role in supporting other initiatives throughout the city, including placemaking, connectivity, and supporting a healthy lifestyle. As residents continue to express an interest in being able to connect to more areas by car or by bike, City engineers and planners work together to determine how to integrate sidewalks and bike accommodations whenever possible on road improvement projects – one of the standards in the City's newly adopted Complete Streets policy.

The benefits of a biking community extend far further than just to the individual powering the pedals. Biking communities enjoy being able to more easily recruit a younger workforce, benefit from the sustainability side effects of less cars on the road, and enjoy the benefits of a more active and healthy community. A simple 15 minute commute by bike to work



Last year, Cedar Rapids became the first in the state to put down permanent green bike lanes, installing them downtown at 3rd Street and 3rd Avenue. The green lanes call attention to the intersection, the area where cars and bikes are most likely to conflict, and provide bright, designated lanes for cyclists. In addition to the green lanes, residents also saw the addition of

several new bike racks and a bike corral downtown, casting a clear vision for a bike-friendly district.

This summer, on-street bikeways are being considered on segments of Boyson Road as well as 3rd St SE, with off-street trails coming to Edgewood Rd from O Ave to the Ellis Trail. These new facilities will provide key connectors to residential areas, schools, and areas of employment. These segments will serve as important connection routes as the City works to increase the opportunity for residents to choose from a variety of transportation methods to meet their needs and help support a healthy and active lifestyle. •

Where would you like to connect by way of bike lane? Join the discussion on CRTalks.com.

Placemaking Contributes to Vibrant Communities



City planning is more than just zoning – it's an effort to organize amenities that encourage walkability and create a unique sense of place.



Health, well-being, and social opportunities are integral components to a vibrant and sustainable community. Placemaking plays a large role in bringing groups of people together in a shared community identity, and the City continues to look for ways to grow these opportunities and create attractive and accessible neighborhoods.

As part of public outreach for EnvisionCR, City planners spent months hearing from the community and asking what residents want Cedar Rapids to look like in years to come. Overwhelmingly, residents have a desire for social spaces and enhanced opportunities to interact with each

other. These spaces are identified by their variety of activities and aesthetic elements, and are accessible for all residents, whether you choose to walk, ride a bike, or take a car.

For the City, this means ensuring that ordinances and development criteria support the vision of the community; crafting policies that promote mixed-use development and encourage areas that are more walkable and liveable. For residents, this means you'll start to see more pedestrian-friendly development, with front doors close and accessible to the sidewalk, and more sidewalk development in residential areas. You'll also see continued emphasis on creating

gathering spaces similar to the area at NewBo City Market. This creates vibrancy and enhances the experience. It has helped promote the NewBo area as a place with things to do, places to shop, areas to live, and music and food to enjoy – all within a walkable neighborhood.

With the Complete Streets policy now also formally adopted, planning and connectivity will go hand in hand. Streets tie a community together, so ensuring the street network supports all users – pedestrian, cyclists, and motorists – will mean more opportunity for residents to travel how they want, where they want. Creating opportunities for people to move in convenient, healthy, and sustainable ways is a key goal as the City continues to develop areas that build a sense of place and community. •

Walkability and connectivity play a big role in placemaking. Where would you like to see sidewalks improved or added? Leave your comments at CRTalks.com.





CR Transit Keeps Moving Forward



City Manager Jeff Pomeranz shares information on the City's new transit mobile app during the dedication of the new Ground Transportation Center last November.

Cedar Rapids Transit is making it easier than ever for customers to opt for public transportation – a greener, more sustainable way to travel. With the dedication of the Ground Transportation Center last fall and a mobile app launching soon, citizens have more opportunity than ever to elect taking a bus instead of a personal vehicle.

The fully renovated Ground Transportation Center was dedicated last November, marking yet another

milestone in Cedar Rapids' flood recovery efforts. The new depot no longer requires buses to back out into traffic, and offers a safer, more convenient place for patrons to access public transportation.

With 22 new buses added to the City's fleet in the last five years, CR Transit is setting its sights toward the next goal: offering a mobile app designed to give patrons up-to-the-minute information on when the bus will arrive. The app

will allow customers to text a request for immediate real-time information on their route, and offers a map that seamlessly displays bus location and arrival time.

The goal is to make it as easy as possible for residents to receive, at the touch of a button, information on how they could access a bus – creating more opportunity to grow ridership and decrease the number of vehicles on the road.

Behind the scenes, the app will be able to provide valuable information on routes and driving times, and will serve as an additional management tool to increase efficiency.

Residents can look for the app this spring, which will be accessible on the City's website: CityofCR.com/Transit. Are there barriers that are keeping you from trying out public transportation? Let us know at CRTalks.com. •



Being Wise with Water



While the industrial sector consumes the largest amount of water in Cedar Rapids, residents play a huge role in sustaining environmental solutions that focus on conservation. With the help from a grant from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, the City is aiming to encourage citizens to reduce water consumption and increase awareness and participation of this important sustainability initiative.

The campaign this spring will focus on three tiers: reduce water use in toilets, reduce water use for irrigation, and enhance educational outreach. Every resident concerned with environmental issues and sustainability is a member of the iGreenCR team, and will play a valuable role in this campaign's continued success!



Many Reasons For Picking Up Litter

Did you know that litter clean up in the United States costs more than \$11.5 billion each year? In addition to the actual clean-up costs, there are other compelling consequences:

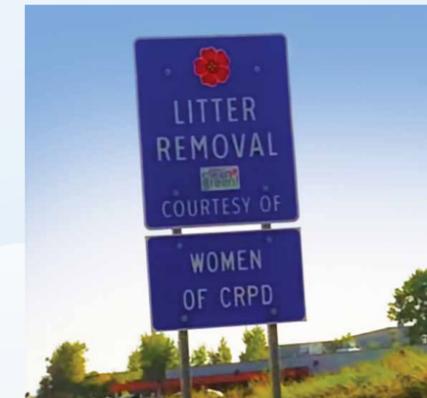
63% of business development officials say that litter impacts a company's decision to locate to a community.

93% of homeowners say a littered neighborhood decreases their assessment of a home's value and influences their decision to purchase a property.

55% of realtors think that litter reduces a property value by 9 percent.

66% of property appraisers would reduce a home's value if it was a littered area.

Damaged ecosystems and polluted waterways, injuries to wildlife, and even possible injuries to human health can result from the accumulation of litter.



The good news is that many people are making an effort to keep Cedar Rapids beautiful by picking up litter and making sure we have a clean and visually appealing community with clean streets and roads, clean sidewalks and gutters, clean and attractive businesses, and attractive venues.

City Manager Jeff Pomeranz is challenging every citizen to collect at least one bag of litter this year to help clean up the community. Citizens may pick up a 1-Bag Challenge kit and gather

dye tabs, and report the findings. The students will then calculate the percentage of toilets with leaks and the amount of water and money that can be saved by replacing their toilet with high efficiency toilets. •

Want to learn more about rebate opportunities, educational outreach, and how you can help conserve our water? Visit iGreenCR.com. You can also let us know the creative techniques you've used to help conserve water, at CRTalks.com.

litter from your neighborhood, around your workplace, or wherever you see the need. The kits are available at Cedar Rapids Hy-Vee Food or Hy-Vee Drug Store customer service counters, or at City Hall and other City locations.

City Manager's 1BAG CHALLENGE

There are many City departments making an extra effort to work together and help keep Cedar Rapids clean. **The "Women of the CRPD" adopted a section of U.S. Interstate 380 as part of the "Adopt-A-Highway" program.** Others participate in city-wide clean-up events held during the year. You can help by remembering to always dispose of garbage properly, taking the City Manager's 1-Bag Challenge, and encouraging your friends and family to do the same. Even small efforts can make a big difference in keeping our community clean and beautiful. •





LEED, or Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design, is a green building certification program that recognizes best-in-class building strategies and practices. Building projects satisfy prerequisites and earn points to achieve different levels of certification. LEED certified buildings save money and resources while promoting renewable, clean energy.

Central Fire Station is Elite Amongst Fire Stations With LEED Platinum Certification



The Central Fire Station, which serves as the headquarters for the Cedar Rapids Fire Department, is LEED Platinum certified. The Central Fire Station at 713 1st Avenue SE is the largest fire station in the United States to earn LEED Platinum certification. There are nine other Platinum fire stations, but the Cedar Rapids location is the largest at 67,140 square feet and the only one used as a main fire station in a community.

The Central Fire Station achieved LEED Platinum certification for energy use, lighting, water and material use as well as incorporating a variety of other sustainable strategies. By using less energy and water, LEED certified buildings save money for families, businesses and

taxpayers; reduce greenhouse gas emissions; and contribute to a healthier environment for residents, workers and the larger community.

The LEED Platinum certification was established by the U.S. Green Building Council and verified by the Green Building Certification Institute (GBCI). LEED is the nation's preeminent program for the design, construction and operation of high performance green buildings.

“The Central Fire Station’s LEED certification demonstrates tremendous green building leadership,” said Rick Fedrizzi, President, CEO & Founding Chair, U.S. Green Building Council. **“The urgency of USGBC’s mission has challenged the industry to move faster and reach further than ever before, and the City of Cedar Rapids serves as a prime example with just how much we can accomplish.”**

LEED certification of the Central Fire Station was based on a number of green design and construction features that

positively impact the project and the community. These features include:

- Sustainable site selection – downtown, near bus stops, bicycle storage and changing rooms
- Stormwater quality and quantity control
- Reduced heat island effect due to lightly colored paving and roofing
- Light pollution reduction measures employed
- Water efficiency – no landscape irrigation, water-conserving plumbing fixtures
- Material use – recycling construction waste, using local, recycled, and low-emitting materials

The building was designed to last 75 years or more and has energy cost savings of over 60 percent compared to code-required baselines.

The Project Management Team for the Central Fire Station included the City of Cedar Rapids; Ryan Companies US, Inc.; Miron Construction; and Solum Lang Architects, LLC. •

Library Opens New Chapter in Energy-Efficiency

The Cedar Rapids Public Library located at 450 5th Avenue SE is a LEED Platinum Certified building utilizing energy saving and cost saving features which make it 30 percent more energy efficient than the old building, despite being 9,000 square feet larger. Sustainability was a major focus of the library design and a priority for the Board of Trustees, who oversees the management of the library.



The HVAC system in the new library uses Geothermal Heat Exchange that substantially reduced overall energy consumption and the cost of operating the library.



The Library is designed to take full advantage of daylight-harvesting techniques while minimizing glare on workstation surfaces through the strategic location of windows, large

overhangs on the first floor, solar light tubes, and exterior sunscreens. The linear indirect lighting fixtures use high-efficiency florescent bulbs that reduce the watts per square foot consumed by the building. The overhead lighting fixtures are also tied to daylight sensors that automatically dim or turn off all overhead lighting fixtures that are not needed to provide adequate illumination to the public spaces and offices of the library during daytime operating hours.

The building has several strategies to manage stormwater on the site. Twenty thousand square feet of the second floor roof is a green roof which is accessible to the public, known as the LivingLearning Roof. The LivingLearning Roof absorbs most of the storm water that would have otherwise entered the storm sewer

through roof drains. The rainwater that falls on the remainder of the roof areas and paved hardscape of the site is directed to underground water-quality vaults through pervious paving to allow it to naturally drain into the soil. The objective is to retain 100 percent of all rainwater that lands on the site from all but an unusually heavy storm and prevent any of it from entering the storm sewer system.

The goal of the Board of Trustees and the Library Design Team was to build a Library that performs as efficiently as possible, both to reduce the environmental impact and to reduce the cost of maintaining the building. •

For more information on the Cedar Rapids Public Library, visit www.crlibrary.org or call (319) 261-READ.



Ditch Your Doses at the Police Department

Do you have unused prescription medications that you want to properly dispose of? The Cedar Rapids Police Department has a drug disposal box located in the entryway of the Police Station at 505 1st Street SW where unused prescription medications can be dropped off.

The drug disposal box allows the public a convenient means of disposing unused medications throughout the year. Using the drug disposal box at the Police Station helps protect the quality of our community's water and can prevent prescription drug misuse and abuse. Traditional methods for disposing of unused medications such as flushing them down the toilet or throwing them in the trash can pose threats to our groundwater. Additionally, leftover medications are highly susceptible to diversion, misuse and abuse. Studies show that a majority of abused

prescription drugs are obtained from family and friends, including the home medicine cabinet.



In addition, the Police Department, in cooperation with the Drug Enforcement Agency, hosts two drop-off events annually. An event in April last year resulted in 52.4 pounds of drugs being turned in and an event on September 27 brought in 57.2 pounds of medications that were properly disposed of.

The public is encouraged to use the drug disposal box throughout the year. This is a convenient way to dispose of medications; more than 300 pounds of unused prescription medication was collected over a recent six-month period.

Liquids and needles or sharps cannot be collected. Medications in pill or patch form are accepted free and anonymously with no questions asked. •

For additional drop-off site locations visit DEA.gov or call 1-800-882-9539.

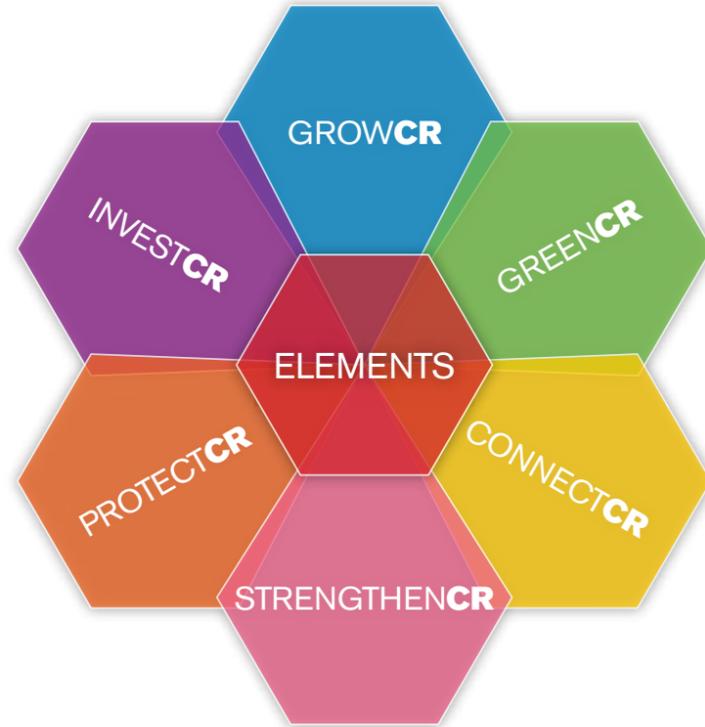
EnvisionCR Formally Adopted

“If you’re not improving, you are falling behind. EnvisionCR is the people’s voice – and these goals reflect their aspirations for a strong and vibrant Cedar Rapids.”

– Cedar Rapids Mayor Ron Corbett

On January 27, 2015, City Council formally adopted the EnvisionCR Comprehensive Plan, setting new goals for City-initiatives across all departments. The goals of EnvisionCR emerged after an intense public outreach campaign to engage residents of all ages and backgrounds, from high-school students to senior executive leadership.

The newly adopted plan will serve as a blueprint for City leaders when making decisions on prioritization, funding, and long-term planning. This plan represents an alignment of the shared vision of the community, with City Council goals and detailed initiatives to achieve them.



EnvisionCR

Your input greatly impacted the scope and direction of the plan. Thank you for your involvement and participation! Please visit CityofCR.com/ComprehensivePlan to view the final product.

Alignment of City Council Goals with EnvisionCR

- StrengthenCR** – Make bold moves in community planning to retain the character of neighborhood and corridors
- GrowCR** – Make bold moves in future planning to encourage sustainable connections of growth areas to existing neighborhoods
- ConnectCR** – Create a culture that enhances transportation options for pedestrians and cyclists through complete streets, trails, and public transportation
- GreenCR** – Buffer and connect existing parks, trails, and streams to build a natural network in addition to regional collaborations and individual efforts to improve stormwater management, water quality, wildlife habitat, and outdoor recreation
- InvestCR** – Make Cedar Rapids a desirable place for businesses to start, move, and grow by leveraging resources to invest in business districts and amenities that keep and attract a skilled workforce
- ProtectCR** – Provide quality services to increase neighborhood safety and keep moving forward with the flood mitigation system
- PromoteCR** – Lead regionally, think Cedar Rapids first by telling our story strategically, emphasizing intergovernmental relations, and branding and marketing the City of Cedar Rapids

EnvisionCR is not a plan that will sit on a shelf now that it has been adopted. It includes 97 identified initiatives that will be completed within the next one to five years. An annual evaluation and review will ensure progress, as well as an opportunity to adapt to the changing conditions and needs of the community. ●

Building for the Future – Flood Control Moves Forward



Plans continue to move forward for one of the community’s most critical initiatives – flood control. City leaders

are committed to the successful development of a Flood Control System that benefits the entire community for generations to come. The system will be designed to convey the 2008 flood flow, reducing flood risk through the heart of Cedar Rapids on both the west and east sides of the river. The system will include a combination of floodwalls and levees, and incorporate elements that reflect our community’s culture, history, and vision.

The City has spent several months seeking community feedback in the hopes of incorporating as much

public input as possible into potential alignment and aesthetic options – options that are anticipated to be finalized later this summer. Residents have provided valuable feedback during several community-wide open houses, and outreach continues online at CRTalks.com and the City’s website, CityofCR.com.

Stay informed on the Flood Control System by signing up for text or email alerts: CityofCR.com/Subscribe. The next public open house on the Flood Control System will be held March 31. Visit CityofCR.com for more details. ●

Paving for Progress Gears up for a Second Summer

What we did this first summer:

Immediate improvements to help keep the overall health of our roads high.

Coming up: A strategic, research-driven plan that includes short, immediate fixes and big picture solutions.

Want to learn more about the data-driven management plan to help prioritize our roads? Visit CityofCR.com/PavingforProgress.



The right treatment, at the right time, to the right road.

Where was Progress Made? Summer 2014 Improvements

- 1) 1st Avenue east from 27th Street to 40th Street
- 2) Oakland Road NE from E Avenue to H Avenue
- 3) Diagonal Drive SW from I-380 to West 8th Avenue bridge
- 4) Broadview Dr. SE from 5022 to Lawndale
- 5) Bever Avenue SE from Memorial Drive to 22nd Street
- 6) Bever Avenue SE from 19th Street to 14th Street
- 7) 19th Street SE from Glenway Dr to Bever Avenue
- 8) Garden Drive SE from Washington Avenue to Grand Avenue
- 9) 3rd Avenue SW from 6th Street to 10th Street
- 10) Edgewood Road SW and Wiley Boulevard SW from 16th Avenue to Williams Boulevard
- 11) Boyson Road NE from C Avenue to Corporate Limits
- 12) Blairs Ferry Rd from East of Miller Road to West City Limits
- 13) 17 Street SW from 1st Avenue to 10th Avenue
- 14) 29th Street Dr SE from 300 to 400 block
- 15) Ellis Lane NW from Ellis Boulevard to 8th Street NW
- 16) Green Valley Drive SE
- 17) Northbrook Drive NE from Boxwood Lane to Laurel Lane
- 18) Prairie Drive at 27th Street NE
- 19) Juhl Drive NE ●

Two-Way Streets On the Horizon

One-way to two-way street conversions have been considered for several years as part of a long-term vision for an accessible and vibrant downtown.

City Council formally adopted a five-year, long term conversion plan. Conversion segments in this five-year plan include:

- 2nd Avenue from 12th Street to 19th Street SE
- 3rd Avenue from 13th Street SW to 19th Street SE
- 4th Avenue SE from 1st Street SE to 19th Street SE
- 5th Avenue SE from 1st Street SE to 19th Street
- 7th Street SE from 4th Avenue SE to 12th Avenue SE
- 8th Street SE from 4th Avenue SE to 12th Avenue SE

2015 Conversion Segments:

- 2nd and 3rd Avenue from 6th Street SW to 1st Street SE
- 4th Avenue SE from 5th Street SE to 19th Street SE
- 7th Street SE from 4th Avenue SE to 12th Avenue SE

Why convert downtown streets?

Two-way streets are an important spoke in the wheel for a walkable, accessible downtown. The shift supports key planning documents, including



Two-way conversions are a long-term vision for a well-connected and easy to navigate community.

EnvisionCR and Complete Streets, and dovetails with Blue Zones emphasis on communities that are connected and mobile. Two-way streets also support a long-term goal of increasing more residential areas downtown, and makes it easier for people to access eateries and other venues, turning downtown into a “destination” rather than a “pass-through.”

Two-way streets are easier to navigate for visitors, particularly for those

seeking key hubs such as the MedQ. They also help ensure traffic can move efficiently through downtown, eliminating the need to idle at traffic signals or forcing motorists to wait behind cars who are yielding to oncoming traffic while waiting to make right hand turns. •

Need more info?

Visit www.CityofCR.com/Conversions.

Make a Difference in Your Community! Volunteer for Boards & Commissions

You can participate in City government by serving on one of the more than 30 City boards, commissions and advisory committees. These advisory groups partner with the Cedar Rapids City Council and City staff to guide the future of our community. Learn how you can apply to serve on one of these boards on the City’s website, CityofCR.com, by clicking on “Government” and then on “City Boards & Commissions.” Women, minorities and qualified persons with disabilities are encouraged to apply.

Completed applications may be submitted to the City Clerk’s Office, located in City Hall at 101 First Street SE, or sent by email to Boards&Commissions@Cedar-Rapids.org. •

For more information, contact the City Clerk’s Office at 319-286-5060, or by using the same email address. Applications are due by April 30, 2015.

Nominate Someone Who Makes A Difference



**Your Community.
Your Credit Union.**

Nominate someone who demonstrates exceptional support for our community, exhibits the responsibilities of strong citizenship, and develops projects or initiatives that benefit other residents. Five individuals will be chosen to receive a Five Seasons Citizenship award and will each receive a \$1,000 donation to the charity of their choice.

Award recipients will be recognized at Resident Appreciation Day at the Downtown Farmers’ Market on Saturday, June 6. They will also be formally acknowledged at a future City Council meeting and be featured in an upcoming edition of Our CR magazine. •

Complete the nomination form to the right or on the City’s website, CityofCR.com, and submit it by May 1, 2015.

For more information, call Gail Loskill at 286-5742.



**Your Community.
Your Credit Union.**

Five Seasons Citizenship Award

Nominee’s Information

Nominee’s Name _____

Email Address _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Reason for Nomination

Describe in 75 words or less how this person displays an understanding and appreciation of civic responsibility, and what they have done to benefit other residents in Cedar Rapids.

Describe in 75 words or less how this person has promoted the benefits of living, working and playing in Cedar Rapids.

Describe in 75 words or less how this person has demonstrated leadership in community service in Cedar Rapids.

Nominator’s Information

Your Name _____

Email Address _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Please return completed nomination form by May 1, 2015 to: Cedar Rapids City Hall, 101 First Street SE, ATTN: City Manager’s Office & Five Seasons Citizenship Program, Cedar Rapids, IA 52401 or email mayor@cedar-rapids.org.



Civil Rights Media Contest

The Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission, in partnership with We Create Here, has kicked off a poster and video contest for youth and adults to spread awareness of Fair Housing in our community.

The poster contest is a great way to teach kids about the importance of civil rights. This contest is open to Cedar Rapids and Marion residents ages 5-18. **An individual child will be awarded up to \$600.00 towards post-secondary education!**

The video contest is open to residents of the corridor who are 18 and over. This contest is divided into two categories: a 30-second PSA video and a 3-10 minute video. The winning entry of the 30-second video contest will be shown on local television stations and the long-form video will be used in professional and training sessions. **The winning individual or team for each category will be awarded up to \$2,000.00!**

The deadline for both contests is March 30, 2014. Prizes will be awarded by a panel of judges and the community, and will be presented at an Awards Ceremony on Thursday, April 30, 2015. For more details, visit Cedar-Rapids.org/CivilRights. •



Fair Housing— It's not an Option, It's the Law.

If you feel you have been treated unfairly, contact the Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission at **319-286-5036**.



The Civil Rights Commission is a neutral, fact-finding administrative agency located at:
50 2nd Avenue Bridge SE, 7th Floor | Cedar Rapids, IA 50403

Cedar-Rapids.org/CivilRights

Most Requested City Services

City Service	Location	Phone Number	Email Address
Animals	900 76 Avenue Drive SW	319-286-5993	AnimalControlMgmt@Cedar-Rapids.org
Bid opportunities	City Hall, 101 1st Street SE	319-286-5021	L.Carter@Cedar-Rapids.org
Building and housing codes	City Services Center, 500 15th Avenue SW	319-286-5831	J.Canaday@Cedar-Rapids.org
Buses	4th Avenue and 1st Street SE	319-286-5573	CRTransit@Cedar-Rapids.org
Fire safety inspections	713 1st Avenue SE	319-286-5166	CRFire@Cedar-Rapids.org
Garbage, recycling and yard waste collection	City Services Center, 500 15th Avenue SW	319-286-5897	SolidWaste&Recycling@Cedar-Rapids.org
Homestead and military credits	City Services Center, 500 15th Avenue SW	319-286-5888	CityAssessor@Cedar-Rapids.org
Housing assistance programs	City Hall, 101 1st Street SE	319-286-5872	Development@Cedar-Rapids.org
Land development	City Hall, 101 1st Street SE	319-286-5822	DevelopmentService@Cedar-Rapids.org
Park rentals	Ambroz Recreation Center, 2000 Mt. Vernon Rd. SE	319-286-5731	Ambroz@Cedar-Rapids.org
Potholes and street maintenance	City Services Center, 500 15th Avenue SW	319-286-5802 or 286-5826 for emergencies	Street@Cedar-Rapids.org
Recreation programs	Ambroz Recreation Center, 2000 Mt. Vernon Rd. SE	319-286-5731	Ambroz@Cedar-Rapids.org
Sewer backup or problems	City Services Center, 500 15th Avenue SW	319-286-5802 or 286-5826 for emergencies	Sewer@Cedar-Rapids.org
Traffic signals and street lighting	City Services Center, 500 15th Avenue SW	319-286-5802	Traffic@Cedar-Rapids.org
Utility billing	City Hall, 101 1st Street SE	319-286-5900	WaterMail@Cedar-Rapids.org

For more information about the City of Cedar Rapids and its services, call 319-286-5080 or visit www.CityofCR.com.



Civil Rights Commission Relocation to Veteran's Memorial Building

The Civil Rights Commission offices have moved to the seventh floor of Veteran's Memorial Building. Offices are located on the 2nd Avenue Bridge on May's Island, 50 2nd Avenue Bridge. The phone number remains (319) 286-5036 and office email remains civilrights@cedar-rapids.org.

Expanding Opportunities for All Children to Play



The Variety Star Playground design incorporates a bug theme into the playground features to tie into Noelridge gardens nearby.

Play impacts children physically, emotionally, socially and cognitively. It helps to refine children's fine motor

skills and body awareness, and keeps them healthy and active. Play has been linked to improving attention, creativity, memory and many skills critical for learning. It is essential to childhood, yet many kids in Linn County are left out of play on park playgrounds.

The Cedar Rapids parks system has 96 parks with 42 playgrounds. While the playgrounds offer some adaptive play for children with disabilities, none are all-inclusive and offer access to every playground feature.

Soon that will change due to Variety – the Children's Charity. Variety will build a 9,200 square foot playground in Noelridge Park that will benefit all children including those with cognitive and physical disabilities. It will provide

opportunities for all children to play.

The Variety Star Playground will feature a rubberized safety surface and ramps that allow wheel chair accessibility to all playground equipment. In addition, some swings are adapted for children to transfer from wheel chairs. The playground also has shade structures that provide additional protection from the elements.

Variety has launched a fundraising campaign to pay for the playground that will cost over \$475,000. The Hall-Perrine Foundation has already confirmed their support. The playground will be built as soon as the fundraising goal is reached. Make contributions online at VarietyIowa.com or call the Variety State Office at (515) 243-4660. •

City Council

To leave a voice message for a City Council member, call 319-286-5051. To find your district, go to www.CityofCR.com, click on City Council and look for the Find Your District link.



MAYOR Ron Corbett
Ron.Corbett@Cedar-Rapids.org



DISTRICT 3 Pat Shey
Pat.Shey@Cedar-Rapids.org



AT LARGE Ralph Russell
Ralph.Russell@Cedar-Rapids.org



DISTRICT 1 Kris Gulick
Kris.Gulick@Cedar-Rapids.org



DISTRICT 4 Scott Olson
Scott.Olson@Cedar-Rapids.org



AT LARGE Ann Poe
Ann.Poe@Cedar-Rapids.org



DISTRICT 2 Monica Vernon
Monica.Vernon@Cedar-Rapids.org



DISTRICT 5 Justin Shields
Justin.Shields@Cedar-Rapids.org



AT LARGE Susie Weinacht
Susie.Weinacht@Cedar-Rapids.org

1 in 10 babies need our NICU. Choose experience.



*Introducing St. Luke's NICU graduates:
Charlotte & Ellison, class of 2005
Finley & Fletcher, class of 2010*

From left: Fletcher 4, Ellison 8, Charlotte 8 and Finley 4, fill their days with soccer, swimming and learning.

When La Porte City couple Katy and Neal, were blessed with not one but two sets of twins they never dreamed they'd need the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at St. Luke's with each pregnancy and delivery. But when they did – they were thankful this life-saving care was there when they unexpectedly needed it.

For nearly 40 years St. Luke's Advanced Level III national Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) has provided peace of mind to thousands of families who never thought they'd need our services.

Why choose St. Luke's to have your baby?

- Most **advanced NICU** in the area
- Babies are **cared for at St. Luke's**, not transferred to another NICU
- **Most experienced** NICU doctors and staff caring for babies as young as 23 weeks gestation (40 weeks is full-term)
- Only NICU staffed with **neonatal specialists 24 hours** a day, every day of the year
- **22 private** NICU suites

Read Charlotte, Ellison, Finley and Fletcher's birth stories at unitypoint.org/cedarrapids/NICUFAQ.



Charlotte and Ellison in St. Luke's NICU in 2005.



Katy with Fletcher, Charlotte and Ellison.