



STATUS & INFORMATION REPORT

*This report includes a schedule of next week's meetings for elected officials. We cannot assure that all meetings are noted, since not all meetings are coordinated through City offices. This calendar is **not** an official posting.*

**MEETING CALENDAR**

<b><u>Monday, May 7</u></b>	1:30pm 5:30pm	Re-org Task Force Meeting, ( <i>4<sup>th</sup> Floor Conf. Room</i> ) Joint City/County Meeting, ( <i>Council Chambers</i> )
<b><u>Tuesday, May 8</u></b>	5:00pm 7:00pm	Blueprint for the Future Open House, ( <i>Washington High School cafeteria</i> ) Wellington Heights Neighborhood Association meeting, ( <i>Paul Engel Center, 1600 4th Avenue SE</i> )
<b><u>Wednesday, May 9</u></b>	6:00pm	Council Meeting, ( <i>Council Chambers</i> )
<b><u>Thursday, May 10</u></b>	11:00am 7:00pm	Blueprint for the Future Open House, ( <i>US Cellular Center</i> ) Noelridge Neighborhood Association meeting, ( <i>Noelridge Park Church, 1147 Clifton Street NE</i> )
<b><u>Saturday, May 12</u></b>	10:00am 10:00am	Mound View Neighborhood Association, ( <i>Central Park Pres Church, 1700 B Ave NE</i> ) Blueprint for the Future Open House, ( <i>Jefferson High School cafeteria</i> )

**CITY MANAGER** - The next "Enhance Our Neighborhoods" Open Houses are scheduled as follows:  
 Thursday, May 17      5:00 – 7:00pm      Time Check Recreation Center, 1131-5<sup>th</sup> Street NW  
 Saturday, May 19 10:00am – 12:00pm      Horizons, 819-5<sup>th</sup> Street SE

**DEVELOPMENT** - The Westdale Mall revitalization effort is moving forward. The City Council has authorized Economics Research Associates to conduct a market analysis and staff is working with RDG Planning/Design to complete a planning strategy by early August. The City Council is also expected to make a determination at the May 9<sup>th</sup> meeting regarding a request by Jerry Ambrose and Hunter Parks to redevelop the former Big Lots site at the north end of the mall. The Council will review this request to determine if the proposed development would be detrimental to future redevelopment of the overall mall area.

With basis from Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, a recent Executive Order (13166) implements requirements to ensure that federally assisted programs provide meaningful access to persons who have limited English proficiency (LEP); meaning those persons who, regardless of citizenship but due to their national origin, do not speak English as their primary language and have limited ability to speak, read, write, or understand English. The "EO" directs each Federal agency to publish guidance clarifying respective obligations for compliance. Community Development staff has met with Civil Rights staff to initiate discussions concerning guidance issued by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for its assistance programs. A four-factor programmatic analysis of need will be required, as prerequisite to preparation of a Language Assistance Plan that will address what vital materials may need translation and how interpretation services may be provided. This will affect any/all federally assisted programs directly administered by the City, as well as those indirectly administered by sub-recipients.

The City's Grant Consultant, Randall Funding and Development, has recently been authorized to assist with the preparation of three grant proposals: (1) for the Linn County Nonprofit Resource Center, a Compassion Capital Fund Demonstration Program Grant for non-profit development (possibly \$1,021,113 over three years); (2) for Five Seasons Transportation and Parking, a Bus and Bus-Related Facilities Discretionary Program Grant (to support the National Strategy to Reduce Congestion on

America's Transportation Network) for new buses and energy efficiency improvements at the maintenance facility (possibly \$1,030,000); and (3) for the Fire Department, a FEMA/USFA Assistance to Fire Fighters Program Grant for replacement of the hazardous material trailer currently in use (possibly \$350,000). Please contact Gary Hughes if you would like to receive weekly e-mail announcements of new grant opportunities, along with access to the consultant's internet-based search engine.

**FIRE** - Public Education visited 13 classrooms this week with the Kid's Fire Safety Trailer. Inside the trailer the children look for unsafe fire hazards in the kitchen and living room. The children are then able to practice their home escape plan when they enter the third room in the trailer – the bedroom. Inside the bedroom all aspects of a home escape plan are reviewed and then theatrical smoke is introduced in the room and the children then go through the proper steps in exiting their house.

Captain Brown and Battalion Chiefs are participating in 3 company drills at the FD drill tower. Drills enable fire fighting personnel to practice Incident Command and fire fighting techniques. Fire fighting crews continue to fulfill demands from the public. Crews are conducting fire drills, fire safety presentations, and fire extinguisher demos.

Chief English attended a meeting with the Iowa Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management related to hazardous materials response in the state, especially response to incidents involving Weapons of Mass Destruction.

**GOLF** - The new golf department website is now active. Address is [www.playcedarrapidsgolf.com](http://www.playcedarrapidsgolf.com). This new site is extremely interactive, user friendly and dynamic in its ability to deliver the most up-to-date golf news and information to the golfing public. It contains features that our customers have been requesting, such as a complete calendar of events for all four golf courses. The department will also be sending out email blasts to users who subscribe to promote lesson programs, eSpecials, news from tournaments and to eMarket the City's golf department. Reports on subscriber usage will be available 24/7. The new golf department website is an exciting addition to our marketing strategy for the department.

The driving range at Gardner golf course is ready to open for paying customers. Renovations on drainage and irrigation systems have been completed by Head Superintendent Jeff Schmidt and his staff, as well as special projects by mechanic Jim Worrall and Head Professional Steve Charters.

The new tee time reservation system has received an abundance of positive comments from the golfing public. Several phone calls have been fielded regarding the new option for tee time reservations. The site is extremely user friendly and can be found on our new website or on the City website, golf department tee time page.

**HUMAN RESOURCES** – The department is working to complete a Frequently Asked Questions document to provide information to City employees about the reorganization. Some of the questions received are:

**Q. How are decisions being made whether employees apply for new jobs or are reclassified?**

A. If positions in the new structure did not exist in the old structure a competitive selection process will be followed. Job descriptions will be analyzed to determine if positions are new, reclassifications, or contain no changes. All new positions will be posted for internal applicants. Some may also be open for external applicants.

**Q. Will the City of Cedar Rapids offer any financial help to employees who lose their jobs?**

A. If employees stay through the date agreed to with their departments they will receive a severance payment of \$4000, minus taxes. In addition, employees will have the option of EITHER:

- health insurance coverage for 9 months at their current level (family or single) by paying the premium active employees in their unit pay OR
- one week's pay for each 2 years of service. Applicable payroll taxes will apply and partial years will be prorated.

**Q. I'm close to being eligible for IPERS benefits. How do I get information?**

A. You may be eligible to buy years of service to improve your pension payments. Visit the IPERS website at [www.ipers.org](http://www.ipers.org) to find helpful information. You can also call 1-800-622-3849. An IPERS representative will be on site on May 14 to provide general information and schedule individual appointments with employees. Please contact Michelle Johnson at 286-5000 if you would like to schedule an appointment. A representative will be here again in June to answer questions.

**LIBRARY** - In the first half of this fiscal year, ISAIC has had calls (non-crisis) from 86 Iowa counties. 33% of the calls were from Linn County. Typically the callers were requesting information on drugs of abuse or problem gambling, or referrals for treatment and prevention providers. The calls come from community members, law enforcement, educators, businesses, as well as counselors. During the same six month period, there were 521 crisis calls that were taken by Foundation 2. The ONDCP(Office of National Drug Control Policy) Drug Prevention News Wire has been added to the ISAIC website, <http://www.drugfreeinfo.org/ondcpnews.html>

Guest card usages at the Main Library have been tracked since the end of August, 2006. In that time, 659 people have been logged on for internet access with guest cards. Of those usages, 330 were CR/IA residents who, for a valid reason, were given internet access without regular library cards. Of the usages, 329 were by visitors. Guest users have hailed from 42 of the 50 states, including Alaska. We have also registered users from England, Australia, Germany and Austria.

**PARKS** - New street lights are scheduled to be installed by Alliant Energy along the entrance into Cherry Hill Park west during the week of May 7<sup>th</sup>.

The Park Department hauled away 70 bags of trash weighing approximately 2,300 pounds and 580 pounds of metal to be recycled from the 15 in 5 Cedar River cleanup held April 28<sup>th</sup>.

The Trout Unlimited – Spring Creek Chapter had a trash cleanup along and in McLeod Run from McLeod Place to Collins Rd. NE on April 28<sup>th</sup> collecting 42 bags of trash and other metal refuse.

The Mother's Day open house at the Noelridge Park greenhouse will be Sunday May 13<sup>th</sup> from 10:00am – 5:00pm. The open house will feature approximately 58,000 annual flower plants, the permanent plant collection and a display by the Cedar Rapids Bonsai Club. The event is free to the public. Starting May 14<sup>th</sup>, the annual flower plants will be shipped from the greenhouse and planted in the outdoor flower beds in various parks, golf courses, and other public areas throughout the City.

**POLICE** - CRPD and Marion PD participated in discussions with the Law Enforcement students at Kirkwood regarding Community Policing and police work in general. CRPD personnel are involved with area schools and colleges with on-going educational matters concerning law enforcement issues.

Sgt. McGarvey coordinated a traffic safety checkpoint along 6<sup>th</sup> Street SW utilizing platoon 4 officers and traffic commanders, one of four to occur during the summer in the Weed and Seed areas. Twenty three vehicles were checked during the project for various safety items along with operator licensing and proof of insurance resulting in 5 citations being issued and 11 warnings.

The Special Response Team and instructors from Des Moines PD conducted a week long Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) basic training for regional response consisting of 33 students from CRPD and the State Patrol teams. This training consists of classroom and practical exercises and drills. Some of the exercises are done at the police range and other sites to provide practical exposure to different scenarios. WMD training is a specialty area that the tactical response teams use to prepare for various types of threats and attacks. Response to explosive and hazardous exposures is part of the curriculum as well as other forms of potential assaults on the community.

**RECREATION** - The Boys Iowa High School Athletic Association will be hosting the Boys State Tennis Tournament at Veterans Memorial Tennis Center on May 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>. This tournament brings about 250 players and parents to Cedar Rapids. The Girls State Tennis Tournament will be held on May 31, June 1 & 2. It will bring about 300 players and parents to town. There are also several hundred local tennis enthusiasts that come to watch the tennis matches. The Kernels Ballpark is very helpful with this event by allowing players and spectators to use their facilities at no charge for extra restrooms on these dates.

The Farmers Markets opened Tuesday, May 1<sup>st</sup> at the **new** 8<sup>th</sup> Ave. location. There were 45 stalls of product for customers to purchase. Vendors were pleased with the first day as it was the most productive opening day they have seen in many years. KCRG and WMT were on site to report Noelridge Farmers Market opened Wednesday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Deanna Austin with Weed and Seed started on April 30 at Time Check Recreation Center. Primary duties will be to connect with the neighborhood youth and act as a mentor. The position will also be an information and referral source for area families who need assistance or are having problems.

**USHERS FERRY** - Ushers Ferry opens for the season on Saturday May 5<sup>th</sup>. The Village will be open weekends in May, September and October and Tuesday through Sunday during June, July, and August. Hours are 1:00 -4:00pm. Admission is \$4 for adults and \$2 for kids 5-14. Children under 5 are free.

Ushers Ferry will participate in the CR Attractions Day on May 12. Hours for this special day will be 10-4 and admission will be free.

Ushers Ferry will offer free admission for mothers on May 13<sup>th</sup>. Photos of children and grandchildren will be admired, but are not required.