



## STATUS & INFORMATION REPORT

### WEEK OF DECEMBER 17, 2007

**This will be the final S & I Report of 2007.**  
**The next report will be distributed January 2, 2008**  
**Best wishes for a safe holiday.**

#### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- ✓ The City of Cedar Rapids and The Linn County Regional Planning Commission have been working together to coordinate a sewer replacement project for the Indian Creek and Dry Run Creek sanitary sewer trunk line. The Sanitary Sewer Working Group consists of members from five jurisdictions including Cedar Rapids, Linn County, Marion, Hiawatha, and Robins. The members created an Intergovernmental Agreement to replace all 20 segments of the sewer system extending from Robins south to the Cedar River. Replacement of this system will help to prevent sanitary Sewer Overflows into the Indian and Dry Run Creeks, backups into resident's basements, and allow for anticipated growth in the north side of the metropolitan area.
- ✓ Cedar Rapids will receive \$96,765 through the 2008 Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program for two Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) coordinators. This funding is used to provide 125 families case management up to 5 years so they can achieve economic independence and self-sufficiency. Families in the program are eligible to establish an escrow account as their earned income increases. Once a family meets all of their goals, and are eligible to graduate they will receive any escrow they have earned. Several families have used their escrow accounts to purchase a home. The Housing Choice Voucher program is awaiting official notification from HUD on this grant.
- ✓ Staff and the Historic Preservation Commission will evaluate the potential to reformat the *Guidelines for Cedar Rapids Historic District*. New elements of the Guidelines may include home-repair tips, recommendations, materials not allowed, and more pictures of historic preservation in Cedar Rapids. The *Guidelines evaluations* will address the review process and the process for improvements in historic districts.
- ✓ The Linn County Regional Planning Commission postponed the Tower Terrace Road Corridor meeting originally scheduled for December 11<sup>th</sup> due to weather conditions. The meeting has been rescheduled for December 18<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 – 8:15pm at Linn Mar High School in the Upper Commons room. This meeting will be the first of several public workshops to discuss the future needs of the Corridor.
- ✓ The Linn County Regional Planning Commission has received two applications for Transportation Enhancements funds that it programs each year. This year the Cities of Hiawatha and Robins have applied for funding to construct trails in their communities. A recommendation on which project to fund will be made March of 2008.

#### FIRE / PUBLIC SAFETY

- ✓ Fire crews will be delivering Christmas presents to elderly residents on December 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, and 20<sup>th</sup> in town. "Be a Santa to a Senior" program is coordinated by Home Instead Senior Care. While delivering the presents that have been wrapped by the Boy Scouts, firefighters ask the residents if they can check the smoke alarms to make sure they are working properly. Last year fire fighters delivered presents to 86 homes, replacing 22 batteries and putting up 38 new smoke alarms.

- ✓ The ice storms have kept crews busy with routine vehicle accidents, numerous downed power lines and one major fire caused by an arcing power line in contact with the house.
- ✓ Recent fires caused by carelessness remind us how careful and aware we must be when around fire. Cooking still is the leading cause of fires in Cedar Rapids. The most common cause is not paying attention while in the kitchen. Turn the burners off when done cooking and never leave the stove unattended while in use. If you have a fire while cooking, quickly cover the pan with a lid or flat metal item like a cookie sheet, turn off the power to the stove and call 911 if the fire is not contained. Never use water, baking soda or flour to extinguish a cooking fire. It could make the fire worse, but more importantly you could easily get burned.
- ✓ The Urban Deer hunt as of December 14<sup>th</sup> has seen 278 deer killed by bow hunters. Of the 278 total deer, 249 have been female and 29 male. Two hundred six of the deer have been kept for personal consumption, while 72 have been donated.

## **LIBRARY**

- ✓ Lori Barkema and Foundation Director Marie DeVries spoke to a group of retired accountants December 13<sup>th</sup>. Lori shared information about the library's annual report – successes and collaboration with the Metro Library Network, Iowa library comparative data, and budget struggles. Marie shared the roles of the Friends and Foundation and invited them to the January 7<sup>th</sup> rally at First Presbyterian Church.
- ✓ Plans are underway for numerous programs in 2008 including Jazz at the 'Brary, the Master Gardener series, a Family Fun Day in collaboration with the CR Museum of Art, Summer Reading, librarian-led book discussions, a series of discussions on Jewish Literature, Teen Read Week, the Read the River intergenerational reading program, Freedom Festival, and a storyteller performing Iowa ghost stories.
- ✓ Both heat pumps in the learning center have been mounted and connected to the loop system. The energy system and fire alarm systems were connected on Friday. The learning center should be ready for use this week.
- ✓ Upcoming holiday programs for children will include a showing of the film "Akeelah and the Bee" on December 26 at 1:30pm (Children's Library); a Holiday Vacation Craft Program on December 27 at 10:00am (second floor lobby); and a showing of the movie "Clifford: Doghouse Adventures" (Children's Library) on December 28 at 10:30am.

## **PARKS & RECREATION**

- ✓ The Parks and Recreation Department won first place for best use of theme for their float in the holiday parade.

## **POLICE**

- ✓ The CRPD ended its recruiting drive with over 200 applications returned. There are several positions available due to retirements with an anticipated academy this June.
- ✓ During the December 11<sup>th</sup> ice storm, CR Officers responded to 136 traffic hazards (this includes downed trees and power lines and stalled vehicles), 37 accidents involving property damage and 1 minor personal injury accident. They also investigated a bank robbery, a burglary in progress and 3 domestic disturbances.
- ✓ CR Officer Felix Barta was killed in the line of duty on February 15, 1961 while responding to a domestic abuse call. His widow, Ann Barta, turned 100 years old on December 12<sup>th</sup>. The CRPD wishes Ann Barta a very happy centennial birthday!

## **PUBLIC WORKS**

- ✓ From 9:00am December 1<sup>st</sup> to Friday December 14<sup>th</sup>, PW Maintenance crews worked all but 10 hours. To date, the snow and ice control program has applied over 3,000 tons of salt; applied over 2,000 tons of sand; worked over 3,300 hours of overtime; conducted two snow removals in the downtown business area (costing over \$30,000); responded to over 40 barricading calls on the night of December 11<sup>th</sup> for downed limbs, trees and power lines; received over 200 calls for downed limbs and trees; cleared the city sidewalks three complete rotations plus repeat trips to necessary locations for a total of over 70 miles of walks or bridges; 30 sidewalk snow/ice clearance abatement inspections; hauling of 2,500 tons of sand to the Public Works facility; performed 3 complete plowings of the city and two minor snow/ice control events.
- ✓ In preparation for snow and ice, all of the city properties were reviewed and a GIS map was created of city-owned sidewalks. In a joint meeting with multiple city departments and a SSMID representative, clearing responsibilities of all city-owned sidewalks have been assigned and agreed to by departments for this winter season. Map books and site locations were then provided to the respective departments.

- ✓ Starting today, December 17<sup>th</sup>, available crews will pick up trees, limbs, and brush from the street right-of-ways as weather permits. Please use your Yardy and bundle small limbs as appropriate. Crews will pick up storm debris for a two-week period ending December 28<sup>th</sup>. To assist the crews and fit into the dump trucks, the limbs need to be cut to six foot lengths

## UPDATES

**The United Way Campaign** donations for all City departments totaled \$27,986.00

### Sinclair Update

- ✓ City staff met with the EPA Region 7 representative regarding progress on brownfield clean-up and assessment grants. During the representative's tour there were no issues or questions with respect to the EPA grants identified.
- ✓ Completion of the Phase II environmental assessment soil and water sampling/testing is being scheduled for completion in December, weather permitting.
- ✓ Removal of the demolition debris is about 85% complete.

### Westdale Mall

- ✓ Approximately 100 citizens braved the cold weather and ice storm to attend the December 6<sup>th</sup> Westdale Mall Open House. Feedback forms have been posted on the Development Department's website.
- ✓ In response to citizen feedback staff is evaluating an alternative that would retain the mall structure in its current form. This will provide the community an opportunity to view a range of redevelopment alternatives for feedback at the next open house on January 17<sup>th</sup>.

The fire-damaged garage at 1552 C Avenue NE that has been a source of several citizen complaints and was mentioned at the City Council meeting during the Enhance Our Neighborhoods presentation was demolished and the debris cleaned up on December 10<sup>th</sup>. This was one day prior to the deadline on the Notice of Violation that was served to the financial company that now owns the home.

A citation for performing plumbing work without a valid license was issued last week to an individual. This is the sixth violation to be issued by the Code Enforcement Division in the last two months for individuals operating without a city license.

## COUNCIL MEMBERS' CALENDAR

*(Not all meetings are noted. The calendar is **not** an official posting.)*

<b>Monday, December 17</b>	12:00	Security Incident Training Session, <i>(Council Chambers)</i>
<b>Tuesday, December 18</b>	6:00pm	Downtown Developer Interviews, <i>(Council Chambers)</i>
<b>Wednesday, December 19</b>	6:00pm	Council Meeting, <i>(Council Chambers)</i>
<b>Thursday, December 20</b>	4:30pm	Budget Meeting, <i>(Council Chambers)</i>