



STATUS & INFORMATION REPORT

WEEK OF MARCH 10, 2008

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- ✓ A Question & Answer session was held March 5th on the Riverfront Park Master Plan RFQ. The City is seeking firms to help create a master plan for both banks of the river from I-380 to the 16th Avenue Bridge, which would include park, trail, riverwalk, and outdoor gathering place amenities. Thirty-four individuals from Iowa, Illinois, Nebraska, Minneapolis, Wisconsin, and Massachusetts attended the one and one-half hour session to ask questions regarding the project and the RFQ. Questions and answers will be posted on the Community Development website.
- ✓ Staff met March 7th to discuss the first LEAN (Kaizen) event that will be held April 8th through April 12th with stakeholders of the land development process.
- ✓ Last week a concern was raised with regard to participants enrolled in the Section 8 program and questions related to public safety concerns in the area of 29th Street Drive SE. This is a federal program designed to provide rent assistance to low-income individuals/families. Eligibility is based on income. Participants must abide by certain regulations or they can lose their rent assistance if they are:
 - charged with drug or violent criminal activities
 - evicted by their landlord
 - allowing other people to live with them that are not listed on the lease; and,
 - not reporting changes in income and family composition.

If a participant is terminated from the Section 8 program, the participant may continue to live in the same unit if the landlord is agreeable, but will no longer receive rent assistance from the City. The unit must pass a Housing Quality Standards Inspection, and the rent must meet reasonable standards. Landlords are responsible to do their own background checks.

FACTS ABOUT 29TH STREET DR:

- There are 17 Section 8 participants located on this block, out of a total 140 rental units
- 8 head of households are disabled
- 14 are female head of households
- 2 are elderly (over 62 years of age)
- The oldest is 96 years old
- The youngest is just under one year old
- There are 9 families with children living on this block
- 5 terminations for program violations since 2006

City staff will continue to coordinate efforts among all departments when responding to questions or concerns related to municipal service delivery.

FIRE - PUBLIC SAFETY CODE ENFORCEMENT DIVISION

- ✓ The final Code Enforcement Division feedback meeting in a series of six forums will be held March 12th from 1:00 - 2:00pm on the 2nd floor of the Public Works Building in the south Traffic Engineering conference room. This meeting will be targeted towards general contractors, with an opportunity for them to share thoughts and concerns about the City's building, electrical, fire, mechanical, plumbing and zoning inspections and regulations.

LIBRARY

- ✓ The next fiction book discussion will be held Monday, March 17th at 10:00am in the 2nd floor lobby. Join in a discussion of the book *Bel Canto* by Ann Patchett. The book is set somewhere in South America, at the home of the country's vice president.
- ✓ The next nonfiction book discussion will be held March 20th at 2:00pm in the 2nd floor lobby. The book is *Postville: A Clash of Cultures in Heartland America* by Stephen Bloom.
- ✓ Two Early Learning computer stations have been ordered with hopes of being installed by the end of the month. They are standalone computers loaded with educational children's games.

POLICE

- ✓ Officer Matt Magnuson graduated the 3rd graders at Johnson Elementary School in the GREAT program after the students completed 6 weeks of training.
- ✓ Officers Glenn Kieler and Tom Grubb were recertified at the Iowa Law Enforcement Academy in Defensive Tactics. They are now certified to train the recruits how to handle themselves in physical situations on the street.
- ✓ A retirement coffee was held for Chief Michael Klappholz March 6th. Federal, State, County and City personnel was present and gave awards and accolades to Chief Klappholz for his community service for the last 33+ years.
- ✓ Oral interviews were held March 7th for the 28 police officer applicants. Civil Service will present a certified list for selection of officers.
- ✓ Applications for Chief of Police are being posted on various websites and are currently being accepted. The Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) will be screening the applications and providing a list of qualified candidates to be brought to town for interviews.
- ✓ The Cedar Rapids Police Department is adjusting well to the 4-ten hour work days. This allows officers to continue the neighborhood policing and meet the communities' needs.

PUBLIC WORKS

- ✓ As of March 7th, roughly 11,300 tons of salt, over 12,500 tons of sand and 12,000 hours of overtime were expended in response to 36 snow events. These events have accumulated approximately 59.1 inches of snow or ice and the third largest snow/ice year on record.
- ✓ The city has been successful in the removal of the ice and snow pack with the use of motor graders. The equipment has been in use with additional overtime to expand the use. This unintentionally resulted in thick piles of ice and snow (or windrows) in front of driveways. The work will continue this week. Maintenance crews are striving to return to the desired level of service as the weather returns to more normal conditions and thank people for their patience as they continue to work to improve quality of the roadways.
- ✓ The warming weather is causing several drainage issues and pot holes. Staff will be scheduled to patch and clear the drainage problems as soon as they are reported by both staff and the public. Residents should contact the Public Works Department anytime at 286-5826 to report pot holes. Concerns can also be emailed to street@cedar-rapids.org for follow-up during regular working hours.
- ✓ The Mayor gave a thank you celebration for the snow removal crews on March 7th in recognition for their hard work throughout one of the worst winters on record. The city has remained a vibrant urban hometown with the main roads open for business and commerce.

WATER

- ✓ The Transit Division of the Utilities Department is transferring the old Fire Station at the corner of 5th Street & E Avenue NW to the CRPD for their use as a NW side community policing outpost. The facility was the first city-owned building and was renovated in the mid 1990's by the Transportation & Parking Department. The building, currently referred to as the Transit Annex, has two offices, a meeting room and a restroom on the upper level and one office, one restroom and a parking stall on the ground level. An elevator was installed when the building was renovated. The transfer from the Transit Division to the Police Department is expected to occur during the week of March 17th.

- ✓ Beginning March 10th at approximately 7:00am, J Avenue NE between the Water Plant entrance and Shaver Road will be closed. Closure is anticipated to last for 30 calendar days. Every reasonable effort will be made to re-open the road sooner. The road is being closed to allow relocation and replacement of an existing 24" diameter process pipeline. The pipe is being replaced in order to make room for proposed improvements on the Plant site. This work is part of the \$40,000,000 Disinfection System Improvements project that began in August 2007. Work is scheduled to be completed by January 2009. The objective of the Project is to ensure continued production of safe and reliable drinking water for the use of our residents, visitors, businesses, and industries. Everyone's cooperation is appreciated and understanding for any inconvenience this road closure may cause over the next month.

COUNCIL MEMBERS' CALENDAR

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

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| Monday, March 10 | 6:30pm | Harbor Neighborhood Association meeting, <i>(Time Check Recreation Center - 1131 5th St NW)</i> |
| | 7:00pm | Kenwood Park Neighborhood Association meeting, <i>(Kenwood Park United Methodist Church, 175-34th St NE)</i> |
| | 7:00pm | Oak Hill Jackson Neighborhood Association meeting, <i>(St Wenceslaus Church Gym Building, 1224-5th St SE)</i> |
| Tuesday, March 11 | Noon | State of the County presentation, <i>(Longbranch)</i> |
| | 7:00pm | Wellington Heights Neighborhood Association meeting, <i>(Paul Engle Center, 1600- 4th Ave SE)</i> |
| Wednesday, March 12 | 6:00pm | Formal Council Meeting, <i>(Council Chambers)</i> |
| Thursday, March 13 | 7:00pm | Noelridge Neighborhood Association meeting, <i>(Noelridge Park Church, 1147- Clifton St NE)</i> |