



**CEDAR RAPIDS**  
City of Five Seasons

## **STATUS & INFORMATION REPORT**

WEEK OF JUNE 2, 2008

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*Cedar Rapids is a vibrant urban hometown - a beacon for people and businesses that are invested in building a greater community for the next generation.*

### **CITY MANAGER**

- ✓ Boards and Commissions member training is planned for later this summer, after the June 30<sup>th</sup> vacancies are filled. Training will be held for all members to hear from the Mayor and City Council about the City's Vision and how Boards and Commissions assist in the Council's work toward that Vision, as well as a presentation from the Ethics Board. This training will be valuable for all members, new and veteran.

### **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

- ✓ At a recent meeting, the City Council asked about the status of a demolition delay ordinance regarding historic properties. That item has been on hold based upon the current work plan priorities.
- ✓ A location feasibility study will soon be completed for the new Intermodal Transportation Facility (ITF) location. This study will be submitted to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for their review and approval. The requirements for site acquisition and the use of federal grant funding includes multiple steps to achieve a successful outcome. A timeline of those steps through project completion will be provided for City Council.

### **FACILITY MAINTENANCE SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

- ✓ The purpose of the Facility Maintenance Services Department is to maintain the City's buildings and grounds to provide a safe, healthy, cost effective and aesthetically pleasing environment. Services provided include custodial duties, grounds maintenance, snow removal, mechanical, electrical & building repairs, environmental services and energy monitoring & reporting.

### **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

- ✓ Curt Waterman has successfully completed 2 Microsoft certifications; Microsoft Certified Technology Specialist (MCTS), *Configuring Windows Vista* & Microsoft Certified Information Technology Professional (MCITP), *Enterprise Support Technician*.

### **LIBRARY**

- ✓ The Library is pleased to announce an exciting new service for patrons of the Cedar Rapids, Marion, and Hiawatha libraries. Books are now available for downloading - free of charge. Check out the new "Overdrive" downloadable library. IT staff has added the downloadable library to iBistro. (<http://catalog.crlibrary.org>). It is in the dark blue section at the top of the page after Search/Home. It is also available on our home pages (<http://www.crlibrary.org>) under "Library Services".
- ✓ The Library has been awarded a grant for *Picturing America*, an exciting new initiative from the National Endowment for the Humanities that brings masterpieces of American art into classrooms and libraries nationwide. Students and citizens will gain a deeper appreciation of our country's history and character through the study and understanding of its art. The initiative will begin in September when Children's Services will be developing programs around the art reproductions that will be displayed in Children's Services throughout the school year. More information is available on the website <http://picturingamerica.neh.gov>.

- ✓ Children's summer reading is off and running. In addition to the Hiawatha Public Library, three elementary schools, Arthur, Hoover, and Viola Gibson, will be partners this summer. In these partnerships, the hope is to reach many children who would not otherwise participate. Monetary support for the summer reading program is being provided by Hills Bank and Trust, the Friends and the Foundation. The program begins June 1.

## **POLICE**

- ✓ Students from Arthur Elementary School collected and donated over \$1,500 to the Friends of the Cedar Rapids Animal Shelter Fund. The donation will be used to prepare animals for adoption and other shelter needs.
- ✓ Greg Graham began as Chief of Police on June 1<sup>st</sup>. He is planning to meet with staff in house and various social agencies throughout the city and other law enforcement agencies his first week.
- ✓ June 2<sup>nd</sup> is the first day of the Cedar Rapids Police Academy. There are 18 recruits in the class, 12 of which are Cedar Rapids Officers, 3 are Linn County Sheriff Deputies, 2 from Eastern Iowa Airport Police and 1 from Department of Corrections.
- ✓ Several Cedar Rapids Police Officers have volunteered to assist the Butler County Sheriff's Department and other law enforcement agencies throughout Butler County to assist with tornado damage clean-up.
- ✓ This is the time of year when the Police Department receives calls about loud boats on the river. Boats are subject to "noise" ordinance laws like vehicles or factories. To make a complaint, citizens can call the PD at 286-5491. The officer will try to wait until the boat docks to speak with the driver or the Linn County Sheriff's Office River Patrol can investigate the complaint.

## **PUBLIC WORKS**

- ✓ Cedar Rapids has received 70% higher rainfall in April and May than normal. This combined with cool temperatures have made optimum conditions for vegetation growth. At the same time the weather has limited the ability of crews to mow. To maintain the appearance of our roads and neighborhoods, personnel were moved to staff the work based on the need. They have completed the north side of the city and have moved to the southwest for large mower work.
- ✓ Crews over the weekend started preparations and set up of pumps for the expected crest of the river on Tuesday. You can check the river level and projected forecast by a link on the Engineering portion of the City website.
- ✓ Stump removal operations are on hold due to the rain over the last week and the forecast for this week. Crews will be working on trimming and a drainage way.
- ✓ Major Street and Drainage Maintenance Work includes:
  - Windsor Drive NE – Finish a panel and sanitary box out repair
  - Millbrook Drive NE – Finish a panel and sanitary box out repair
  - Deb Ann Lane NE – Finish a panel and sanitary box out repair
  - 4433 Pine View Drive NE – Start a panel and sanitary box out repair
  - 42<sup>nd</sup> Street at Twin Pine Drive NE - Start a panel and sanitary box out repair
  - 3913 Summerfield Lane NE - Start a panel and sanitary box out repair
  - Cleveland Street SW – Continue storm sewer repairs on intakes
  - 66<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW west of 6<sup>th</sup> Street SW – Storm drainage way cleaning
- ✓ The Edgewood Road Bridge over the Cedar River was inspected the week of May 26<sup>th</sup>. The bridge is in good condition and the repairs of the cracks that were discovered in December 2002, which forced a month long bridge closure, are performing well.
- ✓ Final plans are being prepared for the new Edgewood Bridge SW over the CRANDIC RR and paving from this point to 37<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW. The design will celebrate the history of the area, which dates back to the early 1860's, when the Missouri River Railroad was built. An Edgewood Road crossing has existed almost as long. Four historical plaques are planned to be placed along the multi-use describing this history with the longest bridge in Cedar Rapids being built – the bridge over Union Pacific RR and Prairie Creek.

## TREASURY

- ✓ Treasury Operations has been working with parking violations software provider T2 to implement on-line payment of parking violations. It should be operational in June.
  - ✓ Legislative - The city recently conducted a conference call with staff from Vision Iowa and the recently hired Sasaki Associates firm to discuss the RE-CAT (River Enhancement – Community Attraction and Tourism) grant application process for Cedar Rapids' Riverfront project. The details for the RE-CAT application process are currently being developed by the Vision Iowa Board and should be available within a month. Vision Iowa staff stated the following expectations that apply to all requests for funding:
    - The application should not be submitted until the project is 'ready to go' or near the breaking ground stage.
    - Project should be completed as proposed, as changes after the application has been submitted are undesirable.
    - Budgeted numbers should be as accurate as possible. Over and under budget situations will work to our disadvantage.
    - Vision Iowa money is the last dollar in so all public and private monies must be secured.
    - Application can not request funds for basic infrastructure or housing elements.The typical CAT grant contract is a 2 year agreement.
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## UPDATES

**NEAT** - NEAT is a cooperative effort of code enforcement division staff (housing, zoning, and building), neighborhood police officers, and neighborhood groups. Housing rehabilitation and other volunteer groups are offering assistance to those that need help complying with municipal codes. Through June 1<sup>st</sup>, Neighborhood Enhancement Action Team (NEAT) squads have performed neighborhood inspections in eleven neighborhoods, evaluating conditions that contribute to blight or are safety concerns, including chipping and peeling paint; roofs, gutters, windows and soffit/fascia in need of repair or replacement; missing address numbers; and trash and debris in the yard.

Of the 313 homes inspected, 252 or 80.5% had at least one violation. Re-inspections of those properties with violations began late last week. Further information will be provided on the number of homes that are compliant after the first re-inspection.

**Abandoned, vacant and dilapidated homes** - Since April 2007, there have been 268 complaints received about abandoned, vacant and dilapidated homes in the City. The Code Enforcement Division has triaged the homes by seriousness of their condition to help the City develop and implement strategies to manage these properties. The worst properties are considered high-priority or "red" due to a combination of health, safety and structural issues with the properties. Over the past few months, four properties have been removed from the list: two for voluntary demolition by owners; one that will be going through rehabilitation; and one that the City has acquired (1419-5th Ave SE) and will demolish soon.

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## COUNCIL MEMBERS' CALENDAR

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

<b>Monday, June 2</b>	7:30am	Swearing in of new Police Chief Greg Graham, <i>(Mayor's Office)</i>
<b>Tuesday, June 3</b>	11:30am	Brown Bag - ReThink: The psychology of cities and their leaders, <i>(Council Chambers)</i>
	5:00pm	Red Cross Award Ceremony for Allison Wilhelm, <i>(Red Cross office, 6300-Rockwell Drive NE)</i>
<b>Wednesday, June 4</b>	4:00pm	Boards & Commissions interviews, <i>(Council Chambers)</i>
	6:00pm	Council work session, <i>(Council Chambers)</i>
<b>Saturday, June 7</b>	7:30am	Downtown Farmers Market