

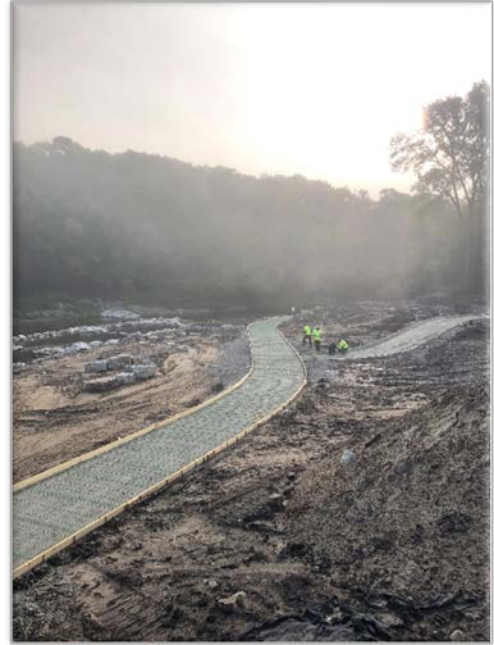
- September Project Highlights - 2020

Water & Pollution Control

Low Head Dam Improvements Project

The work in the river channel has been completed, thanks to a moderate drought this summer. Work is progressing on the south bank-side improvements. Nearly 2,000 cubic yards of material from the riverbank have been excavated and hauled off-site. This excavation serves the dual purposes of opening up the area to be more inviting to the public, and providing the necessary protection against an increase in the 100-year flood elevation.

A shared use path along with the upstream and downstream portage has recently been completed (shown under construction in the photo). These improvements to the riverbank will provide better access for anglers, kayakers, and other users of the park. Landscaping should be completed yet this fall, with a ribbon-cutting ceremony planned for next spring.



Public Hearing Planned for SRF Loan / Environmental Review

At the second City Council meeting in October, staff anticipates holding a public hearing on the findings of the Iowa DNR’s environmental review of the North River Valley Well Field Project. Conducting an environmental review is a requirement of the State Revolving Fund loan process.

Physical and Cyber Security Assessments

The “America’s Water Infrastructure Act of 2018” requires that water utilities, among other things, conduct a “risk and resilience assessment.” The assessment for the Ames Water Plant has been performed in-house, and an informational summary will be provided to Council later this year. In conjunction with the assessment, staff arranged to have the US Department of Homeland Security – Cyber and Infrastructure Security Agency (US DHS – CISA) perform separate physical security and cyber security assessments. These assessments will provide comparative data showing how our security posture compares to more than 400 other water treatment plants around the nation. Conclusions from these assessments will be prioritized and, if appropriate, incorporated into future CIP planning.



Library

The Ames Public Library launched two new services recently:

Storyline - Want to hear a story?

Call the Story Line at (515) 239-5636 and you may recognize the voices of your favorite library staff as they share stories for a variety of ages, stories in multiple languages, and family-friendly jokes. Listen any time you want, as many times as you want!

Personalized Picks - Need some book recommendations?

Fill out our **Personalized Picks** online form to tell us about what you want to read. Our experts will put together a custom book list based on your responses and e-mail it to you!

The Library held two successful and timely programs for adults recently:

FACING FACTS: THE TRUTH ABOUT FAKE NEWS AND WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT - Held September 12 via Zoom
The Library partnered with faculty from Iowa State University's Greenlee School of Journalism and ISU Graduate Students in Psychology who led an interactive media literacy workshop to encourage skills to better navigate the shifting media landscape. A team of experts defined the role of journalists versus media, identified how to develop visual literacy skills, explored why our brains are persuaded by misinformation, and shared mindfulness tips around news consumption. There were breakout sessions with activities to put their new skills into practice. The presentation will be shared on YouTube and you can find the supporting materials on our website at <https://www.amespubliclibrary.org/FacingFacts>

Black Lives Black Stories: A Racial Justice Film Series

This is a film discussion series centering on African Americans and their experiences. Participants watch each film on their own time using the Library's free Kanopy streaming service. Then, join a live virtual conversation facilitated by Dr. Novotny Lawrence from ISU's Greenlee School of Journalism and Communication and the Department of English. The presentations will be recorded and shared on the Library's YouTube Channel for those who cannot attend.

Monday, September 21, at 7pm, via Zoom:

I Am Not Your Negro: James Baldwin and Race in America

Monday, October 19, at 7pm, via Zoom:

For Ahkeem: Challenges Facing African American Teenagers

Monday, December 7, at 7pm, via Zoom:

Moonlight

Public Works

Resource Recovery

RRP is gearing up for another Great Pumpkin Disposal in October: We got a new forklift!

RRP crews are rebuilding conveyor C-8; when complete, it will be installed during one of the power plant's maintenance outages.

We are making an informal video for use at daycares rather than bringing the kids in for a tour.



Parks and Recreation

Bandshell Park

The electrical upgrade and lighting project at the bandshell is nearing completion. The project included correcting electrical code issues, consolidating electrical panels, and adding LED light fixtures. As shown below, the LED lighting will enhance any event at Bandshell.



Homewood Golf Course

Construction on the new clubhouse continues with progress being made every day. As shown below, the footings and walls for the basement have been poured. Next up is waterproofing the foundation, backfilling, plumbing and electrical stubbed in, installing the pre-cast concrete panels on top of the foundation, pouring the basement floor and the at-grade slab for the check-in area, and then start framing the clubhouse. Stay tuned for monthly updates on the progress! The new clubhouse will include a community room that can be utilized year-round (including rentals), a fireplace, an outdoor patio, and energy efficient appliances. It is scheduled to be completed in spring 2021.



Emma McCarthy Lee Park Pedestrian Bridge

Staff held a pre-construction meeting with Henkel Construction in preparation for the new pedestrian bridge that will be constructed to span Clear Creek in Emma McCarthy Lee Park. Construction is expected to start in early October with completion in late November. The new bridge will be 10' wide and 70' long and will be able to handle multiple pedestrians and bicyclists at a time as well as service vehicles.

Inis Grove Park Restroom Project

The renovation of the restroom adjacent Duff Ave. in Inis Grove Park is complete and the restrooms are now open. The renovation included transitioning one male and one female restroom to two gender neutral

restrooms. Automatic door locks, motion/infrared light sensors, metal roof, and limestone facing were additional upgrades to the building. Before and after pictures are shown below.



Ice Arena and Homewood Budgets

The Ames/ISU Ice Arena and Homewood Golf Course are both enterprise funds which means revenues must cover expenses as no property tax dollars are allocated for the operation of these two facilities. When revenues exceed expenses, the excess funds are put into an operational fund balance. Conversely, when expenses exceed revenues, funds are drawn from the fund balance to cover the shortfall. As we are almost through the first quarter of FY 2020/2021, the effects of the pandemic on these two operations warrant an update.

Homewood Golf Course		
FY 2020/21 Year-to-Date (Through August)		
	2019/20 Actuals	2020/21 Actuals
Expenses	\$44,093	\$41,985
Revenues	\$67,496	\$71,523
Revenues Over Expenses	\$23,403	\$29,538

Please note that although Homewood looks good at this time, October will be the last month revenues will be collected until spring 2021. Full-time staff salaries, utilities, and other overhead costs will continue to be charged even though no revenue will be coming in. In FY 2019/2020, Homewood broke even, so the fact that there is a surplus greater than last year at this time is hopefully a positive sign.

Ames/ISU Ice Arena		
FY 2020/21 Year-to-Date (Through August)		
	2019/20 Actuals	2020/21 Actuals
Expenses	\$80,999	\$69,583
Revenues	\$38,834	\$18,199
Revenues Over Expenses	(\$42,165)	(\$51,384)

Contrary to Homewood, the Ice Arena brings in most of its revenue September through April but still has large overhead costs due to full-time staff, utilities, and the ice making system. The fact that the facility has a negative revenue over expenses greater than last year is concerning. Staff has been trimming expenses as much as possible, but it may be difficult to cover the reduced number of ice rentals this year due to the pandemic.

Fitness Programming

Another four-week session of outdoor classes began August 31 due to demand. These classes continue to be popular with 16 classes being held with 155 participants.

Another session of Deep Water classes began at Ames Municipal Pool, September 14. Two classes are being held and are full with 10 participants each.

Twenty-five registrations have been accepted for a September session of TKD classes which are being held via Zoom.

Two classes of Silver Sneakers began being offered September 8 for the first time since the pandemic started. Participation has ranged from 5-10 per class and all participants are happy to be able to come back to classes.

Fall Programming

Staff continues to evaluate how to safely offer programs and gauge the interest of residents to enroll in programs. Outdoor activities have been more popular than indoor and thus some programs traditionally held indoors have been moved outdoors. Below is a listing of several fall recreation programs and classes being offered:

- Youth soccer for boys and girls in grades 1-6 started the week of September 14. Fifty-three participants are playing this fall compared to 202 participants in fall 2019. This year’s registrations are only 26% of last year.
- Kiddie Kickers, a youth soccer program for boys and girls ages 5-6, was scheduled to start but was cancelled due to only five registered participants. In fall 2019, there were 49 participants.

- Adult Indoor Volleyball Leagues started with 32 teams (10 women's, 4 men's, & 18 coed) compared to 52 teams (14 women's, 7 men's, & 31 coed) in fall 2019. This represents 62% participation this year compared to last.
- Open swim at Municipal Pool will start in October with participants needing to pre-register to attend as space will be limited. Private pool rentals will also resume in October.
- Birthday parties during public skate at the Ames/ISU Ice Arena resumed in September. Additionally, the number of participants allowed for public skate sessions has been increased.

Planning and Housing

Planning

Development is proceeding at Duff Plaza commercial development, formerly the Kmart site. The east half of the former Kmart building has been divided into five commercial tenant spaces. Currently in the process of tenant build-out are Ulta, Petsmart and Homegoods. The 5 Below retail space is complete and open for business. The backside of the building is in the process of being built out as interior climate-controlled storage, Cube Smart. Parking lot improvements have been made to the area in front of the building as well.

Downtown Façade Program grant applications are due to the City by October 2, 2020. This is the first round of grant application review for FY 2020-21. More information is available on the Planning Division website.

Ames Plan 2040 work continues with staff and RDG. Staff with RDG originally anticipated providing a complete draft to Council in September. The final draft is still in progress awaiting staff review. Staff will provide an update to City Council later in October on the expected schedule for the remainder of this year.

Potential new developers of the Rose Prairie site at the corner of 190th Street and Hyde Avenue have approached City staff to discuss modifications to the approved Master Plan and development agreement. The goal of the developer is to create additional efficiencies in the development plan to be able to move forward on a first phase of development. The developer does not plan to seek an increase in development intensity with the proposed changes.

The Champlin's property on the south side of Ames continues to have inquiries about options for development, potentially within the County on the existing lots. City Council tabled the annexation request back in January 2020 as the City was considering growth scenarios for Ames Plan 2020.

Housing & Community Development

Staff is currently reviewing seven (7) Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) proposals in conjunction with the Baker Subdivision Development along the south side of Tripp Street. The proposals are anticipated to be presented to City Council at the last meeting in October.

For the first four weeks of the 2019-20 CDBG CARES (COVID) Grant Rent, Mortgage and Utility Relief Program has processed approximately 40 applications, 6 denials and 9 approvals. Telephone calls are increasing with the recent utility bill notices.

The infrastructure improvement to install the utilities to the lots in the Baker Subdivision has begun. The first phase of this work is anticipated to be completed by December 2020.

Electric

Electric Distribution has restored power to all electric customers who were without power after the Derecho. They are now finishing up the last of the street light repairs caused by the storm.

EV Chargers – All three project agreements have been fully executed with IDOT, and we have received authorization to expend funds.

Current/next steps:

- Review quotes and procurement process for equipment with June
- Write an RFQ for the installation contract
- Discuss details of AIF arrangement with ISU/CyRide

SunSmart – The access road and fence are installed. Support structures for the panels are being installed, and photovoltaic panel installation will start next week. IT and Superior (Central Square) are working on a billing solution to distribute solar production credits.

Geothermal – Invitation to Bid #2021-023 Baker Subdivision Geothermal Heat Pump System was issued on September 23 and is due on October 14.

City Manager’s Office

Climate Action Plan – With Greenhouse Gas Inventory completed and presented to City Council, staff is moving forward on developing an RFP to hire a consultant to guide the creation of a Climate Action Plan for Ames. The same cross-departmental team that facilitated the GHG Inventory will develop the RFP and be involved in the selection of a consultation. As part of the RFP, the consultant selected will first work with the City Council to craft a reasonable and acceptable carbon reduction goal. The next steps would be work with the City Council, sector representatives, and the public to develop a plan for carbon reduction in City operations and community wide.

Census 2020 – City staff continue to work with the U.S. Census Bureau to try to improve response rates in Ames for the 2020 Census. Due to the pandemic and the subsequent changes in schedules at Iowa State University, this year’s census has experienced tremendous challenges in trying to reflect the Ames population. ISU student response rate is the primary concern. Census takers will continue to follow up in-person with homes across the country through September 30 in an effort to reach everyone. To see local response rates at the census tract level, go to: <https://2020census.gov/en/response-rates/self-response.html>



Cyclones Care – The City of Ames continues to partner with Iowa State University on promoting the public health educational campaign, “Cyclones Care,” which focuses on four pillars of healthy behavior (Wear a face covering. Physically distance from others. Wash hands frequently. Stay home if you’re ill.) In addition to CyRide bus boards and a billboard on South Duff Avenue, the Cyclones Care message is included in signage at City buildings, Iowa State campus, and local businesses. Recently, Cyclones Care water bottles were distributed to the Ames Community School District, and they will be available to other schools in Story County. This is a partnership that includes funding from the City, ISU, Mary Greeley Medical Center, Story County, the Ames Chamber of Commerce, and Heartland Senior Services.

