

Staff Report

FY 2018-19 Mid-Year Sustainability Report

December 18, 2018

This report provides a mid-year update of the FY2018-19 activities and accomplishments related to the Sustainability Advisory Services contract between the City of Ames and Iowa State University.

BACKGROUND:

On July 1, 2010, the City entered into a contract with Iowa State University to utilize the services of its full-time Director of Sustainability. The contract covers a maximum of 480 hours annually (or no more than 25 percent of the Director of Sustainability's time). The Initial Scope of Services focused on the reduction of electric consumption. As additional opportunities and needs have been identified related to sustainability, the Scope of Services has expanded and diversified. During FY 2018-19, in keeping with the Council's direction, the Scope of Services targets priority areas related to energy consumption reduction, as well as adding waste reduction and diversion:

- 1) Continue to work with Public Works Department and Water and Pollution Control Department on reuse and diversion programs related to the waste stream, including – but not limited to – the exploration of a composting and food waste program.

- 2) Continue to support and strengthen the Smart Business Challenge through outreach and recruitment of participants, oversight of Challenge interns, and marketing of outcomes and accomplishments of Challenge participants.

- 3) Continue to represent the City at events that educate residents about ongoing City sustainability efforts, rebates, and waste reduction opportunities including – but not limited to – the Eco Fair and WelcomeFest.

- 4) Coordinate the new Rummage RAMPage at the Ames Intermodal Facility in partnership with the Resource Recovery Plant, Public Relations, CyRide, and Iowa State University, to address concerns that usable housewares and furniture are being

needlessly discarded and hard-to-process materials are being sent to the Resource Recovery Plant.

5) Continue to assist departments in enhancing and updating the EcoSmart program web pages and all material on the City of Ames website related to sustainability and conservation. Continue to provide student feedback on improving our sustainability marketing and education materials.

6) Additional requests from Council – Council voted to engage Merry Rankin to come back to Council with proposals of ways that Council can partner with ISU to address carbon reduction. (November 27, 2017, Council Meeting)

PROGRESS ON SCOPE OF SERVICES:

1. ***Continue to work with Public Works Department and Water and Pollution Control Department on reuse and diversion programs related to the waste stream, including – but not limited to – the exploration of a composting and food waste program.***

Mid-Year FY2019 accomplishments include the following for Priority Area #1:

- Continue to complete milestones related to the \$20,000 forgivable loan from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources exploring beneficial opportunities and options to improve the Resource Recovery Plant's (RRP) process and improve the quality of refuse derived fuel (RDF):
 - Completion of review and comments of multiple drafts of the Waste Diversion Enhancement and Recommendation report by SCS Engineers.
 - Report highlights will include the following five focus areas:
 - RRP Suitable Materials Identification
 - Recycling and Composting Opportunity Assessment
 - Community Engagement
 - Comparison of Other Communities
 - Recommendations

The SCS final report will come back to the City Council at the Jan. 22 meeting.

Collaboration partners: Public Works – Bill Schmitt, Mark Peebler and Lorrie Hanson; SCS Engineers and Public Relations Officer – Susan Gwiasda

2. Continue to support and strengthen the Smart Business Challenge through outreach and recruitment of participants, oversight of Challenge interns, and marketing of outcomes and accomplishments of Challenge participants.

Mid-year FY2019 accomplishments include the following for Priority Area #2:

- Continued recruitment of additional businesses for a total of 33 Smart Business Challenge participants, as well as efforts to certify additional current participants, resulting in one bronze, five silver, three gold and nine platinum certified businesses.
- Presented about the Smart Business Challenge (and the unique value-added collaboration offered for Iowa State University and the City of Ames) at the international conference of the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education in October in Pittsburg, PA, www.aashe.org/conference.
- Continued recognition of Challenge participants through publicizing success stories in City Side.
- Completed video "stories" of Platinum business reflections on impacts and opportunities in joining the Challenge, awaiting completion for posting.
- Held Platinum Business Discussion to gain feedback related to Challenge value and value-added opportunities, service provided by program staff, strategic visioning for continued growth and increased and enhanced participation.
- Annual Smart Business Challenge Recognition Event scheduled for Thursday, January 24, from 11:30am-1:30pm at Reiman Gardens.

Collaboration partners: Electric Services – Don Kom and Steve Wilson; Public Works – Bill Schmitt, Water & Pollution Control – John Dunn; Mark Peebler and Lorrie Hanson; The Energy Group, The Iowa Department of Natural Resources' Iowa Waste Exchange Program; Volunteer Center of Story County and Public Relations Officer – Susan Gwiasda

3. Continue to represent the City at events that educate residents about ongoing City sustainability efforts, rebates, and waste reduction opportunities including – but not limited to – the Eco Fair and WelcomeFest.

Mid-year FY2019 accomplishments include the following for Priority Area #3:

- Participated in the Iowa State University WelcomeFest.
- Continued a monthly radio program on KHOI focused on community sustainability accomplishments, initiatives, and opportunities.

- Continued sharing of City of Ames sustainability efforts as part of speaking engagements.
- Continued sharing of City of Ames and Ames community volunteer opportunities and sustainability events via Live Green! Monthly newsletter, Live Green! social media platforms and targeted emails.
- Continued work with Ames Electric Services in moving forward on a community solar project. Focus on marketing, outreach, and public education opportunities.

4. Coordinate the new Rummage RAMPage at the Ames Intermodal Facility in partnership with the Resource Recovery Plant, Public Relations, CyRide, and Iowa State University, to address concerns that usable housewares and furniture are being needlessly discarded and hard-to-process materials are being sent to the Resource Recovery Plant.

Year end FY2018 accomplishments include the following for Priority Area #4:

- The third annual Rummage RAMPage was held July 27 to Aug 2, 2018. The event surpassed last year's impact, both in tonnage diverted and support provided to community non-profits through sales. More than 51 tons of furniture and housewares (102,550 pounds) was diverted from being landfilled (an increase of 31%) and \$18,607 was raised for the local non-profit agencies (a \$4,000 increase from previous year). As with the 2017 event, tremendous support was received from ISU Parking, several City departments, the Volunteer Center of Story County, and more than 50 volunteers representing 15 community non-profit organizations.
- In addition to collecting items to sell, clothing, shoes, linens, books, DVDs, CDs, and non-perishable, unexpired food were once again collected and donated to community non-profit organizations for beneficial and value-added distribution.
- The addition of the ROAR (Rehoming Our Animals/Aquariums Responsibly) initiative, ensuring an opportunity for drop-off of pets that are not able to be moved with residents or residents are no longer able to care for – rather than releasing them – collected three pets – two fish and a bearded dragon. Support to continue this initiative as part of Rummage Rampage was expressed by both community members and the ROAR partnering organizations.
- Planning will kick-off in January for the 2019 Rummage RAMPage event scheduled for July 28 – August 3.

Collaboration partners: Iowa State University Parking Services, Volunteer Center of Story County, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Story County Conservation, Iowa Wildlife Center, Resource Recovery Plant, City of Ames Police Department, Ames Electric Services, City of Ames Animal Shelter, Public

Relations Office, and community non-profit organizations and volunteers

5. Continue to assist departments in enhancing and updating the EcoSmart program web pages and all material on the City of Ames website related to sustainability and conservation. Continue to provide student feedback on improving our sustainability marketing and education materials.

Year end FY2019 accomplishments include the following for Priority Area #5:

- Offered assistance toward highlighting information for the Composting Rebate Program featured on the Smart Watersheds website www.cityofames.org/government/departments-divisions-i-z/public-works/stormwater-program/smart-watersheds.
- Ongoing input, feedback and assistance regarding City of Ames Smart Energy, Smart Water, Smart Watersheds and other EcoSmart programs.

Collaboration partners: Electric Services, Public Works, Water and Pollution Control and Public Relations Office

6. Additional requests from Council – Council voted to engage Merry Rankin to come back to Council with proposals of ways that Council can partner with ISU to address carbon reduction. (November 27 Council Meeting)

Year end FY2018 accomplishments include the following for Priority Area #6:

- Opportunities are being identified for focus areas with relevance locally and on a broader level. One opportunity may emerge from recommendations identified in the final consultant report for Resource Recovery may offer unique collaboration opportunities with students.

Also, as progress continues with the City's solar project, a second opportunity related to expanding solar energy and renewable energy options may be appropriate for student collaboration or graduate level research.

Collaboration partners: Electric Services, Resource Recovery and Public Relations Office