

## Staff Report

**FY 2020-21 Mid-Year Sustainability Report**

December 22, 2020

This report provides a mid-year update of the FY2020-21 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 2020-21, in keeping with the Council's direction, the Scope of Services targets the following 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 EcoFair 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) Serve as a City contact with consultants to complete a Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Inventory and assist in the completion and presentation of the GHG Inventory to the City Council. Play a key role in selecting consultants for a Climate Action Plan. Help lead the committee of City employees in collaboration with the selected consultant to complete and present the Climate Action Plan to the City Council.

**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 FY2020-21 accomplishments include the following for Priority Area #1:

- Monitor progress and collect feedback from participants in the City of Ames FWD (Food Waste Diversion) pilot program. To date over 150 compost starter kits have been sold, with most participants choosing to use their own buckets and not purchasing a starter kit. More than 13 tons of food waste have been collected since the program's beginning – with over half (8 tons) collected in the last six months.
- With increased awareness of the beneficial impact of diverting food waste from the Resource Recovery System, increased participation in diverting of fall produce (pumpkins, gourds, squash, etc.) has occurred. During fall 2020, 8.5 tons were collected. This is in addition to the pounds collected through FWD (and PR for this initiative).

Collaboration partners: Public Works – Bill Schmitt, Mark Peebler and Lorrie Hanson and Public Relations Officer – Susan Gwiasda; also Parks & Recreation has assisted by selling kits at the Community Center Gym.

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 FY2020-21 accomplishments include the following for Priority Area #2:

- Recruitment and hiring of one new Smart Business Challenge Intern for 2020-2021, Edgar Guillen.
- Continue recruitment of additional businesses to the Smart Business

Challenge. To date, with the addition of four new businesses this fall, 36 businesses are participating in the Challenge. New businesses joining include Danfoss; Hastings, Gartin, Boettger, LLP; Lockwood Café; and The Salon. Current certifications in the Challenge include three bronze, nine silver, four gold and 11 platinum – an addition of two new certifications, +39 and KHOI, both silver.

- Began recertification process for businesses being certified for at least three years. Two businesses completed recertification, McFarland Clinic and Morning Bell Coffee Roasters – both recertifying at the platinum level.
- Annual Smart Business Challenge Recognition Event is scheduled for Thursday, January 21, from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. This year's event will be held virtually with lunches delivered to businesses and attendees joining the event via Zoom connection. No newly certified platinum business is being recognized at this year's event. Catering will be offered by one of the Challenge's platinum-certified businesses, Wheatsfield Cooperative. Ms. Robin Bostrom, Business Specialist with the Iowa Economic Development Authority's Iowa Downtown Resource Center and Main Street Iowa Program, will be this year's keynote speaker.

Collaboration partners: Electric Services – Don Kom and Kayley Lain; Public Works – Bill Schmitt, Mark Peebler and Lorrie Hanson; Water & Pollution Control – John Dunn; 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 EcoFair and WelcomeFest.**

Mid-year FY2020-21 accomplishments include the following for Priority Area #3:

- Participated in the Iowa State University WelcomeFest in August.
- Continue a monthly radio program on KHOI focused on community sustainability accomplishments, initiatives, and opportunities.
- Continue sharing of City of Ames sustainability efforts as part of speaking engagements.
- Continue 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.

- Connect with KHOI to begin planning for an on-air Sustainable Ames/Earth Month celebration program, in consideration of the success and positive feedback from last year's Fresh Air EcoFair event. Date is tentatively scheduled for April 24.

**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.**

Mid-year FY2020-21 accomplishments include the following for Priority Area #4:

- Due to COVID-19 considerations and precautions, the fifth annual Rummage Rampage event was cancelled.
- Work with City of Ames staff, throughout summer and fall months, to promote donation resources and outlets and field questions related to alternative diversion opportunities for beneficial use of non-beneficial items for the Resource Recovery System.
- Began planning for the 2021 Rummage Rampage Event. The fifth annual (redux) event is scheduled for July 30 – August 7.

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, Ames Police, Ames Electric Services, Ames Animal Shelter, Ames Parks & Recreation, Ames Water & Pollution Control, Ames Public Works, Public Relations Office, and community non-profit organizations and volunteers

**5. Serve as a City contact with consultants to complete a Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Inventory and assist in the completion and presentation of the GHG Inventory to the City Council. Play a key role in selecting consultants for a Climate Action Plan. Help lead the committee of City employees in collaboration with the selected consultant to complete and present the Climate Action Plan to the City Council.**

Mid-year FY2020-21 accomplishments include the following for Priority Area #5:

- Collaborated with City staff and consultant PaleBLUEDot to complete a community GHG inventory and three reports:

- City of Ames Community Greenhouse Gas Inventory
- City of Ames Climate Vulnerability Assessment
- City of Ames Citywide Solar PV Energy Potentials Study
- Completed Council presentation of inventory process, results and forecasting, in collaboration with City staff and consultant PaleBLUEDot.
- Completed Climate Action Goal Setting and Plan RFP. The RFP received City Council approval on Dec. 8, 2020 and is scheduled for issue early January. The proposals are scheduled for review in February 2021, and award approval requested is anticipated at the March 23, 2021 City Council meeting.

Collaboration partners: Electric Services – Kayley Lain; Public Works – Bill Schmitt; Planning Services – Kelly Diekmann; Water & Pollution Control – Dustin Albrecht; City Manager’s Office – Deb Schildroth and Susan Gwiasda; Purchasing – Karen Server