

## Staff Report

**FY 2019-20 Mid-Year Sustainability Report**

December 10, 2019

This report provides a mid-year update of the FY2019-20 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 2019-20, 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 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) Work with various City of Ames departments to select a consultant to create a Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Inventory for Ames. Once a consultant is selected, serve as the City's point of contact with the consultant to facilitate the completion and presentation of the GHG inventory 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 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 nearly 100 compost starter kits have been sold, with many participants choosing to use their own buckets and not purchasing a starter kit. More than one ton of food waste has been collected to date – averaging 300-400 pounds per month.

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 accomplishments include the following for Priority Area #2:

- Continue recruitment of additional businesses to add to the existing 34 Smart Business Challenge participants, as well as efforts to certify additional current participants, resulting in one bronze, six silver, three gold and 10 platinum-certified businesses.
- Annual Smart Business Challenge Recognition Event is scheduled for Thursday, January 23, from 11am-1:30pm at Reiman Gardens. Adam Hammes, Executive Director of The Iowa Sustainable Business Forum will be our keynote speaker. Newly certified platinum business being recognized at the event are: 3M and REG.

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 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 supporting the community solar project, through marketing, outreach, and public education assistance.

**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 FY19 accomplishments include the following for Priority Area #4:

- The fourth annual Rummage RAMPage was held July 26 to Aug 3, 2019. The event surpassed last year’s impact, both in tonnage diverted and support provided to community non-profits through sales. More than 58 tons of furniture and housewares (116,424 pounds) was diverted from being landfilled (an increase of 12%) and \$33,194 was raised for the local non-profit agencies (nearly a \$15,000 increase from last year). As with the 2018 event, tremendous support was received from ISU Parking, several City departments, the Volunteer Center of Story County, and 22 community non-profit organizations providing nearly 1,300 hours of service.

- 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 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 two painted turtles that were rehomed.
- Planning will kick-off in January for the 2020 Rummage RAMPage event scheduled for July 24 – August 3 (extended to 11 days).

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. *Work with various City of Ames departments to select a consultant to create a Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Inventory for Ames. Once a consultant is selected, serve as the City's point of contact with the consultant to facilitate the completion and presentation of the GHG inventory to the City Council.***

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

- Collaborated with City staff to develop and distribute an RFP for the completion of a community GHG inventory. Received responses from five consulting firms.
- Interviewed top firms with City review team and followed up with reference checks of preferred vendor. Assisted in recommendation to Council to award contract.
- Collaborated with City staff to finalize contract language and confirm contract with PaleBLUEDot.
- A kick-off meeting with City staff and PaleBlueDot was held on December 3 to confirm new schedule and begin scope of work.

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, Susan Gwiasda, and Tasheik Kerr; Purchasing – Karen Server