

Staff Report

FY 2021-22 Mid-Year Sustainability Report

December 14, 2021

This report provides a mid-year update of the FY2021-22 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 2021-22, 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 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.

5) Serve as a City contact with consultants to complete 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 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 FY2021-22 accomplishments include the following for Priority Area #1:

- Promote and increase awareness and education related to the City of Ames FWD (Food Waste Diversion) program. More than 41 tons of food waste have been collected since the program's beginning – with over half (26 tons) collected in 2021.
 - In complement to the FWD program, the City continues to offer the Great Pumpkin Drop-off program, offering an option for fall produce (pumpkins, gourds, squash, etc.). During fall 2021, an additional 6.36 tons were collected.

Collaboration partners: Public Works – Bill Schmitt, Mark Peebler and Lorrie Hanson and Public Relations Officer – Susan Gwiasda; Parks & Recreation also offers assistance through 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 FY2021-22 accomplishments include the following for Priority Area #2:

- Recruitment and hiring of two new Smart Business Challenge Interns for 2020-2021, Lydia Youngquist and Lucia Rizzo.
- Continue recruitment of additional businesses to the Smart Business Challenge and three-year recertification of current certified business members. Thirty-seven businesses are currently participating in the Challenge. Current certifications in the Challenge include three bronze, nine silver, five gold and 11 platinum.
- Annual Smart Business Challenge Recognition Event is scheduled for Thursday, January 20, from 11:30am-1:15pm. We will reconvene in person for this year's

event at Reiman Gardens, offering virtual participation option as well. Mr. Yuill Herbert, with the Sustainable Solutions Group – consultant for the City Climate Action Plan, will be this year’s keynote speaker, speaking on “Envisioning the Role of Businesses in Ames’ Low Carbon Future”.

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; 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.

Mid-year FY2021-22 accomplishments include the following for Priority Area #3:

- Participate in the Iowa State University WelcomeFest.
- Participate in an Ames Public Library Zero Waste Panel Discussion.
- Continue a monthly radio program on KHOI focused on community sustainability accomplishments, initiatives, and opportunities.
- Continue to represent the City in sustainability update segments on KASI.
- 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.
- Engage City of Ames department participation in Iowa State University environmental events. Public Works (Storm Water and Resource Recovery), City Manager’s Office and Electric Services tabled at the annual Campus Sustainability Month Celebration.

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 FY2021-22 accomplishments include the following for Priority Area #4:

- The fifth annual Rummage RAMPAGE was held July 30 to Aug 7, 2021. The event diverted over 45 tons of furniture and housewares from being landfilled and raised more than \$40,000 for local non-profit organizations – an increase of

nearly \$7,000 from the fourth annual event, held in 2019. As with the 2019 event, tremendous support was received from ISU Parking, several City departments, the Volunteer Center of Story County, and more than 1,500 hours provided by volunteers representing 28 community non-profit organizations.

- In addition to collecting items to sell, clothing, shoes, linens, books, DVDs, CDs, school supplies, cleaning supplies 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 – once again partnered with the event.
- Planning will kick-off in January for the 2022 Rummage RAMPage event scheduled for July 29 – August 6.

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. Plan 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 FY2021-22 accomplishments include the following for Priority Area #5:

- Collaborate with City staff and consultant SSG to support milestone components of the Climate Action Plan process including:
 - Completion of Plan process components of data collection and business as usual energy and emissions modeling.
 - Completion of two Steering Committee workshops, two Supplemental Input Committee workshops and one Town Hall meeting.
 - Completion of weekly consultant planning and engagement meetings.
 - Development of education and engagement materials including a project

website, online survey, and various marketing materials.

- Collaboration with and assistance to community engagement, outreach and awareness building opportunities including Ames Climate Theatre Action, Care of Creation Ecumenical Prayer Service and Ames Public Library Tabling.

Collaboration partners: Electric Services – Kayley Lain; City Manager’s Office – Deb Schildroth and Susan Gwasda