



West Branch City Council
 City Administrator's Report
 9/21/20

Pending Action Items:

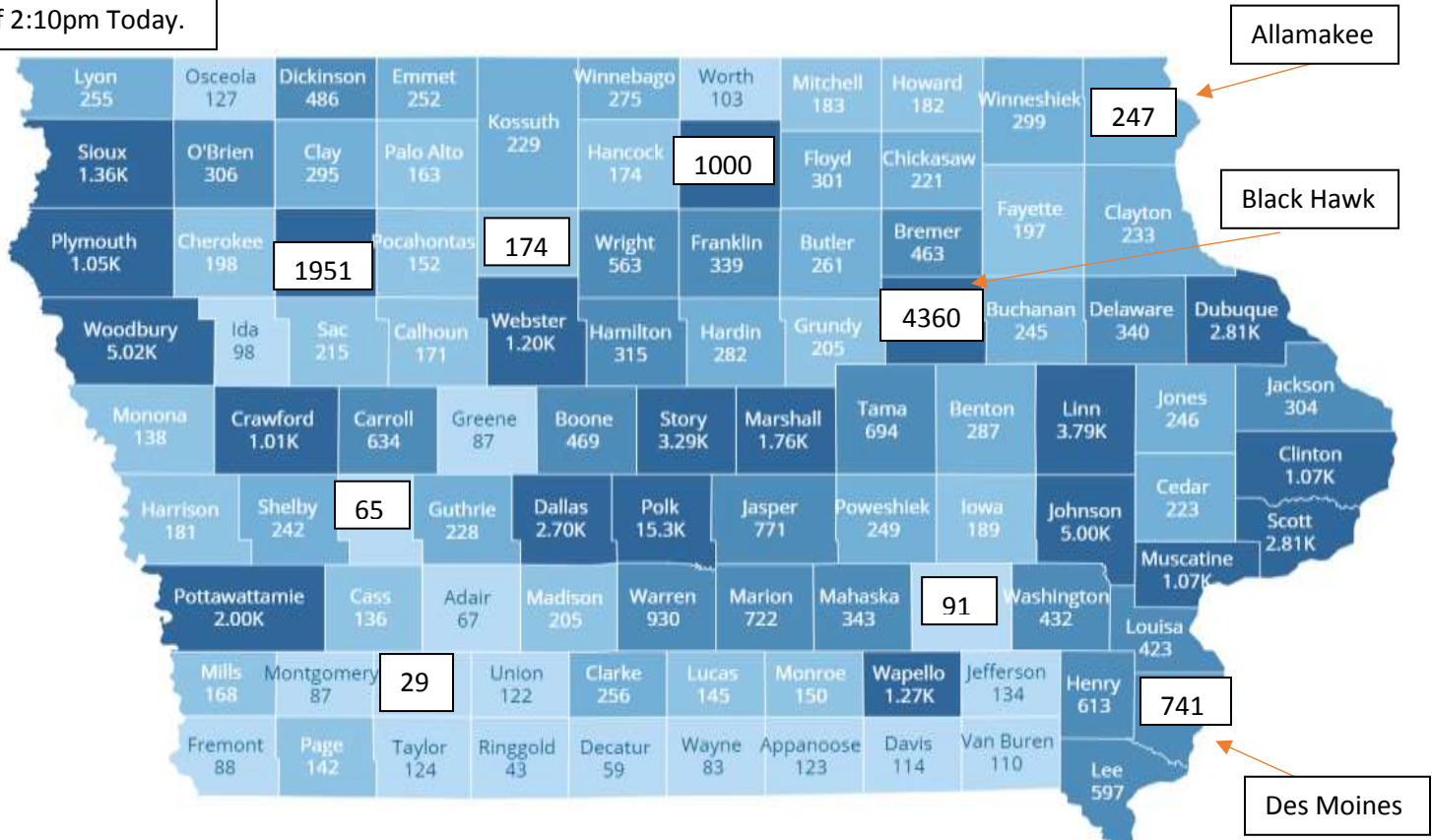
(Wastewater Topic)

After speaking with Pilot Project coordinators from Baldrige Environmental and Iowa University, I've agreed to draft a letter to DNR to request an extended compliance schedule (for a formal pilot project) with the intent to move forward with lagoon expansion. The lagoon expansion has to be done anyway (under every system that has been proposed in the facility plan). This is a last ditch effort to slow down the process before design is started. This will give the city more time to save funds before the large rate increase will need to happen, and it will keep our hopes alive that we will still be able to find a cheaper wastewater solution. As you may be aware, the \$2 million Iowa Economic Development Authority COVID-19 grant application was denied. However, East Central Intergovernmental Association (ECIA) is still investigating other grant opportunities for us and is currently looking at similar funding from the Iowa Economic Development Authority under a Public Works grant. ECIA has agreed to continue to pursue funding this project at no cost to the city. With regard to our Intended Use Plan (IUP) application we still expect to be approved in September. The IUP allows us the financing for our design phase of our Wastewater Treatment Facility. We hope to get a letter out to DNR and get a response before we have to begin expending funds for design.

Report from the Desk of the City Administrator:

- City Safety Committee recommends continuing the city's COVID-19 protocols for at least another month. Jose Gongora, our Safety Committee Consultant has agreed to make himself available to answer an of the City Council's questions at 915-227-1002. As many of you may know Mr. Gongora currently also serves as the safety coordinator for Kinze Manufacturing.

As of 2:10pm Today.



COVID cases appear to be on the rise once again, and I have received a couple criticisms regarding City Council members not wearing any type of face covering and the concern that it maybe the wrong message being sent for those viewing the City Council meetings. Although, Statistics show that Masks are critical in keeping the infection rate from peaking and managing the rate of deaths due to infection. The state continues to increase as a whole and we're nearing 257,653 total individual (past and current) positive cases statewide. The Federal Government has identified states that are consider to be the hottest outbreaks or red zones in the country. We are current among those states. At this time the City Council is still practicing Social Distancing. With City Council Meetings still using Zoom for the Public audiences over 10 people. At the time the Council indicated that this practice would continue until July. Our next meeting will be September 8th. Is there any new direction that the city should adhere to before this meeting of after? Elsewhere the city continues to take precautions but regular working conditions are slowly being restored. At this time, it has been personal choice mask for indoor employees; however, we have counter-shield in use and many times if we notice a customer using a mask staff has mask at their work stations that they will use to interact with masked customers.

- The summary of Clean-up for 203 Green Street. The City Attorney, the abatement contractor, and I surveyed the property before scheduling the clean-up. In order to avoid keeping up with questionable items with potential value; such as, tools, ladders, chain saws, construction materials, etc. we agreed to stack things (with reason) and pack of items between the house and the garage. This turned out to be a good compromise. I believe our kinder and gentler approach may save us the effort of having to defend anything in district court... but we will see. I gave home owner hours of facetime, in order to keep interference with the clean-up crews to a minimum. I also had some give and take with the homeowner, which seem to help the process. The homeowner actually signed over the title for the junk vehicle which solved the storage cost issue that the city would have provided the upfront cost for. Thus, likely waiting for the property lien process for city reimbursement (which can be lengthy process). We did run into an issue of several mystery buckets filled with water. According to the crew foreman one of the buckets was turned over and a fierce odor was emanating from the spillage. Apparently, it was so bad that a pile of dirt was used to cover it up. Unsure of the contents of the six remaining filled buckets, city crews disposed at the lagoon. We also could not close the garage completely, so it does appear to be a haven for at least stray animals and other undesirable critters. We did leave the porch alone. Primarily not because our ordinance doesn't apply but because district court requested be left alone last year's clean-up. But for now, a markable improvement. When you get a chance take a look at the property - "it's night and day".



Before

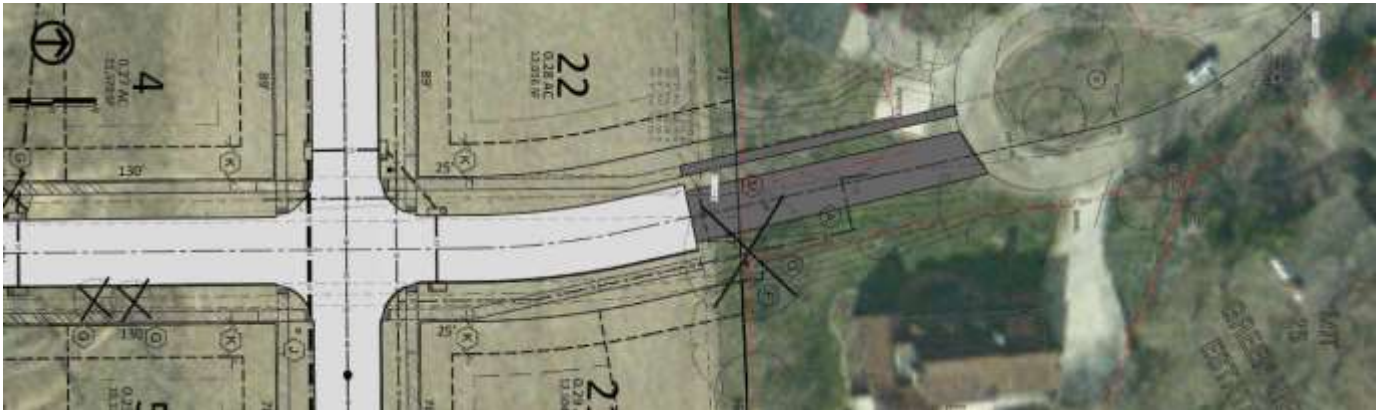


After

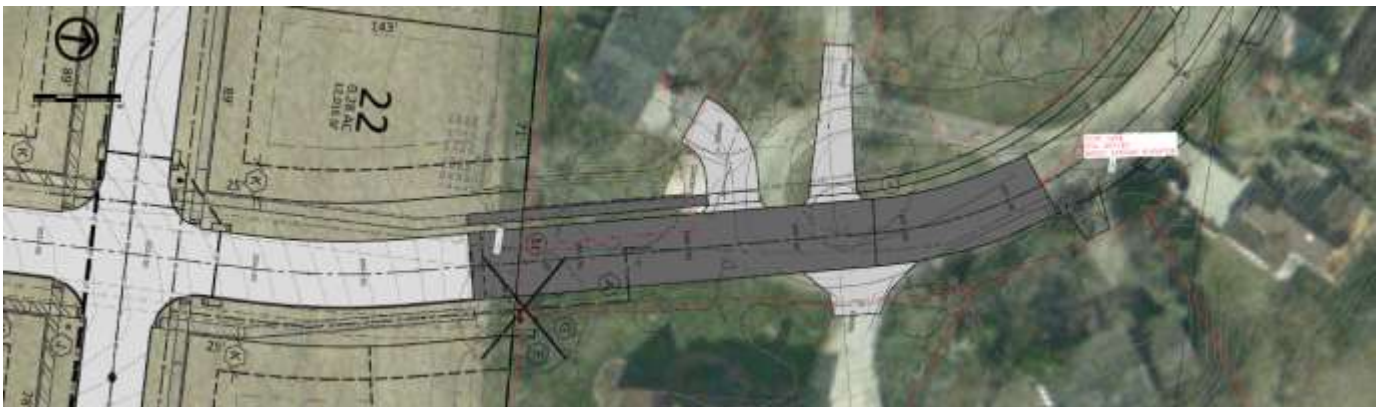
Follow up / Reminder Items:

- **Greenview Connection** - The city has reviewed the anticipated remaining portions of this project and it is expected to be very manageable, and would fit with Public Works operational budget. However, there has been some thought to make the connection a straight street, thus removing the cul-de-sac. This may require additional right-of-way from one of the neighbor property owners. To reach agreement with this property owner a sidewalk may need to extend from where it was originally intended to stop, and continue to the edge of this property owner driveway. V&K is working up design that will consider both the option of connecting and the option of taking out the cul-de-sac. Where City Council can decide which approach is more desirable and any additional cost considerations that may need to be made.

Option 1



Option 2



V&K is still working up the numbers on both of this options and staff expects to have both options with prices on the October 5th City Council meeting.

- We had several deadlines to make sure that we can go after covid-19, CARES Act Funds, Governor’s Relief, and derecho. At this time we have been able to respond to all the requirements.
- Over the last two weeks, I have started the evaluation process of the management team. We started with 360 evaluations and required reading of the book, entitled, “Who Moved My Cheese”. A book that coaches agile when accepting the realities of change. And inspires innovation through continual improvement and staying in tune the condition of one’s environment. The final stage of the evaluation process will be a sit down with me, to discuss the book, recent successes, and areas to build upon.
- The Gaskill Notice of Public Hearing is expected to take place October 19th. The statement of property rights is being handled by the City Attorney.