

This is the first of two introductory issues of *The Planner* you will receive through the City's General City News program. If you'd like to continue receiving this e-newsletter (it's FREE!), subscribe online at www.icgov.org/subscribe (go to "Newsletter" and click on "Planner Newsletter") and we'll e-mail a copy directly to you each time a new issue is released.



The Planner

VOLUME I, ISSUE I Week of JULY 27, 2009

Newsletter for the Iowa City Planning & Community Development Department

Urban Planning | Historic Preservation | Housing Rehab | Community Development
Economic Development | JCCOG Transportation Planning | Neighborhood Services | Public Art

Planning Department introduces e-newsletter

The City of Iowa City's Planning and Community Development (PCD) Department has launched an electronic newsletter to help keep the public apprised of meetings, events, and programs that are overseen by the department. The newsletter, called *The Planner*, will be published on a regular basis — often weekly — depending on event schedules and the volume of news available.

The department will continue to issue news releases to local newspapers, radio and television stations, post articles on the website, and distribute news with other methods of communication that have been used in the past, but will add the newsletter as yet another source of information for the public.

The Planner will be posted to the City's website on Fridays, on the main page of the PCD section: www.icgov.org/PCD. Readers may check the web page for the newest edition, or sign up on the PCD web page for a free electronic subscription to have the publication directly e-mailed

each time a new issue is released. Back issues of *The Planner* will also be available on the PCD website page.

News content will include a schedule of public meetings for the upcoming week, as well as information about programs and events of interest to Iowa City



CITY OF IOWA CITY

citizens from each of the PCD areas: Urban Planning, Historic Preservation, Housing Rehab, Community Development, Economic Development, Neighborhood Services, Public Art, and Johnson County Council of Governments (JCCOG) Transportation Planning.

Have comments or suggestions for the newsletter? Contact Jodi DeMeulenaere, our Public Information Assistant, at 356-5230 or e-mail jodi-demeulenaere@iowa-city.org

i . n . s . i . d . e

Rummage in the Ramp this week!

The biggest garage sale in town — Rummage in the Ramp — will be held Sunday, July 26 through Sunday, August 2. It's a great way to clear out your unused household items, or shop for great bargains! *Page 2.*

Flood updates

We've already marked the one-year anniversary of the flood, but the recovery work is far from done. Updates inside. *Pages 5-6.*

Sharrows have come to the City

Some of the more heavily traveled streets in town are now featuring sharrows for a safer, more enjoyable bicycle ride. *Page 7.*

Rummage in the Ramp:

Donate your unused items or shop for great bargains...all for a good cause!

“Rummage in the Ramp” is quickly becoming one of those don’t-miss summer events in Iowa City, and this year promises to be the best one yet, with more donations expected and increased sales hours that will allow people even more time to shop and purchase items.

Rummage in the Ramp 2009 will be held from Sunday, July 26 through Sunday, August 2 on the lower level of Chauncey Swan Parking Ramp, between Burlington and Washington Streets.

Donations of kitchen and other household items, furniture, clothing, beds and bedding, books, toys, small appliances in good working order, and non-perishable food will be accepted. All donations are tax-deductible. If you are unable to get items to the ramp yourself, you may schedule a time for volunteers to pick up and deliver your items for you. A \$10 fee to help cover gasoline costs is requested.

Computers and other electronics, such as televisions, stereos, and game systems, will be accepted, but will require a \$5 donation fee which will be used to cover recycling costs for these items if they do not sell or are not in working condition.

While all efforts will be made to ensure proper working order, any electronic items purchased at the sale will be sold “as-is,” with no guarantees for the buyer.



NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES

MARCIA BOLLINGER

**Neighborhood Services
Coordinator**

319.356.5237

marcia-bollinger@iowa-city.org

Web page:

[www.icgov.org/
neighborhoodservices](http://www.icgov.org/neighborhoodservices)

Rummage in the Ramp is a donation and re-use sale organized by the City of Iowa City to help reduce the volume of furniture and household goods that are hauled to the curb or dumpster each summer as students and other tenants move out of their apartments. The event encourages people to donate, rather than throw away, their still-usable furniture and other household items. The items are then sold at bargain-basement low prices, ranging from \$1 to \$20. Proceeds from the sale are divided among local nonprofit organizations that help staff the event.

Last year, Rummage in the Ramp diverted about 19 tons of reusable materials from the Iowa City Landfill and Recycling Center, and raised about \$9,000 for local nonprofits. In its first year, the event raised \$4,000, and was named the Iowa Recycling Association’s “Recycling Project of the Year.”

For more information, including how to schedule a pick-up appointment or for a list of participating nonprofits, visit www.icgov.org/rummageintheramp or contact Marcia Bollinger at 319.356.5237 or Jennifer Jordan at 887-6160.

RUMMAGE IN THE RAMP

DONATION & SALES HOURS

**Sunday, July 26
through Friday, July 31:**
Noon to 8 p.m. daily

Saturday, August 1:
8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Sunday, August 2:
8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES

Party in the Park

This week: Scott Park and Wetherby Park

Scott Park and **Wetherby Park** will be the featured sites for this week's Party in the Park neighborhood summer fun series.

On Tuesday, July 28, the party will be held in Scott Park, located on Scott Boulevard between Court Street and Muscatine Avenue. Live musical entertainment will be provided by Nick Arp, who will be performing acoustic originals and eclectic covers. Thursday, July 30, the party moves to Wetherby Park, at 2400 Taylor Drive. Jeffrey Morgan will entertain with traditional and original songs and stories for all ages.

Both parties are scheduled from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Attendees are asked to bring their own chairs or blankets to sit on, as park seating is limited. There is no charge to attend. Party in the Park events are designed to give neighbors a chance to get together in their local park for an evening of fun, entertainment, and socializing, with live music, games, arts and crafts, and ice cream.



URBAN PLANNING

ROBERT MIKLO

Senior Planner
319.356.5240

bob-miklo@iowa-city.org

Web page:

www.icgov.org/urbanplanning

Zoning info will soon be available online

Citizens who drive past a property in their neighborhood with a sign that indicates the property is being considered by the City of Iowa City for “Rezoning,” “Subdivision,” “Special Exception,” or “Variance” now have another means to find out more details — the City website. In the past, the signs instructed interested parties to call the City’s Planning & Community Development office for more information. By posting this information on the City’s website, citizens will have access to the information 24/7, to research whenever it’s most convenient for them.

Summaries of the Planning & Zoning cases will also be printed in this newsletter. Watch for upcoming issues of *The Planner* for information on the new system, when it will be ready to go, and how to access the new web page.

The website address will also appear on signage that will be posted at the sites that are being considered for a zoning or other change.

State of Iowa Single Family Housing Program

Construction gets underway!

Construction is now underway on 40 new homes that are being built as part of the State of Iowa's Single Family New Construction Unit Production Program. The program was implemented to help replace some of the housing units that were lost in last summer's flood.

The homes, which include a mix of single family detached homes, duplexes, zero lot lines, row houses, and condominiums, will be built in six different subdivisions throughout Iowa City. Each will offer accessibility features and meet energy efficiency requirements. The homes have been sold to low- and middle-income residents,



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

STEVE LONG

**Community Development
Coordinator**

319.356.5250

steve-long@iowa-city.org

Web page:

www.icgov.org/commdev

some of whom were victims of last year's flood. Most are first-time homebuyers.

A total of 53 individuals or families applied to and qualified for the program, but because only 40 houses were available, the final selection was made using a lottery system. All 53 names were placed in a Bingo Ball, with Mayor Pro-Tem Mike O'Donnell drawing the names of the 40 lucky new homeowners.

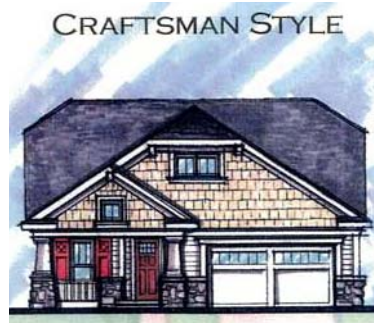
The price of each home will not exceed \$180,000. Homeowners are also eligible for downpayment assistance which could total up to 30% of the home's purchase price. If the homeowner lives in the home for 10 years or more will not need to repay the loan, but if they move before the 10-year term has expired, they'll be required to pay back a prorated amount.

The homes are due to be completed by the end of the year.

For more information on this program, visit our website at www.icgov.org/newhomes or contact Tracey Achenbach at the Housing Trust Fund of Johnson County at 319.358.0212 or at tachenbach@htfjc.org. The City has contracted with the HTFCJ to assist with administering this housing program.

The homes and contractors

Area builders and developers submitted construction proposals for the Single Family New Construction Unit Production Program to the City in April, with final plans selected by City staff. The homes are being built by the following contractors: Arlington Development, B&H Builders, Capital Builders, Peninsula Development, Southgate Development, and Town & Country Manor Development Co. Homeowners selected their homes in the order in which their name was drawn in the lottery. They'll be working with local lenders to finance their home purchases.



Above is one of the program's new home designs. To see other designs and where the homes are being built, visit www.icgov.org/newhomes.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

I-JOBS & flood program update

I-JOBS

The City of Iowa City is currently submitting several applications for I-JOBS funding. I-JOBS is the State of Iowa's three-year, \$830 million infrastructure investment initiative designed to create jobs, strengthen the state's economy, and build a "safer, stronger, greener, and smarter state." The requests include:

Housing assistance: The Community Development staff submitted an application earlier this month for \$1.2 million in State Jumpstart 3 funding for housing assistance. The funds would be directed toward flood victims who have not yet received any Jumpstart assistance due to incomes that are over 150% of the area median income, and households that have already received awards from previous Jumpstart funds, but in amounts lower than \$50,000.

Other projects: Staff members from the Community Development and Urban Planning division and JCCOG are currently preparing applications for I-JOBS and CDBG funding for several City projects:

- construction of Fire Station 4
- relocation of the North Wastewater Treatment Plant
- the Dubuque Street / Park Road bridge project
- UniverCity Partnership housing acquisition and rehab program
- Rocky Shore Drive lift station and Rocky Shore Drive flood gate
- levee between McCollister Boulevard and the railroad tracks on the west side of the river
- levee between Highway 6 and the railroad tracks on the east side of the Iowa River, and the
- elevation of Taft Speedway / No Name Road.

Details of each project will be outlined by Planning & Community Development Director Jeff Davidson and Public Works Director Rick Fosse at the July 27 City Council work session.

Eleven homes purchased in HMGP buyout

Eleven flood-damaged homes in the 100-year floodplain have been purchased by the City with either Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) funds or Community Disaster Grant (CDG) funds. Demolition of the homes will take place later this summer, and the space will be converted to parkland. As many as 30 additional homes may be acquired and demolished through the HMGP buyout over the next few months.

City sends letters to 71 homeowners re: non-FEMA buyouts

Letters have been mailed to 71 eligible property owners to determine their interest in a possible non-FEMA buyout program. FEMA's HMGP program required that buyout properties be located in the 100-year floodplain. The second buyout program currently under consideration would be geared toward homeowners whose properties were significantly damaged by last year's floods, but were not eligible for FEMA's buyout program because of their location in the 500-year floodplain. An application to request funds for this second buyout program will be submitted to the Iowa Department of Economic Development (IDED), requesting funds from the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program.

For more information, contact Community Development Coordinator Steve Long at 319.356.5250 or steve-long@iowa-city.org, or Community Development Planners David Purdy at 319.356.5489 or david-purdy@iowa-city.org or Doug Ongie at 319.356.5479 or doug-ongie@iowa-city.org.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

WENDY FORD

**Economic Development
Coordinator**
319.356.5248
wendy-ford@iowa-city.org
Web page:
www.icgov.org/ecodev

Flood recovery programs assist local businesses

HUD: BRAP budget approval on its way

Although the State of Iowa received program approval from Housing and Urban Development (HUD) several weeks ago for the Business Rental Assistance Program (BRAP), state officials are still waiting for HUD to approve the budget for the program. Iowa Department of Economic Development (IDED) Deputy Director Vince Lintz visited with HUD officials two weeks ago, and they indicated that budget approval for the program may come within the next week or two.

In the meantime, IDED is providing draft contracts to the City's Economic Development staff so we can get ready to implement this program as soon as the City receives its grant contracts from the state. Once we hear, "Go!" we'll be able to execute contracts immediately, and get checks drawn for qualified applicants.

The program will provide up to six months of rental assistance (up to \$50,000) for businesses that opened or re-opened in a commercial building damaged by the flood. Businesses and commercial landlords alike will benefit, as vacant spaces are filled

and business is stimulated in disaster-impacted areas. Businesses that meet the program guidelines will have the rental assistance loan forgiven as long as they operate in the rental unit for at least six months. If the business closes or moves to a new location within the six-month period, prorated repayment will be required.

Flood relief overview: City assists 74 businesses

Three flood assistance programs have been made available to local businesses that were impacted by last summer's flood:

Iowa City Flood Recovery Program: Instituted very shortly after the flood, this program provided up to \$5,000 in grant funds to businesses for flood-related clean-up expenses. The City distributed almost \$75,000 to 18 business applicants.

Jumpstart Small Business Assistance Program: Flood-impacted businesses were eligible for up to \$50,000 in forgivable loan funds plus an additional \$5,000 for reimbursement of new energy-efficient equipment. The City distributed \$1.25 million to 44 participants. Of the \$1.25 million, \$45,000 was for reimbursement of energy-efficient equipment.

Business Rental Assistance Program (BRAP): To date, 38 applications totaling \$646,000, have been received for this program, which will provide rental assistance for businesses that opened or re-opened in a commercial building damaged by the flood. The funds for the program are expected soon.

When funding for the BRAP program gets underway, the City will have helped 74 businesses through the three programs. Of the 74 businesses, 74% participated in only one of the three programs, 16% in two programs, and 10% in all three programs.

For more information, contact Economic Development Coordinator Wendy Ford at 319.356.5248 or e-mail wendy-ford@iowa-city.org



JCCOG TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

JOHN YAPP

**Johnson County
Council of Governments
Executive Director
319.356.5252**

**john-yapp@iowa-city.org
Website:
www.jccog.org**

Sharrows implemented as part of Metro Bicycle Plan

Iowa City and Johnson County bicycling enthusiasts are now enjoying some major improvements to the local bicycle network – shared lane arrows, or “sharrows,” which have been implemented as part of the JCCOG Metro Bicycle Master Plan. The plan, which is available for review on the JCCOG website at www.jccog.org, was developed to inventory existing facilities and identify opportunities to improve bicycle access in Iowa City and surrounding Johnson County communities.

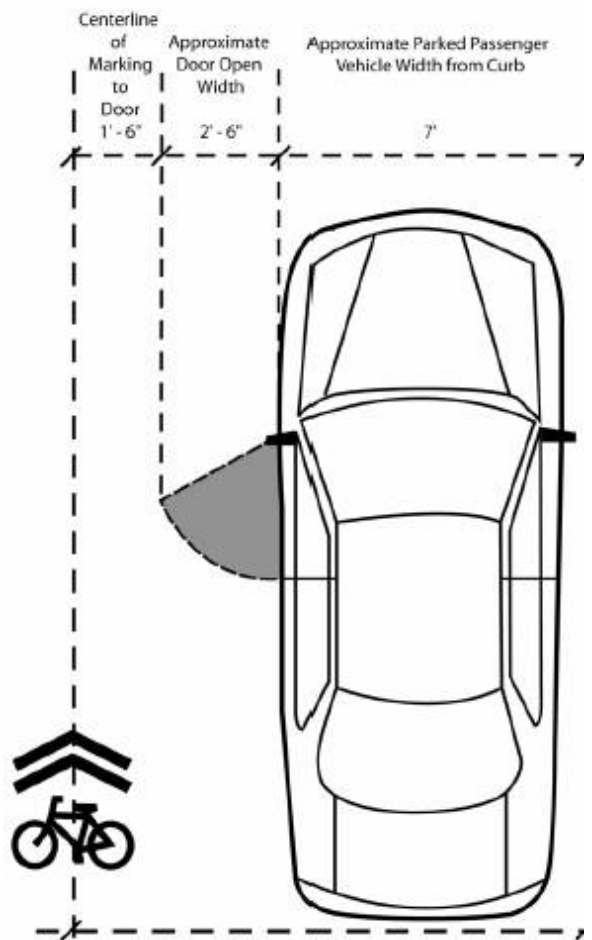
The Iowa City City Council will consider a resolution at a meeting later in July to officially adopt the master plan as a guide. The City also plans to submit an application to the League of American Bicyclists to be designated as a “Bicycle Friendly Community.” When it applied in 2007, the City received an “honorable mention,” prompting the development of the Metro Bicycle Master Plan.

The sharrows, which are an alternative to bike lanes, are located on Market, Jefferson, and College Streets in Iowa City, and on 5th Street in Coralville.

A sharrow does not demarcate a separate bicycle lane, but it does direct the bicyclist to travel in the proper lane position to avoid being hit by opening doors of parked cars. The sharrow markings also remind roadway users where the travel lane is too narrow to be safely shared side-by-side by cyclists and passing motorists.

Many cyclists know that when there is no bike lane present, cyclists are expected to ride on the right. The sharrows, on the other hand, are located in the left lane, to increase safety. Bicycle lanes on the left side of some one-way streets are gaining popularity to help reduce the number of bicyclists being struck by opening car doors. The design also helps increase visibility, as the rear-right blind spot is eliminated and drivers can more easily see a bicyclist in the driver’s side mirror. Another feature is that this removes bicyclists from the path of buses pulling into bus stops.

For more information on sharrows or other improvements to the local bicycling network, contact Kristopher Ackerson, JCCOG Assistant Transportation Planner, at 319.356.5247 or e-mail kristopher-ackerson@iowa-city.org.



WHO SHOULD YOU CONTACT?

PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

General Phone: 319.356.5230

Fax: 319.356.5217

Department Web Page: <http://www.icgov.org/PCD>

ADMINISTRATION

Jeff Davidson

Director
319.356.5232
jeff-davidson@iowa-city.org

Janet Dvorsky

Administrative Secretary
319.356.5230
janet-dvorsky@iowa-city.org

Jodi DeMeulenaere

Public Information Assistant
319.356.5236
jodi-demeulenaere@iowa-city.org

URBAN PLANNING

Robert Miklo

Senior Planner
319.356.5240
bob-miklo@iowa-city.org

Urban Planners:

Karen Howard

319.356.5251
karen-howard@iowa-city.org

Christina Kuecker

Historic Preservation
319.356.5243
christina-kuecker@iowa-city.org

Sarah Walz

Board of Adjustment
319.356.5239
sarah-walz@iowa-city.org

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Steve Long

Coordinator
319.356.5250
steve-long@iowa-city.org

Community Development Planners:

Tracy Hightshoe

319.356.5244
tracy-hightshoe@iowa-city.org

Doug Ongie

319.356.5479
doug-ongie@iowa-city.org

David Purdy

319.356.5489
david-purdy@iowa-city.org

Housing Rehabilitation Specialists:

David Powers

319.356.5233
david-powers@iowa-city.org

Jeff Vanatter

319.356.5128
jeff-vanatter@iowa-city.org

Liz Osborne

Program Assistant
319.356.5246
liz-osborne@iowa-city.org

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Wendy Ford

Coordinator
319.356.5248
wendy-ford@iowa-city.org

JCCOG

John Yapp

Executive Director
319.356.5252
john-yapp@iowa-city.org

Transportation Planners:

Brad Neumann

319.356.5235
brad-neumann@iowa-city.org

Kent Ralston

319.356.5253
kent-ralston@iowa-city.org

Kristopher Ackerson

319.356.5247
kristopher-ackerson@iowa-city.org

Darian Nagle-Gamm

319.356.5254
darian-nagle-gamm@iowa-city.org

Human Services Planning:

Linda Severson

Coordinator
319.356.5242
linda-severson@iowa-city.org

NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES

Marcia Bollinger

Coordinator of
Neighborhood Services
& Iowa City Public Art Program
319.356.5237
marcia-bollinger@iowa-city.org