



The Planner

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 1 Week of JANUARY 11, 2010

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

Calendar

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CDBG & HOME applicant workshop. Page 3.

Board of Adjustment meeting. Page 6.

January 14

Historic Preservation Commission meeting. Page 6.

Community panel presentation: "Neighborhood-University Partnerships: Miller-Orchard and Beyond." Page 5.

January 18

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. City offices closed.

January 20

Economic Development Committee meeting, 8 a.m., Lobby Conference Room.

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LED lighting in City ramps

City receives \$1.5 million for flood mitigation project

Federal funds received for Dubuque Street elevation and Park Road Bridge replacement

The recent passage of the Transportation/HUD Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2010 (H3288), which has been signed by President Barack Obama, will result in \$1.5 million in federal funds coming back to Iowa City to help fund a major flood mitigation project — the elevation of Dubuque Street and the replacement of Park Road Bridge.

During the flood of 2008, Dubuque Street, which carries over 25,000 cars per day, was closed for over 30 days. The back-up of floodwaters from Park Road Bridge caused an additional ten inches of flooding upstream. As a result, the elevation of the street and the replacement of the bridge were rated as High Recovery Projects by the FEMA Emergency Support Long-Term Care Recovery Committee.

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Flooding closed Dubuque Street for more than a month in 2008. Plans call for elevating the street to protect the City from similar problems in future flood events.



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Flood mitigation projects

continued from cover

Total cost of the project is approximately \$32 million. In addition to the Transportation/HUD funding, residents of Iowa City passed a local option sales tax to help pay for the project. Other applications for state and federal funding are still pending. City officials and staff will continue to seek additional funding for this and other flood mitigation projects in an upcoming trip to Washington, D.C. in February.

For more information, contact David Purdy, Community Development Planner, at 356.5489 or e-mail david-purdy@iowa-city.org.

Applications available for four new flood programs for businesses

The City's Economic Development division is now accepting applications for four new flood recovery programs offered by the State of Iowa to assist business owners who were impacted by the floods of 2008. The four new programs are:

Expanded Business Rental Assistance Program (EBRAP)

This program is an expansion of the original Business Rental Assistance Program (BRAP), which provided rental assistance to businesses that were located in, or planned to locate in, a business rental space that was damaged by the flood. The EBRAP program extends assistance to include reimbursement of up to 50% of replacement costs associated with machinery and equipment, office equipment, furniture, supplies, and inventory that was damaged by the flood. The maximum amount of assistance available is \$50,000 per business. In-home businesses are not eligible.

Loan Interest Supplement Program (LISP)

Businesses that have taken out loans to cover physical damage or loss of business from the flood can receive assistance from this program in the form of interest supplements. LISP funds will be provided to individual businesses for a maximum of three years, with a \$50,000 cap per business.

Commercial Rental Revenue Program (CRRG)

CRRG can assist commercial building owners who lost revenue from rental space that was damaged by the flood. Up to 12 months of lost rental revenue is available, with a maximum amount of \$25,000 per unit. Businesses must show that the rehab and repair of the building is complete and that it is ready to be occupied. Assistance is not available for units that were vacant at the time of the flood, or for commercial property owners who did not own the flood-damaged property at the time of the flood.

Residential Landlord Business Support Program (RLBS)

This program will help compensate residential rental landlords who own affordable housing rental units. Landlords whose buildings or

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Applications available for four new flood programs for businesses

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mechanical / electrical systems were damaged in the flood are eligible to receive up to \$15,000 per business tax ID number. Damage caused by sanitary or storm sewer backup is not included unless it is determined that the damage was a direct result of the flood.

How to apply

Application forms for these programs are available at the State of Iowa Recovery Iowa Office website at:

www.iowalifechanging.com/jumpstart/business_rental.aspx.

Completed application forms must be mailed or dropped off to:

City of Iowa City

Attn: Wendy Ford, Economic Development Coordinator

410 E. Washington Street

Iowa City, IA 52240

Funds will be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis.

For more information

For more information, visit the City of Iowa City website at www.icgov.org/businessrecovery, or contact:

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Business assistance

Businesses that were damaged in the floods of 2008 have been offered four new post-flood recovery programs from the State of Iowa. The City is now accepting applications for the programs. In this photo, taken during the flood, businesses south of Highway 6 were offered a helping hand by volunteer sandbaggers.



CDBG / HOME applications for FY11 available

Application forms for CDBG and HOME funds for FY2011 are now available. Local agencies, nonprofit and for-profit organizations and others interested in submitting an application for funds are urged to attend an upcoming workshop to gain information about the application and allocation process. **The workshop is scheduled Wednesday, January 13 at 11 a.m. in Emma Harvat Hall at City Hall.**

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnership (HOME) program funds are provided to Iowa City by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to help meet the needs of low- and moderate-income residents. In fiscal year 2011, which begins on July 1, 2010, the City expects to receive approximately \$1.6 million in CDBG and HOME funds.

Application forms for FY2011 are available at www.icgov.org/fy11apps. The deadline to submit applications is Tuesday, January 26, 2010, at noon.

A public allocation process will be conducted to determine which projects will receive funding. FY11 funds become available on or after July 1, 2010.

For more information, contact Tracy Hightshoe at the City at 356.5230 or by e-mail at tracy-hightshoe@iowa-city.org.

Get a GRIP!

City's housing rehab program can help residents with home improvement funding



Nearly every Iowa City homeowner has a to-do list of home maintenance, repair, or improvement projects they'd like to get underway – a new roof, carpeting, replacement windows, or even a major remodeling project. Unfortunately for many, while the need and the desire

to tackle home improvement projects may be readily available, the funding it requires may not be.

Maybe it's time to get a GRIP – a City-funded long-term, low-interest loan available to qualifying homeowners for home maintenance and improvement projects. GRIP, which stands for "General Rehabilitation and Improvement Program," is administered by the Housing Rehabilitation Program, part of the City's Community Development division.

The minimum loan amount is \$10,000, although homeowners can borrow up to \$40,000. Repayment is set up on a 20-year term at 3.9% interest, which would equate to a \$66 per month payment for a \$10,000 loan or \$131.99 monthly payment for a \$20,000 loan. With the GRIP program, homeowners can make their improvements while saving hundreds of dollars per month compared to a standard short-term home equity loan through a bank or other lending institution.

To be eligible, applicants must live in an owner-occupied home located within the city limits of Iowa City. Mobile homes, apartment buildings, rental

properties and commercial buildings do not qualify for GRIP funds. Applicants must have enough equity in their home to secure a loan. The program is available only to residents whose household earnings fall at or below 110% of the City's median income. The maximum allowable income is as follows:

Household size	Maximum income
1.....	\$58,520
2.....	\$66,880
3.....	\$75,240
4.....	\$83,600
5.....	\$90,310
6.....	\$97,020

In addition to the loan, GRIP will also extend the technical assistance and support of the City's Housing Rehabilitation staff, who can help participating homeowners with everything from remodeling ideas and choosing a contractor to helping oversee the project's progress.

GRIP funds are awarded on a first-come, first-served basis, and there is a limited amount of funding available.

Application forms are available on the City of Iowa City website at www.icgov.org/default/?id=1908 and during business hours from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. in the Planning and Community Development Department on second floor of City Hall, 410 East Washington Street.

For more information about GRIP or the City's other housing rehabilitation programs, contact one of the following Housing Rehab staff members:

David Powers:
356-5233 or david-powers@iowa-city.org

Jeff Vanatter:
356-5128 or jeff-vanatter@iowa-city.org

Liz Osborne:
356-5246 or liz-osborne@iowa-city.org



NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES

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

Program will discuss ideas for community partnerships

University of Iowa graduate students in Urban and Regional Planning who last year helped develop plans to revitalize Iowa City's Miller-Orchard neighborhood will discuss the project as part of an upcoming program to brainstorm other potential town-gown partnerships between the University of Iowa and the City of Iowa City. The program, titled "Neighborhood-University Partnerships: Miller-Orchard and Beyond," will be held Thursday, January 14 from 7 to 8:30 p.m. in Room A of the Iowa City Public Library at 123 S. Linn Street, and will be followed by a public reception at the Englert Theatre, 221 E. Washington Street. The public is invited to attend both events, which are being sponsored by the UI Obermann Center for Advanced Studies, the Urban and Regional Planning graduate program, and the City of Iowa City.

In their work on the Miller-Orchard neighborhood project, students found a quiet, family-oriented neighborhood along Benton Street that was beginning to experience the impact of housing deterioration, traffic congestion, unfriendly pedestrian routes, and crime. Through a series of meetings with neighbors, students developed a plan to revitalize the area and establish a new identity within the greater Iowa City community. The project will be discussed as a launching point to brainstorm other collaborative efforts that could benefit the community and UI students.

Presenters include Marcia Bollinger, Neighborhood Services Coordinator for the City of Iowa City, and Charles Connerly, Director of the University of Iowa graduate program in Urban and Regional Planning. Panel discussion members include Therese McKenzie, Event Coordinator for the Grant Wood Neighborhood Association, and Carolyn Colvin, Associate Professor of Teaching and Learning in the UI College of Education.

For more information, contact Marcia Bollinger at 356.5237 or e-mail marcia-bollinger@iowa-city.org.



Partners in progress

Graduate students in Urban and Regional Planning worked with residents of the Miller-Orchard area last year to create a plan to revitalize the neighborhood. Their work will be presented at a program this week to discuss other ideas for partnerships between UI and the City.

To see the full Miller-Orchard plan, go to:
www.icgov.org/millerorchardplan

MEETINGS THIS WEEK



URBAN PLANNING

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Three seats open on Historic Preservation Commission

Three seats will be open on the City's Historic Preservation Commission beginning in March. Each term is for three years. The Commission is seeking representatives for the Brown Street district, Summit Street district, and an at-large representative.

Citizens from the Iowa City community who are interested in volunteering for these positions are encouraged to apply. For more info, contact Christina Kuecker at 356.5243 or e-mail christina-kuecker@iowa-city.org.

Board of Adjustment

MEETING INFORMATION

Wednesday, January 13, 5 p.m., in Emma Harvat Hall in City Hall, 410 E. Washington Street

AGENDA ITEMS

Special Exceptions

EXC09-00008: Discussion of an application submitted by Judy O'Donnell for a special exception to allow a specialized education facility to operate at 415 Highland Avenue, in an Intensive Commercial (CI-1) zone.

EXC09-00007: Discussion of an application submitted by Iowa Wireless Services, LLC for a special exception to construct a communications transmission facility (cell phone tower) in an Interim Development - Single Family Residential (ID-RS) zone at 3106 Rochester Avenue.

EXC09-00009: Discussion of an application submitted by Ace Auto Recyclers to amend the requirement of a previously approved special exception for a salvage yard in the Heavy Industrial (I-2) zone at 2752 South Riverside Drive, to allow a waiver of the solid fencing requirements along the north, south, and east sides of the property.

For more information, contact Sarah Walz, City of Iowa City Associate Planner, at 356.5239 or e-mail sarah-walz@iowa-city.org

Historic Preservation Commission

MEETING INFORMATION

Thursday, January 14, 6 p.m., Planning & Community Development Conference Room (second floor) in City Hall, 410 E. Washington Street.

AGENDA ITEMS

Historic Review

Review for Certificates of Appropriateness for projects at the following addresses: 20 E. Market Street and 402 S. Lucas Street.

Update on Manville Heights Survey

Presented by Marlys Svendsen, Svendsen Tyler, Inc.

Discussion of the Historic Preservation Guidelines

For more information, contact Christina Kuecker, City of Iowa City Associate Planner, at 356.5243 or e-mail christina-kuecker@iowa-city.org

To view agendas & meeting packets

Agendas and meeting packets for all scheduled meetings are posted to the City website at least 24 hours prior to the meeting. To view this information for these or upcoming meetings, visit the City's Calendar page at www.icgov.org/default/apps/GEN/calendar.asp, click on the date of the meeting, and then on the name of the group that will be meeting.



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City receives state grant for LED lighting project in parking ramps

The City of Iowa City's plan to upgrade lighting systems in its public parking ramps has gotten thumbs-up approval from the State of Iowa Office of Energy Independence, which has awarded the City approximately \$419,000 to help pay for part of the project. The grant will be used to replace older lighting fixtures with more energy-efficient LED lighting in two City-owned ramps. LED lights last twice as long, require less maintenance, and use less electricity.

The City has already completed installation of LED lighting in the Court Street Transportation Center ramp. Next, the lighting in four additional ramps — Capitol Street, Dubuque Street, Chauncey Swan, and Tower Place — will be replaced with LED technology. A new parking facility that is planned as part of a new multi-purpose building to be constructed on the old St. Patrick's School site will also feature LED lighting.

The projects are part of a City-wide effort to invest in and implement green, sustainable practices which often also provide substantial cost savings. The City also hopes to encourage local businesses and residents to follow suit by investing in new, environmentally friendly technology.

Cost of the total lighting project is \$1,257,000, with approximately \$419,000 coming from the grant. In addition, the City anticipates receiving rebates from MidAmerican Energy Company for energy conservation improvements, although the amount of the rebate cannot be calculated until the projects are completed.

Kristopher Ackerson, Assistant Transportation Planner with the Johnson County Council of Governments, estimates that the cost savings from the new lights will be so significant that the City will recoup the balance of the cost of the projects in just four years. After that, the City will continue to save money on electricity bills with the LED lighting technology.

The grant is part of approximately \$40.5 million that is being allocated for projects across Iowa to help create an economically viable and environmentally sound energy future by reducing per capita energy consumption by at least 25% by the year 2012. Funds were made available through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

For more information, contact Kristopher Ackerson at 356.5247 or e-mail kristopher-ackerson@iowa-city.org.

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