

**COUNCIL ACTION FORM**

**SUBJECT: FY 2018-19 YEAR-END SUSTAINABILITY REPORT**

**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 2018-19, in keeping with the Council's direction, the Scope of Services targets priority areas related to energy consumption reduction, as well as adding waste reduction and diversion. These areas include the following:

- 1) Continue to work with the Public Works and Water & Pollution Control Departments 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 Rummage RAMPage at the Ames Intermodal Facility in partnership with staff from 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) Continue to assist City departments in enhancing and updating the EcoSmart program web pages and all material on the City of Ames website related to sustainability and conservation. Continue to provide student feedback on improving our sustainability marketing and education materials.
- 6) Additional requests from Council – At its November 27, 2017 meeting, Council voted to engage Merry Rankin to come back to Council with proposals of ways the Council can partner with ISU to address carbon reduction. At its February 12,

2019 meeting, Council voted to engage Merry to facilitate a RFP to hire a consultant to complete a Greenhouse (GHG) Inventory.

**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.***

Year-end FY 2019 accomplishments include the following for Priority Area #1:

- Completion of milestones related to the \$20,000 forgivable loan from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources exploring beneficial opportunities and options to improve the Resource Recovery Plant's (RRP) process and improve the quality of refuse derived fuel (RDF):
  - Receipt of final Waste Diversion Enhancement and Recommendation report by SCS Engineers was received and presented to Council.
    - Report areas of focus included the following impact areas:
      - RRP Suitable Materials Identification
      - Recycling and Composting Opportunity Assessment
      - Community Engagement
      - Comparison of Other Communities
      - Recommendations
  - Submission of final grant report.
  - Completion of mechanical changes in processing.
    - Completion of the addition of multiple air knives throughout the Resource Recovery Plant, resulting in a 10% increase of the recovery of beneficial refuse-derived fuel (RDF). Continued air knife additions are being explored and planned for next fiscal year toward achieving maximum performance.
    - Continued exploration related to the addition of an optical scanner and disc spreader to the Resource Recovery Plant, pending achievement of maximum RDF recovery through air knife inclusion.
    - Kick-off of study related to options for remodeling of current system or construction for a new combustion system using RDF.
  - Establishment of a drop-off location for used bicycles.

- Reuse opportunity for used bicycles offered as part of car line drop-off landfill diversion efforts.
  - Collaborative partnership with area bicycle repair shops and programs to offer refurbished bicycles to individuals and communities.
  - Kick-off of efforts toward offering additional “last chance” reuse programs.
- Development of a pilot food waste community compost program. Pilot will be offered July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020. Upon completion of pilot year, the program will be analyzed and feedback collected in determining ongoing opportunities.
- More information available at [www.CityofAmes.org/FoodWaste](http://www.CityofAmes.org/FoodWaste)
  - Pilot project components include:
    - “Pay as you Compost” voluntary, drop-off program for food waste composting available to any Story County resident or business.
    - Participants can use their own collection containers or purchase a four-gallon collection bucket (with lid and educational and instructional labeling) as part of a participation package.
    - Two participation options:
      - Four-gallon container, five compost collection bags and a punch card for five compost drop-offs for \$20.
      - Five compost collection bags and a punch card for five compost drop-offs for \$10.
    - Locations for purchasing supplies include:
      - Ames Resource Recovery Center during regular business hours.
      - Ames City Hall Community Center Desk during regular business hours.
    - Drop-off sites include:
      - Ames Resource Recovery Center during regular business hours.
      - City of Ames Yard Waste Disposal Site (400 Freel Drive) during regular business hours.
    - Items accepted for composting include food preparation and leftover food waste such as coffee grounds, fruit, vegetables meat, shellfish, waste from indoor house plants (plants and

soil), and other items.

Collaboration Partners: City of Ames Public Works, Water and Pollution Control, Public Relations Office, Green R U, and SCS Engineers

**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.**

Year-end FY2019 accomplishments include the following for Priority Area #2:

- Continued recruitment of additional businesses for a current total of 34 Smart Business Challenge participants (an increase of eight businesses from last year and includes the loss of one platinum business, Fighting Burrito), as well as efforts to certify additional current participants, resulting in one bronze, six silver, three gold and nine platinum certified businesses.
- Hosted the annual SBC Luncheon, facilitated by Mayor John Haila, on January 24, 2019, at Reiman Gardens. Ames business community members attending were able to interact with sustainability resource organizations, honor platinum certified businesses, and take part in discussions and dialogue about benefits and opportunities of joining the Challenge and exchange sustainability tips and ideas.
- Continued recognition of Challenge participants through publicizing success stories in City Side.
- Completion of video "stories" for new Challenge members offering perspectives on impacts and opportunities in joining the Challenge, underway for summer.
- Completion of Challenge Enhancement components related to increasing engagement and furthering the value to businesses in joining the Smart Business Challenge. Components will be effective August 2019.
  - Enhancements include the following:
    - Businesses have one year from the date of their original energy audit to receive a certification of at least the Bronze Level to ensure inclusion in all Challenge marketing and publicity materials.
    - Personalized annual check-ins through teleconference or one-on-one meeting with the Smart Business Challenge Team to provide resources and assistance as needed.
    - A re-certification process every three years a business is enrolled

in the Challenge to highlight additions and improvements made in their sustainability practice.

- Recognition for Platinum Businesses based upon the number of years they have maintained platinum (Example: Platinum 3, indicating a business has achieved platinum certification for three consecutive years).

Collaboration Partners: Ames Electric Services, Public Works, Water and Pollution Control, and Public Relations Office; The Energy Group; Iowa Department of Natural Resources' Iowa Waste Exchange Program, and Volunteer Center of Story County

**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.**

Year-end FY2019 accomplishments include the following for Priority Area #3:

- Participated in the Ames Eco Fair planning meetings and event on April 20.
- 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 moving forward on a community solar project. Focus on marketing, outreach, and public education opportunities.

**1. Coordinate the 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 FY2019 accomplishments include the following for Priority Area #4:

- Completed four planning meetings for the 2019 Rummage Rampage event. This year's event will be held from Friday, July 26 to Saturday, August 3 and

has been extended two extra days due to overwhelming interest and participation last year. This year's event will offer 1,600 hours in 60 different volunteer shifts for participating non-profit organizations, including overnight as well as day-time opportunities.

- Completed informational meeting for non-profit organizations on May 15.
- The timeline calendar for this year's event includes the following key dates:
  - May 25: Deadline for agencies to sign-up for funding eligibility.
  - May 25 to July 1: Agencies register volunteers and receive weekly updates.
  - July 1: Deadline for agencies to register for at least 10 hours.
  - July 3: Agencies notified if they have not registered 10 hours to qualify for funding distribution.
  - July 5: Volunteer registration opens to the general public.
  - July 18: Volunteer Orientation meeting.
  - July 26: Event begins.
- Additional event information, as well as sign-up instructions for non-profit organizations and volunteers, can be found on the Rummage Rampage website:  
<http://www.cityofames.org/living/rummage-rampage>.
- ROAR (Rehoming Our Animals/Aquariums Responsibly) will continue to be offered as a component of Rummage Rampage for the 2019 event, toward 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. As with last year's inaugural offering of ROAR, community animal rescue organizations will be on call to transport animals to appropriate locations toward beginning the rehoming process. No adoptions will take place at the event.
- A pre-event drop-off option is being piloted this year, which will offer a storage and transportation outlet for donation items, April-July. For customers using the Resource Recovery Center's car line drop-off, donated items for Rummage Rampage will be stored in an on-site collection trailer and taken to the event.

Collaboration Partners: City of Ames Animal Shelter, Electric Services, Police Department, Public Works, Water and Pollution Control, and Public Relations Office; Iowa State University's Office of Sustainability, Parking Services and Facilities Planning and Management; Volunteer Center of Story County; Iowa

Department of Natural Resources; Story County Conservation; Iowa Wildlife Center, community non-profit organizations, and volunteers

**2. Continue to assist departments in enhancing and updating the EcoSmart program web pages and all material on the City of Ames website related to sustainability and conservation. Continue to provide student feedback on improving our sustainability marketing and education materials.**

Year end FY2019 accomplishments include the following for Priority Area #5:

- Offered assistance toward updating information on City of Ames sustainability webpages with specific focus on highlighting the City's journey toward increased and enhanced sustainability commitment and community engagement in sustainability.
- Ongoing input, feedback and assistance regarding City of Ames Smart Energy, Smart Water, Smart Watersheds and other EcoSmart programs.
- Ongoing oversight of the Smart Business Challenge web pages.

Collaboration partners: City of Ames Electric Services, Public Works, Water and Pollution Control, and Public Relations Office

**3. Additional requests from Council:**

- a. ***Council voted to engage Merry Rankin to come back to Council with proposals of ways that Council can partner with ISU to address carbon reduction. (November 27 Council Meeting);***
- b. ***Council voted to move forward with an RFP to hire a consultant to complete a Greenhouse (GHG) Inventory and asked for Merry Rankin to facilitate the process (February 12, 2019, Council Meeting).***

Year end FY2018 accomplishments include the following for Priority Area #6:

- #6a: Opportunities are being identified for focus areas with relevance locally and on a broader level.
  - The Waste Diversion Enhancement and Recommendation Report identified a lack of community engagement and knowledge in City of Ames sustainability programs/services. Of particular concern was ensuring consistent outreach messaging to students and residents. One

proposed solution focused on peer-to-peer education, such as employing a graduate student to increase and enhance both student and community-wide waste reduction and diversion commitment.

- Discussions are in progress with the Iowa State University Office of the Vice-President for Research to identify opportunities that may exist related to current research initiatives.
- As progress continues with the City's solar project, an additional opportunity related to expanding solar energy and renewable energy options may be appropriate for student collaboration or graduate level research.
- #6b: Finalization of an RFP for the completion of a community greenhouse gas inventory is in progress.

Collaboration Partners: and City of Ames Electric Services, Public Works and Public Relations Office and Iowa State University Office of the Vice-President for Research

### **2019/20 SCOPE OF SERVICES:**

Attached is a contract for continued sustainability services for the coming fiscal year. If Council has other priorities, those could be added to this scope of services.

### **ALTERNATIVES:**

1. Approve the 2019/20 contract with ISU for the activities shown on the attached scope of services.
2. Replace or add to the scope shown on the attached agreement.

### **CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

The attached contract will continue the City's partnership with ISU to promote the City Council's sustainability priorities during 2019/20.

Unless Council has other priorities to include, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that Council approve Alternative No. 1 as shown above.