Progress on I-74 Bridge Project

The I-74 Mississippi River Bridge project has met another major milestone: installing the last arch floor section and connecting the Iowa-bound bridge from riverfront to riverfront in the Quad Cities. On July 16, the last piece of the arch floor was lifted and set into place. Forming the approaches, tying stainless rebar, and pouring concrete is now underway with the goal of opening the westbound bridge to traffic by the end of 2020. After completing the westbound I-74 roadway in Moline and Bettendorf last year, focus is now on reconstructing eastbound (Illinois-bound) lanes.

What’s happening in Bettendorf?
Reconstruction of the eastbound interstate in Bettendorf began this summer. Traffic was shifted to the new westbound I-74 lanes, and the last Iowa exit (Grant Street/U.S. 67) has been closed for the remainder of the construction season to allow work on the interstate. Contractors are working to reconstruct about half of the eastbound lanes this year and then complete the remainder in 2021. Crews are removing pavement, installing storm sewers and lighting along the interstate, and 14th Street is currently being reconstructed now that the new westbound I-74 on-ramp is located at Grant Street/U.S. 67.

What’s happening in Moline?
An eastbound I-74 detour was put in place earlier this year to allow reconstruction of the interstate downtown. Contractors are working quickly to reconstruct the eastbound lanes, including expanding the roadway from two to three lanes, reconfiguring interchanges, and reconstructing bridges and viaducts. In addition, concrete paving is currently taking place from 12th Avenue to the southern limit of the project. The majority of the interstate in Moline is anticipated to be completed by the end of 2020.

What’s next?
After the westbound bridge is completed, both directions of I-74 local traffic will be shifted to the new bridge while the eastbound is under construction. The traffic shift will be implemented in stages over several months, with westbound shifted to the new bridge first. Stay tuned for traffic updates by signing up for alerts at www.I-74RiverBridge.com.

The project team thanks everyone for their continued enthusiasm and patience as the new I-74 River Bridge is built.
The year 2020 has been challenging. It has tested our strength, our health, and our faith. We have seen a virus change the way we live. We have watched riots and hatred run rampant across not only our country but the world. But through this, we have also seen kindness, respect, and generosity.

Our community has always had a strong core. We are made up of hardworking and dedicated people. We come together to aid on another in crisis and we celebrate our triumphs. With this message, I would like to share some of the challenges we are facing and how, with a little understanding and support, we will overcome the same.

The economic impact of COVID-19 will continue to affect the City’s budget in FY 20/21. Bettendorf has incurred previously unbudgeted expenditures for personal protective equipment, sanitizing supplies, and social distancing materials. The most significant impact is lost revenue from a variety of sources such as local option sales tax, hotel/motel tax, road use tax, and our own revenue producing enterprise funds such as the Family Museum, Splash Landing, and the Life Fitness Center.

Bettendorf has many tools available to respond to this crisis. We have strong reserve funds and have identified several cost cutting measures to help us fill the budget gap. The City has delayed capital projects and equipment purchases, reduced operating costs in all departments, and canceled some summer/fall events and programs. We have a number of response options available if the COVID-19 pandemic continues to affect revenue going forward.

On August 10th, severe storms ripped through the Midwest and hit our community with winds exceeding 100 miles per hour. The storm knocked out power, downed countless trees and utility poles, and caused widespread property damage. Our crews immediately began cleaning up the damage caused by the storm. They worked 4,300 man hours, 1,300 hours outside of their normal work schedule. Approximately 8,000 cubic feet of debris was cleared. Although the storm brought hardship, it was a great example of how the City and residents worked together for a common goal. Great job to everyone!

Despite the challenges we are facing, the Building Inspections Division has seen a steady increase in permits issued that include permits for various types of construction ranging from signs to new buildings. The issuance of permits helps the City make sure construction meets minimum city and building code requirements. Changes in the total number of permits from year to year are driven by many factors like new home starts, commercial development, and severe weather damage. For example, the City had issued 2,356 reroof permits due in large part to the April 6th hailstorm. Fence and pool permits are also on the uptick in 2020, as families are looking for creative ways to stay home due to COVID-19.

One of the City Council’s top priorities has been to staff the Surrey Heights Fire Station with career personnel. Surrey Heights has served as a volunteer station since 1999. Because of the growth in the northeast section of the City, the Council felt it necessary to staff the station with fulltime firefighters, along with volunteers. The City added three career firefighters as of October 1 and three more will be hired in February, 2021. When staffed, two veteran personnel will be assigned to the Surrey Heights Fire Station and respond as a crew to 911 calls per shift. When qualified volunteer is available, the crew will respond as an Engine Company.

In other news, we now have a fully “fibered” city. We are proud to say that there are a number of great fiber and broadband partners in our community. Just to name a few, Central Scott Technologies, CenturyLink, Geneseo Communications, Media-com, and MetroNet offer a vast array of products including phone, internet, and television to serve your needs. Bettendorf truly is a gigabit community.

The City continues to work on further development and redevelopment of some of our key commercial corridors. In 2021, you will see continued development at Forest Grove and Middle Road, redevelopment occurring around the Cumberland Square corridor, new businesses surfacing at the site which formerly housed The Lodge, and improvements to enhance the Duck Creek Plaza area. We are very fortunate in Bettendorf to continue to see great construction and development. This growth is a testament to our strong relationship with area developers and community partners.

In 2021, we will continue to expand our commercial and residential offerings, as we welcome three new senior housing developments to Bettendorf. This market is growing rapidly, and Bettendorf is happy to see the private investment in these three senior housing coops and residential developments.

As 2020 comes to an end, we can only hope that next year will bring more positivity and a stronger outlook. Whatever we face, we will confront it as a community of dedicated, hardworking, and compassionate people.

Stay safe and healthy!
A new golf experience is coming to Palmer Hills Golf Course in May of 2021. A 56,500 sq. ft. putting course, featuring separate but integrated putting greens, will offer challenges and fun for all levels of golfers. The unique layout is intended to emulate an extended 18-hole course with easy access and connections that link the putting course to the visually stunning landscape of mature oaks, rolling hills, and manicured golf course features.

Watch for more details on this exciting golf feature!

Always Connected with the Bettendorf Public Library

Research shows that children are never too young to listen to a story being read to them. During the month of October, toddlers and preschoolers are invited to take part in a special reading program just for them. If you are interested, register at the Youth Services desk.

Have you always wanted to join a book group but could not find the time? Then join the Library staff at one of their monthly book discussion groups, currently being held virtually. For more information or to register for the Contemporary Books, Get Lit, and Mystery Books discussions, visit www.bettendorflibrary.com/adult-programs. Book Discussion Groups are sponsored by the Friends of the Bettendorf Public Library.

Get crafty with the Library’s monthly Creation Studio: Grab-and-Go programs for children and the Take Home Workshops recommended for ages 16 and up. Pick up a kit, watch the video on the Library’s Youtube channel, and try your hand at a new craft with the supplies in the kit.

For more information on Library programs go to www.bettendorflibrary.com or call 563-344-4175.

Luckey Climber, Popular with All Ages

With two years of fundraising and planning, plus two months of installation, the Family Museum’s Luckey Climber, presented by Genesis Birth Center, is now open to the public. Since opening in June, this indoor climbing structure has been popular with kids of all ages – and even some brave adults.

The two-story climber, located in the Great Hall, is made up of large climbing platforms and is surrounded by a secure vinyl-coated cable netting. This artistically stunning structure allows guests to climb from the first floor to the second floor while observing photographs of clouds on the climb up and aerial photographs on the way down. The climber is designed in such a way that there is no fall greater than 18 inches making it safe for the young demographic. While intended for young children, all ages are welcome to climb!

This one-of-a-kind installation was designed and installed by Luckey LLC out of New Haven, Connecticut. This is the first Luckey Climber in the state of Iowa. Other climbers have been installed in zoos, parks, aquariums, and theme parks around the world.

Guests will also notice changes when they visit the second floor balcony. The Museum has combined its art studio, clay studio, and ThinkShop into the Imagination Studio. Visitors can be creative with art supplies, work with clay, and build with tools. Imagination Studio is open Monday - Saturday, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., and is included with general admission.
Regular City Council meetings are held on the first and third Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m.

Committee of the Whole begins at 5:00 p.m. on the Monday prior to the City Council meeting and on the fourth Monday of each month, if necessary. Meetings are held at City Hall/Council Chambers, 1609 State Street.

Recorded meetings can be seen at www.bettendorf.org or Cable Channel 9, check Mediacom for channel.
The Life Fitness Center is now the official Parks and Recreation hub, a multi-service and wellness center. The facility still offers fitness opportunities, indoor swimming, fitness classes, and personal training, but now you can rent meeting/party rooms, take part in recreation programming, and much more.

Due to COVID-19, all activities at the Community Center have ended.

For more information, call the Life Fitness Center at 563-344-4119.

Join the Fitness Team

Fees for Members and Guests

Daily Fee $12
1-month membership:
  Adult $68
  Youth (ages 14-17) $35
  Senior (ages +60) $55

Annual Membership*
  Adult $478 $39.83
  Adult Couple $634 $52.83
  Family $778 $64.83
  Single Parent Family $622 $51.83
  Senior $414 $34.50
  Senior Couple $570 $47.50
  Youth $242 $20.16

*Ask about available 10% discounts:
  - active military, teachers, Genesis, & John Deere

Payment plans available for annual memberships:
  - one-time $40 processing fee applies at renewal

Due to COVID-19, the City has seen a significant decrease in revenue. This loss will affect not only this year’s budget but also 20/21. Because of this, the City has decided not to open Frozen Landing this season.

The ice rink, which is 10 years old, needs major repairs and equipment replacement, which will be a substantial cost to the City.

Frozen Landing’s staff is looking forward to seeing everyone in 2021.

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused many events in the Quad Cities to be canceled or postponed. The City of Bettendorf is sorry to cancel some of the fall and winter events, but it is for the health and safety of our community. We hope to have these events back in 2021!

Here is a list of cancellations:

Halloween Parade
City Hall Open House Trick or Treat
Scarecrow Shenanigans, Family Museum
Dogtoberfest, Parks and Recreation
Mother/Son Day of Fun, Parks and Recreation
Father/Daughter Day of Fun, Parks and Recreation
Winterfest, Family Museum
Tis the Season, Senior Holiday Event

Bettendorf’s Trick or Treat will be held on Saturday, October 31 5:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

SORRY! EVENTS CANCELED
Election day is Tuesday, November 3, 2020.
Polls will be open from 7:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.
Due to COVID-19, there may be changes to polling locations. Please check the auditor's website for updated information, www.scottcounty-iowa.gov/auditor.
Questions call Voter's Hotline at 563-326-8683 (VOTE).

Are You Ready for Winter?
As winter approaches, staff prepares for snow/ice control. The following information will help residents understand their responsibilities during winter months.

The City’s standard for snow/ice control is bare pavement everywhere on public streets within 24 hours following the cessation of snowfall from an average storm of 4-6”. Alleys and recreational trails are the last priority and will be accomplished, unless successive snow events require city assets to be employed on main streets continuously.

Residents are encouraged to remove vehicles from streets to allow crews to push snow to the curb. City Code prohibits parking in turn-around areas of cul-de-sacs until snow is cleared.

When clearing driveways, make sure the snow is not pushed into the street. This is covered by City Code and violators can be cited. During snow and ice control procedures by the City, it is common for plowed snow to be pushed and/or thrown back onto sidewalks, driveways, and aprons especially around corners. This unfortunate event results from the need to maintain certain speeds and plow angles to provide efficient and safe snow and ice control. While the City strives to minimize the effects of this thrown snow, it is inherent to snow and ice control activities. Removal of this additional accumulation of material on sidewalks, driveways, or aprons is the responsibility of the abutting property owner.

The City will repair any turf that is damaged from plowing operations. Damage due to deicing chemicals will not be repaired by the City.

The City will not repair damages to any landscaping (hardscaping, plants, irrigation systems, or accessories such as lighting) that is within the right of way.

City Code requires sidewalks to be cleared of snow and ice within 48 hours of the conclusion of snow event. This means bare surfaces, regardless of how much snow falls or ice accumulates. Any sidewalk over six feet (6’) wide is the City’s responsibility to clear. Any sidewalk six feet (6’) wide or less is the responsibility of the homeowner. This includes not only sidewalks in front of the home, but also in the back of the property and beyond a privacy fence that may surround the backyard. Property owners who fail to do this can be cited and the city will do the work by contractor and charge the resident.

For questions concerning responsibilities during winter months, call Public Works at 563-344-4088.

Standardized School Speed Zone Restriction

The Engineering Division and the Police Department have been jointly working over the past two years evaluating speed control and signage in proximity to schools throughout the City. During this time, it has been observed that different school speed zone restrictions exist. These include speed zones only in effect from 8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. and afternoon from 3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. when school is in session, zones in effect from 7:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. when school is in session, and schools that are in residential neighborhoods or along streets with 25 mph speed restrictions at all times.

Additionally, Bettendorf and Pleasant Valley School Districts operate on different schedules, as does Morningstar Academy. Given the City’s relatively small footprint, it is common for drivers to pass schools in multiple districts with differing school speed zone restrictions, which leads to confusion and ultimately non-compliance. School start and release times have also changed over the years, in addition to early out days and before/after care programs. These schedule changes are leading to increased vehicle and pedestrian traffic at times that were not covered under prior ordinances.

In response, the City is standardizing school zone speed limits. The posted speed limit in these zones will be 25 mph from 7:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Monday - Friday when school is in session. In addition, a new 25 mph school zone has been put in place along 18th Street near Mark Twain Elementary.

The City is also continuing a multi-year program to equip these areas with new standardized electronic signage. These signs are programmed with school calendars for that specific location and respond to date and time of day to ensure motorists are being provided with proper feedback.

These changes are being implemented to reduce speeds and increase safety in school zones within the City of Bettendorf.