

HEADLINES



Rock Island makes Progress Toward Goals

January 24, 2005

Rock Island [City Council](#) established several [goals](#) in September of 2004. The City has made considerable progress toward each goal. For more information, select on the topic of interest below.

TOP PRIORITIES

QCIC Redevelopment / Reuse
Gateway and Entrance Beautification and Action
Retail Study and Implementation Plan
Wireless Telecommunications Infrastructure Study
RiverVision

MODERATE PRIORITIES

Public Arts
Southwest Residential Development

HIGH PRIORITIES

Infill Housing Projects
Retail Development Blackhawk Rd
Infrastructure Upgrade & Funding
Vacant Commercial Sites
Children's Garden
Southwest RI Business Park

OTHER PRIORITIES / ACTIVITIES

TOP PRIORITY

1. QCIC Redevelopment/Reuse

- A. A redevelopment plan for this property was presented to the City Council in November. Final report is being prepared.
- B. LRC has contracted to begin demolition of some of the buildings that are not being utilized.
- C. McLaughlin Body started construction at the facility to install their new painting operation that will lead to additional jobs.
- D. IEPA has approved a remedial action plan for Midway Oil property and our consultant will soon begin remediation work.
- E. The court granted city permission to enter the Willey property to inspect it and determine locations for soil borings.

- F. Contract awarded for the demolition of some of the buildings at the DNR project site.

2. Gateway and Entrance Beautification Plan and Action

- A. City purchased land on 11th Street near Blackhawk Road that can be improved for an attractive city gateway.
- B. Funds were recommended in the CIP for improvements to two gateways.
- C. Centennial Bridge landscaping was completed.
- D. Reached agreement to purchase land at Illinois Oil at the corner of 24th Street and Fourth Avenue to landscape this city entranceway.

3. Retail Study and Implementation Plan

- A. The first phase of the Buxton Study was completed which identified the profile of customers for four retail locations. The next phase of the study is underway.
- B. HyVee has exercised options to purchase properties needed for their expansion and is proceeding with litigation against one owner.

4. Wireless Telecommunication Infrastructure Study and Plan

- A. Research with other cities has occurred and presentation made to City Council.
- B. Presentation from vendors and providers has occurred to determine the current status of broadband in the city and future plans.
- C. Reviewed possibility of a county-wide study that would assess broadband capabilities in the county and determine what might be needed to expand such service.

5. RiverVision Plan

- A. The RiverVision Plan was approved by the City Council.
- B. Requests for Qualifications generated three responses from developers who have interest in the Armory property.
- C. Schrieber-Anderson prepared a scope of work to refine the concepts generated from the Hargraves study.
- D. A concept for a coordinating committee was recommended that will be part of an intergovernmental agreement that will be considered by the City of Davenport and the City of Rock Island.
- E. Discussions on the joint project of lighting the dam have started with the Corps of Engineers and the City of Davenport.
- F. A workshop with federal agencies is scheduled for Mid-February. The purpose is to identify possible sources of funding to help implement RiverVision.

HIGH PRIORITY

6. Infill Housing Projects

- A. The city entered into a development agreement with HMV Developers on the Chippiannock property that will result in 35 lots for upper end residential.
- B. The city approved a development agreement for the St. Mary's Convent property for a new housing project that will consist of 74 units of townhomes and condominiums.
- C. Rezoning of the Villa property was approved. The developer proposes renovation of the property for elderly assisted living.
- D. GROWTH and Rock Island Housing Authority started construction of six single-family homes in older neighborhoods.
- E. Discussions have occurred with Habitat for Humanity regarding a concentrated area for development.

7. Retail Development along Blackhawk Road Corridor.

- A. City Council approved a concept to purchase land in Southwest Rock Island to mitigate wetlands for the 30th Street and Blackhawk Road project.
- B. Design for the extension of infrastructure south of Blackhawk Road on 30th Street was completed. An easement was obtained.

8. Infrastructure Upgrade Plan and Long-Term Funding Mechanism

- A. The Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan was submitted to the City Council and approved.
- B. Wastewater rate increase of 5% for the next two years was approved and a review of the water rates will be completed in July to determine if higher rates are needed to increase the capital investment in the water system.

9. Vacant Commercial Sites (18th Avenue—29th to 31st Streets)

No progress this quarter.

10. Children's Garden at Quad City Botanical Center

- A. City provided assistance with land acquisition and environmental studies and clean-up.
- B. The 2005-2006 budget includes funding for the Botanical Center's share of the debt service for the parking lot as part of the city's contribution for the Children's Garden.

- C. The city is considering the request to pick up the Botanical Center's share of the debt service for 2004-2005 and transfer \$200,000 originally approved for the pedestrian crossing for the Children's Garden project.
- D. Quad City Botanical Center received a \$40,000 grant for a "Tinsel Tent" to be placed at the entry to the Children's Garden from Scott County Regional Authority.

11. Business Park in Southwest Rock Island

- A. City Council approved gaming funds for the purchase of property in the southwest to develop a small lot industrial park.
- B. Property was identified and an option was obtained on property.

MODERATE PRIORITIES

12. Public Art

- A. TIF funds were approved for the placement of downtown art.
- B. Funds were also allocated for the creation of an Arts Incubator in the downtown.
- C. TIF assistance was provided to the Development Association to establish "Brew and View II" at the Rocket Theater.

13. Southwest Residential Development

- A. All single-family lots in Highland Place have been sold with 11 homes completed or under construction. Four villa units have been completed.
- B. Foxtrail development under construction. Plat is being prepared for City Council approval.

OTHER PRIORITIES AND ACTIVITIES

1. City Operations

- A. Conducted Free Fall Leaf Pick-up and Free Bag Giveaway.
- B. Selected McGladrey for Audit Services for a three-year engagement.
- C. Proposed a new program to replace failing customer water services.
- D. New solid waste collection system was proposed and reviewed with several neighborhood groups.
- E. Preliminary budget was prepared. Tax levy was approved and CIP and Gaming allocations were approved.

- F. Community Development Black Grant Allocation decisions were made.
- G. A projector and screen were added to the City Council Chambers to help provide the public with better visual information.
- H. Police Radio System Upgrade underway.
- I. Saukie Regional Drainage Project was approved and construction started.
- J. Received a grant in the amount of \$101,000 for the conversion of traffic signals to LED that will save energy costs.
- K. Received a grant from FEMA for \$54,000 for the purchase of turn-out gear for the Fire Department.
- L. Picnic area at Whitewater Junction was added.
- M. Videos marketing RIFAC and other park facilities were provided. Advertising is underway.
- N. New Tee Marker program was established for the golf courses to add revenue.

2. Rental Housing Licensing Program Approved

- A. Staff has been selected to implement the program.
- B. Licensing of rental property owners is underway. 487 applications have been processed as of December 15.
- C. A checklist was created that identifies the scope of the planned property inspections and an informational session was held to explain the new program.
- D. A new rental incentive program was approved to aid property owners to address code violations.

3. Centennial Bridge

- A. Reached agreement with the state to assume responsibility for snow removal.
- B. Bridge Commission was eliminated.
- C. State inspection completed and plan established to complete work the state requires with the remaining funds.

4. Casino Rock Island Project

- A. Tax Increment Financing District established for the site.
- B. Casino started site reclamation work.

C. Enterprise Zone expansion application was submitted to DCEO for approval.

5. Downtown Housing

A. Sala Apartments renovation underway and completion planned for early 2005.

B. Tax credits for Voss project were obtained.

C. Downtown TIF Program. Four units at Shields Sewing completed. Four completed at LeFigaro and three are under construction at Circa '21.

D. City Council agreed to support GROWTH and RIHA effort to complete Murphy Loft project.

6. New Sign Ordinance was passed.

7. City Financial Condition

A. Issued \$4,955,000 bond sale on October 18; obtained substantial interest in the market and a very competitive rate.

B. Received an upgrade in the City's bond rating to A₁ from A₂ reflecting the city's sound financial performance. This saved the city an estimated \$26,000 in interest expense.

8. Neighborhood Planning and Redevelopment

A. A Request for Proposals was sent to consultants interested in developing a plan for the neighborhood north of Seventh Avenue, near 11th Street.

B. The City Council passed an ordinance seeking condemnation of Old Lincoln School in order to obtain title to this deteriorating landmark property as a way to support the neighborhood.

C. Augustana College made a presentation to the City Council regarding their plans for the campus and expressed interest in working with the city more closely.

9. Community Marketing

A. Community Marketing Task Force has been meeting to prepare an updated marketing plan.

B. A Draft Marketing Plan was submitted to the City Council in December.

C. An advertising campaign concept has been prepared. Plans are to implement it in Spring, 2005.