

Headlines



Progress Toward City Council Goals Continues

May 4, 2006

At Rock Island's goal setting session September 9 and 10, 2005 [City Council](#) set top priorities for the coming year. The following is a summary of the status of each goal to date.

Top Priorities

1. [Infrastructure Upgrade Plan](#) and Long-term Funding Mechanism

Status :

- A. 2007-2011 CIP prepared and presented.
- B. Decision made by City Council to approve a plan to upgrade the City water system by increasing investment in water main replacement.
- C. Plan submitted to City Council for approval on January 9, 2006.
- D. Water and sewer rate increases were approved to allow the improvements for 2006-2007 to move forward.
- E. City Council reaffirmed the special assessment process for local streets.

2. [Columbia Park](#) Development

Status :

- A. Parks completed 44th Street gateway beautification project.
- B. All properties were acquired for the riverfront park development. Design is complete.
- C. Contract was awarded for the demolition of the old Farmall plant powerhouse. Demolition is underway of this and four other buildings.
- D. Environmental assessment and remediation at the future park site occurred.
- E. QCIC owners demolished the obsolete water tower and repainted the extension of parts of the facility.
- F. McLaughlin Body continued work to relocate the paint operation to the QCIC facility. They have added 30 jobs and invested \$10 million.
- G. A corridor grant application was submitted to IDOT for a study of the IL 92 corridor.

3. Casino Rock Island Relocation and Related Opportunities

Status :

- A. Illinois Gaming Board approved the relocation of the project to the proposed site.

- B. The project design is underway and the financing structure is being finalized by the Casino Rock Island.
- C. Groundbreaking is expected in June 2006.

4. RiverVision Plan Implementation

Status :

- A. Schrieber-Anderson presented three options for review on the design of the riverfront. The public and City Council have provided feedback.
- B. An intergovernmental agreement with the City of Davenport was approved to design the lighting of the lock and dam. Consultant selection was made and design is underway.

5. Armory Plan Completion and Implementation

Status :

- A. Hendricks Development was selected to study the feasibility of redevelopment of the Rock Island Armory.
- B. Report was presented suggesting limited redevelopment potential for the structure.
- C. The City Council authorized staff to contact the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency to request permission to demolish.

6. Blackhawk Road Corridor Retail Development

Status :

- A. City completed the public improvements south of Blackhawk Road at 30th Street to provide access for future retail development.
- B. Property was acquired to allow the extension of the widening of Blackhawk Road. IDOT is planning letting bids on the project in late April 2006.
- C. Developer has obligation to build 10,000 square foot building six months after the street improvements were completed.

High Priorities

1. Property Tax Relief Strategy and Actions

Status :

- A. City tax levy was proposed that would increase the levy by 3 percent. The City's tax rate would decline by 8 cents per \$100 of assessed valuation.
- B. City Council approved the levy on December 12, 2005.
- C. A revised levy was passed in March to keep the tax levy at the same level and reduce the tax rate by 13 cents per \$100 of assessed value to \$2.44 per 100 of Assessed Value.
- D. Balanced budget was adopted in March.

2. Long-Term Control Plan for Wastewater System

Status :

- A. Recommendation from the Water Resource Committee was presented to the City Council in November.
- B. A public hearing was held on January 26th. Meetings with neighborhood and business groups and large customers were held.
- C. The CIP included funding to begin implementation of the plan.
- D. Long Term Control Plan was approved by the City Council and the staff was authorized to submit the plan to the USEPA.

3. Rental Housing Inspection Program

Status :

- A. Program implementation continued.
- B. As of 3/31/06, 2020 buildings have been registered. Calendar year to date, 165 exterior inspections were completed.

4. Martin Luther King Community Center Operating, Funding, and Partnerships

Status :

- A. MLK Board is considering establishing a foundation similar to the Library Foundation.
- B. State and federal resources are being explored.
- C. Collaboration is being explored with Boys and Girls Club, Two Rivers Y, Rock Island and Moline Parks and Recreation and YWCA on joint programming.
- D. Project expansion schematics are being reviewed by the MLK Board to determine if larger space for growth should be included.

5. Armory Park Direction and Actions

Status :

- A. Schrieber and Anderson prepared three schematic concepts for the riverfront design.
- B. Meeting with City Council and other stakeholders took place. A preferred option was selected by the City Council.
- C. Planning for Armory Park has been delayed until a decision on the Armory can be made.
- D. Property at 101 18th Street was purchased.
- E. Downtown parking study was authorized.

6. Southwest Andalusia Road Retail Development

Status :

- A. IDOT is updating appraisal information to allow a trade of property.

Other Projects and Activities

1. City Operations

Status :

- A. Animal ordinance was revised to clarify language and definitions regarding dangerous and vicious animals.
- B. Hired coordinator for [Lead Based Paint Grant](#).
- C. Proposal on providing water to Rock Island Arsenal was submitted.
- D. Carts and trucks for [automated refuse collection](#) were purchased and delivered. Joint bid with Moline saved \$100,000 annually over the prior contract. Implementation started on February 6, 2006.
- E. [Community Development Block Grant](#) allocations were approved.
- F. Legislative consultant was hired to help obtain federal support for City priorities. City Council approved priorities and they were submitted to the congressional delegation.
- G. The [Rain Gardens Program](#) won a state award from the Lt. Governor' s Office and an Urban Innovations Award.
- H. Parks Department started maintenance of downtown landscaping.
- I. Parks added a greenhouse for growing plants to be used in landscaped areas.
- J. Design for the 7th Avenue improvements was approved and will include a designated bike path and landscaping.

2. Personnel

Status :

- A. The Mayor and City Council selected Cindy Neiggemann for the position of [City Clerk](#).
- B. Joint Administration Agreement was approved by the City and the bargaining units for managing the City' s health care program. An actuary was hired to establish rates and a consultant was hired to facilitate the work of the Health Care Planning Committee.
- C. Key positions were filled in the Parks Department.
- D. Arbitration decisions were obtained and contracts were settled with the Federal Order of Police and Command Officers.
- E. Labor contract was settled with Library employees; IAFF contract is headed for arbitration.
- F. Training schedule was prepared for 2006.

3. Public Safety

Status :

- A. Incident Command Training was conducted for City personnel to comply with Homeland Security requirements.
- B. A School Resource Officer position was established with support from School District 41. The program started in the fall.

- C. An amendment to the Liquor Ordinance was approved prohibiting the sale of the 4 ounce bottles of liquor in Rock Island. The 11th Street liquor license moratorium was extended for one year.
- D. An ordinance was passed that prohibits aggressive panhandling and restricts the hours for panhandling in the city.
- E. A new \$1 million fire training facility is nearing completion on Arsenal Island.

4. Technology

Status :

- A. The City entered into a three-year contract with SBC for voice communications.
- B. Phase II of the fiber installation was completed that will reduce the cost of data communications. Phase III is underway.
- C. A consultant was selected with other local governments to study broadband services in Rock Island County.
- D. Mobile data terminals were purchased and installed in police vehicles.
- E. Police Department converted to electronic, paperless report preparation.
- F. Golf software was purchased.
- G. KJ WW was selected to design camera system and WiFi for [the District](#)
- H. Upgrade of City Council Chambers is underway.

5. Development

Status :

- A. A revised development agreement for the Prairie View Business Park development was approved.
- B. Eleventh Street gateway was improved through property acquisition and demolition.
- C. MetroBank opened a new Rock Island facility in the former Illinois Casualty Building on 5th Avenue.
- D. Steel Warehouse made a decision to begin a 40,000 square foot expansion. Construction completed.
- E. KJW W submitted plans to purchase property to accommodate a major expansion at their Rock Island location. The City Council approved the vacation of 26th Avenue with specified conditions.
- F. The [New/Old Chicago planning process](#) is underway. A meeting of stakeholders was held to obtain ideas for redevelopment for the area.
- G. Received a [Preserve America grant](#) for improvements to the Centennial Bridge Office.
- H. A new 45,000 square foot injection molding plant expansion is underway at Norcross.
- I. Steve Pressly purchased property at 30th Street and 7th Avenue for a new \$2 million funeral home.
- J. [DuMarche Live/Work Condos](#) announced plans for 8 units on 3rd Avenue.
- K. The City purchased 40 acres of land on Ridgewood Road for a new business park and wetlands mitigation site.

- L. QC Botanical Center Children' s Garden was awarded a \$750,000 Scenic Byways Grant.
- M. Augustana College is constructing a new 220 room dormitory on 38th Street.

6. Renaissance Rock Island

Status :

- A. A reorganization of Renaissance Rock Island was approved by the affiliates of Renaissance Rock Island.
- B. The capital campaign is underway. The City increased its contribution to DARI for 2006-2007.
- C. Mike Thoms was appointed President. Recruitment is underway for the position of Business Development Director.
- D. Community marketing advertisement campaign continued in print media throughout the Quad Cities through December 2005.
- E. The [LiveRI website](#) averaged 75 to 80 hits per day.
- F. A survey of Rock Island residents showed a 37% recall rate of the Rock Solid, Rock Island advertising campaign. Twelve percent stated they learned something about Rock Island from the ads, and 5% stated the ads changed their perception of Rock Island.