

City Administrator's Monthly Activity Report

Aaron Burnett, City Administrator

February 2025

(Issued March 14, 2025)



Monthly report of the City Departments of the City of Mason City

Airport

Reported by David Sims, Airport Manager

Date: February 2025

United Airlines Enplanements/Deplanements	FBO Fuel Flow
From 2/1/2025 – 2/28/2025	
Monthly Enplanements 509 / Deplanements 469 / Total 978 (+54% February 2024, Highest February total since 2018)	Monthly 22,902 Gallons Sold (+22% February 2024)

Routine Activities for the month – Administration and Operations:

- Terminal Demolition Project underway and on schedule. Interior demolition is nearly complete. The contractor is expected to complete the project by the end of April.
- Signed Design Task Order for Water Service Improvement Project.
- Signed Design Task Order for Terminal Landscaping Project.
- Attended the Iowa Public Airport Association’s Legislative Event in Des Moines.

Activities planned for next month and other comments:

- Accept Terminal Project as complete and begin grant closeout process.
- Approve Design Task Order for Construct General Aviation Taxiway Project.
- Hold design meetings for Water Service Improvement and Terminal Landscaping Projects.
- Iowa Department of Transportation to conduct triennial pavement condition study of runways and taxiways.

Development Services Department

Reported by Steven Van Steenhuyse, AICP, Development Services Director

The new North Iowa Corridor Housing Development Corporation (NICHDC), under the leadership of Shelley Oltmans, is becoming an effective partner with the City to advance the Council's housing development priorities. The NICHDC sold its first house in February, which was one of the houses formerly on the Blackmore Nursery site on 4th Street SW. The City moved this house to 12th Street SE and transferred ownership to NICHDC, who renovated and sold it. NICHDC owns two other houses moved from the Blackmore site that they are renovating and preparing for sale, providing updated housing affordable to the workforce. Proceeds from these sales will allow the NICHDC to purchase and renovate more houses.

In addition, NICHDC now owns 537 4th Street NE, part of the project to remove the dangerous retaining wall on the south side of the 500 block of 4th Street NE. The vacant lot to the west of 537 will be sold to the NICHDC in April, which will allow them to move the house now at 549 4th Street NE to that lot. This will leave the majority of the property on this block (after the wall is removed and the property is re-graded) for new development. We intend to work with NICHDC to market this property for a quality townhome project. Ms. Oltmans has also been proactive in other workforce housing efforts, by making contacts with housing developers and identifying potential development sites. We are excited about these efforts and look forward to cooperating with the NICHDC on new projects to bring quality workforce housing developments to Mason City.

Planning and Zoning Division: The Planning and Zoning Commission met in February to consider rezoning several parcels on the north side of 19th Street SW in Central Heights. The potential owner requested rezoning from Z2 Sub-Urban to Z3 General Urban, which would allow him to establish his fireplace sales and service business on the site. There was some concern from neighbors that this rezoning could allow a 3-story apartment building next to the single-family neighborhood; the developer stated that a multi-family building is not in his plans. The P&Z unanimously recommended approval of the rezoning, which will come before the City Council for first consideration in March.

The Zoning Board of Adjustment met to consider three requests. The ZBA approved a Special Exception to allow a lot combination resulting in a lot depth of 182 feet, instead of the maximum 150 feet, at 1042 17th Street NE. The ZBA also considered two requests from the owner of 1640 12th Street NE. The owner wishes to remove an existing garage and replace it with a new one in the same location. The new garage will encroach 18 feet into the required front setback for detached garages, requiring a Special Exception. In addition, the new garage, together with an existing shed, will exceed the maximum area allowed for detached buildings of 1,200 square feet. This requires a Conditional Use Permit. The ZBA approved both requests.

The Historic Preservation Commission met twice in February. At the regular February 6 meeting the HPC considered two Certificates of Appropriateness for alterations to contributing buildings in the Downtown National Register Historic District. The owner of 115 1st Street SE proposed to remove several unsympathetic window infill panels on the front and side of this 2-story building and replace them with new windows filling the original opening. This will make those windows appear closer to the original windows. The second Certificate of Appropriateness was to allow the owner of Splash Multisport at 205 North Federal to remove the non-historic first floor façade and replace it with a more sympathetic glass and metal façade, similar to the original. The Commission approved both requests. The Commission held a special meeting on February 24 to consider the demolition of three houses owned by the City. The house at 251 8th Street SE was acquired via Iowa Code Section 657A. The Chief Building Official determined that the deterioration of the house prevented rehabilitation. The houses at 543 and 545 4th Street NE are part of the 4th Street NE project detailed above. Both houses are too dilapidated to be saved. The HPC determined that none of the three houses are historic, paving the way for their demolition.

Code Enforcement Division: With a significant snowfall in February, the Code Enforcement Division received 120 snow complaints. There were 125 code enforcement case requests opened in February, of which 56 were initiated by staff and 69 initiated via complaint. The cases included 58 requests for code enforcement information, 17 for junk, rubbish and refuse complaints, and 23 for uncollected garbage.

Building Inspections Division: Fifteen major building permits and six minor building permits were issued in February. Total construction valuation of all permits was \$9,010,674, leading to \$35,223 in permit fees.

Rental Inspections Program: The Housing Inspector inspected 66 units. A total of 40 Rental Dwelling Certificates were issued. The program collected \$4,555 in Rental Dwelling Certificate fees and fines.

Transit & Safety Division: There were 12,006 rides on the fixed route system, down slightly from 12,633 in February 2024. Two new employees received in-board training, and 218 training sessions were conducted.

Corridor Revitalization Loan (CoRL), Downtown Revitalization Loan (DoRL), and Building Renovation/Life Safety (BuRLS) Programs: The Grant and Forgivable Loan Review Committee did not meet in February.

Developments: The Development Review Committee met three times in January. Residential, commercial, and industrial projects that have recently begun or are underway include:

- City projects: Mason City Police Department Upgrades (nearly complete), Mason City Fire Station Addition; Prairie Rock Trail Bike Park, including the shelter building.
- Good Shepherd, Inc, renovation of the former nursing home at 222 South Pierce Avenue to an assisted living facility.
- Habitat for Humanity has started building six new homes on 26th Street SW, on the old Madison School site. They intend to construct 13 homes in this area over the next few years.

- There were no permits issued for rooftop solar arrays in January.
- Construction of the Willow Creek Riverwalk is expected to be completed in the spring.
- Warmer weather has allowed installation of concrete panes for the first floor of The Delaware Apartments. This project includes covered parking under the building, as well as parking spaces outside the building. The parking will be leased to the City, who will then provide parking spaces to the public.
- Briarstone West Offices has begun construction of a 3-unit office/commercial building at 2615 Skyview Lane. A total of four office/commercial buildings are anticipated at this site.
- Tractor Supply, 4985 4th Street SW, is now in the City and is nearing completion. The owners are working for opening in March.
- Restaurant Projects: the Development Review Committee has reviewed plans to open new restaurants at the following locations: 2960 4th Street SW (former Papa's - proposed sushi and ramen restaurant); 3229 4th Street SW and (former Red Lobster/Las Palmas – proposed Japanese hibachi). These are in various stages of review and opening dates are as yet unknown. The conversion of 510 Village Green Drive (former Fazoli's/Mason City Pet Clinic) appears to not be moving forward.

Elmwood-St. Joseph Cemetery

Reported by Tyler Anderson, Cemetery Manager

Tyler

- Steady working with families and individuals on burial and pre-need situations
- New columbarium project complete, along with new bronze sculpture installed
- Assisting with CIP and Budget projections
- Working with Recreation Department with Mason City Arena events this upcoming Summer
- Foundation research – limestone or concrete base for headstones

Paula

- Continuing to add information to CIMS, including older obituaries and new additions to the grounds
- Answering several questions about plots, upcoming inurnment burials, and decoration guidelines

Grounds:

- Winter projects, including oil changes, air filter replacements, and deep cleaning facilities and equipment
- Great work helping with various citizen requests as needed
- Sculpture installed next to the new columbarium
- Planning ahead for Summer projects, including tree removal and replacement, continued beautification of cemetery sections

Engineering Department

Reported by Mark A. Rahm, P.E., City Engineer

The following is an update on some of the most notable Mason City projects at this given time. They include the IA 122 Mercy Corridor, Mason City Bike Park and Trails, Home Grant Downtown West Revitalization Program, 12th Street NE Bridge over Ideal Creek, East Park Redevelopment, Mason City Water Works Plant Upgrades, Taft Avenue Water Main Loop, 43rd Street Lift Station and Force Main Project, and the U.S. 65/South Federal Avenue Reconstruction Project.

IA 122 Mercy Corridor – Consultant: WHKS

The Iowa DOT (IDOT) let the project on February 18, 2025. There were two bids submitted by, Reilly Construction Co., Inc. and Wicks Construction, Inc. The winning bid was submitted by Reilly Construction Co., Inc. in the amount of \$12,452,715.36. The bid was twenty percent above the engineer's opinion of cost. The project will begin later this spring and span two construction seasons, 2025-26.

Bid Package 1 – Contractor: Rock Solid Trail Contracting, LLC

The project was accepted and final payment approved by the City Council at their regular meeting on February 4, 2025.

Home Grant Downtown West Revitalization Program – City Engineering

The project is under contract with Heartland Asphalt, Inc., of Mason City. The contractor began saw-cutting pavement in preparation of removal and replacement. A preconstruction meeting to discuss all details of the project is scheduled for March 25th. The project completion date is August 15, 2025.

The scope of work includes new construction of, or the replacement of pedestrian ramps meeting ADA compliance, the removal and reconstruction of alley approaches, removal and reconstruction of curb and gutter, full depth pavement patching, pavement scarification and Hot Mix Asphalt resurfacing, adjustment of manhole castings, adjustment of water valves road boxes and all other incidentals to complete the work as shown in the plans.

12th Street NE Bridge over Ideal Creek – Consultant WHKS

The Iowa DOT (IDOT) completed their audit of the project and the application for final reimbursement of Federal Funds in the amount of \$44,000.00 was filed with the IDOT. The city is awaiting the reimbursement payment.

East Park Redevelopment – City Engineering

The project was let on February 25th, with four bids being received. The winning bid was submitted by Bob McKiness Excavating & Grading, Inc. in the amount of \$195,888.00. A recommendation to award a contract was presented to the City Council on Tuesday, March 4th.

The demolition and grading will be completed as a two-phase project, the completion date is August 19, 2025.

The scope of work includes site clearing and grubbing; the demolition of a single family home, including a detached outbuilding; disconnection of water and sewer services; installation of new

water and sewer services; remove and replace PCC pavement patches, curb and gutter and sidewalk; demolition of block retaining wall; construct modular block retaining wall; embankment shaping and grading, site restoration and seeding; and all incidentals within the parameters of the East Park Redevelopment project

Mason City Water Works Plant Upgrades – Consultant: SEH

SEH and city staff continued working with Veolia on the final scope and equipment prices. Veolia is the vendor supplying the major EDR components of the water treatment up-grade equipment. A reworked and revised engineer’s opinion of cost will be provided to the city upon identification of and completion final scope.

Taft Avenue Water Main Loop – Consultant: SEH

SEH continued working with the contractor, Summers’ Enterprises, Inc., on coordination of shop drawings, Buy America Build America (BABA) certificates. The project remains on schedule for an April start date.

43rd Street Lift Station and Force Main – Consultant: SEH

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) environmental section has reviewed the plans and is scheduling a site visit to perform an environment, historical and archeological investigation and survey of the property on which the lift station will be constructed.

The City continued working with the owner of Newman Farm, LLC for access permissions for the IDNR investigating team, and on the acquisition of property for the location of the lift station.

U.S. 65/South Federal Avenue Reconstruction – Iowa DOT

The Engineering Department attended a preconstruction meeting for Phase 2 of the U.S. 65/South Federal Avenue Reconstruction Project. The project is scheduled to begin sooner than anticipated with a major closure of South Federal Avenue beginning south of the intersection of 6th Street and IA 122, south to approximately 10th Street. I anticipate the cross streets will remain open for a while longer. The IDOT will maintain access to businesses along the project.

Other Notable Items by the City Engineer during the Month of February Include:

- The City Engineering Department (Department) continued work on design and preparation of plans and specifications for several FY26 projects.
- The Department entered data and updated records from several of the projects worked on in 2024.
- The Department linked approximately 1,500 sewer inspection records into the GIS mapping system as well as performing many additional edits.
- The Department researched and provided sewer records for 160 properties to a televising company working for Alliant Energy on a gas main improvements project.
- The Department designed and estimated (presurvey) a turn and bypass lane for the employee entrance at Curries on 12th Street NW.
- Attended a Council Budget Workshop.
- City Engineer and Asst. City Engineer attended the 2025 Iowa Concrete Paving Association’s 61st Annual Workshop.

Finance Department

Reported by Brent Hinson, Finance Director

Utility Billing

- Working toward accepting credit cards in person at the Utility Counter in the coming months; waiting for new equipment
- Mailed 9,680 utility bills and 345 disconnection notices, completed 294 utility service orders

Finance

- Attended 3 Development Review Committee meetings
- Committee work and coordination on 500-600 Block 4th NE redevelopment
- The DNR awarded the Winnebago Watershed a \$125K planning grant, and we look forward to working on that process
- Coordinated the 3rd & final Council budget workshop and prepared Truth & Taxation notice and made preparations for CIP hearing
- Bidding of CD Investments- 2 CDs were bid and awarded, both to First Citizens: 1) \$4M for 91 days at 4.40%; and 2) \$2M for 182 days at 4.35%
- Coordination with Southbridge Mall operations
- Printed 619 payroll checks/stubs, 502 payable checks
- Reconcile credit card bank deposits for Aquatic Center, Golf Course, Campground, Arena, Police Department, Cemetery, & Inspections
- Scanned 1235 invoices for payment processing
- HOME rehab Block Grant work-ongoing projects
- Mental Health Grant Meetings
- Iowa Criminal Justice Grant Writing Training
- Preparation for new Fire Grant in Iowa Grants
- Monthly Reports: Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (JAG); Brownfields

GIS

- Pollinator habitat in flood buyout areas meeting
- Extend 3 hydrant flushing route boundaries
- Traffic Sign Inventory

IT

- Coordinate the installation of the new switches for RSM
- Get with Laura M to plan out SQL update
- Update Staff List on website

Fire Department

Reported by Erik Bullinger, Fire Chief

EMS OPERATIONS

New advanced intubation equipment added (UE scopes and I-Gels) with intensive, in-depth training provided on their use.

Preventative maintenance plans on equipment are being reviewed to reduce downtime of equipment and decrease replacement costs.

FIRE OPERATIONS

Took delivery of the new drone with thermal imaging capabilities to be deployed for fire suppression, search and rescue, and fire pre-planning missions. Funding for this drone was generously provided by Ag Processing of Mason City.

Drone team established and FAA UAS training started with new drone team members.

FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU

Seeing an increased interest in fire code compliance from businesses and the public. This is consistent with the increase in building improvement projects in the area.

Attended training at the International Code Council Upper Great Plains Region III.

HAZMAT

HazMat team applied for FEMA funded grant to purchase FTIR/Ramen analyzer to identify unknown substances.

HazMat team members delivered Hazardous Materials Operations level classes for area First Responders in; Dougherty, Estherville, Hampton, Emmetsburg, and Northwood

TRAINING

Firefighting

- Captains & Lieutenants provided battalion level training on wide range of activities for senior and junior members.
- Call critiques performed for continual improvement efforts.
- Tour of large package distribution center for preplanning.

EMS

- Speaker from AHA presented a class on “Mission Life, Stroke Education” to all battalions, which included a new stroke assessment tool “BEFAST” that was added to our protocols.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Heartsaver 1st Aid/CPR/AED class to 17 city employees.

MCFD was invited to MCHS by iJAG to discuss careers in firefighting and EMS.

RENOVATIONS UPDATE

- Dorm addition interior 90% complete – estimated completion at the end of March.
- The conference room and offices are near completion, with furniture delivery beginning early next month.
- Staff continue to use one restroom while finishes are being made to the women's restroom/locker room.
- Siding being installed as the weather allows.
- All windows should be completely installed by mid-March.

OTHER

One staff member attended the Iowa Society of Fire Service Instructors Conference, with an emphasis on multigenerational differences in learning techniques.

One staff member attended a 10-day fire investigator class at the National Fire Academy in Maryland. This extensive training is funded through FEMA.

One staff member attended continuing education on fire inspector/investigator training.

COMMITTEES

The training committee convened twice this month to expedite discussions regarding new hire orientation and the structure of the recruit academy.

The EMS Committee convened to discuss preparations for this year's EMS Week promotional campaign. Additionally, the topic of ensuring alignment with the latest care guidelines for the community was addressed in preparation of future protocol revisions.

Truck Committee met twice in February to detail the needs for the next aerial apparatus. Multiple product demonstrations were also attended by committee members.

Human Resources Department

Reported by Perry Buffington, Human Resources Director

Department	Full-time	Part-time	Grand Total
Airport	5	2	7
Cemetery	3	1	4
City Administration	3	1	4
Development Services	11	19	30
Engineering	17		17
Finance	10		10
Fire	45	1	46
Human Resources	3		3
Library	14	2	16
Mall	1	7	8
Museum	6	1	7
Operations & Maint	66		66
Police	47		47
Recreation	7		7
Youth Task Force	2		2
Grand Total	240	34	274

Plus 121 Seasonal employees

Staffing

Currently we have 9 recruitments underway, with a total of 20 vacancies that were in various stages of the recruitment process in addition to the start of recruitment for our summer seasonal staff. Hired 1 seasonal and 1 regular full-time employee during February. We experienced 2 regular full-time resignations and no retirements during the month.

Hiring Activity:	- Police Officer-9 openings (Police): Continuing recruitment, Next testing date is scheduled for 3/26/25.
	- Heavy Equip Operator Water Reclamation - 1 opening (O&M): Interviews conducted in late February.
	- Firefighter/Paramedic - 2 opening (Fire): Offers made with MMPI and physicals in process.
	- Intermediate Accounting Clerk - 1 opening (Finance): Interview conducted and position filled internally.
	- Data Processing Specialist - 1 opening (Finance): Job description being updated with recruitment to start in March.

- Library Assistant I - 1 opening (Library): Filled vacancy with an internal promotion.
- Library Clerk PT - 1 opening (Library): Began an internal and external recruitment.
- Admin Asst-Housing/Safety - 1 opening (Dev Services): Interviews conducted and job offer made. Scheduled to start work in March.
- Mall Manager - 1 opening (Mall): With the long-term City ownership of the mall, we need to staff it with regular employees. At the time of purchase, we hired existing staff as temporary employees. Recruitment is underway to fill the Mall Manager position as the initial step in this transition.
- Programming Assoc part-time - 1 opening (Museum): Job reopened, will begin a new recruitment in the near future.
- Transit Driver - 2 driver opening (Dev Services): Continuing recruitment.

Labor Relations/Legal

No significant labor issues to report. The Council approved a new 2-year labor agreement with the Teamsters in February.

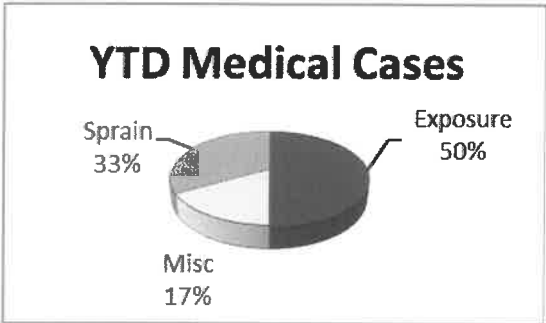
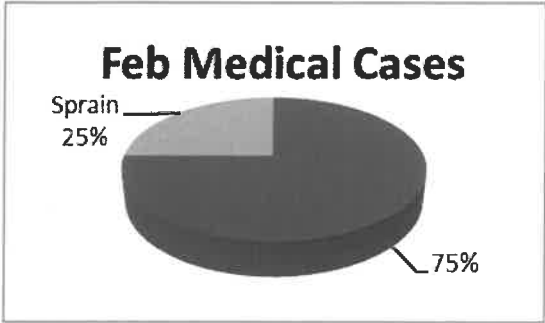
Major Projects

- Police Officer staffing will remain a focus of our department into the future. During February we completed the setup and implementation of an upgraded recruitment software system that expands our marketing and tracking capabilities for recruitments and identifying possible new applicants, improved applicant communications, and streamline our administrative processes. We are excited to utilize this system with our future police officer recruitments and all recruitments. We also began use of an alternative marketing firm to assist us in additional police officer recruitment efforts. Seasonal recruitment is underway, and all summer seasonal positions are expected to be filled by the end of April.

- We are nearing the testing phase of a new HRIS software system that will allow us to offer electronic access to employee data for both employees and managers, establish electronic management approval workflows eliminating inefficient paper documentation, and improving the overall efficiency of city government. The HR/Records Specialist has begun her role in assisting the implementation of the City Hall electronic data records transition project as part of normal duties.

**SAFETY
STATISTICS**

The City has experienced 6 injuries requiring medical attention in 2025 compared to 2 injuries during the same period the prior year. Our workers' compensation experience rating continues to show strong improvement over the past several years.



MacNider Art Museum

Reported by Edie Blanchard, Museum Director

General Activities: Daily / Weekly / Monthly tasks:

- The Museum paid the artists that sell in its gift shop for its last quarter of the year sales. It replenished and changed out merchandise.
- The Museum held its monthly Kids Club class—which is a free class sponsored with funds from First Citizens. Registration was at the maximum of 30 however there was winter weather on the day of the class which led to a lighter turnout.
- The Museum accessioned a work of art by Claire Van Vilet. The work, which is an artisanal produced book using handmade paper and artistic techniques, was purchased with funds donated by the MacGregor Family. It is the first art book the Museum has in its collection. The Museum strives to collect a variety of types of fine art.
- The Museum worked with Bergland + Cram to obtain an estimate to create drafts and estimates of the building cost of the additional collection storage building. This will be approved at the next board meeting.
- Museum performed outreach at several locations it partners with: IOOF Care Center, Manly Care Center, Good Sheppard Care Center.
- Museum staff taught a variety of classes including a watercolor class that was extremely successful.
- The Museum volunteer wrapped up the extensive sorting and organizing of the Museum's art supplies.
- The Museum the Museum participated in budget meetings as needed with city council and other department heads.

Attendance totals for the month of February (Reminder less classes due to low staff):

Classes

(2/4) Art Bugs: Be Mine: 12 adults & 10 children

(2/8) Watercolor: Hearts & Flowers: 10 adults

(2/15) Kids' Club: Collage Art: 20 kids

(2/27) Creating w/Clay B: 10 children

Events

(2/8) Celebration of Life: 70 adults & 5 children

(2/11) First Responders training: 20 adults

(2/20) One Vision: 94 adults & 3 children

(2/13) Clear Lake Public Library Tour: 8 adults & 11 children

186 members

11 city memberships

13 business

Gallery Attendance	331
Event Attendance	192
Classes	162
Playground	73
Outreach	39
Tour Attendance	19
Totals	816

Operations & Maintenance/Parks Department

Reported by Jim Collins, Public Works Director

Utility Division:

4 Days snow/ice control
3 Days Leak Detection
2 Main Breaks
2 Days Hauling Materials w Street
1 Day Foundation back fill
2 Days concrete pour back

Water Reclamation Division:

- Completed 2024 IADNR & EPA Biosolids report
- Completed 2024 Pretreatment report for IADNR
- Replaced worn-out check valves in Lakeview lift station
- Did extensive repairs to 2 diaphragm pumps
- Purchased a used semi tractor for biosolids hauling
- Getting UV system ready for installation next month
- Conducted hearing test for all employees
- Stephany, Paul and Tony attended a leadership class in Clear Lake
- Took care of all general plant operations
- With the nice weather, plant staff repaired several skimmer arms on clarifiers

Sanitation Division:

Things are running smoothly. We're getting calls as to when we will start the yard waste season. With snow on its way, I think Monday March 31st will be the first day. Weather permitting of course.

Trash Talk:

Prior to modern landfills, in early 1900, "piggeries" began popping up across the U.S. A piggery was basically a large farm that housed thousands of pigs that would eat raw garbage. This was a unique type of garbage service that was effective until the pigs died from food-borne illness.

Street & Parks Division:

- With the warmer temps we have stopped all tree removals at the golf course. We can resume when the ground firms up.
- We have also started to sweep the downtown and some of the main roads to remove sand and winter debris. We are still going hard on street trees and have crews working in the alleys doing tree trimming.

Police Department

Reported by Jeff Brinkley, Police Chief

Highlights

- Patrol
 - Second Detail officers responded to a sexual assault investigation and were able to get the victim medical assistance. The suspect was located and taken into custody a short time later.
 - Second Detail also seized a delivery weight quantity of marijuana and personal use methamphetamine following a traffic stop for driving under suspension.
 - Third Detail responded to a report of a stolen vehicle in the early morning hours. Officers were able to use technology to locate the vehicle and arrest the driver for 2nd Degree theft and driving while barred.
 - Third Detail officers arrested a suspect for attempted burglary and public intoxication after two witnesses reported a burglary in progress.
 - Lab analysis returned on a handgun that was recovered during a traffic stop. Evidence linked it to a prior shooting incident that remains under investigation.
- Criminal Investigations
 - Criminal charges filed in February included: Theft in the 1st Degree, Disseminating Obscene Material to Minors, 3rd Degree Sexual Abuse, and Continuous Sexual Abuse of a Child.
 - Our Evidence Specialist sent out notices to eight vehicle owners that they had ten days to claim their vehicle from impound.
- Support Services
 - Issued several hundred alternate side parking tickets in first ASP event of the year.
 - Towed 45 vehicles this month – 33 for overtime parking or abandonment.

Public Library

Reported by Mary Markwalter, Library Director

The library hosted all regular programming in February; storytime, Lego club, coding club, author talks, book clubs, teen and tween programs and craft days. It was busy!

The library submitted current statistics to Iowa legislators, wrote to them and spoke to them.

HVAC Controls work is being completed at this time.

The Winter Reading Challenges end on February 28 and the special Spring Break programming will begin on March 10. There are a lot of great activities for all ages during spring break.

Recreation Department/Highland Park Golf Course/Mason City Arena

Reported by Brian Pauly, Recreation Superintendent

February was a busy month for the Recreation Department with multiple programs in full swing. Youth basketball, tumbling, mini and tiny tot cheerleading continued to provide engaging opportunities for young athletes to develop their skills. Adult recreation also remained strong, with drop-in volleyball, basketball, and pickleball continuing to see steady participation. Drop-in adult volleyball has maintained the high numbers we've seen since it started, and our women's power volleyball league remains a competitive and popular offering.

Beyond our core programs, we welcomed new participants into our school-age care program after the closure of Little Angel Childcare Center. All three of our before- and after-school care sites accommodated additional children, ensuring families had reliable options for their childcare needs. The department also engaged with various organizations to plan future events, including a meeting with representatives from the University of Northern Iowa Soccer Program to coordinate our June youth camp and discussions with the Steak Cookoff Association regarding our ninth annual event at MacNider Campgrounds, scheduled for the first weekend in July.

Our department also took time to recognize our seasonal staff members, hosting our annual appreciation night at a North Iowa Bulls game. The event was well attended, with 80 staff members coming together to celebrate their hard work and dedication. Additionally, the MacNider Campgrounds reservation system underwent a transition as its previous company was acquired by Let's Camp, a Canada-based organization. This change will require some adjustments, but staff are working to ensure a smooth transition for campers. The department was also represented at Leadership North Iowa and participated in the Chamber Speed Dating Service Group outing, continuing to build connections within the community.

Preparations for the summer season have already begun, with aquatic center manager and head lifeguard interviews completed. As of now, we have 28 returning lifeguards committed for the upcoming season, setting us up for a strong start. Additionally, I attended the Elevate and Innovate Workshop in Urbandale, a free event hosted by the Iowa Parks and Recreation Association that provided valuable insights and networking opportunities.

The Mason City Arena remained busy throughout February, hosting four North Iowa Bulls games, three Mason City Toros games, eight Mason City High School Hockey Club games, and 13 Mason City Youth Hockey lower-level games. In addition to regular-season play, Mason City Youth Hockey hosted a 16-team tournament, bringing in teams from across the region. Beyond hockey, the arena continued to serve as a hub for community events and public skating sessions. Staff have been working on in-house improvements to enhance the facility and maintain a high-quality experience for all users.

Arena staff have also been working closely with Lutron to find a long-term solution to the ongoing lighting issues. The current system, impacted by the dissolution of Audacy in June 2020, has become increasingly difficult and costly to maintain. The primary concern has been lights not being shut off properly, and staff are exploring all possible options to resolve this issue efficiently. On a more exciting note, the arena has secured a national act for July 24 and is close to finalizing another major event, further enhancing its role as a premier entertainment venue in North Iowa.

Volunteer Program

Reported by Mary Litterer, Volunteer Program Coordinator

Activities for the Month of February 2025:

The Mason City Volunteer Program is involved in numerous projects. Earth Day will continue with volunteers adopting an area to pick up over the spring/summer. When out for a walk or walking your dog, take a bag along and pick up trash. The Volunteer Program has had three new volunteers join again this month bringing the number of new volunteers to 34 in the last 10 months. Thank you to the volunteers for joining in our different City projects. There were a total of 1,121 volunteer hours in the month of February.

- Worked again this month on budget with gardeners' input for beautification program
- Contacted vendors for the upcoming flower program
- Updated website maps for Earth Day
- Worked with several new volunteers on projects currently active
- Finished 2025 Beautification final budget
- Continued to work on other grants
- Attended several meetings working on elder and youth programs

Youth Task Force

Reported by Youth Task Force Director

Grant/Budget Updates:

- All reports and claims for January were submitted.
- Grant tracking/expense reporting.
- Received funding from the Murphy Trust foundation.
- 2/14-IT Grant Sustainability
- 2/19-Dept Head meeting
- 2/24-IHHS grant check-in

One on One Mentoring

- Monthly check in with community-based mentors.
- 2/4-Received youth app
- 2/10-Drop off items at Newman
- 2/24- Mentor orientation
- Received 3 new mentor apps this month
- Ad created for Mentoring Recruitment Targeting Businesses, shared/promoted on FB

Peer Mentoring:

- 2/3-2/7 Valentines for Vets for Peer Mentoring (all programs)
- 2/20 Meeting at Clear Lake School for Peer Mentoring
- Weekly meetings and check-ins with school staff.

Child Care Works

- 2/12 Impact Team Zoom Call
- 2/18 Child Care Works Team Meeting
- CCW weekly check-ins (2/25 Outreach to potential investors for Child Care Works)
- Provided ongoing support for the Child Care Works impact group and wage supplement program.
- On going wage supplement program administration and weekly check-ins
- State funding projections.

Executive Board Meeting- 2/27

Other

2/4/25 Iowa Mentor Coffee Chat

2/5/25 Nonprofit Speed Networking Event

2/6 P4C Grooming Training

2/11/25 Elements of Effective Mentoring 5th Edition

2/11-CPR/First Aide/NARCAN/AED training (Jessica)

Facebook posts

Ongoing: POs, grant reporting, time tracking