



## Human Resources

### Employee committees:

#### **Team Marion: 6.4 – Enhance employee experience through a meaningful and intentional engagement model**

The Employee Safety Committee recently updated the accident reporting form and the return-to-work policy, which have been implemented throughout the organization. These changes allow for more efficient responses to workplace incidents and provide a smoother transition back to work for employees. The committee will now be able to review workplace accidents, identify trends and build strategies to mitigate future claims. The Committee's focus will now shift to updating the City's safety manual.

### Chapter 411 legislative update:

Following recent changes to Iowa Code Chapter 411, staff identified the need to contract with EMC Insurance (EMC) to ensure proper coverage for all eligible 411 claims. An initial recommendation was reviewed with Council on Jan. 21, with the agreement with EMC approved on March 6. The City will transition to EMC for claims administration effective July 1. This partnership offers improved reporting functionality, ensures compliance with legislative requirements, streamlines claims processing and provides a proactive service approach that will benefit both the City and its employees. Eligible employees are primarily sworn public safety employees in Police and Fire. Impacted retirees have been notified of this change.

## IT

### Security Cameras:

Connectivity at Draper Park is complete and security cameras are scheduled to be fully functional on the City's network by April 30. The installation of cameras at the Central Plaza in City Square Park and along the 7th Avenue streetscape is nearing completion. Door security elements of the Depot are also being installed. Completion of security elements for the Central Plaza project is anticipated by April 30. A contract was awarded to Hawkeye Communications for the installation of cameras at the Public Works facility. Work is expected to begin by May 1 with completion anticipated by June 15.

### Public WiFi:

#### **Vibrant Community: 1.4 – Enhance accessibility for residents and visitors through transit, sidewalk and other mobility-focused programs**



ImOn completed the installation of fiber connectivity in January. Outdoor wireless access points will be installed this month, with an anticipated service turn-on date of May 7, in conjunction with the ribbon cutting for the Central Plaza at City Square Park.

#### **Fiber optics assets:**

This project includes creating an inventory of the current fiber assets throughout the community, as well as reviewing agreements to incorporate them in the City's records management system. Staff expanded the scope of this project to include traffic signals throughout the city. Staff are working to prepare a detailed project management plan to include the additional scope of work with relevant deadlines and milestones. The project management plan is expected to be completed by April 30.

#### **Century Link audit:**

All analog lines have been transitioned to ImOn under our master services agreement or converted to new technology (i.e. cellular dialers for fire alarms). This project is complete.

#### **IT master plan:**

A request for proposals (RFP) will be issued by May 5 seeking vendors to facilitate a technology review and develop a master plan for technology needs. Staff expect a recommendation for the next steps by the end of June.

## **Finance**

#### **FEMA Derecho Grant:**

The City received the final payment in the amount of \$1,602,237 for the final Waterway Debris Removal project in February. This marks the successful completion of all projects aside from Category Z – Management Costs. The Management Costs project of \$330,000 was compiled and submitted to the State for review.

#### **Cost allocation methodology:**

The final cost allocation plan was received by the consultant, Cost Advisory Services, Inc. (CASI), and a close-out meeting was held on March 6. This topic will be discussed further with the Council subcommittee in the coming months.

## **Police**

#### **Traffic cameras:**

On Jan. 27, 2025, the Police Department began deploying the mobile unit between the 29 approved



locations throughout the city. Under the new Iowa code, traffic can no longer be monitored in both directions, which has had a negative impact on the effectiveness of the mobile unit. On March 1, 2025, the first annual report was submitted to the IDOT, as required by Iowa Code, regarding the permitted locations. The permanent automated traffic enforcement cameras were not impacted by the permitting process as they are for red light enforcement, not speeding violations.

#### **Organization structure:**

The Police Department currently has two vacant positions. Two police officers started on April 7 and will attend the academy in May. However, the department will drop to four vacant positions with the upcoming retirement of Chief Kitsmiller on April 18, and a police officer departure from the City on April 19. The department is currently conducting background checks on two applicants, following testing in March, and three additional individuals are being vetted.

## **Fire**

#### **Training Facility:**

Construction of the training tower is nearing completion, and the contractor is finalizing the punch list repair items. The foundation design and specifications for the burn cell were awarded in January. Total project completion is on schedule for fall 2025.

#### **Ambulance/Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Study:**

The study, conducted by Public Consulting Group (PCG), is complete and was presented to Council this week. Staff will meet with Area Ambulance Service in May to review the recommendations and collaborate with partners to research processes in line with the study recommendations and develop necessary timelines.

#### **Commission on Fair Accreditation International (CFAI) Accreditation:**

The Fire Department continues to incorporate tenants of fire accreditation into its operating model to measure performance and inform organizational evolution. Next steps include the completion of a self-assessment and application for accreditation in March 2026.



## Public Works

### Automated collection:

**Sustainable Infrastructure & Services: 4.3– Implement and maintain the sustainable practices of waste management**

Automated collection began in Oct. 2024. Staff will share a six-month update with Council in May 2025.

### Stormwater Master Plan:

**Sustainable Infrastructure & Services: 4.1– Implement and maintain sustainable infrastructure for streets, sanitary and storm sewers, trees and water**

Through a GIS website, residents gave input on where they have experienced stormwater and drainage issues. Staff and HDR are working to fill in gaps in the data collected to work toward the calibration of the model. The plan is on track with the next milestone occurring in July 2025 regarding the assessment of detention basin conditions.

### Tower Terrace Road:

**Community & Economic Development: 3.1 – Support sustainable business growth to diversify the City's tax base**

- **C Avenue to Alburnett Road Segment A (Meadowknolls Road to Alburnett Road)**  
Landscaping improvements and final punch list items are all that remain. Items will be completed this spring, weather permitting.
- **RAISE/BUILD Grant Application**  
Staff worked with the metro group to submit a Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD), previously known as the RAISE grant application. Award announcements are expected in June 2025.
- **Community Project Funding (CPF) - existing**  
As a metro group, \$5 million was received from Congresswoman Hinson's CPF program to fund Tower Terrace Road from Interstate 380 to Highway 30. The tentative timeline includes establishing preliminary design plans by January 2026, with final design plans approved in March 2027. Staff anticipate project completion by December 2027.
- **Community Project Funding (CPF) – new**  
In collaboration with Linn County, staff applied for 2026 Community Project Funding (CPF) for a one-mile segment of Tower Terrace Road, west of Highway 13.



- **Other**

Mayor AbouAssaly, accompanied by staff, will continue lobbying efforts for Tower Terrace Road during a fly-in trip to Washington, D.C. in June. Local agencies will meet with federal legislators during the trip. An overall update on Tower Terrace Road will be provided to Council in May.

**Central Plaza construction:**

**Vibrant Community: 1.1 – Make Marion a regional, cultural and entertainment destination for residents and visitors**

Small items remain and the project is on track for completion by the May 7, ribbon cutting. The commemorative brick pavers will be left out of the project and not installed until later to accommodate construction access for the Broad and Main on 6th project.

**Citywide parking:**

**Safe Community: 5.2 – Protect lives and property through enhanced code enforcement policies and practices**

The City continues to make incremental progress in establishing “No Parking” zones along streets. The matter was tabled at the Feb. 20, Council meeting with additional consideration scheduled for April 17. Following approval, staff will determine the next segment for Council consideration.

**ARPA sewer:**

**Sustainable Infrastructure & Services: 4.3– Implement and maintain the sustainable practices of waste management**

Construction is underway on the next two sewer segments funded with ARPA dollars. Project VII (7) is underway by Pirc-Tobin Construction and is nearing completion. Work will be finalized in May, after hot mix asphalt (HMA) is available for the season. Boomerang Corp. recently started Projects IV (4) and V (5), with 280 working days allotted.

**CeMar Phase V:**

**Vibrant Community: 1.2 – Enhance educational, arts, culture and recreational opportunities**

Property acquisition is complete and the environmental clearances for this project have been obtained. Construction plans and other documentation were submitted to the Iowa Department of Transportation (IDOT). It is scheduled to be bid by the IDOT in June. The timeline for construction will be determined based on the low bidder’s schedule for the season.



### **Public Works site master plan (now includes former site):**

Staff will present an updated draft ECO Industrial layout and projected timelines to Council in June 2025. The tentative plans include relocating the salt building, Recycling Drop-off Center and Yard Waste Facility to the new Public Works site. Staff is also engaging a commercial relator to assess the value of the former Public Works site.

## **Parks & Recreation**

### **Outdoor Aquatic Center:**

**Vibrant Community: 1.1 – Make Marion a regional, cultural and entertainment destination for residents and visitors**

A Construction Manager at Risk (CMaR) contract will be reviewed by Council for a possible vote of approval in May. The CMaR will assist with project cost and phasing, which will help determine the final budget. The schematic design for the aquatic center is expected to be complete by mid-April. As part of the design process, a final concept has been identified for Willowood Park, allowing it to move into schematic design as well. This park will feature a farmers market pavilion, playground, splash pad, trails and natural prairie areas. Both the aquatic center and Willowood Park will follow a nature-inspired theme. Staff finalized the aquatic center's placement on the current site and incorporated future dry recreation amenities into the overall plan. Upcoming public engagement opportunities will include the City Showcase and the first Farmers Market at Willowood Park. Staff continue to provide monthly updates at Council meetings.

### **Draper Park development:**

**Vibrant Community: 1.3 – Preserve the historical character of the city**

Construction at Draper Park is complete except for the educational signage that is currently in production. A ribbon cutting ceremony is expected by the end of June, after signage is installed.

### **Central Plaza operations:**

**Vibrant Community: 1.1 – Make Marion a regional, cultural and entertainment destination for residents and visitors**

The contractor is nearing completion of the project and will soon hand things over to the City. The next steps include installation of the owner-supplied items including benches, tables and other furnishings. A ribbon-cutting ceremony is scheduled for May 7, with the first large event at the Central Plaza in City Square Park being the Marion Arts Festival on May 17.



#### **YMCA guest passes:**

On April 1, the YMCA provided their annual update to Council. In addition, an amended agreement that includes continued discounted membership fees for Marion residents, track pass access and monthly community days were also approved. This project is complete. Staff will transition to addressing parking around the YMCA.

## **Community Development**

#### **Comprehensive Plan & moratorium:**

**Community & Economic Development: 3.2 – Ensure Marion’s growth is guided by planning principles and develops in a sustainable and resilient manner**

Following Council’s approval of the 2045 Comprehensive Plan in March, staff has been working to develop design updates and operational standards for moratorium-impacted uses, along with landscaping and signage recommendations. To meet the June completion deadline, the Planning and Zoning Commission will hold a special meeting in April to schedule a public hearing for May 22. This hearing will address the design standards, the final ordinance and sign code updates, with a final reading scheduled for June 19.

#### **Linn County Metro Hazard Mitigation Plan:**

**Efficient & Effective Government: 2.2 – Broaden partnerships internally and externally within the community through collaborative shared services frameworks**

The Linn County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan, which includes all cities, unincorporated areas and school districts in the county, has been approved at each of the local levels. The East Central Iowa Council of Governments (ECICOG) submitted the final plan to Homeland Security for final comments. Upon their approval, the plan will be complete.

#### **Safe Routes to School (now sidewalk gaps):**

The City’s planning consultant, MSA Professional Services, Inc. (MSA), has taken on this project. Staff overlayed the City’s sidewalk and trail information with Linn-Mar and Marion Independent school districts’ Safe Routes to School plans. MSA and staff will meet the week of April 28, to formulate the next steps and develop a phasing plan. Staff anticipates this coming before Council in June.

#### **International Code Council (ICC) code updates:**

**Safe Community: 5.2 – Protect lives and property through enhanced code enforcement policies and practices**



Staff are working to adopt the International Code Council's (ICC) 2024 code updates. The Construction Code Review Board unanimously approved the changes in February and a recommendation was presented to Council on April 3. Staff researched the requested information and submitted findings on April 17.

#### **16th Avenue & 15th Street development:**

Following a review of the developer's proposal and the requested incentives, staff have determined the City is unable to meet the financial requirements in the proposal. The developer is no longer considering the development of this property. This project is complete.

## **Library**

#### **Strategic Plan Implementation:**

The Library Board of Trustees adopted the 2025-2028 Marion Public Library Strategic Plan in October 2024. Staff have been working on the 2025 plan of service, as well as all four focus areas. Current initiatives include expanding bookmobile services and days of delivery, deepening the partnerships between the library and community non-profits and expanding fundraising efforts to further enhance library services.

## **City Manager's Office**

#### **Airport:**

**Vibrant Community: 1.4 – Enhance accessibility for residents and visitors through transit, sidewalk and other mobility-focused programs**

A revised Request for Proposals (RFP) is active with responses due May 6. Council is expected to consider proposals on May 8.

#### **Broad & Main on 6th:**

Building plans are currently under review. DCI Group's revised plan includes 3,000 sq. ft. of commercial space adjacent to the parking floor, along with potential changes to the exterior steps. The Planning and Zoning Commission and Council will review and consider the changes in May. Construction is scheduled to begin in May or June, with a completion date of July 2026.

#### **Former Library site:**

A status update meeting occurred on April 16. The development team is currently working on general layouts and site configurations. A follow up meeting will be scheduled for the second half of May.





### **Collaborative Growth Initiative:**

An update meeting was held on April 7. The Cedar Rapids Metro Economic Alliance and Jodi Schafer shared a draft budget for recommended upcoming activities. Additional research was requested to develop a contribution formula for Cedar Rapids, Marion and Hiawatha.

### **Wayfinding:**

#### **Vibrant Community: 1.4 – Enhance accessibility for residents and visitors through transit, sidewalk and other mobility-focused programs**

The project team received the finalized Community-wide Wayfinding Master Plan in February. A Council presentation by the consultant is planned for May. Then a working group with representatives of Parks and Recreation, Public Works, Engineering and Communications will be established to develop a phased implementation plan that aligns with the recommendations in the document and the available funding as approved in the CIP.

### **Website refresh:**

A refresh of the City website is currently underway. The project team is currently reviewing the updated design. Next, new and existing administrators will receive training, and will then begin revising the existing content to enhance the user experience. The redesigned site and new eNewsletter and text notification features are expected to go live in October 2025.

### **Mobile food units:**

Last fall, staff worked to develop an ordinance regarding mobile food units. Staff worked with the Chamber and Uptown Marion to review sample codes from our comparable cities and create a code that protects the investment of our brick-and-mortar businesses, while allowing mobile food units to thrive. Special consideration was given to identify designated parking locations within the Uptown Marion District. The new chapter was adopted on April 3 and requires a license for all mobile food units to operate within the city. Licenses are available annually or for a single event. Additional approvals and fees apply for operation in a designated park.

### **Laserfiche:**

Laserfiche software has been used since 2014 for document and record management needs. Council agendas, minutes, resolutions, agreements and more are stored and indexed for quick and efficient retrieval. As departments go through paper files, those that require permanent retention or are frequently accessed are being added to Laserfiche. Laserfiche is also used for process automation. Staff created a list of paper-heavy processes that could be converted into a Laserfiche form process. These



forms would be completed online, routed to appropriate individuals for review and/or approval, and then stored in the applicable folder within Laserfiche. The first process staff is updating is related to travel authorization and expense reimbursement. Staff are currently finalizing updates to the travel policy and forms, with plans to implement the new automation process July 1. Other forms under review for automation include asset acquisition/disposal forms and requests for bids.

#### **Grow housing:**

Staff worked with MEDCO and a group of local partners to conduct a needs assessment and found that 43 percent of homes surveyed in Marion were in need of major repairs. While federal housing programs are on hold, staff are focusing on local funding to develop affordable housing and rehabilitation programs, including infill housing with a developer or contractor. Staff plans to present the next steps to Council in June 2025.

#### **City Hall renovation:**

**Safe Community: 5.2 – Protect lives and property through enhanced code enforcement policies and practices**

Staff engaged with an architectural and interior design firm to assist with refining the plans and creating a preliminary budget for the overall project. The design and planning phase is underway with completed plans expected in May, which will include a budget and project timelines. The project will then move through the bidding, construction and furnishing phases, with an anticipated completion date in December 2025.