



Administrative Report Mayor Eddie Moran

TO: City Council
FROM: William M. Heim, Managing Director
PREPARED BY: Maritza Loaiza, Special Assistant
MEETING DATE: October 10, 2022
AGENDA MEMO DATE: October 5, 2022

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:

- The Community Development Director continues in contact with community partners such as Helping Harvest and Alvernia University on projects that will positively impact the city.
- The CD Department continues to attend biweekly Project Management team meetings to discuss progress on CDBG-funded projects. More than 15 projects (primarily public parks, ADA ramps, and fire stations) are in part financed by Community Development Block Grants. The City must spend \$3,597,787.50 (1½ times the amount allotted in 2021 of \$2,398,525) by November 1st.

Currently, less than \$841,844.83 remains to be spent before November 1st. If funds are not expended, HUD requires the City to provide a detailed plan on how and when the funds will be used.

- Community Development is currently applying for two grants. The first is the **Healthy Homes Production grant** for a total of \$2M with a 15% City match. The grant will help aging families battling elevated blood lead levels (EBLL). The second is the **Older Adults Home Modification Program grant** for \$1.25M. This grant does not require a match but does require a professional therapist. The funds will assist elderly individuals in maintaining a healthier lifestyle.

DOWNTOWN:

- The Downtown Ambassadors continue with the daily cleaning of the Penn Street Corridor with the assistance of the Hope Rescue Clean team.

- The Downtown Coordinator met with the Property Maintenance Manager and a PMI Supervisor to better understand what Downtown Ambassadors should focus on as it relates to Property Maintenance concerns. Several properties were discussed, and brainstormed on possible solutions. Communication will occur with business owners to inform them of expectations and responsibilities.
- The Downtown Coordinator visited business owners in the 500 block of Penn Street to discuss art/decoration projects for the holidays. Business owners expressed interest in assisting with holiday decorating.
- The Downtown Coordinator met with the City’s 275th Anniversary Coordinator regarding a planting project their committee is planning.
- Downtown Ambassadors completed Narcan training from the City’s EMS staff. They also completed safety training.
- Upcoming events occurring in the Downtown area are as follows:
 - October 28th: Mayor Moran’s Halloween on Penn event
 - November 19th: Holiday Parade
 - December: Tree Lighting and Holiday Market (date TBD)

FINANCE:

- The Finance Department’s Citizens Service Center provided the following updates:
 - CSC Manager is working with the Human Resource Department to assist with future customer service training.
 - The CSC Manager assists the Solid Waste team in establishing the administrative functions related to dumpster permitting, including electronic billing, notifications, and form development.
 - The CSC Manager met with Property Maintenance Division personnel to discuss service requests and ways to improve workflow.
- The Finance Department’s Accounting Division provided the following updates:
 - The Accounting Manager met with Public Works staff to assist with the new Direct Energy invoices. Two vendor numbers were created for Direct Energy gas and electric accounts, and the Sustainability Manager will create a profile for future EFT payments.
 - The Accounting Manager also met with Public Works staff to answer Munis system-related questions and with the Capital Projects Manager to discuss Fund 34 Capital Projects spreadsheet for reconciliation purposes.
 - A 2023 Downtown Corridor budget was created, including the new Munis accounts. Figures for fringes were reviewed and approved by the City Controller
 - Internal budget work continues for 2023 budget revenues, expenses, and salary status.

- The Finance Department’s Purchasing Division provided the following updates related to projects:
 - Dumping Abatement RFP - Re-bid was advertised, and bids are due on October 21, 2022.
 - 3rd & Spruce Rec Center Roof Replacement – Bids were received on September 21st and are currently under review.
 - 3rd & Spruce Rec Center HVAC Improvements – Bids were received on September 21st and are currently under review.
 - Egelman’s Lower Dam Modifications RFP – Three proposals were received. The selection committee is currently reviewing the technical proposals.
 - Sidewalk Project for Community Development – Bids are due on October 7th.
 - Skyline Drive Observation Overlook Clearing – Mount Penn Mountain from the Pagoda to List Road Project – Bids are due on October 13th.
 - Upcoming Projects:
 - Registering Abandoned Properties for Community Development
 - Reading Skate Park Construction
 - Reading Iron Playground
- The City Controller is working with Accounting Division to identify areas of improvement within the transactional recording process.
- The City Controller is preparing for the upcoming DCED grant closeout audit
- The City Controller has determined minimal discrepancies exist between USL vs. Munis.
- The Finance Department’s Project Manager is working with the Accounting and Treasury Division to establish the HCM positive pay file.
- The Finance Department provided the following updates on the AHL Grant activities:
 - Powerful Woman event is scheduled for October 15th in Council Chambers. Grant staff is working with various departments to ensure the event is successful.
 - Community-Accessible Testing & Education (CATE) vaccine clinic is scheduled to run through November.
 - Health Literacy Questionnaire (HLQ) survey is ongoing. 235 paper responses have been collected. The goal is set at 1,000.
REDCap technology is almost complete allowing for online survey participation.
 - Upcoming Grant-related activities include:
 - September 30th – Salvation Army Food Distribution (City of Reading only)
 - October 5th – Vaccine Clinic at 6th & Penn Streets

- October 6th – Opportunity House
- October 8th – Out in the Park with LGBT Center
- October 8th – Breast Cancer Zumbathon at Reading High School
- October 11th – Hope Lutheran Food Distribution
- October 12th – Vaccine Clinic at 6th & Penn Streets
- October 13th – Event at Reading Public Library (tentative)
- October 15th – Powerful Woman Live Event at City Hall
- October 16th - Vaccine Clinic with Giorgio Family Day at Giorgio Farm
- October 21st – Glenside Housing Complex – food distribution event
- October 28th – Halloween on Penn Street with Mayor Moran

FIRE:

- The Reading Fire Department will have nine members recognized on October 18th at a banquet in Bethlehem, PA. Our members will be given the 2021 Lehigh Valley Burn Foundation Preferred Spirit of Courage Award for heroism.
- RFD Chief Stoudt attended the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Service the weekend of October 7th thru the 9th at the National Fire Academy. Reading Firefighter/EMT Mark “Dewey” Kulp, who passed away on January 5, 2021, due to COVID-19, will be honored during the event. RFD served as an escort for the Kulp family throughout the weekend event.
- RFD Firefighter James “Corky” Lerch Jr, who passed away on October 28, 2020, to work-related cancer, was honored on September 17th at the IAFF Fallen Firefighters Memorial in Colorado Springs, CO. His wife was in attendance and escorted by FF/EMT Corbin Keiser, who described the event as very humbling and moving.

LIBRARY:

- The Reading Public Library has completed the Wyomissing Foundation grant application for funding for the StoryWalk project.

POLICE:

- The Reading Police Department’s Community Engagement Officer attended several recruiting events prior to the entry-level test conducted on October 1, 2022. He reported speaking and providing information to many individuals interested in the testing. In addition, work on community engagement activities continues, including but not limited to the Faith and Blue event scheduled for October 9, 2022.
- The Reading Police Youth Academy continues to see steady participation from a core group of cadets.
- The RPD Records Office Renovations project is complete. SGT Lonsinger, who oversaw the project, is working on a presentation detailing the project.
- The RPD’s VSU Expansion project has begun. Sites for new cameras and equipment have been identified, and agreements with the Reading School District and other entities to host the equipment are being completed at this time.

PUBLIC WORKS:

- Public Works staff has also completed:
 - 30 sites were cleaned up, which resulted in 247 bags of litter, including 7 bulk items
 - 7 graffiti abatement projects from various locations throughout the City
 - 11 dead animals were picked up
- Public Works staff from various divisions organized, facilitated, and participated in the 1st Annual Waltman Memorial City-wide Cleanup on September 24th. Public Works had 74 participants who worked 3 hours each and collected 96 bags of trash, seven bags of yard waste, and one bulk item. The Sustainability also partnered with Juvenile Probation volunteers, who did a fantastic job clearing embedded debris in baseball field areas.
- Public Works Operations Division assisted with the Puerto Rican Day Parade and Salsa Festival, which took place on Penn Street on September 18th.
- Public Works Sustainability Manager attended the Berks Cultural Diversity Festival on September 24th and shared information on energy efficiency, planning efforts, clean city initiatives, the Adopt-A-Block program, and recycling.