

**Iowa City  
Parks and Recreation Commission  
Wednesday, March 9, 2016 – 5 p.m.**



**Robert A. Lee Community Recreation Center – Meeting Room B  
220 S. Gilbert St.**

- ITEM 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- ITEM 2. STAFF INTRODUCTION**  
Tammy Neumann, Administrative Secretary
- ITEM 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
- ITEM 4. PUBLIC DISCUSSION OF ANY ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA**
- ITEM 5. EASTSIDE SPORTS COMPLEX MASTER PLAN**
- ITEM 6. LOWER CITY PARK MASTER PLAN**
- ITEM 7. HICKORY HILL PARK MASTER PLAN**
- ITEM 8. LETTER TO METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO) REGARDING BIKE MASTER PLAN**
- ITEM 9. ECOPOLIS PROPOSED NORMANDY DRIVE FORUM**
- ITEM 10. REPORT ON ITEMS FROM CITY STAFF**
  - a) Recreation Division Superintendent – Chad Dyson
  - b) Parks Division Superintendent – Zac Hall
  - c) Parks and Recreation Director – Juli Seydell Johnson
- ITEM 11. CHAIRS REPORT – CLAY CLAUSSEN**
- ITEM 12. COMMISSION TIME/SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**
- ITEM 13. ADJOURN**



**MINUTES  
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION  
FEBRUARY 10, 2016  
RECREATION CENTER – MEETING ROOM B**

**DRAFT**

**Members Present:** Suzanne Bentler, Larry Brown, Clay Claussen, Maggie Elliott, Wayne Fett, Cara Hamann, Joe Younker

**Members Absent:** Lucie Laurian, Paul Roesler

**Staff Present:** Juli Seydell Johnson, Chad Dyson, Zac Hall, Tammy Neumann, Rae Lynn Schepers

**Others Present:** Dell Holland

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Claussen called the meeting to order at 5 p.m.

**STAFF INTRODUCTION:**

Seydell Johnson introduced Rae Lynn Schepers, Senior Maintenance Worker with the Forestry Division, to the Commission. Schepers started working with the City in 1985 as a seasonal employee and eventually moved to a full-time position in 1988. Since that time she has moved from pruning trees to climbing trees to currently supervising a small forestry crew. She is an Iowa State grad who began her career for a forestry department in Idaho for three years before returning to Iowa. Hall said that Schepers is the brains behind the scenes in all aspects of forestry. Schepers explained that she works with homeowners and contractors to help determine the best species of trees to be planted in a particular location. Elliott asked Schepers what challenges she experiences with the City's need for more diverse tree species, especially with the impending threat of emerald ash borer. Schepers said that when experimenting with various species, it is easier to do so in a park setting than in the right-of-ways. Younker asked what species she would recommend. She said that she likes the Coffee Tree as it does not produce pods and is a good size (45'-50' high, 25'-30' wide). Claussen asked what some of the biggest challenges are in her position. She said that she would like to be involved in the early planning processes with developers as often times when utility lines, water mains and fiber optics are run, they are done so without consideration of the space necessary to plant trees. He then asked what she likes best about her job. She explained that the City keeps her on her toes and she likes the challenge. She also enjoys the community and the people that she works with. Younker asked where the City purchases their trees. Schepers explained that the City has a nursery on Scott Blvd. She further explained that keeping up a nursery is very time consuming, therefore, some trees are purchased from local nurseries whose trees are inspected and certified. Commission members thanked Schepers for attending the meeting and for her continued dedication to the department as well as the City.



**NEW MEMBER INTRODUCTION:**

Claussen introduced new commission member, Wayne Fett to the board. Fett explained that he grew up in Iowa City, is a graduate of West High School and the University of Iowa and recently retired as the Senior Associate Director of Recreation Services for the University of Iowa. He worked in Recreational Services for 31 years where he managed outdoor recreation areas and outdoor sports programs, fitness programs and all buildings west of the river. He is married and has two grown children and four grandchildren. He is a cyclist and cross country ski enthusiast. Commission members welcomed Fett to the board.

**OTHER FORMAL ACTION:**

**Moved by Elliott, seconded by Bentler, to approve the January 13, 2016 minutes as written. Passed 7-0 (Laurian and Roesler absent).**

**PUBLIC DISCUSSION**

None

**RECREATION DIVISION REPORT:**

**Eastside Sports Complex Update:** Dyson gave a presentation of the preliminary plans of the Eastside Sports Complex. He reminded Commission that the City has contracted with Hitchcock Design Group who has created two concept plans. Dyson pointed out that one of the goals of this project is to provide an economic development opportunity for the region as it will provide services for all income levels and will be unique to Iowa City. As the new Hoover Elementary School is built, there will be more opportunity for development in the area in the future. Brown asked if when a development comes in if they are required to designate space for bike paths and trails. Seydell Johnson and Hall both said that there is nothing mandatory but that they generally do include plans for such. Brown expressed his desire to get some means to cross the railroad tracks in that area. Hall noted that both of the concepts presented by Dyson will show that the designer has taken that into consideration. Dyson explained that these two concepts are really more to show the possible amenities. Claussen asked if they were going to investigate a way to direct water offsite to the south side of the tracks. Seydell Johnson said while it isn't shown on these concept plans, staff will be asking them for more details addressing this issue. Bentler addressed Brown's question regarding trail development in any potential development to the north of this property, and whether it should have a designated neighborhood open space area within the development plans. Seydell Johnson said this is something that certainly can be looked at individually. Brown further stated that since the developers are going to benefit from this that they should make some provisions. Both concepts show 12 total ball diamonds, however, in reviewing with staff the size suggested is thought to be too large. Concepts also show two soccer/multi-use fields, a trail that loops around the perimeter, a gated entrance at both ends for ticketing purposes during tournaments. Staff has worked with Planning on doing a parking analysis. The concept shows a little over 500 parking spaces, however, staff feels this may be more than what is necessary. Hall noted when comparing that number to City Park, which has parking from the west side of the ball fields, around the stage and ponds, and parking along the river, there are a total of 555 parking stalls. There has been some discussion of including a small dog run as many tournament goers bring their dogs with them. There would be concessions as well as playground areas and as well as group seating options at both fields. Concept B shows the parking lot centralized, one less ball diamond and does not allow as much space for soccer/multi use facilities. It has been suggested that there be an indoor turf space that would accommodate indoor practices for all sports as well as restrooms, concessions and a



possible in-door running track. Other amenities include basketball courts, otherwise is much the same as concept A. Bentler likes the idea of parking along the perimeter rather than central. Hamann likes the variety of used that Concept B shows. Seydell Johnson said that this development would likely be built in phases and that having two parking lots would allow for easier phasing. Dyson noted that at this time staff would like to hear from Commission on their feelings about the amenities to be offered at the facility. Hamann asked how long the proposed trail is. Seydell Johnson said it is long enough for a walk/run, however, is not 5k, and may be 1-1.2 miles. Seydell Johnson and Dyson will meet with Hitchcock this week who will be present at the March commission meeting.

Dek Hockey/Bettendorf Visit: Seydell Johnson, Hall and Dyson met with a Patrik Levesque of Quad City DekHockey. Dek hockey is a variation of ice hockey, however, it is played outdoors on a tennis court like surface and players wear regular shoes instead of skates. Levesque is interested in partnering with Iowa City Parks and Recreation. The Quad Cities started with one facility and have expanded to two in Bettendorf with approximately 2000 players using the facilities. Staff explained that a dek hockey space takes a little less than an acre of land. Dyson explained that staff sees this as a new trend in adult sports as softball seems to be on the decline. It is a sport that can be played by all ages. Seydell Johnson said it could offer intramural opportunities for middle school aged kids through adult participants. Levesque explained that dek hockey offers an alternative option for kids who don't currently identify with a specific sport. Dyson explained that while in the very early stages, if the department were to move forward, they would enter into an agreement with Levesque. Levesque covers the hard costs including an annual fee so there would be little to no costs paid by the City. Brown said that he simply could not support another program where a fee is involved that would make it difficult for less fortunate families to become involved. Dyson said they would set stipulations where they would offer scholarships to make sure that no kid is turned away. Brown further expressed that as communities, states and governments go into the future, they have to consider the lesser fortunate as he sees everyday where kids and/or families are unable to participate in activities due to the fees.

While meeting with Bettendorf staff, Hall, Seydell Johnson and Dyson also toured their pickle ball courts. Pickle ball is another sport that has become very popular and City staff is getting more and more requests to reserve the current tennis courts for this activity. Staff had considered turning some of the tennis courts at Mercer into pickle ball courts; however, after reviewing the courts in Bettendorf and discovering the minimal cost involved, staff will revisit and look for a site to serve as stand-alone pickle ball court. The resurfacing project will still take place this spring on the current tennis courts at Mercer but likely will no longer have the added pickle ball lines added. Discussion will continue at a staff level.

Staffing: Dyson announced that the department is preparing to post their seasonal positions. The department is developing a system in which positions are categorized. For example, a person would apply for a seasonal aquatics position which would cover various positions within that category. Staff is also reviewing current job prerequisites and making changes that may be creating barriers. For example, they may be able to make changes to age restrictions in some positions. The department is also reviewing minimum wage changes and current pay scales for the positions offered. Currently positions range from \$9 to \$15/hr. Fett said he believes that the pay scales for the department are very competitive.

## **PARKS DIVISION REPORT**

Willow Creek/Kiwanis Park Project Update: Hall noted that during the grading and over-seeding process at the park, some drainage issues were found. HBK has provided staff with some solutions. Staff has reviewed those options and has since passed them onto engineering for review. He is still hopeful that they will meet the May deadline for the completion of phase one.



**Mercer Playground Redesign Update:** All of the playground equipment has been delivered to the Park Shop. Staff will hold a preconstruction meeting with the contractor in March and then will begin the extraction of old equipment and site prep soon after. This will be the largest playground within the City's park system.

**Highland Park Update:** Staff put a new shelter and new water fountain into the park earlier this fall, as well as relocated some swings from Mercer to Highland Park. At that time there was no funding available for additional playground equipment. However, Geoff Fruin, Assistant City Manager, Tracy Hightshoe, Coordinator of Neighborhood Development Services, and Kris Ackerson, Planner for Community Development, applied for reallocation of \$25,000 in CDBG funds for this project. Staff met with the neighborhood last week to discuss options for playground equipment. Voting results from the neighborhood are available on the Lucas Farms Neighborhood Association Facebook page. Staff hopes to have this playground installed before Memorial Day.

**Forestry Update:** Hall announced that there has been a confirmed case of emerald ash borer on University of Iowa campus. The department has a plan in place and will proceed as already scheduled. Hall will share more details with commission as they become available. Hall also mentioned that Council approved funds in the FY17 budget to complete a tree inventory of Iowa City. Staff is excited about this as it will help tremendously in future planning.

**Staffing:** Hall reminded commission that Earlis Stockman, a 43-year employee of the Parks department, retired in January. The department conducted interviews and have selected Jarret Meade to fill that position. Meade worked with Stockman for over 20 years and is very familiar with the parks system. This in turn opened a Maintenance Worker III position. Staff has interviewed internal candidates and will announce that selection soon.

After evaluating the position needs of the Parks Maintenance Division, Seydell Johnson and Hall are proposing the deletion of a Maintenance Worker II position and adding one Maintenance I position to staff. It has been determined that it would better serve the department to have a Parks Maintenance I position whose responsibilities would cover evenings and weekend maintenance needs.

#### **DIRECTORS REPORT:**

**Oakland Cemetery Columbarium Policies and Fees:** Seydell Johnson explained that the Cherish Columbarium, an infant columbarium that is located on the far east side of the cemetery, was built in 2010. This columbarium is capped with a bronze sculpture of a mother rocking her infant. The niches in this columbarium are for the ashes of mothers who passed away during childbirth or babies/children who have passed. The cost of the columbarium was \$78,000 with the idea that it would sell out in seven years. Unfortunately, none of these niches have been purchased since its installation. Therefore, staff would like to relocate the sculpture and open up this columbarium for all ages. Several of them are large enough for two individuals. In talking with area funeral homes, there are requests for dual spaces. This proposal will have to go before City Council as it will involve a fee change. There will be no addition cost to the department.

**Commission Packet and Updates:** Seydell Johnson said that she enjoyed meeting with each commission member individually during the past month. She asked each member what they would like to see included in the month Commission packets. Overall she gathered that members would like to see a more streamlined packet. Therefore, she will meet with department staff to consider a new layout for these



packets. Commission can expect that new format in their next packet and they will then be invited to comment at the March meeting.

Correspondence:

- Move Naturally to the Market Survey Results: Hamann reported that in May of 2015 there was a campaign encouraging customers to bike or walk to the farmers market. Those that did so were given a \$2 coupon to use at any of the vendor stalls. The Move Naturally to the Market Survey was conducted in conjunction with this program. The survey was to evaluate the success of the program and to get customer perspectives on biking and walking safety in the community. The group surveyed 104 patrons which revealed that 50% of those biked to the market, 35% walked and 15% drove/rode a vehicle. As mentioned, this survey evaluated customers' feelings on how safe they feel while biking and/or walking in the Iowa City Area. Barriers for not biking or walking to market were as follows: Distance, too much to carry, not enough time, safety concerns, injury and other. The most popular answer to increasing safety for bikers and pedestrians were to add more bike lanes, paths/trails and repair and maintain existing streets and bike/pedestrian facilities.

Hamann announced that the Iowa City Metropolitan Planning Organization of Johnson County (MPOJC) is working on updating their current bicycle master plan. There was some discussion about the lack of transportation as a barrier to parks and recreation programming, especially among low income families. Members agreed that with biking and walking being low-cost modes of transportation, they would like to urge MPOJC to include a pedestrian master plan along with the updates to the existing bicycle master plan. Hamann mentioned that there is an online survey regarding the current bike master plan, however, she has some concerns about some not having access to the survey. She asked for commission input. Fett mentioned that they might consider going to the neighborhood centers in the area. Bentler suggested that offering a gift card to those who take the survey may make it more enticing as well. Younker suggested that it may be appropriate for a letter on behalf of the commission be written and sent to MPOJC suggesting that they include a pedestrian plan along with the bicycle master plan. Hamann will write a memo and send to Seydell Johnson for distribution and review.

Brown noted that many bicycles are left on bike racks around the city and never retrieved. The Police Department collects those and many are sold at auction in Chicago. Brown talked to the City last year about this and they gave him ten bikes to repair and distribute. He would like to see the City develop a relationship with the bike library to offer this service with the idea that they would take these bikes, make necessary repairs, and then distribute to the less fortunate rather than shipping them out of Iowa City to sell.

- Iowa City Blue Zones Certification: Seydell Johnson announced that Iowa City was named a certified Blue Zones Community this week. This new designation will be celebrated as part of the Iowa City Freeze Fest scheduled for Saturday, February 20 at the Terry Trueblood Recreation Area from 1 to 3 p.m. The Blue Zones celebration is scheduled at 2 p.m.

Seydell Johnson shared that she met with affiliate boards including Kickers, Iowa City Boys Baseball and Iowa City Girls Softball. She noted that the Girls Softball board is virtually all new members who are excited about working with Parks and Recreation staff. She said that she and Dyson received a lot of good feedback from all of the groups and will keep the commission informed.



**CHAIRS REPORT:**

Claussen reminded commission members that Tom Markus, City Manager, has taken a new position in Lawrence, Kansas. He further noted that City Council will be making a decision as to whether to make Geoff Fruin the interim City Manager. Claussen said he was fortunate to spend some time working with Geoff and feels it is important that the Commission show their support in making that happen. He said that he will personally be sending a letter in support of Fruin to the Council. Brown asked if the Commission could do that as a board. Seydell Johnson suggested members to do so on an individual level if they would like rather than an action of the Commission.

Claussen discussed the construction of the Chauncey and its effects on the farmers market. Seydell Johnson said she is hoping to get a more definite timeline soon but there is nothing available as of this meeting. She has been assured that the market will remain open during construction.

**COMMISSION TIME/SUGGESTION FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:**

Bentler received an email from Jeff Biggers on behalf of the Ecopolis group. He shared that they would like to have a forum to talk about revisions to the Parkview/Normandy drive area that is currently all city owned property. They would like to see this area rebranded into something with gardens, fruit trees, etc. and have asked Bentler and Laurian to be a part of this forum on behalf of the Commission. Bentler told them that she would bring it up at tonight's commission meeting and perhaps add them to a future agenda. She is not comfortable in becoming a part of the forum while being a Parks and Recreation Commission member. Seydell Johnson expressed that she would like to reach out to them and invite them to a future meeting to share their information.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**Moved by Elliott, seconded by Fett, to adjourn the meeting at 6:40 p.m. Motion passed 7-0 (Laurian and Roesler absent).**



## PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

## ATTENDANCE RECORD

NAME	TERM EXPIRES	12/10/14	2/11/15	4/8/15	5/13/15	6/8/15	7/8/15	8/12/15	9/9/15	10/14/15	11/12/15	12/9/15	1/13/16	2/10/16
Suzanne Bentler	1/1/17	X	X	X	X	O/E	X	X	X	O/E	X	X	X	X
David Bourgeois	1/1/15	X	O/E	O/E	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O/E	*	*
Larry Brown	1/1/18	O/E	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	O/E	X	O/E	X	X
Clay Claussen	1/1/18	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Maggie Elliott	1/1/17	X	X	O/E	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Wayne Fett	1/1/19	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	X
Cara Hamann	1/1/16	X	X	X	X	X	O/E	X	X	X	X	X	O/E	X
Katie Jones	1/1/18	X	X	X	X	X	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Lucie Laurian	1/1/15	X	X	X	X	X	O/E	O/E	X	X	X	X	X	O/E
Paul Roesler	1/1/18	*	*	*	*	*	*	X	X	X	X	X	O/E	O/E
Joe Younker	1/1/16	X	X	X	O/E	X	O/E	O/E	X	X	X	X	X	X

**KEY:** X = Present      O = Absent O/E = Absent/Excused

NM = No meeting

LQ = No meeting due to lack of quorum

\* = Not a member at this time





Date: February 29, 2016  
To: Juli Seydell Johnson, Parks and Recreation Director  
From: Chad Dyson, Superintendent of Recreation  
Re: Eastside Sports Complex Master Plan

**Commission Role:**

1. Provide input for the following items of the draft Eastside Sports Complex Master Plan:
  - a. Final Design Features
  - b. Phasing
2. Provide recommendation to the City Council for approval, approval with changes, or continued work on the plan as presented.

**Background:**

- Parks and Recreation staff have been working with the Hitchcock Design Group team to create a design for a proposed new sports complex on the east side of Iowa City (420<sup>th</sup> and Taft Road). The City currently owns approximately 74 acres of land to be developed as a sports complex/neighborhood park.
- There were several sport field needs identified by staff and the public that have been included in the plan. These include baseball, football, and soccer fields as the primary needs.
- Secondary needs include an indoor turf space, trail loops for running events, a dog run, parking, neighborhood access, concessions/restrooms, playgrounds and a maintenance facility.

**Project Timeline:**

The proposed project timeline will be concluded with a final report submitted to the Parks and Recreation Commission in April. A phasing and construction schedule will be determined with final master plan. There is currently no funding allocated for construction.

**Attachment:**

Site plan









Date: February 29, 2016

To: Juli Seydell Johnson, Parks and Recreation Director

From: Zachary Hall, Superintendent of Parks and Forestry

Re: Lower City Park Master Plan

**Commission Role:**

1. Provide input for the following items of the draft Lower City Park Master Plan:
  - a. Final Design Features
  - b. Maintenance Level Areas
  - c. Phasing
2. Provide recommendation to the City Council for approval, approval with changes, or continue work on the plan as presented.

**Background:**

- City staff has been working with consultants from the Confluence design team to create a redesign of the trails, parking, signage, ballfields, shelters, festival stage, carnival, maintenance areas and placement of other amenities within Lower City Park.
- The overarching theme of the Lower City Park Master Plan is to redesign the park to be more flood resilient during nuisance, seasonal, or 100 year flood events. The goal of the flood resilient design is to incorporate as many of the existing features of the park while identifying and adding amenities not currently offered. Costly flood events in 2008, 2013, and 2014 identified the need to address the issue of flood resiliency. Sand and sediment deposits associated with these flood events resulted in extra maintenance to reestablish damaged areas once useful in the park. Ballfield, shelter, fence, carnival, and trail repairs have become the norm due to frequent flooding.
- Input from the Parks and Recreation Commission, a public open house, online forum and staff identified the need for key park features such as the ponds, ice skating, ballfields, festival stage, native plantings and well defined maintenance areas to be included in the final design.
- The Lower City Park Master Plan addresses the need for flood resiliency and analyzes the entire park's strengths and weaknesses for opportunities to provide better services to its users. At this time construction and implementation of the Lower City Park Master Plan does not have funding.

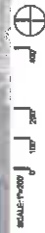
**Project Timeline:**

The proposed project timeline will be concluded with a final report submitted to the Parks and Recreation department in March. A construction schedule will be discussed once phasing of the project has been determined. Funding has not been allocated for construction of this project.

**Attachments:**

- Site Plan
- Maintenance Levels
- Phasing Plan









Date: February 29, 2016

To: Juli Seydell Johnson, Parks and Recreation Director

From: Zachary Hall, Superintendent of Parks and Forestry

Re: Hickory Hill Park Master Plan

**Commission Role:**

1. Provide input for the following items of the draft Hickory Hill Park Master Plan:
  - a. Goals and Objectives
  - b. Park Design
  - c. Phasing
2. Provide recommendation to the City Council for approval, approval with changes, or continued work on the plan as presented.

**Background:**

- The redesign Advisory Committee, consisting of staff and representatives from The Friends of Hickory Hill Park, has been working with the design team from Snyder and Associates to create a redesign of the trails, bridges, signage and amenities of Hickory Hill Park.
- A trails and bridges study was conducted in 2011 identifying areas of the park with erosion issues impacting trails and bridges primarily due to seasonal flooding. The 2011 study inventoried and categorized the condition of each bridge and trail within the park.
- Since the 2011 study the park has sustained seasonal flooding in 2013 and 2014 exacerbating the trail and bridge issues previously studied. The displacement of a major bridge connection at the 1<sup>st</sup> Ave entrance is an example of the impact from these past flood events.
- The replacement of the bridge is a separate FEMA project anticipated for a Fall 2016 completion. The new bridge will be incorporated into the Hickory Hill Park Master Plan final design.
- The 2011 study did not address specific park features such as access, signage/way-finding, programming, park sections, park branding, surfacing materials or other amenities.
- Seasonal flood impacts and input from the Friends of Hickory Hill Park and the public identified the need for a more complete master plan for the entire park.
- The Hickory Hill Park Master Plan addresses these missing features and analyzes the entire park's strengths and weaknesses for opportunities to provide better services to its users.

**Project Timeline:**

The Hickory Hill Park Master Plan has \$600,000 allocated in CIP funds to be phased over the next 3 years. The proposed project timeline will include a public meeting March 13 at the RALRC at 1:00-3:00pm and a public meeting for a draft report tentatively scheduled for April 24 at Hickory Hill Park. The final master plan is anticipated to be completed by June 2016. A construction schedule will be set once phasing of the project has been determined.

**Attachments:**

- Site Plan
- Invitation to Public Meeting



## ***The City of Iowa City wants your input!!***

### **Project: Hickory Hill Park Master Plan**

#### **Overview:**

The City of Iowa City and with the assistance of the Friends of Hickory Hill Park is developing a Master Plan for Hickory Hill Park. Park elements to be considered include park programming, wayfinding and signage, bridge and trail improvements and park access. You are invited to attend the open house to view ideas and provide input.



#### **Event: Open House Input Session**

**What:** Chance to provide input for the design of Hickory Hill Park!

**Who:** Surrounding neighborhoods and general public

**When:** *Sunday, March 13 from 1:00pm – 3:00pm*

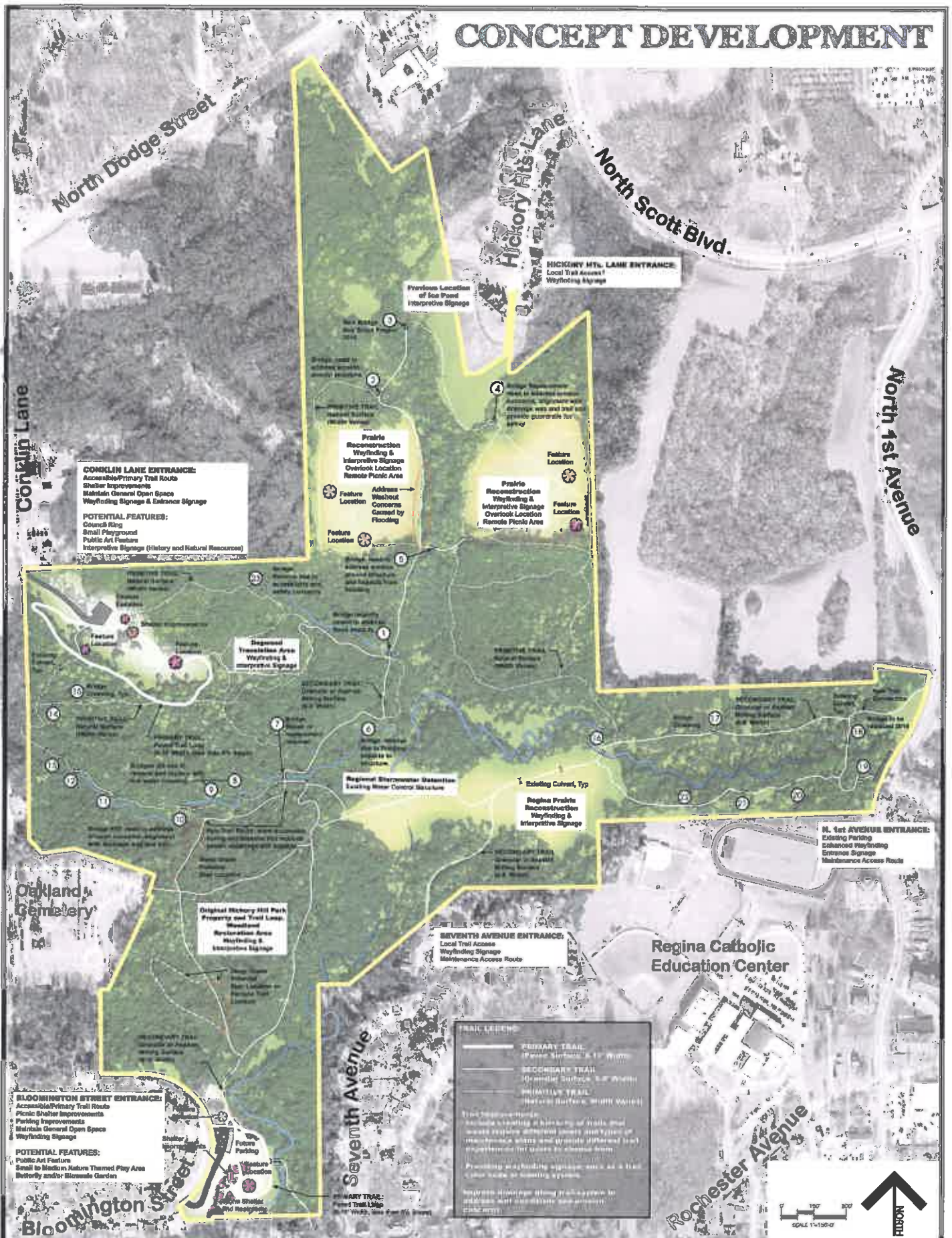
**Where:** *Robert A. Lee Recreation Center, Social Hall, 220 S. Gilbert Street, Iowa City*

At this meeting we will present master plan design ideas based on input received from initial meetings with an Advisory Committee. A brief formal presentation will occur at 1:30 pm with informal public input sessions before and after the presentation. Please stop by at your convenience. Your input is needed!

**Questions?** If you have any questions about the project or process, please contact Don Marner, Snyder & Associates, Inc. office phone (515) 964-2020.



# CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT



# Hickory Hill Park Master Plan





Date: March 1, 2016  
To: Parks and Recreation Commission Members  
From: Juli Seydell Johnson, Parks and Recreation Director  
Re: Letter to Metropolitan Planning Organization Regarding Bike Master Plan

**Commission Role:**

1. Review draft letter of recommendation.
2. Approve sending letter.

**Background:**

- At the February 10th Parks Commission meeting, Commission member Hamann announced that the Iowa City Metropolitan Planning Organization of Johnson County (MPOJC) was working on updating their current bicycle master plan.
- There was commission discussion about the lack of transportation as a barrier to parks and recreation programming, especially among low income families.
- Members agreed that with biking and walking being low-cost modes of transportation, they would like to urge MPOJC to include a pedestrian master plan along with the updates to the existing bicycle master plan.
- Younker suggested that it may be appropriate for a letter on behalf of the commission be written and sent to MPOJC suggesting that they include a pedestrian plan along with the bicycle master plan.
- Hamann provided attached memo for Commission consideration. Director Seydell Johnson provided memo to all commission members in advance. Suggested edits are included in current draft.

**Attachment:**

- Draft letter to Metropolitan Planning Organization of Johnson County.



Metropolitan Planning Organization of Johnson County  
Attn: Sarah Walz  
410 E. Washington Street  
Iowa City, IA 52240

Re: Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Planning

Dear Ms. Walz and MPOJC Staff:

The Iowa City Parks and Recreation Commission is charged with recommending and reviewing affairs that relate to parks and recreational centers and related functions within the city. Given these duties, we believe bicycle and pedestrian planning is within our purview.

Specifically, we have a vested interest in the development and maintenance of off-road trails and on-road bicycle and pedestrian facilities to create a more bikeable and walkable community, as well as increase safety. We have identified the lack of transportation as a barrier to parks and recreation programming, especially among certain geographic areas (e.g., south of Highway 6) and demographic groups (e.g., low income). Bicycling and walking are low cost and sustainable transportation options, therefore are sensible modes to encourage and for which to increase accommodations.

As a commission, we would like to urge you to create a pedestrian master plan in tandem with the impending updates to the existing bicycle master plan. We recognize that efforts have been made in the areas of sidewalk infill, curb ramp replacements and identification of other barriers to pedestrians. We are also aware that the MPOJC is revising the long-range transportation plan and we encourage increased accommodations for bicycling and walking in that plan as well.

Sincerely,

Parks and Recreation Commission Members  
City of Iowa City





**Date:** March 1, 2016  
**To:** Parks and Recreation Commission Members  
**From:** Juli Seydell Johnson, Parks and Recreation Director  
**Re:** Ecopolis Proposed Normandy Drive Forum

**Commission Role:**

1. Determine level of Commission participation in Ecopolis Normandy Drive forum.
2. Direct response to Ecopolis concerning Commission participation in this forum.

**Background:**

- Commission Member Bentler received an email from Jeff Biggers on behalf of the Ecopolis group. He shared that they would like to have a forum to talk about revisions to the Parkview/Normandy drive area. They would like to see this area rebranded into something with gardens, fruit trees, etc.
- The email asked Bentler and Laurian to be a part of this forum on behalf of the Commission. Bentler asked that this item be added to a future agenda.
- Seydell Johnson met with Jeff Biggers to discuss the group's ideas and forum. Seydell Johnson shared information regarding the City's efforts in this area during the past year with Earthview Environmental.
- Information provided by Ecopolis from this meeting:

**Attachment:**

- Map of neighborhood with City Land Holdings and planting areas.
- February 17, 2016 email from Jeff Biggers with links to Ecopolis information.
- February 4, 2015 email from Jeff Biggers regarding "Forum on Rethinking Mosquito Flats"









**From:** Jeff Biggers [mailto:jrbiggers@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 17, 2016 8:43 AM  
**To:** Juli Seydell-Johnson; Grant Schultz  
**Subject:** Re: Forum on Rethinking Mosquito Flats

Nice to meet, Juli, and thanks for your time.

Here's the link to paw paw trees in Iowa: <http://farmprogress.com/story-way-down-yonder-in-the-pawpaw-patch-in-iowa-9-2488>

And the link to Mosquito Flats: <http://thestudio.uiowa.edu/historycorps/items/show/175>

NY Times pieces on soil, Versaland: <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/21/opinion/iowas-climate-change-wisdom.html>

And some background on Ecopolis: [www.ecopolis.org](http://www.ecopolis.org)

Talk soon, JB





Date: Thu, 4 Feb 2016 22:26:23 -0600

Subject: forum on rethinking Mosquito Flats

From: [jrbiggers@gmail.com](mailto:jrbiggers@gmail.com)

To: [su-bent@hotmail.com](mailto:su-bent@hotmail.com); [lucie-laurian@uiowa.edu](mailto:lucie-laurian@uiowa.edu); [organicgrant@gmail.com](mailto:organicgrant@gmail.com)

Hi Suzanne, Lucie,

Hope this finds you well.

As you might know, we've been contacted by various people to hold an Ecopolis Forum to revisit the proposal for fruit trees and gardens in the Mosquito Flats neighborhood. In fact, some folks have suggested a name change for the nickname of the neighborhood; The Paw Paw Patch, as a way of rethinking plans for the city-owned empty lots in the area. Grant Schultz from Versaland has offered to contribute 1,000 paw paw trees as a start.

As we have done with other Ecopolis Forums on solar, local food, bikes and pesticides, bringing together community, city and private entities, we're happy to convene a similar forum: "From Mosquito Flats to Paw Paw Patch, Rethinking Reforestation, Fruit Trees and Community Gardens in the Parkview Terrace Neighborhood," as a step in this direction.

Would you two, as part of the Parks Commission, and with a background in the original fruit tree proposal, be available to take part in a panel presentation with Grant for such a forum in late March or early April?

Thanks for your thoughts on this.

Best, Jeff

Jeff Biggers



# Iowa City Parks & Recreation Commission Packet

March 9, 2016

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## Upcoming Events

### March

- March 10, **Youth Sports Council Meeting**  
Mercer Park Aquatic Center P & G Room, 7-9pm
- March 11 & 12, **Special Olympics Mid-Winter Tournament and Opening Ceremony**
- March 13, **Hickory Hill Park Master Plan**, Public Meeting  
Robert A. Lee Community Recreation Center Social, Hall 1:00-3:00pm
- March 26, **DNR Trout Stocking Event**,  
Terry Trueblood Recreation Area, 10:00am-1:00pm
- March 31, **DNR EAB Workshop**  
Extension Office, 1:00-3:00pm (Professionals) 6:00-7:30pm (Homeowners)

### April

- April 9, **Vicious Circle Disc Golf Tournament**  
Peninsula Park, 8:00am-5:00pm
- April 10, **Wake Up and Willow Special Event**  
Discovery Garden, Robert A. Lee Community Recreation Center
- April 13, **Parks Commission Meeting**  
Robert A. Lee Community Recreation Center Meeting Room B  
5 p.m. – Meeting Room B
- April 24, **Hickory Hill Park Master Plan, Public Meeting**  
South Hickory Hill Park Shelter 1:00-3:30pm

### May

- May 4, **Iowa City Farmers Market Begins its 44<sup>th</sup> Season**
- May 11, **Parks Commission Meeting**  
Robert A. Lee Community Recreation Center  
5 p.m. – Meeting Room B
- May 14, **Ground Breaking for the Robert A. Lee Community Recreation Center Outdoor Classroom**
- May 19-21, **Special Olympics State Summer Games**
- May 30, **Memorial Day Event at Oakland Cemetery** (Time TBD)



## **Future Commission Items**

**April 13, 2016**

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**May 11, 2016**

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## **Status – Previous Commission Items and Discussions**

- January Commission Meeting
  - ***Peninsula Neighborhood – Park Dedication Discussion***
    - Staff met with representatives from the peninsula neighborhood to discuss dedication of Emma Harvat Park.
    - Staff reiterated the requirement of the development to dedicate this land as a public park.
    - The Homeowners Association has had no further discussions with the City on this topic.
    - The group also discussed the addition of a neighborhood garden.
  - ***City FY2017 Budget***
    - Approved by Council on March 1, 2016.
- February Commission Meeting
  - ***Oakland Cemetery Columbarium***
    - Changes to fees and designation of columbarium approved by Council on March 1, 2016.
  - ***Parks Maintenance Staff Reorganization***
    - Bob Richardson promoted to MW3
    - City Council approved hiring MW1 at February 16, meeting.
  - ***Ecopolis request for Public Forum***
    - Director Seydell Johnson met with Jeff Biggers to discuss the groups' ideas for the Normandy Drive neighborhood and share the work done in the area by Parks & Recreation crews last year. Parks Commission Agenda Item for March 9, 2016.
  - ***Dekhockey***
    - A space for Dekhockey is included in the master plan for the East Side Sports Complex. No additional staff efforts will be made to locate and build a facility in a current park. The private vendor has been informed of this decision.



## **Notable from Parks & Recreation Staff**

### **Parks**

- Congratulations to Bob Richardson on his promotion to Maintenance Worker III. Bob has worked for the City for 10 years. His primary duties include construction and playground inspection, installation, maintenance and repair.
- Forestry and Horticulture staff attended the 60<sup>th</sup> Annual ISU Shade Tree Conference in Ames. Bill Walls, Bob Richardson and Tony Rodgers have completed the Iowa Certified Construction Inspector Pollution Prevention Practices training. Ryan Kriz, Dennis Lovetinsky, Tyler Baird, Joe Green, Rae Lynn Schepers, Judson Yetley have completed Pesticide Applicators recertification. Joe Wagner has completed DNR's Fireline Fire Safety Refresher course.

### **Recreation**

- On January 16 we hosted our first "Flick n Float" event in the pool at the Robert A. Lee Recreation Center. We had 45 swimmers in attendance and received good feedback. Staff is working on developing more events for the future.
- Freeze Fest was held at the Terry Trueblood Recreation Area on February 20. Nearly 300 children and parents or caregivers attended this event, somewhat more than last year. Participants made homemade ice cream in a bag, joined the U of I Chemistry Department in several experiments, painted in snow, shot parachute balls from a sling shot, learned about Prairie Fire Management, made seed bombs, and discovered much about winter survival, Iowa history and Iowa wildlife. This event, meant to get people out doors and active succeeded regardless of the thaw that made ice skating and ice fishing and ice fishing impossible. Noteworthy of this event was the announcement by Blue Zones that Iowa City had received Blue Zones certification
- The money collection box at the Thornberry Dog Park has experience a number of thefts and vandalism this spring. Staff is working with police on additional patrols and considering other options for collection of daily fees.

### **Cemetery:**

- A wind storm toppled two significant trees on Friday, February 19. Staff cleared roads that afternoon with additional removed the following week.

### **Facilities:**

- Scott Justason, Facilities Manager, resigned effective February 4, 2016 to take a new position with Upper Iowa University. Applications have been received and interviews scheduled to fill this position.



## **Top Staff Issues**

### **All**

- Hiring temporary staff for summer facilities. Job fair held on February 25, 2016 at Mercer. Approximately 150 temporary employees will be hired by the department for the summer season. Additional information and applications can be found at <https://icgov.org/city-government/departments-and-divisions/human-resources>.

### **Parks**

- Emerald Ash Borer was confirmed in Iowa City on February 9, 2016. Staff focus has been to inform the public and meet with Communication, Forestry and Purchasing staff to prepare for systematic removal of ash trees.
- Damage at Terry Trueblood Recreation Area from bike race held on warmer than expected day. Race organizers have agreed to provide volunteers to assist with park projects and have made a financial donation to the park.

### **Recreation**

- Following the boiler replacement project we have been having issues maintaining the pool temperature at the Robert A. Lee Recreation Center. We had been experiencing extreme ups and downs for several weeks. We have been able to stabilize the temperature in recent weeks and now are only experiencing moderate temperature swings (within 1°-2°). This will likely continue until the BAS project is complete and we have automated controls.
- We are continuing to have issues with the bulk head at Mercer Park Aquatic Center. We were forced to close the pool for several days in February to repair a broken target. Staff is talking with the original designers on ways we can refurbish the existing system prior to considering total replacement.

### **Cemetery**

- Winter grave decorations are to be picked up by the end of February. Staff will begin collecting the remaining decorations in the next couple weeks. Collecting leaves and tree debris will also be a priority for staff as weather allows.



## Project Master List

Project	Timeline	Status
Facilities - HVAC Control Software	Multi-year Implementation for all City Buildings (\$535,000 CIP)	On hold until Facility Manager hired.
Admin: Park Master Plan Update	Project may begin July 1, 2016 (\$75,000 Gen Fund)	Staff preparing consultant selection process
Forestry: Tree Inventory	Project may begin July 1, 2016 (\$75,000 Gen Fund)	Staff preparing consultant selection process
Ashton House - Project Green	Construction Summer/Fall 2016 (\$155,000 Reap Grant)	Consultant completing construction documents.
Fraunholtz Miller Park Design & Construction	Construction Spring 2017 (\$200,000 CIP)	Staff Preparing Preliminary Design
Hickory Hills Park Master Plan & Upgrades	\$200K per year: 2016, 2017, and 2108 (CIP)	Public meeting schedule for March 13, 2016.
Mercer Park Playground	Construction Spring 2016 (\$150,000 CIP)	Spring 2016 Installation
Highland Park Playground & Redesign	Construction Summer/Fall 2016 (\$25,000 CDBG & ~\$8,000 in Neighborhood raised funds)	Construction waiting for Federal release of CDBG funds.
City Park Cabin Restoration	Construction Summer/Fall 2016 (\$200,000 CIP)	Consultant completing construction documents.
City Park Pool Cabana Shelters	Construction Summer/Fall 2016 (\$65,000 CIP)	Staff preparing bid documents.
Pheasant Hill Park Renovation	Construction Summer/Fall 2016 (\$60,862 CIP)	Preliminary Design
Happy Hollow Shelter & Bathroom Upgrades	Construction Summer/Fall 2016 (\$150,000 CIP)	Preliminary Design
Willow Creek/Kiwanis Park Master Plan	Construction to be Completed Spring 2016	Drainage issues being resolved. Restroom Construction spring 2016.
Tennis Courts/Pickle Ball Court	(\$75,000 CIP, \$25,000 Park Improvement Fund)	Staff researching site and design of Pickle Ball Courts.
Youth Sports Complex Feasibility Study	Study complete in Spring 2016	Commission Presentation March 2016.
Lower City Park Master Plan	Study complete in Spring 2016	Commission Presentation March 2016.
Riverfront Crossing Park, Phase 1	Wetlands construction & stream bank stabilization 2017 (Fed Grant)	Staff completing consultant selection process.
Thornberry Dog Park Pond Renovations	Spring 2016	
Chauncey Swan Park	TBD – Park rebuild at end of building project.	Staff has met with design team to discuss park elements and uses.



# Oakland Cemetery

## FY 16 Revenue Report

\*\* shaded areas represent previous 5yr average

	Revenue from Lot Sales	Lot Sale 5yr Average	# of Interments	Interments 5yr avg.	Revenue from Interments	5 year Avg. on Interments	Total Revenue	5yr Avg. on total revenue
July	\$4,300.00	\$5,030.00	10	5.4	\$4,075.00	\$2,627.00	\$8,375.00	\$7,657.00
August	\$11,400.00	\$6,180.00	8	7.8	\$6,900.00	\$3,268.00	\$18,300.00	\$9,448.00
September	\$7,100.00	\$5,160.00	7	7.0	\$3,750.00	\$3,524.00	\$10,850.00	\$8,684.00
October	\$10,150.00	\$6,450.00	10	7.0	\$5,915.00	\$3,259.26	\$16,065.00	\$9,709.26
November	\$4,800.00	\$6,050.00	7	5.4	\$3,042.50	\$2,632.00	\$7,842.50	\$8,682.00
December	\$2,600.00	\$1,830.00	7	2.8	\$3,350.00	\$1,290.00	\$5,950.00	\$3,120.00
January	\$6,400.00	\$3,040.00	1	3.0	\$700.00	\$1,920.00	\$7,100.00	\$4,960.00
February	\$0.00	\$7,750.00	2	3.2	\$750.00	\$1,873.00	\$750.00	\$9,623.00
March		\$4,390.00		5.6		\$3,178.00	\$0.00	\$7,568.00
April		\$7,930.00		7.4		\$3,038.00	\$0.00	\$10,968.00
May		\$5,530.00		6.8		\$2,881.00	\$0.00	\$8,411.00
June		\$5,630.00		8.0		\$3,666.59	\$0.00	\$9,296.59
Totals	\$46,750.00	\$64,970.00	52	69.4	\$28,482.50	\$33,156.85	\$75,232.50	\$98,126.85



# EMERALD ASH BORER

**IT HAS ARRIVED IN JOHNSON COUNTY.  
WHAT'S THE NEXT STEP?**

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, Johnson County is teaming up with the Iowa Department of Agriculture & Land Stewardship, the City of Iowa City, and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources to host two informational meetings concerning the presence of the emerald ash borer (EAB), an exotic, destructive pest of ash trees, which is present in Iowa City.

## **WHEN:**

**March 31, 2016**

**1:00-3:00 P.M. Green Industry Meeting**

For people working in the Green Industry such as arborists, public works and parks, horticulturists, Master Gardeners, tree services, landscapers, nursery centers, lawn care companies, and commercial pesticide applicators.

**6:00-7:30 P.M. Public Meeting**

For homeowners and other concerned citizens.

## **WHERE:**

ISU Extension and Outreach, Johnson County  
3109 Old Highway 218 South  
Iowa City, Iowa 52246

Meetings are **FREE** and registration is not required. If you have questions, call ISU Extension and Outreach, Johnson County at (319) 337-2145.



Image Credit: [www.forestryimages.org](http://www.forestryimages.org)

## **GENERAL TOPICS FOR BOTH MEETINGS:**

**EAB Overview & Symptoms**

**Treatment Options**

**Current Status of Iowa City**

## **GREEN INDUSTRY TOPICS:**

**Wood Utilization Options**

**Bark Peeling-How to find EAB in Tree**

## **PUBLIC MEETING TOPICS:**

**Ash Tree Identification & Assessment**

**Ash Tree Replacements**

## **PRESENTERS:**

**Zac Hall, Parks Superintendent  
Iowa City**

**Mike Kintner, Iowa Department of  
Agriculture & Land Stewardship**

**Mark Shour, ISU  
Extension and Outreach Entomology**

**Mark Vitosh, Iowa DNR Forestry**

The emerald ash borer is a small exotic beetle that kills all species of ash trees. This federally regulated insect was first found in Iowa in 2010 and was recently found in Iowa City in February 2016.

**IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**Extension and Outreach**