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June 2020

Water & Energy

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Going net zero

Meeting water demands



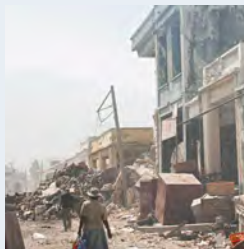
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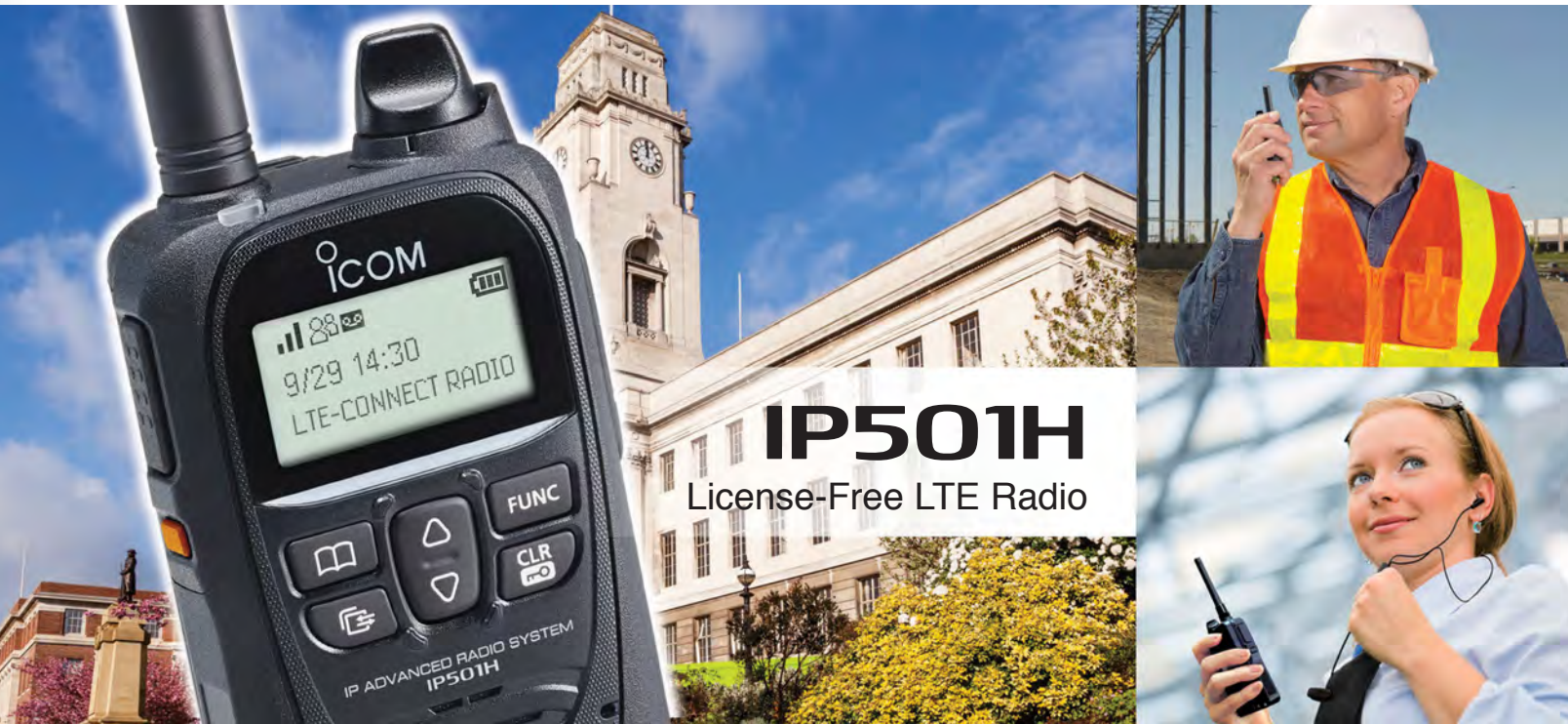
ON THE COVER

Moorhead, Minn., has moved closer to becoming a Greenstep City after purchasing 16,000 recycling bins through a contract awarded by Sourcewell. The new 96-gallon totes, alongside the city's no-sort system, have boosted residents' recycling. Learn more on page 10.



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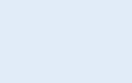
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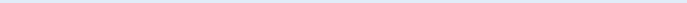
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Meet The Feature Writer

Amanda Demster is a 2008 graduate of Bethel College, now Bethel University, in Mishawaka, Ind. Some of her favorite activities include knitting and crocheting, geocaching, genealogy, kayaking, reading, euchre and mini golf. She enjoys bowling with her Thursday night team, camping and hiking with her friends and participating in activities with her Daughters of the American Revolution

chapter. She and her husband, Chas, make frequent visits to Los Angeles and Chicago for Chas' filming locations website, itsfilmedthere.com. They also love spending time with their family and friends.

A large firework with many red and white sparks is exploding in the dark night sky. Below the firework, a portable barrier made of red vertical poles and a white fabric top is set up on a paved surface. In the background, there are dark silhouettes of trees and a white tent structure.

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Navigating choppy waters



Sarah Wright | Editor

CITIES HAVE BEEN DREAMING big when it comes to energy and water projects, though for many, COVID-19 has halted or temporarily shelved some, with focus shifting to the crisis at hand. It truly adds another layer to the challenges faced by public utilities, which may have already been experiencing operational shortfalls and infrastructure in need of updates or complete overhauls.

Couple the state of infrastructure with the fact residents in most areas of the country are hurting financially and struggling to pay utility bills after having experienced sudden job losses, there is a massive weight on all involved. Acknowledging customers' difficulties, some public utilities have really gone the extra mile to give back to their communities during this crisis.

In Texas, Austin Energy and Austin Water announced they would both be offering reduced electric and water and wastewater bills during the COVID-19 pandemic; it was a move approved by Austin City Council April 9. Each utility also contributed \$5 million to a fund that helps low-income customers with their utility bills. Several other public utilities have offered similar assistance programs and have found an increase in need, such as the case for Spanish Fork, Utah, which highlighted the program to residents looking to make donations to help out others in need at this time.

However, long-term solutions and funding are desperately needed with the U.S.'s overall infrastructure already ranking at a D+ even before this pandemic, and unfortunately, while infrastructure has been broached as a part of future COVID-19 relief packages, one needs a crystal ball to forecast when or even if such funding will jump from the drawing board into reality. Municipalities will have to carry on in the meantime as best as they can, finding their own sources of funding or pursuing creative fixes to get by.

In this issue, we are highlighting some positive water and energy projects and programs cities have completed or are currently undertaking — though some are

experiencing delays or holds in light of the ongoing pandemic.

We lead off with forward-thinking Burlington, Vt., which hopes to realize net zero energy by 2030 — it would be the first U.S. city to claim that title. On a similar energy use reduction mission is Albuquerque, N.M. It has launched the Mayor's Energy Challenge, which will be asking participating businesses to reduce their energy consumption by 20% over the next five years. Finally, Danville, Va., will also be spotlighted in regard to its use of solar energy to revitalize its economy.

On the water side, we are highlighting Naples, Fla.'s, projects, including the construction of aquifer storage and recovery wells, to meet water demands for years to come. Additionally, we will profile the 2019 Berkeley Springs International Water Tasting Gold Medal for Best Municipal Water winner: Eldorado Artesian Springs Inc.

I would like to give a shout-out to Louisville, Ky., which is highlighted on page 46. I may not be a Louisville resident, but its Facebook live Lift Up Lou events have definitely lifted my spirits. Be sure to check them out!

Until next month, stay well and safe everyone. **M**

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Moorhead Public Works crews improve efficiency by picking up no-sort roller carts full of recyclables.



Watch this video to see blue recycling carts turning a city green.



https://sourcewell.co/moorhead_municipal

Sourcewell gives Moorhead boost toward Greenstep City status

Overview

Sustainable. Attainable.

Crews in Moorhead, Minn., are watching recycling “pick up” substantially after rolling out 16,000 no-sort recycling bins. Residents are recycling five times more than they did in 2017 and are helping Moorhead become a GreenStep City. City leaders procured 96-gallon Toter carts and other equipment by using cooperative contracts through their government partner, Sourcewell, which has hundreds of vendors already on contract.



Moorhead residents' recycling increased by 500% with the city's new no-sort recycling carts procured with cooperative purchasing.

Project: Increase recycling

Problem

City leaders in Moorhead wanted to lead sustainability initiatives in the state and ultimately take another step toward being a Greenstep City.

Solution

Moorhead residents are recycling more than ever and moving the city through a statewide sustainability program because of new, no-sort recycling carts. When the city kicked off the revamped curbside recycling program, not only did public participation increase fivefold, but the city also climbed to number three of five steps in the Minnesota GreenStep Cities program.

In July 2017, the city of Moorhead implemented the no-sort system — allowing users to commingle most recyclable items in one bin. To do so, the city purchased 16,000 recycling bins through a contract awarded by Sourcewell.

“When you’re starting a new service, it’s really important to make a great first impression,” said Steve Moore, city of Moorhead

public works director. “And you do that by using quality products that help you provide quality service.”

Moore and the city selected 96-gallon totes for residential recycling and 300-gallon containers or dumpsters for apartments and multifamily housing.

“Whether it’s repairing a street or picking up your garbage or picking up recycling,” Moore noted, “we provide all those services that you use every day in your community.”

Prior to the no-sort recycling method, residents would be asked to separate products into several material-specific containers. Under the new plan, most items — with a few exceptions — could go right into the large bin and wheeled out to the curb every other week for pick up.

The city also created a campaign around its renewed recycling efforts, including a landing page on its website dedicated to frequently asked questions, guides to recycling, ideas to help encourage others to participate, and more.


It wasn’t long before Moorhead began to see its efforts pay off. Moore said the city increased its rate of recycling by 500% — which

he attributes in part to the ease of commingled recycling, as well as the high-quality containers provided to each customer.

Conclusion

“You give them a good product to use and they’re gonna use it,” Moore said.

Nearly three years later, Moore still sings the praises of purchasing from Sourcewell competitively bid and awarded contracts.

“You go to the Sourcewell website and you can say ‘I need this product,’ and then you click on it and you look down there and you find, ‘that’s the one I want; that’s the vendor I want to work with’ and buy them direct,” Moore explained. “And already knowing that we would get the best price because it had been competitively bid already. It really saves time, saves you money. It’s so easy; I can’t stress that enough.” 

Article and photos provided by Sourcewell.

Sourcewell 

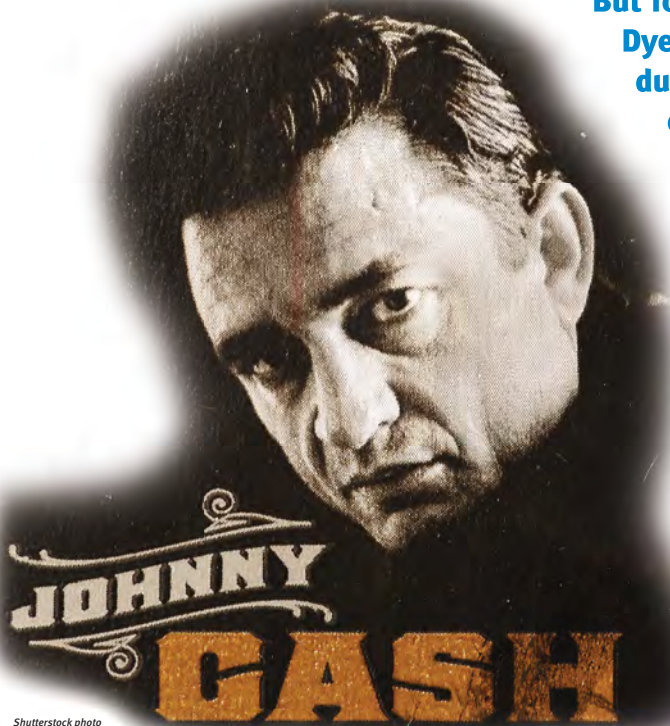


The boyhood home of Johnny Cash, built in the 1930s, was purchased by Arkansas State University and remodeled, opening for public tours Aug. 16, 2014. (Photos are courtesy of Arkansas State University).

Historic Dyess Colony Dyess, Ark.

By RAY BALOGH | The Municipal

But for one of its residents who became world famous, the Dyess Colony in Arkansas might have been relegated to the dust heap of history along with other Depression era government-planned resettlement communities.



The colony, now the town of Dyess, Ark., was founded in 1934 as part of President Franklin Roosevelt's agricultural relief and rehabilitation program for impoverished farmers. One year into the Great Depression, two-thirds of Arkansas's independent farmers had lost their farms, making the state one of the hardest hit by the devastating economic downturn, which was preceded in the state by the Flood of 1927 and then a drought.

Using the state's relief rolls, the federal government hired 1,300 men to construct the settlement, the largest of its kind in the nation.

According to www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net, "The colony was laid out in a wagon wheel design with a community center at the hub and farms stretching out from the middle. The roads leading out were simply numbered rather than named, as in 'Road 14.' The men dug ditches to drain the land and built 500 small farmhouses. Each house had five rooms with an adjacent barn, privy and chicken coop. The houses were whitewashed clapboard, each having two bedrooms, a living room, kitchen and dining room, plus a front and back porch. Apart from



Johnny Cash's eldest daughter, Rosanne, and singer-songwriter Kris Kristofferson take the stage at the annual Johnny Cash Heritage Festival, going into its 10th year. "Rosanne plays a key role in working on the festival and securing talent," said Gina Bowman, director of media relations for Arkansas State University. "Kristofferson, a close friend to Johnny and the Cash family, has attended twice." Proceeds from the festival help fund ongoing restoration projects. (Photo courtesy of Arkansas State University).

these improvements to the land, the colonists were expected to do the rest themselves."

"The rest" included the backbreaking work of cutting trees, blasting stumps and clearing swampland to make way for crops and livestock pastures.

Thousands of economically bludgeoned farm families filled out the six-page application form seeking residence, which included a subsistence advance from the government to purchase 20 to 40 acres of land, one of the homes, a mule and a cow, groceries and supplies. The farmers were expected to repay the advance when they harvested their first year's crops.

The families also received a share of profits from local businesses, such as the general store and cannery. The farms were worked individually, but the rest of the local commerce operated as a cooperative. After three years, the residents received a deed to their house and land.

Ray and Carrie Rivers Cash were selected to participate in the colony. They arrived with their five children — two more were born in the colony — in March 1935. The middle child, J. R., was 3 years old at the time.

J.R. lived in the colony until he graduated as class vice president from Dyess High School in 1950 and later became iconic music legend Johnny Cash.

His boyhood home remains the signal attraction of Dyess, which incorporated as a municipality in 1964. Population of the colony peaked at 2,500 residents in 1936, half of whom left for other work during World War II.

The current population stands at 368. Nevertheless, about 10,000 tourists a year visit Johnny Cash's boyhood home, which was purchased by Arkansas State University in 2011 and restored based on old photographs and reminiscences of the Cash siblings. The Historic Dyess Colony: Boyhood Home of Johnny Cash opened to the public Aug. 16, 2014, and was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2018.

"Most visitors come to see the restored boyhood home of Johnny Cash, and they leave having also experienced the New Deal agricultural colony that helped shape his music," said Adam Long, Ph.D., director of the university's Heritage Sites program, which also maintains and oversees Ernest Hemingway's barn studio, an antebellum plantation, a



A throng of fans crowds next to Johnny Cash's boyhood home to enjoy the 2019 Johnny Cash Heritage Festival concert featuring Grammy Award winner Marty Stuart. Plans for the 2020 festival, held the third weekend in October, are on hold pending resolution of the coronavirus pandemic. (Photo courtesy of Arkansas State University).

Japanese American relocation center and other historical attractions.

"In addition to the Cash home, the federal administration building has been restored for exhibit space and the old colony theater has been transformed into a visitor center," said Long.

"The Dyess Colony is a unique opportunity to see how the history of a region helped to shape a legendary country musician," said Long, who suggested tourists can best prepare for their visit by "taking time to listen to some of the Cash songs inspired by life in the Dyess Colony, such as 'Five Feet High and Rising' or 'Pickin' Time.'"

At the time this article went to press, the attraction was closed "due to the public health emergency," said Long. "We haven't set a reopening date yet. We are following the advice of the local and state health authorities and will reopen when it's safe to do so."

When opened the site will resume its regular schedule, with tours beginning at 9 a.m. Monday through Saturday. The day's last tour will depart at 3 p.m.

Entrance fees, which include admission to all buildings on the site, is \$10 general admission; \$8 per person for seniors and groups of 10 or more; \$5 for students, field trip groups and children from 5 to 18 years of age; and free for children under 5, Arkansas State students and current Dyess residents. **M**

For more information, visit <https://dyesscash.astate.edu>.



Yerington, Nev.

The naming of Yerington, Nev., the only city in the world with that moniker, was motivated by an ultimately unsuccessful bribe.

The area, formerly known as Pizen Switch, Mason Valley and then Greenfield, was subsequently dubbed in honor of Henry M. Yerington, superintendent of the Virginia and Truckee Railroad from 1868 to 1910. He had the authority to determine the route of the Carson and Colorado Railway, and the townspeople created the namesake in 1894 to induce him to aim the railroad in their direction.

The local newspaper at the time, the Mason Valley Tidings, also courted Yerington, publishing the following in an editorial in the Aug. 19, 1893, edition: "H.M. Yerington is at present making a tour of inspection of the C Railroad. We hope Mr. Yerington will visit this valley, that he may meet our solid citizens and discuss the feasibility of extending the railroad into the valley."

The Jan. 4, 1894, issue contended, "If, as many people believe, the C&C Railroad is built into Mason Valley this year — it only skirts the eastern border now — 1894 will see our population and taxable property double."

Unfortunately the railroad never came to the town, but the name stuck.


The progression of names for the area is accompanied by a colorful cocktail of history and folklore.

In 1854 cattle driver N.H.A. "Hock" Mason passed through the valley and returned five years later to settle along the Walker River north of the present city. The post office established in Aug. 6, 1871, and the valley, rich in grazing pasture and fertile for the cultivation of barley, potatoes and grain, were named after him.

About the same time, a settlement along Mason's original cattle trail was colloquially dubbed "The Switch" or Greenfield, the two terms being used interchangeably.

Legend has it the term Pizen Switch originated with an off-hand comment referring to substandard liquor served in one of the community's pair of saloons.

According to www.yerington.net, patrons colloquially called the liquor "poison" but "their accents made it sound like 'pizen.'" The saloon proprietor replenished his whiskey barrel not with new product, but with plugs of chewing tobacco and water.

By 1873 the settlement was developing a character of its own and the inhabitants reasoned a new name was needed to distinguish it from the valley. The informal name of Pizen Switch was discarded and the town was officially christened Greenfield after the sprawling green fields on either side of the main road. The city now boasts a current population of 3,176. 

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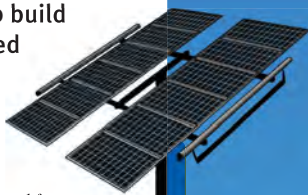
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A new partnership between Iowa City, Iowa, and MidAmerican Energy will see the company lease nearly 19 acres of land at the Waterworks Prairie Park for at least 30 years. This land will be used to build a large-scale solar energy system expected to create 3 megawatts of energy, which is enough power for 580 average homes in Iowa.



Source: <https://www.kcrg.com/content/news/Iowa-City-MidAmerican-Energy-could-team-up-to-create-solar-panel-farm-as-part-of-climate-action-plan-568456441.html>

Focus on: Water and Energy

60%

Burlington, Vt., is aiming to decrease the use of fossil fuel heat sources by this percentage. The city has set a 2030 goal for realizing net zero energy.



Learn more about Burlington's major energy goals on page 18.

2.5 million gallons

Naples, Fla., cut about this many gallons a day off its drinking water use by expanding its reclaimed water system in 2008.



Find out how Naples has addressed its residents' water needs on page 22.

20%

Businesses that participate in the Albuquerque, N.M., Mayor's Energy Challenge commit to reducing their energy consumption by this percentage over the next five years.

Read more about the Mayor's Energy Challenge on page 26.

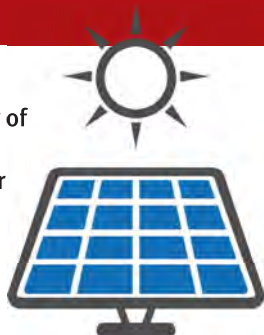
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Eldorado Natural Spring Water has a neutral pH of this amount. Last year, Eldorado Artesian Springs was awarded Berkeley Springs International Water Tasting's Gold Medal for Best Municipal Water in the United States and second best in the world.

Find out what makes this spring water so tasty on page 30.

\$500,000

Danville, Va., saved about this amount in the first year of operation of a solar panel system located on land near a rural school complex.



Discover how solar energy is reshaping Danville on page 34.

\$22,000

The A.B. Jewell Water Treatment Plant in Tulsa, Okla., saved this amount on its energy bill by upgrading 350 lights to LEDs.



Source: <https://www.waterworld.com/water-utility-management/energy-management/article/14092778/city-of-tulsa-water-plant-saves-energy-with-switch-to-led-lighting>



Vermont city aiming for net zero by 2030

Burlington, Vt., created a Net Zero Energy Road Map, which outlines steps toward the city's 2030 net zero energy goal. Pictured is Burlington City Hall at the intersection of Church and Main streets. (Shutterstock.com)

By **AMANDA DEMSTER** | The Municipal

When it comes to net zero energy, the city of Burlington, Vt., holds the road map to success.

Sept. 9, 2019, Burlington Mayor Miro Weinberger, in conjunction with the Burlington Electric Department, released the Net Zero Energy Road Map, which outlines steps toward the city's net zero energy by 2030 goal.

"I know that many Burlingtonians believe, as I do, that we are in a climate emergency and, at the same time, that it can feel tough to know how to respond to the scale of this problem," Weinberger said in a September 2019 press release. "With this road map in hand, we now have clear next steps for what we can do to respond at the local level to this global crisis."

Energy efficiency is not new for Burlington. As early as the 1990s, the city was looking at ways to reduce its carbon footprint. Then, in 2014, BED purchased the Winooski One Hydroelectric Facility, making Burlington

the first city in the U.S. to generate all of its electricity from renewable sources.

Two years later, Weinberger announced the goal of making Burlington the nation's first net zero city by 2030 across three sectors: electric, thermal and ground transportation.

"This is a big goal," Weinberger said in a statement released in October 2019. "But our community has accomplished big climate and energy goals before."

Taking the reins of this project, BED contracted with Synapse Energy Economics and its partner firm, Resource System Groups, to create a report that would show what a net zero Burlington could look like, outlining the steps needed to get there. Thus, the Net Zero Energy Road Map was born.

A major key to attaining net zero status is reducing, if not eliminating, use of fossil

fuels throughout Burlington. The road map identifies four key pathways along this route: efficient electric buildings, electric vehicles, a district energy system and alternative transportation, then lays out strategies for implementing these changes.

"This report tells us what a largely decarbonized Burlington by 2030 would look like," Weinberger noted in the release.

These pathways were developed through use of analysis tools using various scenarios in order to find the ones that best fit what Burlington hopes to achieve. Even now, the city is working on making these goals a reality.

Electric buildings are the first pathway. The main goal in this area is to replace furnaces with ducted heat pumps and boilers with ductless heat pumps. According to the September news release, the goal is to decrease the use of fossil fuel heat sources by 60%.

Simply electrifying a building's heating is not enough, however. That building must

also be able to retain heat, demanding less energy use. Many of Burlington's structures are old, requiring upgrades to make them more efficient. This presents another challenge, in that a number of these buildings fall under historic preservation guidelines.

The historic and the modern do not necessarily have to clash, however, and the city is looking at ways to make the buildings more efficient while maintaining their historic integrity.

Despite Burlington's passion for going net zero, the road map acknowledges that some homeowners may struggle with the cost of replacing their space and water heating systems, especially if those systems have not reached the end of their useful life.

Because of this, BED and Vermont Gas Systems created the Net Zero Homes program, offering incentives to both residential and commercial customers who switch to energy-efficient heat pumps and heat pump water heaters. Higher dollar amounts are available for low-to-moderate income households making the switch.

Other programs and incentives for net zero buildings are outlined within the road map.

The second pathway is electrifying transportation, with a focus on light-duty vehicles, school buses and transit. Ideally, the percentage of new electric vehicle purchases will reach 90% by 2024. This means replacing as many as 10,000 gasoline-powered, light-duty vehicles even before the end of their useful life span.

The goal for this pathway is to reduce the city's total fossil fuel use by 20%. It was noted in the September 2019 news release that this applies to residents' vehicles only, and not to those who commute to Burlington for work or recreation.

Like upgrading a building, replacing one's vehicle can be costly. To encourage Burlington residents to make the switch, BED has announced new electric vehicle and plug-in hybrid electric vehicle incentives, in addition to ones that already existed. BED also plans to expand public charging stations throughout the city.

District energy is the third pathway identified. This will apply mostly to Burlington's larger, more difficult-to-heat structures and could account for up to 15% of the city's fossil fuel reductions. Again, the assumption is these buildings will have undergone significant weatherization upgrades.

Plans for this area work on the assumption that Burlington will use a two-phase model, with phase one set for 2021, followed by expansion in 2024.

Phase one involves capturing waste heat from the city's McNeil Generating Station and supplementing it with renewable natural gas. Phase two includes biogas and waste heat captured from the city's wastewater treatment plant.

The fourth pathway is similar to the second and, in a way, builds on it. This final pathway calls for changes in travel modes, including implementation of alternative transportation, such as cycling and walking and greater investment in public transit.

It also suggests that travel price signals, such as higher fuel costs, vehicle travel charges and increased parking fees and costs could help. Demand management changes could also help, including increased investment in programs such as ride sharing, van pooling, telecommuting, parking buyout and transit subsidies.

Shifting population and employment growth to more densely developed area was also suggested within the road map.



The second pathway is electrifying transportation, with a focus on light-duty vehicles, school buses and transit. As part of this pathway, Green Mountain Transit is adding electric-powered transit buses to its fleet. Pictured is a non-electric Green Mountain Transit bus in the waterfront district. (jenlo7/Shutterstock.com)



As early as the 1990s, Burlington, Vt., has sought ways to reduce its carbon footprint. Now it is pursuing a road map toward net zero energy. (Rob Crandall/Shutterstock.com)

While all of the above may seem ambitious, Weinberger, BED and other Burlington entities have no doubt it is doable.

"We now know that it really is possible for Burlington to largely decarbonize the heating and ground transportation sectors by 2030 – and this report makes it more clear than ever that achieving this goal will take actions by all of us," Weinberger said in the September 2019 press release.

In his October 2019 statement, Weinberger called on everyone in Burlington to do his or her part in working toward this goal.

"My ask for all Burlingtonians is that, starting today, you consider efficiency and electrification every time you're making a decision about your homes, businesses and cars," he said.

To view a PDF version of the Burlington Net Zero Road Map, visit burlingtonelectric.com/NZE. 



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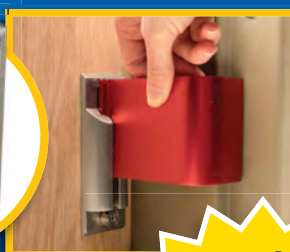
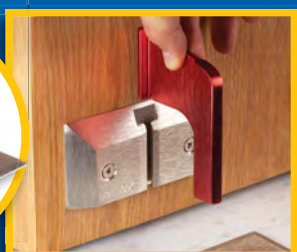
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Naples' journey to maximize its use of reclaimed water



By ANDREW MENTOCK | The Municipal

While water is often taken for granted by the average consumer, members of public works departments know the immense value water has to a community and there is a finite amount available in a given year.

For decades, municipalities have increased their water supply by utilizing reclaimed water, which is wastewater treated and converted into water that can be used for certain purposes, such as irrigation, construction and replenishing groundwater.

The city of Naples, Fla., first introduced reclaimed water to its community more than three decades ago.

"We became a reclaimed water utility," Bob Middleton, the utilities director for the city of Naples, said. "We installed our first reclaimed water distribution transmission mains in 1988. That line went to 10 golf courses within the city of Naples' utility service area. The thing about those golf courses, they're on a long strip of road called Goodlett Road, and

there's kind of one right after another, so it was easy to run mains to them to get them on reclaimed water instead of competing with the city on groundwater, which is what we use for drinking water."

But for a period of time, those golf courses didn't use the reclaimed water because there wasn't any incentive to do so. To combat this, the South Florida Water Management District stepped in five or six years later and told the golf course they would no longer be issued irrigation permits if they didn't use a certain amount of reclaimed water each year.

But nearly a decade ago, Naples and the state of Florida realized that the city still wasn't using enough reclaimed water

ABOVE: At one point too much of Naples, Fla.'s, excess reclaimed water was being put into the Gordon River. To make the most of its reclaimed water, Naples expanded its reclaimed water program to residential areas in the Port Royal area in 2008 and then constructed three aquifer storage and recovery wells, which started construction in 2012 and were finished around 2017. Pictured is the Gordon River Greenway Park in Naples. (Shutterstock.com)

because too much excess of it was being put into the Gordon River.

"We came up with several different plans that really never took hold until 2006," Middleton said. "We started expanding the reclaimed water to residential areas in the Port Royal area specifically, which is in the southern part of our water distribution district. Those are luxury homes with huge lots and they used a lot of water for irrigation.

"In 2006, we began that construction; in 2008, we completed it. We cut about 2.5

million gallons a day off of the drinking water side and applied it to the reclaimed water. That was a big savings.”

But Naples didn’t want to stop there. It hired a private consulting company to create an integrated water resources plan, which it began construction on in 2012.

A big part of the plan was, after expanding its reclaimed water use, finding a way to make sure Naples had an adequate supply year-round. For most of the year, the city can pull extra water from an area canal, but for a few months a year, that dries up.

“We know that two months out of every year, we’re going to be in drought,” Middleton said. “It’s just the dry season and that happens between March, April, May and June of every year; and typically, over a 50-year period, (the dry season) has been two months. We had to come up with a method to have water resources available during the dry season. We constructed three aquifer storage and recovery wells that are about 1,000 feet deep.


“During the wet season, when we have plenty of reclaimed water, we’re putting that water down in those storage wells.”

The project was completed in about five years, and now Naples is filling in the areas where the additional water mains were installed.

Overall, the city has seen immense benefits to its drinking water and the longevity of its water treatment plant.

To help pay for the project, the city of Naples received some grants and also slightly raised the bimonthly utility bills for residents and golf courses.

“Where we are right now we are cutting about 4 1/2 million gallons a day off of the drinking water system and putting it on the reclaimed water system,” Middleton said. “What that does for us is it extends the life of our current water treatment plant and the water supply, which is the Lower Tamiami Aquifer. It extends it indefinitely, in my opinion, because before we installed reclaimed water to residential areas, 70% of the water we produced at the water treatment plant went on the ground for irrigation.

“Our potable consumption was about 370 gallons per person per day. Now it’s under 200 gallons per person per day. That saves the resource. We’re not pulling that freshwater out of the ground at that rate anymore for drinking water. We’re able to save that water resource.” 



Naples, Fla.’s, golf courses were the first to receive reclaimed water for their irrigation needs. Through this and expanding its reclaimed water to residential areas in 2008, the city has saved roughly 2.5 million gallons of treated drinking water a day. (Shutterstock.com)



With its aquifer storage and recovery wells, Naples, Fla., aims to meet its future water needs. Pictured is Naples’ skyline on the water at dusk. (Shutterstock.com)

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Albuquerque, N.M., is focusing on reducing energy consumption by 65% by 2025. As part of that initiative, the city has launched the Mayor's Energy Challenge, which provides resources to local businesses to lower energy use. (Shutterstock.com)

Albuquerque, N.M.:

Leading the fight across climate change, one business at a time

By LAUREN CAGGIANO | The Municipal

Small businesses are the engines of the economy, and collectively, they have the power to make a great difference beyond economic returns.

That's why the city of Albuquerque, N.M., has kicked off the Albuquerque Mayor's Energy Challenge program, an initiative designed to incentivize and support local businesses in their efforts to reduce energy consumption. In exchange for committing to reduce their energy consumption, businesses are armed with tailored technical support and education on the best ways to reduce the carbon footprint of their operations.

Dr. Sydney Lienemann, the city's climate advisor, explained how this program came to fruition.





ABOVE: Albuquerque Mayor Tim Keller speaks at the first on-site workshop at the end of March. (Photo provided)

In January 2019, Albuquerque was announced as one of the winners of the American Cities Climate Challenge, a Bloomberg Philanthropies-funded initiative whereby the organization selected 25 cities that are taking major strides to address climate change and provided technical assistance as well as in-kind support and opportunities for peer-to-peer mentorship with other cities.

One of the resources it provided was an on-site climate advisor for the length of the grant. Lienemann serves in that capacity for a two-year period to help the city carry out the determined goals. Speaking of objectives, Lienemann said the city set forth six deliverables to take what she calls “bold and innovative actions on climate issues.” Among the priorities was outreach to small- and medium-sized businesses, because they usually are the most in need of such resources and don’t usually have the budgets that larger organizations do.

“Very often small businesses don’t necessarily have the resources or the bandwidth to be going out and looking for opportunities to save money on energy efficiency,” she said. “And so that was why small businesses were the focus for these particular programs. It’s

also an area of particular passion for Mayor (Tim) Keller and his administration.”

Lienemann said Albuquerque launched its program in December 2019 and have since been recruiting partner businesses. It had its first on-site workshop at the end of March and recruited 20 small- and medium-sized businesses, as well as a couple of nonprofits to participate.

“We’ve had a huge variety of businesses sign on to participate, which is really cool,” she said. “We have a brewery, a company that does eco-friendly home cleaning, a couple of churches, construction companies and an architecture firm, a bed-and-breakfast and other types of organizations.”

As Lienemann explained, the variety challenged Albuquerque to custom tailor its approach. For example, a restaurant would use energy differently than a cleaning service and, therefore, would require a different strategy. Taking this into account, she said the city has been able to create “mini cohorts” within the larger groups so the hospitality businesses can learn from the office-based ones and vice versa. She said it’s been fun to help them formulate their energy plans and she looks forward to assisting more partner

organizations going forward. Albuquerque is planning to on-board a second cohort, but the timing will likely be adjusted due to the pandemic.

Regardless of the timing, Lienemann said the response from the business community so far has been positive. In her opinion, it’s because the program “makes sense” on several levels.

“This city of Albuquerque really is looking to diversify the economy and support small businesses and they really are the lifeblood of the economy here and employ a lot of people,” she said. “And so, energy efficiency just really makes sense from a business perspective. And, you know, if you’re just a couple of people in the business, you just don’t have the time to be focusing on what resources are available to reduce energy consumption, which ultimately means reducing how much you’re spending on utility bills and (increasing) how much you can reinvest in your business.” ▶

Lienemann said it's all about helping businesses adopt energy-efficiency upgrades. In her words, the city is focusing on "low-hanging fruit" initially. Factors like weather stripping, new windows and insulation and even upgrading to more efficient light bulbs can make a huge impact on bills. These are the means to the end — businesses that participate make the commitment to reduce their energy consumption by 20% over the next five years.

And those businesses are backed by the city's larger goals. Lienemann said Albuquerque has made a lot of progress around energy efficiency, and it's a focus of the current mayoral administration.


"It makes great fiscal sense to reduce our carbon emissions while also saving the taxpayer money," she said. "This fits in by allowing us to share some of the best practices and the tools that we, as a municipality, have employed to reduce our own energy consumption with the private sector. So, through the American Cities Climate Challenge, we have access to a lot of experts who have great ideas about how to reduce energy consumption, both for municipalities and also for the private sector. And we really wanted to make sure that everyone in the city of Albuquerque was able to benefit from that."

For example, Mayor Keller has made the pledge to meet emissions targets under the Paris Climate Accord, as well as reducing energy consumption by 65% by 2025.

"All of these pieces come together to more broadly meet those goals," she said.



The city recruited 20 small- and medium-sized businesses, as well as a couple of nonprofits, to participate in the on-site workshop. (Photo provided)

To learn more about the Mayor's Energy Challenge, visit <https://www.cabq.gov/sustainability/mayors-energy-challenge>. 

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Testing and tasting the best water worldwide



A scenic photo of a canyon and blue sky in Eldorado Springs, Colo. (Photo provided by Jeremy Martin)

By **BARB SIEMINSKI** | The Municipal

“Water, water everywhere nor any drop to drink” are perhaps the most quoted words from English poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge’s immortal “Rime of the Ancient Mariner.”

This precious life-giving liquid is essential to our health and well-being — so much so that 30 years ago, West Virginia created a global entity that began holding annual competitions to see which area had the best water. Entries were based on taste, odor, mouth feel and aftertaste.

Last year’s winner of the prestigious Berkeley Springs International Water Tasting 2019

Gold Medal for Best Municipal Water in the United States and second best in the world was Colorado’s Eldorado Artesian Springs Inc.

Eldorado Springs is an unincorporated city in Boulder County and is about 10 miles from the city of Boulder.

Jeremy Martin, executive vice president of Eldorado Artesian Springs, shared that his

town had placed first last year out of 112 water entries worldwide, adding the town had also won the Gold Medal in 2016.

“We did not place this year,” said Martin. “The difference between winning and losing can be a matter of the judges giving you one or two points less in any one of their taste criteria. Berkeley Springs International Water Tasting gets lots of entries from all over the world competing in the municipal water category, all with great tasting water. So we feel fortunate with such competition to have won the Gold Medal in both 2016 and 2019 and silver and bronze throughout the last 11 years.”



Pictured, from left, are Doug Larson, CEO; Cathy Shoenfeld, chief financial officer; Kate Janssen-Krejsa, chief business development officer; and Jeremy Martin, executive vice president, all of whom are co-owners of Eldorado Artesian Springs Inc. Together, they have over 150 years of collective expertise in the bottled water industry. (Photo provided by Jeremy Martin)



Eldorado Artesian Springs Inc. received the 2019 Gold Medal for Best Municipal Water in the United States at the Berkeley Springs International Water Tasting event. (Photo provided by Jeremy Martin)

In addition to Best Municipal Water — tap water — the 2019 competition included categories in Best Bottled Water, Best Sparkling, Best Purified Drinking Water, Best Flavored Essence Sparkling and a people's choice category for Best Packaging.

Asked if his water was sold in stores nationwide, Martin said no.

"We are regional water branded under Eldorado Natural Spring Water and sell to the Rocky Mountain region only," explained Martin. "Eldorado is an artesian spring, which means that the groundwater is under enough pressure to rise naturally to the surface usually coming from a deep source. Ordinary springs are where groundwater rises to the surface, but not necessarily under any pressure."

Eldorado Springs comes from a small aquifer below the rock formation in Eldorado Canyon, which is just 22 miles away from the Continental Divide.

This spring water originates as rain and snow just east of the Continental Divide. From there,

it enters an aquifer that passes deep beneath Eldorado Springs. When coming to the surface, the natural artesian spring pressure forces the water through a layer of sandstone, creating a natural filtering system. Protecting the source from all other groundwaters is a thick layer of clay just above the sandstone that is impervious to groundwater. Contributing further to the purity of Eldorado Springs is the fact that it is surrounded by hundreds of acres of local, state and federal park land. Eldorado Springs also remains a constant 76 degree Fahrenheit year-round and maintains a constant flow.


The water is regularly inspected by the Food and Drug Administration, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, which is usually accompanied by the Boulder County Health Department and the Department of the Army for military food sales.

"Eldorado Natural Spring Water flows through sandstone, which gives it a pure smooth taste," Martin said. "It has a neutral pH of 7.2, which doesn't impart a bitter or

sour taste like acidic water. Eldorado has only 80 total dissolved solids, which gives it a light taste unlike mineral waters."

All of these factors contribute to water renowned as one of the purest natural springs in the world and judged to be the best-tasting water in North America. The water is not chemically treated in any way.

Founded in 1983, Eldorado Artesian Springs Inc. purchased many of the Eldorado Springs Resort Properties, including 40 acres of land, the springs, water rights, bottling plant, ballroom and historic spring-fed pool. Over the years, operations expanded to include products such as single-serve bottled water, custom water labels for events and even organic vitamin spring water. It also became the first water bottle company in the U.S. to use 100% recycled plastics in 2010.

This year's winner of the Berkeley Springs International Water Tasting Gold Medal for Best Municipal Water was Mission Springs Water District from Desert Hot Springs, Calif. 

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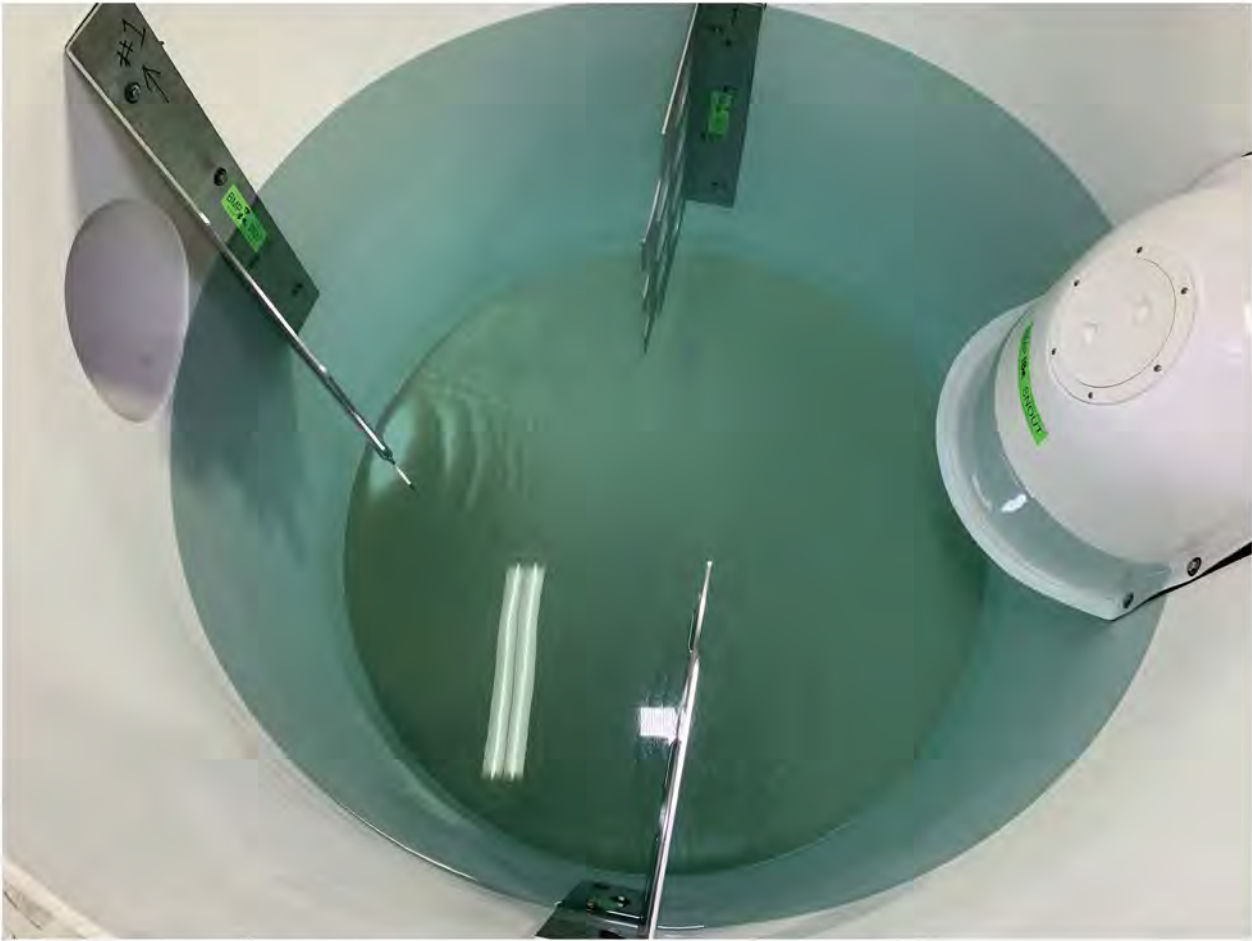
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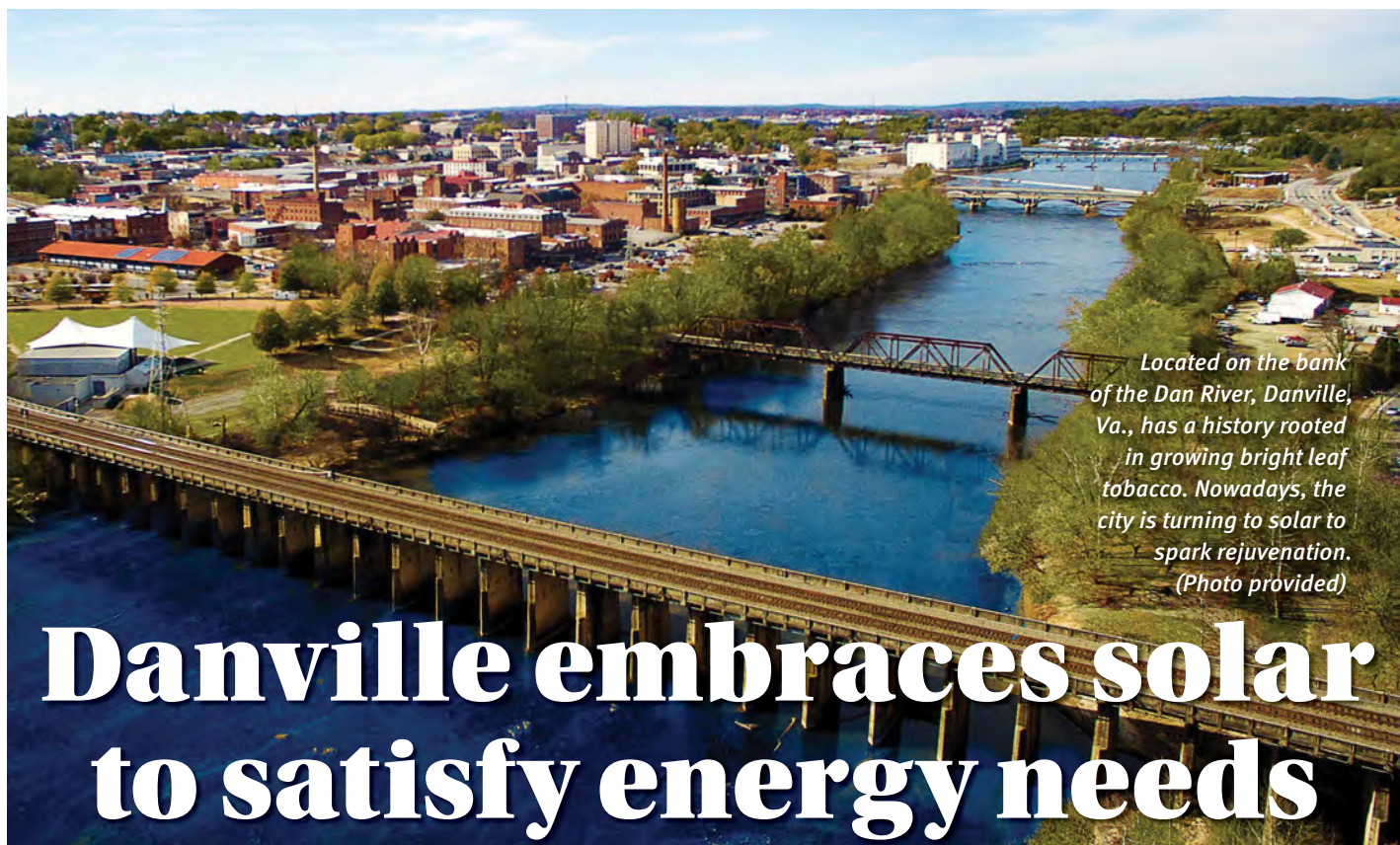
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Located on the bank of the Dan River, Danville, Va., has a history rooted in growing bright leaf tobacco. Nowadays, the city is turning to solar to spark rejuvenation. (Photo provided)

Danville embraces solar to satisfy energy needs

By JANET PATTERSON | The Municipal

While tobacco and textiles may have built Danville, Va., into a thriving metropolis in the south central part of the state, solar energy is sparking the city's revival.

Danville, located in Pittsylvania County, was founded in 1793 on the bank of the Dan River. The rich soil made it perfect for growing bright leaf tobacco, and Danville became known as "The World's Best Tobacco Market."

Danville blossomed in the 19th century with the establishment of the Richmond and Danville Railroad.

In 1882 Riverside Cotton Mills and the boom times of Danville continued. Later known as Dan River Cotton Mills, in the early part of the 20th century, the textile mill produced cotton fabric for clothing and bed linens, and employed as many as 14,000 people. The company took advantage of the hydropower generated by the Dan River.

The 21st century, however, has not been as kind to Danville. The decline of tobacco

and the bankruptcy of the Dan River Cotton Mills in 2004 hit the area hard. The town's unemployment rate climbed to 15% by 2009. Today, Danville is retooling its economy with the help of renewable energy sources.

Danville's first solar farm came online in March 2018, and the harvesting of solar energy continues to grow with two more farms opening this summer.

The city began its progress toward solar energy in 2016 when it asked for proposals for energy capacity resources, according to Jason Grey, Danville's director of utilities.

"We were not set on one type of generation, but received several solar and natural gas responses," Grey said the solar proposals were most appealing to the city because of the low cost and the 30% federal investment tax credit that developers would reap.

After years of purchasing power from third-party electricity providers, the city decided in 2007 to invest in assets like the solar farms.

Pittsylvania County is ripe territory for solar farm developers Grey said. There is ample farmland, and the county is Virginia's largest by landmass with 969 square miles.

Capital investments and private developers have helped revive downtown Danville by converting tobacco warehouses and other historic buildings to breweries, retail spaces and apartments. Tech businesses are finding their way to this historic city of 40,000 residents on Virginia's border with North Carolina.

"There are several industrial customers who inquire about our power supply mix," Grey said of companies that have considered relocating there. "Solar has assisted the city in competing with other economic development projects by offering a lower cost of electric supply."

The solar farms join the mix of energy resources that power Danville. "The solar



Pictured is the Kentucky Solar Farm. According to the Star-Tribune, the farm's construction was a \$10 million investment. (Photo provided)

resources will be blended into our coal, natural gas and hydro resources.”

From the time of the decision to go solar, Grey said the engineering and permitting process took about a year and construction took another six months.

The 6-megawatt system currently in use is supplied by 2,300 solar panels located on land near a rural school complex. Grey said in its first year of operation, the electricity generated from the solar farm has saved Danville about \$500,000. The city-owned Danville Utilities manages electricity, natural gas, water, wastewater treatment and broadband internet for 42,000 customers in the area.

Two more solar farms are set to go online this summer. “We have had some delays because of solar panel manufacturing in China due to COVID-19 and weather delays,” Grey said.

The city of Danville does not own the solar farms but has agreements to purchase all of the energy, capacity and renewable energy credits from the projects. Danville has partnered with Denver-based Turning Point Energy in the development of the farms.

“The solar farms will be our lowest cost of electric supply and will assist us in lowering our summer peak demand,” Grey added. Once all three solar farms are online, Danville will generate 22 megawatts of solar power, which is enough for 3,300 homes.

The projects have created more than 100 jobs with the employment of consultants, engineers and construction workers.

Grey said the city is open to the possibility of adding solar capacity in the future. “It would depend on if our electric load grew any by additional economic development announcements. Right now our energy needs are met for the foreseeable future.”



Capital investments and private developers have helped revive downtown Danville by converting tobacco warehouses and other historic buildings to breweries, retail spaces and apartments. (Photo provided)

He said the city has “a very robust energy efficiency residential and commercial and industrial program that provides incentives to customers who make energy upgrades.”

Unlike some areas of the country where there has been resistance to the development of solar farms, Danville residents have welcomed the new lower cost renewable energy resource, according to Grey.

Looking ahead, he said the city will “be looking at battery storage in the next one to two years to see how that technology has evolved and whether it is advantageous for us to pursue.”

Virginia’s Gov. Ralph Northam signed an executive order in September 2019 setting a goal of having 30% of Virginia’s electricity come from renewable sources by 2030 and 100% by 2050. Only slightly more than 1% of Virginia’s electricity is generated from solar power now. M



Making it count:

Tom Sanders of Moberly, Mo., named Public Works Leader of the Year

By JULIE YOUNG | The Municipal

Tom Sanders said one of the things he enjoys most about being the director of public works for the city of Moberly, Mo., is the diversity his job brings.

"I run across something different every day," he said. "A large portion of my time is spent identifying needs in the areas I work in (and) trying to find the solutions and funding to address them."

Sanders' ability to find funding for his various municipal projects over the past 26 years is one of the reasons he was named Public Works Leader of the Year by the Missouri Chapter of the American Public Works Association in December 2019.

"I think the total is north of \$16 million now," he said.

Not what he intended

After graduating with a Bachelor of Science in geology from Central Missouri State University, Sanders worked with a testing firm that had him working with the drill rig, putting in a monitoring well, test boring for construction and providing numerous other types of testing and oversight. This position gave him exposure to a variety of construction sites, including buildings, parking lots, roads and more. In February 1991, he worked with Stevens & Associates conducting environmental audits and

LEFT: Missouri Gov. Mike Parson visited Moberly, Mo., in January to announce the city had been awarded a \$200,000 community development block grant to demolish 65 neglected houses. Pictured in front, from left, are Councilman Tim Brubaker, Mayor Jerry Jeffrey, Community Development and Public Works Director Tom Sanders, Parson, District 18 Senator Cindy O'Laughlin, Councilman Cole Davis and Councilman Austin Kyser. In back, from left, are City Manager Brian Crane, State Rep. Tim Remole and Councilman John Kimmons. (Photo provided)

RIGHT: City officials pose with a \$405,075 rebate from Ameren Missouri for Moberly's efforts in installing solar panels on city buildings and properties, including city hall, Omar Bradley Regional Airport, the Moberly Aquatic Center and Heritage Hills Golf Course. Tom Sanders is second from the right. (Photo provided)



Tom Sanders, center, cuts the ribbon for the city of Moberly's solar agreement with Ameren Missouri, for which it received a rebate in August 2019. (Photo provided)

then spent two years with Jacobs Engineering, which served as contract oversight managers on a number of cleanup projects in the Midwest.

"The experience with these companies gave me the background I needed to get in with the city," he said.

When Moberly had to transition to a subtitle D type landfill for its municipal waste, the city did not have anyone on staff who was familiar with that kind of setup nor the applicable Environmental Protection Agency regulations and had to use outside consultants to address the related issues. In 1994, the community development director position came open, and Sanders was hired to not only handle that role, but take over landfill operations as well.

As community development director, Sanders was in charge of planning and zoning, grants, building inspection, code enforcement and new construction projects in addition to the landfill. Eight years later, the public works director position came open, and because he had worked so closely with that department in his other role, Sanders knew it wouldn't be a stretch to learn more in order to include the airport, cemetery, fleet maintenance and street department to his job description.

"It wasn't really where I intended to go. I just worked into it," he said.

Realizing the vision

Of course the goal of any public works department is to provide the community with the various services required by the people who live, work and do business there. Whether he is revitalizing or removing deteriorated housing in the city; performing routine roadway maintenance; creating new sidewalks to get students safely to and from school; or connecting bridges and trails for alternative modes of transportation, Sanders said he loves seeing the successful completion of every large project.

"To visualize something, work through the needs, design, funding, construction and watch it materialize as something that will provide service to the public is the most exciting thing about my job," he said.

Sanders is particularly proud of the trail master plan that he helped create in the late '90s that set up a phased approach to connect their school complex, downtown area and parks system. He also worked with several companies to close out their landfill at no cost to the city.

"The costs to operate under the new regulations were not feasible for a small volume city like we had and there was no reserve set aside for the closure," he said. "As part of this, we implemented volume-based trash pricing and curbside commingled recycling. Trash rates were going up

to the point where it made sense for people to pay for the volume that they use rather than everyone paying the average. It was a tough sell, but it worked out well."

He was also responsible for the Omar Bradley Airport upgrades, another phased approach that reconstructed a runway, added new LED lights, remodeled office spaces and constructed a new 12-unit T-hangar building.

"We were able to get outside funding to pay for 90-95% of the project," he said.

Always more to do

Naturally, there is always more to do, and Sanders' future goals include updating several of their documents, including zoning regulations and subdivision regulations; improving Moberly's street rating system with a LIDAR scanning system; and more. Sanders said there are challenges with every project, but his main two challenges involve funding and staffing.

Sanders said the latter has everything to do with the former and he is constantly looking for ways to encourage kids to consider working for the city.

"The street department, water department, wastewater (and) code enforcement are important positions, but cities are struggling to increase the pay to stay competitive," he said. "And while most kids are aware of the police and fire departments, it's tough to recruit for these positions as well." **M**

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‘Brother, can you spare a dime?’

How cities are handling panhandling laws

By DENISE FEDOROW | The Municipal

People asking for money on the streets of cities and towns goes way back. Some reports state the term “panhandling” seemingly originated in the ‘30s when people from the Oklahoma/Texas panhandle migrated to California to escape the Dust Bowl, often with nothing left to their name. And apparently, according to the Supreme Court, panhandling is a protected right under the First Amendment and is considered a form of free speech.

Many cities and towns have ordinances prohibiting panhandling. Some like Hot Springs, Ark., and Pompano Beach, Fla., have had those ordinances challenged in court. So what’s a municipality to do when it is concerned about the safety and well-being of its residents?

Several city and town officials share what they’ve done and how their approaches are working.

Grand Island, N.Y.

After complaints by citizens, Grand Island’s town council enacted an ordinance against aggressive panhandling earlier this year. Town Supervisor John Whitney said Grand Island can’t prohibit panhandling, “It’s a protected right,” but limiting the manner in which and where it’s done is what the town’s ordinance prohibits.

“They can’t come up to you at an ATM or a bank, can’t come up to you in front of stores or in an aggressive manner,” Whitney explained.

Grand Island had citizens reporting that they were approached and felt threatened.

“They were saying, ‘I’m afraid,’” Whitney recalled. So the town held a public meeting and many people showed up and asked town officials to do something about it.

“Some had physical encounters,” he reported.

Grand Island modeled its ordinance after similar ordinances in Buffalo and Rochester, N.Y., where aggressive panhandling laws have held up against legal challenges. Grand Island is close to nearby Niagara, N.Y.

Whitney admitted the law could be fairly hard to enforce because by the time police are summoned the perpetrators have likely left, but Grand Island has had a “marked drop-off in complaints subsequent to the ordinance being enacted.” Therefore, he feels having the ordinance in place has met with some success.



Banks, like this one in Grand Island, N.Y., are locations where several aggressive panhandling ordinances prohibit panhandling. (Photo provided)



Coral Springs, Fla., has an ordinance against soliciting of any kind in the city's major intersections. Pictured is Coral Springs City Hall. (Photo provided by the city of Coral Springs)

When asked about any disadvantages to the ordinance, he responded, "I suppose if it was challenged, it would cost money to the courts, but we've tried hard not to infringe on rights while trying to protect regular citizens as well as those panhandling — as long as it's done in a civil manner."

Whitney said municipalities will have to examine the needs of their individual communities. What would apply to a small bedroom community like Grand Island wouldn't necessarily work in a large municipality.

But at least in Grand Island the problems residents were experiencing "seem to have abated."

Coral Springs, Fla.

Coral Springs' ordinance is not a panhandling ordinance per se — it, instead, prohibits any kind of solicitation at 15 major intersections.

Coral Springs Media Relations Coordinator Alessandra Assenza said she spoke to members of the police department about the city's ordinance. The police told her their priority is to protect residents, visitors and workers. The ordinance, which was adopted in 2013, "prohibits right of way solicitation not specific to panhandling on certain major streets."

Assenza said the police used "a data-based methodology" and focused on major intersections they considered most dangerous. The city did extensive research that proved which intersections were the most dangerous.

Initially, 25 major intersections were examined but only 15 were included in the ordinance.

The Coral Springs ordinance states there should be no approach of vehicles at these intersections or within 200 feet of the lateral curb for the purpose of fundraising, advertising or solicitation. Assenza gave an example of a group holding a car wash and said its members couldn't approach the vehicles for the purpose of cleaning their windows, handing out a coupon or seeking a donation.

If an individual or individuals are soliciting on the sidewalk, a vehicle has to pull off the road and park to pay for an item or make a donation. Assenza said the 200-foot restriction came from research about the distance needed for a vehicle to safely stop without hitting a person or tree.

She said the ordinance was initiated by a commissioner who reported that someone had stepped off the curb into the intersection and he almost lost control trying to avoid hitting them. So the intent of the ordinance was "to significantly lower the threat and increase public safety on major roads."

While Coral Springs' ordinance isn't specifically because of or to deter panhandling, it applies to panhandlers as well. Violators of this rights-of-way solicitation ordinance could be subject to a \$150 fine.

Assenza related this advice from the police who told her, "We'd recommend a complete



Perryville, Mo., feels the aggressive panhandling ordinance it enacted earlier this year would stand up if challenged in court. Pictured is an aerial view of downtown Perryville. (Photo provided)

analysis of the area and area roadways and base (actions) on the data you find."

If someone questions the reason for the ordinance, Assenza added, "We have actual proof — tangible data — they can go in and see."

Perryville, Mo.

The city of Perryville also just enacted an ordinance against aggressive panhandling at the start of the year, but in Perryville's case, it decided to be proactive rather than because it was experiencing a panhandling problem.

"We wanted to get ahead of the situation," said City Administrator Brent Buerck. "I believe part of our job is to monitor and observe what's happening in ►



The Perry Park Center in Perryville, Mo., is home to an aquatics center, performing arts center, Perryville branch of the Riverside Regional Library, parks department and more. (Photo provided)

other communities because it's probably going to happen to all of us eventually."

Buerck was aware of what's been happening in other communities and had experienced aggressive panhandling when visiting other more metropolitan areas. His philosophy is "if we wait until we have a problem to solve a problem, that doesn't really work for us."

When developing the ordinance, he said, "We walked a fine line — we didn't prohibit panhandling while making it safe for the citizens of Perryville but also for the panhandlers."

Some actions prohibited in the ordinance, as it defines aggressive panhandling, include panhandlers can't threaten with bodily harm or the threat of criminal activity; can't persist in asking after being told no; can't block passage; can't touch a person; or can't render any service to a vehicle without first getting the consent of the owner-operator.

It also restricts locations where panhandling can occur such as not within 50 feet of an ATM or bank entrance; within 30 feet of the entrance and exit of any commercial establishment; at any sidewalk cafe; within 50 feet of any school; at bus, train or cab stops; within 20 feet of a crosswalk; and within any municipal-owned building, park, golf course or playground.

Panhandling is also prohibited before 7 a.m. and after 8 p.m. Buerck believes the city needed to be proactive and have an ordinance already in place when needed so "it doesn't look like it's in response to someone or something."

He said if the city is acting in response to an event, it could get the city caught into age, sex, race or religion challenges.

"If it becomes about a specific individual, it's harder — doing it beforehand doesn't give credence to any of those things."

Buerck feels Perryville is just exhibiting "good proactive city government."

"It's a common sense approach where citizens can still feel safe but also didn't absolutely prohibit panhandling, which wouldn't sustain a challenge," he said.

Buerck advises other cities to consider taking a proactive stance as well. "It's a good idea to get ahead of issues before your city has to face them so the community understands, the police understand and those doing it are aware of what the rules are."

He added Perryville is not trying to be punitive: "We want to coexist peacefully. If a person is unaware of the rules, they'd be informed, but if push comes to shove, there are fines." **M**



While Perryville, Mo., wasn't experiencing a panhandling problem, it decided to be proactive in enacting ordinances prohibiting aggressive panhandling. Pictured is the Perryville courthouse. (Photo provided)

Supreme Court ruling

The Supreme Court ruling that civil rights attorneys are using to challenge cities and towns prohibiting panhandling is *Reed v. Town of Gilbert, Ariz.*, in 2015.

That ruling stemmed from a complaint over the sign ordinance regulating how signs could be displayed and imposed stricter limits on certain signs. The ruling in *Reed v. Town of Gilbert* reportedly paved the way for more than two dozen challenges of panhandling ordinances in federal court; however, aggressive panhandling laws seem, so far, to stand up to challenges.

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Cities implement traffic calming measures

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By BARB SIEMINSKI | The Municipal

We can thank the Germans who in the 1930s gave rise to a new word: Verkehrsberuhigung, literally translating to traffic calming. This practice protected residential areas from through traffic by means of speed bumps, narrower roads, physical design, traffic control gates and other safety features, all of which had the intention of slowing traffic for pedestrians and cyclists. The concept was then adopted in 1985 by the United Kingdom. Today, this successful practice can be seen in various towns and cities around the world.

Keith Bredehoeft, director of public works in Prairie Village, Kan., shared some of his knowledge with his department's own traffic calming.

"The main concern of speeding in our neighborhoods is what we wanted to change on 87th Street," Bredehoeft said of the Johnson County city. "Our aim was to make it a resident-driven program that has clear process for traffic calming to be considered. Our process of getting residents' buy-in is essential."

Such a development usually starts with neighbors banding together and calling for a meeting with the public works department, in hopes of obtaining a slower speed for their community. These requests are addressed on a case-by-case basis.

"Speeding was and usually is the main reason for implementing traffic calming," said Bredehoeft, who ran the program from the beginning. "Two residents came to me requesting that something be done. There is usually one main person, but many times, there are

two or three in the group. We had no challenges — the process works really well."

Prairie Village has had neighborhood speed watch programs a few times, because, Bredehoeft observed, it helped the residents to better understand the speeds of cars.

"They appreciated the ability to do this, and now we have about 15 locations where we've had measures installed," said Bredehoeft, adding that most of the time residents are happy with the results. "On most streets where traffic calming has been implemented, we do not get calls from residents about speeding vehicles any longer."

Asked if the speed limits had been changed because of the traffic calming, Bredehoeft said that no speed limits had been changed.

"We do usually get lower speeds after installation and a few mph reductions," said Bredehoeft. "We use pedestrian-activated beacons at existing crosswalks, but they are not considered part of traffic calming.

“In general, I think we have a very successful traffic calming program. It is a resident-driven program, and the program has a very clear process to follow.”

Bredehoeft emphasized that the criteria to consider for installing traffic calming measures are specifically defined and clear so it helps ensure that his department is only installing measures where they are really necessary.

“They can only be used on residential streets that are not considered emergency response routes. The speed table gets a driver’s attention and makes the driver think about what he or she is doing (while driving),” said Bredehoeft. “I personally feel this is one of the main objectives of traffic calming when forcing drivers to think about what they are doing. In today’s world, folks are very busy and thinking about what they are doing next or next week and not always paying attention to their driving. The speed table is not too much of a negative impact to drivers — speed bumps and speed humps can be problematic and I have seen situations where the negative feedback has caused these measures to be removed. We have not had significant negative feedback related to the speed tables. They are a good balance in my opinion.”

Other measures the city has installed to date include median islands, neck-downs and speed display signs. Speed display signs have been good at grabbing drivers’ attention as well.

Mayor Lisa Jones of Foxfield, Colo., has had plans to continue with traffic control gates as a means of pedestrian safety, speeding reduction and stopping cut-through traffic on both East Fremont Avenue and South Richfield Street. Officials had also considered roundabouts, manned gates and toll roads, none of them feasible.

But then the pandemic slammed the world and much of Jones’ staff is working from home for safety reasons. In an email, she wrote, “Due to budgetary constraints as a result of the current situation, the gate project is on hold.”

Dripping Springs, Texas, is another city that uses traffic calming successfully, according to Dripping Springs Public Works Coordinator Aaron Reed.

The main reason for traffic calming in Dripping Springs was high volumes of cut-through traffic during peak traffic times. These cut-through streets are mostly residential. Citizens voiced concerns about safety issues with the cut through so the city worked with its traffic engineer and the community to develop a traffic calming policy.

“The city has received complaints about speeding and safety concerns along these mostly residential streets,” said Reed. “We do not have a municipal police force. The Hays County Sheriff and Constables patrol city streets through interlocal agreements with the city.

“The city has worked together with its citizens to develop the traffic calming policy. So far, the policy and traffic calming have been met with praise and support.”

When asked how many places traffic calming was created, Reed said currently there was one traffic calming area with a second one funded and currently being installed.

If a public works department in another city wanted to explore traffic calming for its town, what advice would Reed give?

“Talk to fellow citizens in your community for input on problem areas and common desired outcomes, and research what other jurisdictions have set up. The city should consult with its city engineer or




Dripping Springs, Texas, has developed resident-driven traffic calming policies after concerns were voiced about cut-through traffic. Pictured is Dripping Springs City Hall. (Photo by Larry D. Moore via Wikimedia Commons; creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/deed.en)



Traffic circles or roundabouts are also methods for traffic calming, reducing speeds and the volume of cut-through traffic. Pictured is a traffic circle in Palo Alto, Calif. (Michael Vi/Shutterstock.com)

hire a transportation engineer to evaluate the need, work with stakeholders and make recommendations,” said Reed.

“Dripping Springs has a great maintenance staff that has been instrumental in the installation of the traffic calming features. This is a fairly new policy for the city so it is still a learning process, but so far, everything has gone smoothly. We are learning about locations for features that limit the ability for drivers to avoid the feature by driving around.” 

Lift Up Lou supports Louisville residents' well-being during COVID-19



Walter Munday shared beautiful nature shots of Beargrass Creek in Seneca Park with Louisville Parks and Recreation. These photos were then posted on the Lift Up Lou Facebook page April 20. (Photo provided)

By AMANDA DEMSTER | The Municipal

In early spring, COVID-19 began spreading across the United States. Suddenly, many businesses were deemed nonessential and shut down. Schools and government offices closed, and sheltering in place became the norm. People began wearing masks and maintaining a 6-foot distance between one another.

At the time, realizing these conditions could quickly get people down, Mayor Greg Fischer of Louisville, Ky., knew he needed to find something uplifting for his city's residents.

"We actually had just got done with our first press conference on the coronavirus," Louisville Parks Department Deputy Director Margaret Brosko said. "We knew it was going to be a long haul and this was going to be serious and impact people in a variety of ways."

On March 14, Fischer contacted Brosko and she immediately took the reins. By March 19, the city announced the launch of an initiative known as Lift Up Lou.

"We started thinking, what are some things we can do before this thing gets really tough?" Fischer said.

The Lift Up Lou webpage, along with its social media presence via Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, sought to encourage Louisville



In response to COVID-19 and to lift up residents, Louisville, Ky., offered meals to its seniors. (Photo provided)

residents to stay active — physically, mentally and socially — all while sheltering in place.

"It's important for people right now to adapt to a new rhythm of life while we're in this stage," Fischer said. "It shouldn't just be sleeping the day away."

As of press time for this article, Lift Up Lou's website and social media pages updated several times a day, ensuring a continual flow of new activities.

As the project grew, individuals and groups throughout Louisville began taking part. Musicians, yoga instructors, artists, magicians, personal trainers, librarians, zookeepers and more began filling Lift Up Lou's pages with things people of all ages could do and enjoy from home. Fitness trainers and yoga instructors began posting workouts, librarians from the Louisville Free Public Library hosted its story times online and artists with the Louisville Arts Network would display their work. A local chef came aboard with cooking tips, and the Louisville Zoo hosted animal-themed activities.

In April, an area magician shared secrets for simple magic tricks, a representative of the Jefferson Memorial Forest taught viewers how to make a backyard fort and actors led an introductory online Shakespeare class. This is just a taste of what Lift Up Lou has offered during the pandemic.

"The city is a platform for human potential to flourish," Fischer said. "So we're using our Lift Up Lou as the vehicle to express that at this time."

Stress relief was also a key component to Lift Up Lou, and every day at 7 p.m. a new mindfulness technique was posted.

As ideas became more creative, musicians gave concerts from the backs of moving vehicles so people would not congregate to listen, but could still enjoy the music. One weekend in March, orchestra director Teddy Abrams performed outside several senior living facilities.

"We hooked up his keyboard and some speakers on the back of one of our rec-on-the-go trucks and he pulled up to some of our senior homes in the community and started playing," Fischer said. "The residents looked out the window and listened from their individual units, applauding, clapping, giving thumbs up. It just made people happy."

Another activity for Louisville seniors was called Virtual Hugs. Those who do not use social media learned to make conference calls so they could "visit" one another in groups.

Feedback about Lift Up Lou has been positive. As Brosko and Fischer have learned, it has not only been good for residents stuck at home, it has benefited those posting videos and leading online activities as well.

"It's amazing because I could talk to a musician who has had all of their gigs cancelled, they're not making any money, they're stuck at home and for them to be able to perform live on this platform gives them a sense of worth, a sense of belonging, instant feedback from the community," Brosko said.

While keeping bodies and minds active was a major focus, so was keeping the Louisville public informed. Links to daily media briefings kept viewers up to date on the latest coronavirus news.

Gaining the cooperation of so many people and entities so quickly may seem like a challenge, but according to Fischer, it was simply a matter of knowing who was best suited to fill each role.

"It's not difficult if you have the right person," Fischer said. "Most every city government has somebody or a group of people who have reputations for getting stuff done."

He recommends identifying people who work in special events-related areas, as well as those who work in information technology.



Helpers at a Lift Up Lou lunch meal event give each other a distanced high five. (Photo provided)



Residents were able to participate digitally in "Aerobics with Laneisha" during a Lift Up Lou live session. The goal of Lift Up Lou was to have Louisville residents stay active. (Photo provided)

He also gave credit to the city's communication department for getting the word out to the public.

"When you think about it, it's integrating what our communication department does," Fischer said. "Basically, Lift Up Lou is really a big communication effort in bringing the community together."

When interviewed in April, Fischer and Brosko, along with all of Louisville, were continuing to brainstorm ways Lift Up Lou can live up to its name.

"The reason Margaret is so good — she is a big thinker, so she can think about the vision of what this can be," Fischer said. "She's well connected in the community. She can speak and people know she's speaking for me. She uses the convening power from my office to get people engaged."

Visit the Lift Up Lou website at www.louisvilleky.gov/government/lift-lou or check out the Lift Up Lou Facebook page. 



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Retread tires provide financial and environmental boost for fleets

Old tires are difficult to dispose of. For years, a common practice was to send them to a landfill, burn them or potentially even recycle them by cutting them up and using the former automobile tires as rubber mulch for playground equipment.

Rather than adding old tires to a landfill, retreading them can save city fleets money while also offering environmental benefits. Pictured, a worker retreads a tire at a foreign plant in the tire retreading industry. (Shutterstock.com)



*Michael Roy,
Vehicle Services
Manager, Portland, Ore.*

There are now other ways to process old tires, but the best course of action is to try and reuse them when possible, especially for municipal fleets that are constantly cycling through old tires.

While the use of retread tires may sound sketchy at first, it's actually common for fleet management experts to use and recommend them.

Michael Roy, the vehicle services manager for the city of Portland, Ore., has been using retread tires for much of his career, both at his current job and in the five years he spent with Pacific Gas and Electric in California.

"There's a significant cost saving versus buying a new tire," Roy said. "The casing, which is the inner part of the tire,

the (Pacific Gas and Electric) standard was we would only retread those twice, but as you can understand, you get to use that casing for twice whereas if you're buying a new tire, you're throwing away the whole tire and not getting the full life out of the casing.

"Besides the cost savings, that's a huge one because in a fleet, you know, our most expensive stuff is fuel and tires. Fuel is usually a larger cost, but tires are right behind that. Anywhere you can manage those costs. Retreaded tires are a way to reduce your cost."

In fact, retread tires can be up to 50% less expensive in comparison to new tires. This often depends on the tire contract a fleet has. For instance, at both the city of Portland and Pacific Gas and Electric, Roy has had a contract with Goodyear Tires, which comes with a predetermined rate.

Goodyear also uses the old fleet tires.

Of course, the other positive aspect of using retread tires is the environmental impact. Overall, a fewer number of tires will go to the landfill, plus retreading a tire actually requires just 7 gallons of oil to produce compared to 22 gallons for a new tire.

"There's a huge benefit, which doesn't always drive how we operate a fleet," Roy said. "We're usually cost-driven first before the environmental benefit, but you can point to both of those and it just makes good sense. Why wouldn't we use them?"

The good news is that the quality of a retread tire is just as good as a new one.

"Performance wise, don't have any complaints from the operators," Roy said. "They work just as well. There's a lot of reliability. The technology's been around for a long, long, long time."

This is because each tire casing goes through a thorough inspection process, which includes both visual and X-ray evaluations, before it is deemed reusable.

If there are any significant defects, the tires won't receive a new tread.



A common misconception about retread tires is that they are responsible for the "alligators," or the tire shreds, seen at the side of a roadway. These shreds are more often from newer tires that overheat because they don't have enough air. (Shutterstock.com)



Portland, Ore., has realized sizable cost savings by purchasing retread tires. (Photo provided)

"If the tires are damaged, you can't recap it," Roy said. "They can do some minor repairs, but what they're really looking for is major damage once they get off that old tread. There are a couple different styles of casing or caps that are put on the tread. Goodyear has a process that is called a UniCircle.

"It's like a one piece; it's kind of like taking out a rubber band, stretching it and putting it over that casing and then cooking it, gluing it back in place."

But for as effective as retread tires are, there are some common misconceptions about them.

"They call it the alligator," Roy said. "So we've all been driving down the freeway and seeing the tread section laying on the side of the road. The myth is 'Oh, that's a retread that came apart because the tread is glued on.' When you're recapping a tire, people make the assumption when that piece of tread spun out on the side of the road. That's a retread that sailed. We had a lot of marketing and communication to do with our customers because there's this myth retread tires aren't good enough."

However, Roy said this likely isn't true, noting that most alligators actually come from newer tires that overheat because they don't have enough air.

It's worth noting that not every vehicle will use retread tires, but in instances where it makes sense, they are an option every fleet manager should utilize.

"If you manage a fleet and you're not utilizing retread tires where it's a good fit and makes sense, you're missing a huge opportunity when it comes to both cost and environmental," Roy said. **M**

Kentucky disproves theory that fairness ordinances restrict economic growth

Pictured is the westside of Midway, Ky.'s historic district. The city adopted a fairness ordinance in June 2015. (Public domain via Wikimedia Commons)



By MAGGIE KENWORTHY | The Municipal



Midway Mayor Grayson Vandegrift speaks in Frankfort, Ky., shortly after Midway became the eighth city in the state to pass a fairness ordinance. (Photo by Al Cross)

When Midway, Ky., began looking into adopting a fairness ordinance in 2015, many of the objectors declared that such an ordinance would harm the city's economy. But since the passing of the ordinance, Midway has seen the exact opposite of this effect – and the city isn't alone in this finding.

"Midway is a city of 18,000 people, so we're not very big ... overall we weren't the kind of city that had tons of jobs," explained Midway Mayor Grayson Vandegrift. "Since (the fairness ordinance passed), we have added over 500 new jobs in Midway, mostly due to industrial growth ... It started in late 2015 and really the boom has continued."

Vandegrift first began looking at the adoption of a fairness ordinance shortly after he took over office in 2014. On Martin Luther King Jr. Day, the local human rights commission gave a presentation regarding a possible ordinance to representatives of Midway, the nearby city of Versailles and Woodford County.

"Just based on Midway's history of being a little more progressive, I suspected that we were going to have to be the ones to do this first," said Vandegrift. "So I went ahead

and moved forward with it and introduced the idea to our city council and started a public campaign to explain what it was. That was the first job, most people thought it had something to do with gay marriage and most people thought that these protections already existed."

The exact verbiage as related to the policy and purpose of the ordinance states, "The city desires to implement a policy that treats individuals within the city equally and free from discrimination in the context of housing, employment and public accommodation on account of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, familial status, age, disability, gender identity and sexual orientation."

After introducing the ordinance, the city moved forward with public forums. During

these events is when the ordinance began to receive some opposition.

According to Vandegrift, the meetings brought forward “a slew of misinformation in attempts to stir up passion and in an attempt to change the narrative.” But he noted that very few of the people speaking up in opposition were citizens of Midway.

The ordinance passed in June 2015 with a vote of 4-2.

“This has had zero negative effects — zero,” said Vandegrift. “We’ve literally almost tripled our occupational tax revenue in five years since the ordinance passed... What I tell people is that it doesn’t mean that if you pass a fairness ordinance you’re going to triple your revenues. But, it did, to me, end one of the many arguments against the ordinance... They said that if we passed this ordinance that we would lose jobs, they said that we would get lawsuits because employers would be sued and none of this happened.”

Vandegrift added, “I still can’t find a negative to us doing it, I seriously can’t find one.”

Midway was the eighth city in Kentucky to pass a fairness ordinance. As of April 2020, there are now 20 cities and counties in the state that have such an ordinance.

Woodford County, which includes Midway, passed its ordinance in January 2020. Even though both Midway and Versailles, which are located within the county, already had their own ordinances at this point, Woodford County Magistrate Liles Taylor explained that over half of the county’s population does not live within these incorporated cities.

Taylor is the one who drafted a fairness ordinance for the county, which was based firmly off of the Versailles ordinance, and presented it to the court. A public hearing was held for the ordinance Dec. 5, 2019, with the final vote taking place Jan. 14.

According to Taylor, the county saw less public input regarding the ordinance than Midway and Versailles previously saw.

“A lot of people already had the opportunity to express their concerns or support,” said Taylor. “So I do think that caused a little bit less participation than you’d see otherwise.”

In addition to the previous community involvement, Taylor stressed that



Pictured is the live stream of the Woodford County Fiscal Court meeting Jan. 14 during which the ordinance had its second reading and was approved. (Facebook screenshot)



In 2015, Midway, Ky., was the state’s eighth city to pass a fairness ordinance. As of April 2020, there were 20 cities and counties in the state with a similar ordinance. (Photo provided)

communication was key in passing this ordinance in a way that made all citizens aware of what it contained. In 2018 when Taylor was elected, the local fiscal court made an effort to advertise the emails and phone numbers of the representatives for public feedback. In addition, the fiscal court streams all of their meetings live on the Woodford County Facebook page.

“I had some people ask me about the issue and I said, ‘I’m happy to tell you all you want, but if you want to hear more about other folks’ opinion, please make sure to visit our Facebook page to see our meeting if you want to hear about the debate,’” said Taylor. “It is difficult for folks to attend a lot of different meetings, whether it be a city council meeting or different committee meetings or planning and zoning,

whatever those things might be, and the opportunity to have folks participate, by at a minimum watching meetings online, live particularly, I think it’s been a really encouraging thing.”

Since Woodford County passed the ordinance so recently, the county has yet to see any direct effects of the ordinance. But, Taylor did note he has heard stories of two different county residents encountering discrimination before the passage of the fairness ordinance.

“I will say that I think that to me, these demonstrate more than ever the importance of such an ordinance on creating a culture of support and affirmation to someone who may suffer discrimination.”

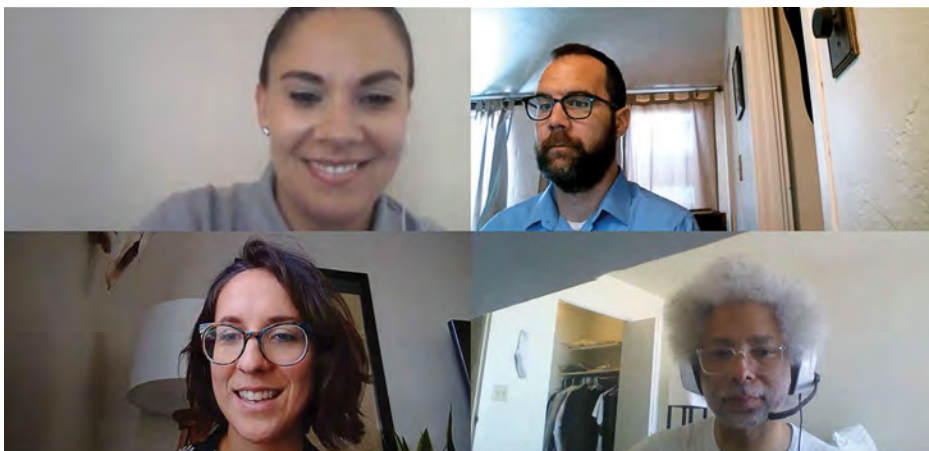
M



Tucson pilots street ambassador program to promote Move Tucson initiative

By NICHOLETTE CARLSON | The Municipal

Beginning last fall, a webinar highlighting the New York City street ambassador program inspired Gabriela Barillas-Longoria, livability planner for Tucson, Ariz., to think up new ways to increase community engagement. “I started thinking of how we could scale it down for a pilot program,” she stated.



After coming up with a budget and proposal, the pilot program was approved and those interested were given two weeks to apply to become a street ambassador. In the 10 days the application process was open, approximately 50 residents applied for the positions. Throughout the months of February and March, an equity analysis was used to go through the applications and prioritize who would be chosen.

The city of Tucson was gearing up to begin in-person training in March when the COVID-19 pandemic hit and it was put on hold. Barillas-Longoria went back to the drawing board last month on how to reach out to the community digitally. “It’s all about meeting people where they were at,” she commented, but she also does not want to replace that in-person engagement.

“As the city of Tucson switches gears to virtual services in response to COVID-19, we’re continuing to engage the community around the Move Tucson long-range transportation master plan effort,” Barillas-Longoria explained. “Due to this new reality, the Move Tucson team will be temporarily focusing outreach efforts online, which means adjusting the street ambassador volunteer program from in-person activities to digital or online engagement.”

The top 10 applicants were sent a questionnaire to see if they would still be interested in the program. The virtual video chat training was developed from scratch by the city. The online training takes place via Microsoft Teams and was planned to last four weeks — between mid-April and May 30, though it may have

ABOVE LEFT: The new street ambassador program in Tucson, Ariz., held its first virtual training session Thursday, April 23. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, city officials reworked the training and program so it could be done virtually, though it is not meant to replace in-person engagement once possible. (Photo provided)

BELOW LEFT: The 10 street ambassadors and one lead ambassador have been working on completing training for the pilot program. Their primary goal during this time will be connecting with community members about the Move Tucson initiative and the resources available. (Photo provided)

Meet the Street Ambassador Coordinators



GABRIELA BARILLAS-LONGORIA

Livability Planner,
City of Tucson
Department of
Transportation & Mobility



SELINA BARAJAS

Lead Ambassador,
Gordley



TERESITA FINCH

Public Involvement
Planner, Gordley

The coordinators for the street ambassador program were introduced to the ambassadors beginning their training via Microsoft Teams. Gabriela Barillas-Longoria, livability planner with the city of Tucson's department of transportation and mobility, was inspired after participating in a webinar, which highlighted New York City's street ambassador program. Teresita Finch with Gordley will act as the public involvement planner. The lead ambassador, also from Gordley, is Selina Barajas. (Photo provided)

been extended into June. The group will then hold weekly online team meetings.

As a pilot program, these 10 street ambassadors and one lead ambassador will focus on engaging with the public on the Move Tucson transportation initiative. The goal of the program as a whole, according to Barillas-Longoria, is "to not only reach but connect with those who are most vulnerable to the impacts of planning, policy and design decisions." This includes residents who are low income, elderly, on disability, a minority or without a home.

These street ambassadors were chosen in part due to their connections with these high priority areas and their ability to connect with community members in these areas. "The power lays in the background of the team," Barillas-Longoria said.

Ambassadors also speak a variety of languages, including English, Spanish, Tohono O'Odham and American Sign Language, so that is not a factor in communication. The ambassadors' affinity for transportation and mobility issues, along with their connection to the neighborhood, allows them to offer direct insight into the community, which, in turn, makes the Move Tucson initiative more accessible and relatable.

These street ambassadors will be playing a crucial role in communicating what the Move Tucson initiative is and showing community members how to become more involved in the process while giving them an opportunity to voice comments and concerns. This will allow members of the community to share transportation challenges and opportunities with the city. The recently released mobile interactive map is one of the best ways for residents to do this.

"By directing people to the interactive public input map, they can identify the specific locations where opportunities exist to build connections, create more travel choices and improve the transportation system," Barillas-Longoria explained. The transportation system includes roads, bus routes, sidewalks and bicycle lanes. Street ambassadors will be reaching out to members of the community through email, social media, phone and video calls.

Meet the Move Tucson Project Managers



ANDREW BEMIS

City of Tucson
Department of
Transportation &
Mobility



PATRICK HARTLEY

City of Tucson
Department of
Transportation &
Mobility

Street ambassadors will work with Andrew Bemis and Patrick Hartley, both from the city of Tucson department of transportation and mobility, who are project managers for the Move Tucson initiative. Street ambassadors will gain feedback from the community regarding Move Tucson. (Photo provided)

Phase II: Mobile Interactive Map



The recently released mobile interactive map is one of the best methods for residents to share transportation challenges and opportunities with the city. One of the goals for street ambassadors is to show community members where to find the map and how to use it. (Photo provided)

When it comes to the Move Tucson initiative and interactions with the community, the street ambassadors will be asked to organize and co-host online discussion groups, encourage residents to take the online program survey, lead people to online resources, including the mobile interactive map, as well as come up with potential problems and solutions to problems. Ambassadors will collect stories about mobility challenges and opportunities throughout the community, assist residents with navigating the online interactive map and input surveys over the phone. The results from this will help to inform the development of the city's transportation priorities over the next 20 years.

Once the COVID-19 pandemic has been resolved, Barillas-Longoria mentioned that Tucson hopes to organize and hold a transportation summit to bring various cities together and share its experience with the street ambassador program. While currently Tucson is starting small and making a case with the pilot program, Barillas-Longoria resolved that the best-case scenario is that street ambassadors will become a city-funded program and a new way to do city business. **M**

EDITOR'S NOTE: In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, readers are encouraged to verify their conference's status. The Municipal has updated entries' statuses with information available as of press time; however, as the situation is still fluid, plans may change rapidly.

JUNE

June 1-4 CleanPower Expo (Cancelled)

Denver, Colo.

www.cleanpowerexpo.org

June 3-7 International Hazardous Materials Response Teams Conference

Hilton Baltimore, Baltimore, Md.

<https://www.iafc.org/events/hazmat-conf>

June 10-13 NYSAFC 114th Annual Conference & Fire 2020 Expo

The Oncenter, Syracuse, N.Y.

<https://www.nysfirechiefs.com/fire2020>

June 12-15 U.S. Conference of Mayors 88th Annual Meeting (Postponed to June 2021)

Austin, Texas

www.usmayors.org/meetings

June 14-17 Prima 2020 Conference (Cancelled)

Gaylord Opryland Resort & Convention Center, Nashville, Tenn.

<https://conference.primacentral.org/>

June 15-18 NFPA Conference & Expo (Cancelled)

Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, Fla.

www.nfpa.org

June 16-19 SIMA 23rd Snow & Ice Symposium (Postponed to Aug. 25-28)

Hartford, Conn.

www.sima.org

June 23-24 Thirty-fourth Annual Police Security Expo (Postponed to Aug. 25-26)

Atlantic City Convention Center, Atlantic, N.J.

www.police-security.com

June 23-25 Safety 2020 (Now Virtual)

Orange County Conference Center, Orlando, Fla.

<https://safety.assp.org/>

June 23-26 Colorado Municipal League Annual Conference

Westminster, Colo.

<https://www.cml.org/conference>

June 23-26 Association of Washington Cities Annual Conference (Cancelled)

Three Rivers Convention Center, Kennewick, Wash.

<https://wacities.org/>

June 24-26 League of Minnesota Cities Annual Conference (Cancelled)

Saint Paul RiverCentre, St. Paul, Minn.

www.lmc.org

June 26-30 Georgia Municipal Association Annual Conference (Now Virtual)

Trade Convention Center, Savannah, Ga.

<https://www.gacities.com/Events/Annual-Events/Annual-Convention.aspx>

June 28-July 1 Maryland Municipal League Summer Conference (Now Virtual)

Ocean City, Md.

www.mdmunicipal.org

JULY

July 6-9 IMSA Forum & Expo (Cancelled)

Peppermill Resort, Reno, Nev.

www.imsasafety.org

July 15-19 Municipal Association of South Carolina 2020 Annual Meeting (Now July 16-18)

Charleston Place Hotel, Charleston, S.C.

www.masc.sc

July 17-20 NACo Annual Conference & Exposition

Orlando, Fla.

www.naco.org/events/nacos-85th-annual-conference-exposition

July 18-20 Mayors National Youth Summit (Postponed: TBD)

Portland, Ore.

www.usmayors.org/meetings/

July 26-30 CADCA Mid-Year Training Institute

Gaylord Opryland, Nashville, Tenn.

www.cadca.org/events

July 30-Aug. 1 Louisiana Municipal Association 83rd Annual Convention

Raising Cane's River Center, Baton Rouge, La.

www.lma.org

AUGUST

Aug. 6-10 ACA 150th Congress of Correction

Cincinnati, Ohio

www.aca.org

AUGUST

Aug. 8-11 Tennessee Municipal League 81st Annual Conference

Chattanooga Convention Center, Chattanooga, Tenn.

<https://www.tml1.org>

Aug. 5-11 Florida Fire Chiefs Association Development Conference (Postponed: TBD)

Sheraton Panama City Beach Golf & Spa Resort, Panama City Beach, Fla.

www.ffca.org/events

Aug. 10-13 Waste Expo

Ernest N. Morial Convention Center, New Orleans, La.

www.wasteexpo.com

Aug. 13-15 Florida League of Cities Annual Conference

Diplomat Beach Resort, Hollywood, Fla.

www.floridaleagueofcities.com

Aug. 17-18 Fire-Rescue Med 2020

Phoenix, Ariz.

www.iafc.org/events/frm

Aug. 17-19 StormCon

Seattle, Wash.

www.stormcon.com

Aug. 19-21 Arkansas Municipal League 86th Annual Convention

Statehouse Convention Center, Little Rock, Ark.

www.arml.org

Aug. 19-21 FRI 2020

Phoenix, Ariz.

www.iafc.org/events/fri

To list your upcoming conference or seminar in The Municipal at no charge, call (800) 733-4111, ext. 2307, or email the information to swright@the-papers.com.

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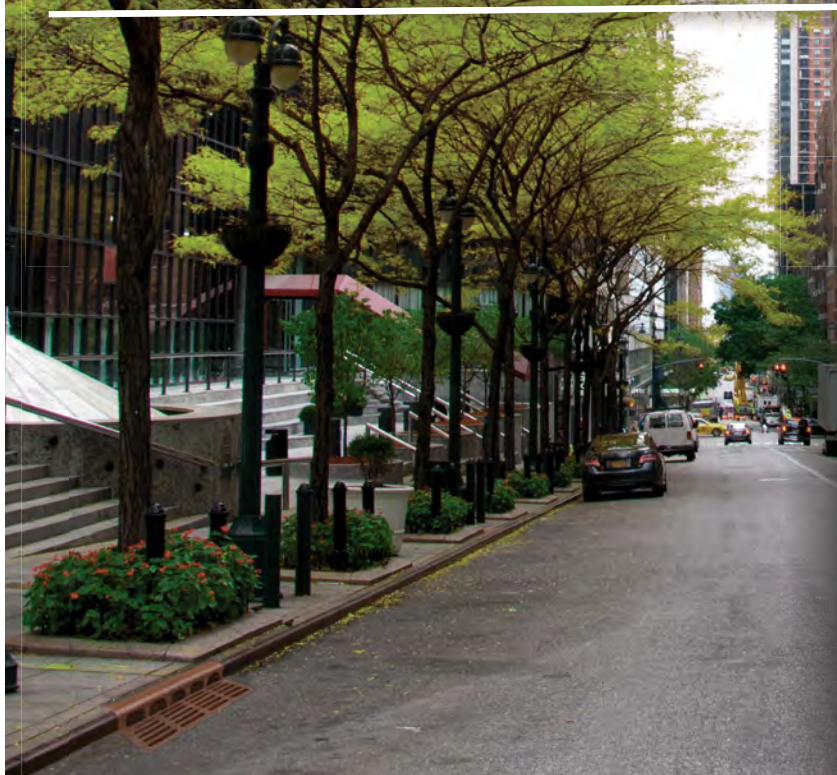
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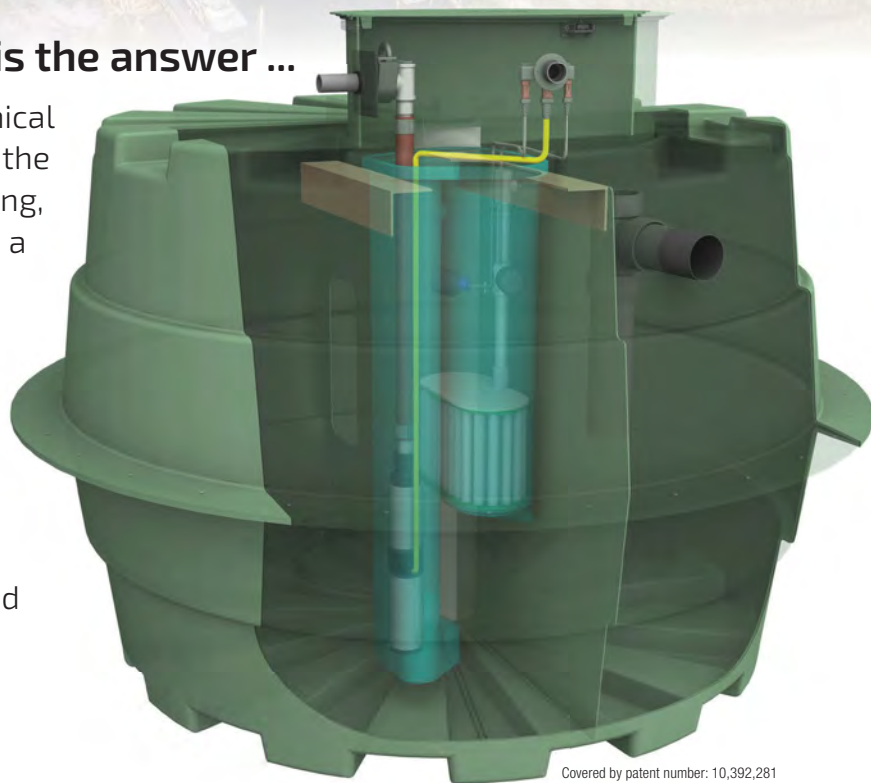
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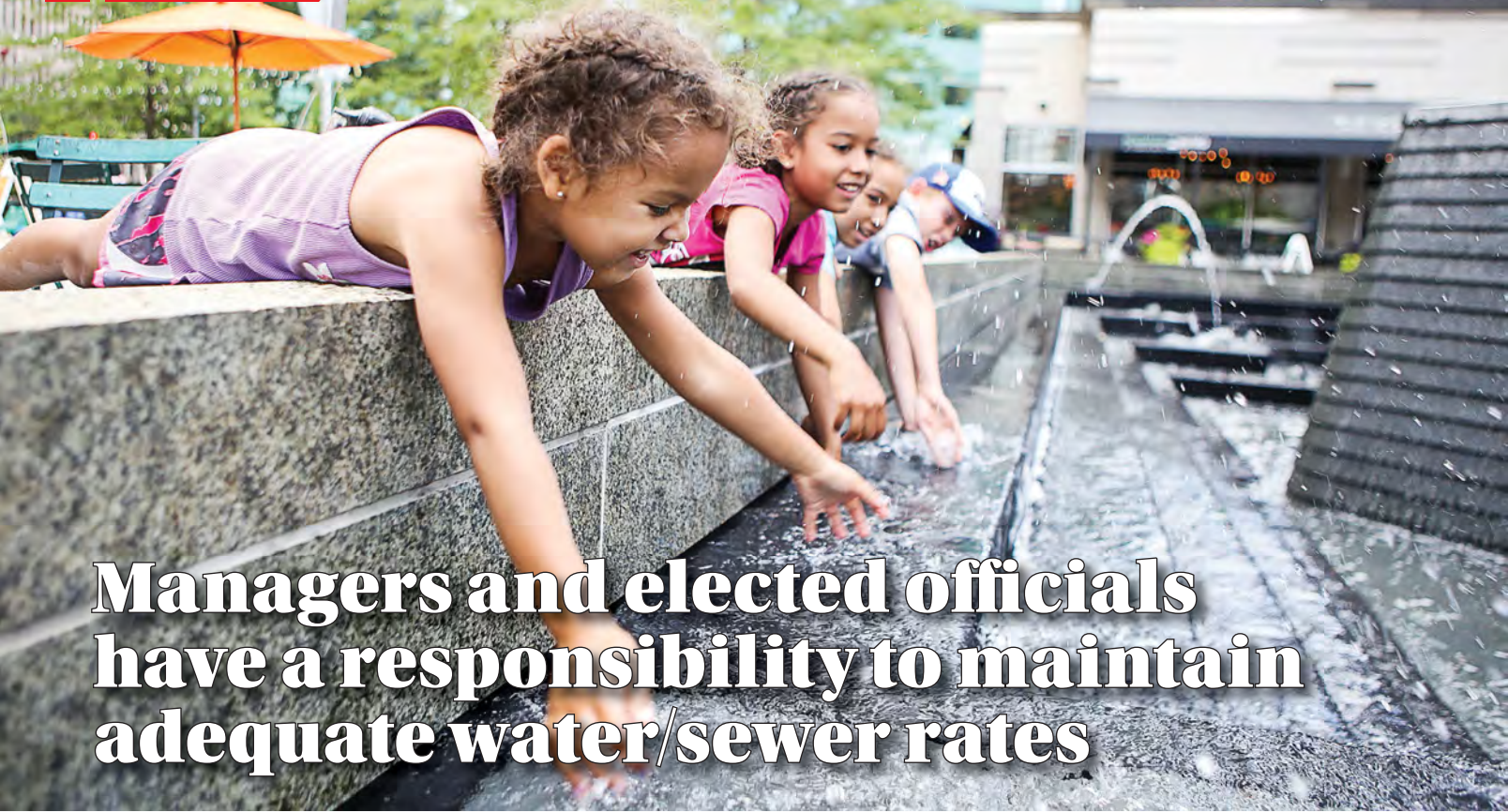
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Managers and elected officials have a responsibility to maintain adequate water/sewer rates



Rodd Hale | Guest columnist
Village Administrator,
Village of Versailles, Ohio

ABOVE: Setting adequate water and sewer rates today prevents the burden of filling in funding gaps from falling on future generations. Pictured are young children playing in a city fountain. (Shutterstock.com)

ONE OF THE MOST DIFFICULT DUTIES OF A CITY MANAGER, or elected official, is the task of maintaining adequate water and sewer rates and increasing rates when necessary. Even the conversation of reviewing rates seems to create more citizen complaints than any other topic an elected body can discuss. Often, the fear of the negative public fallout is enough to keep the subject off the table long after rates should have been increased.

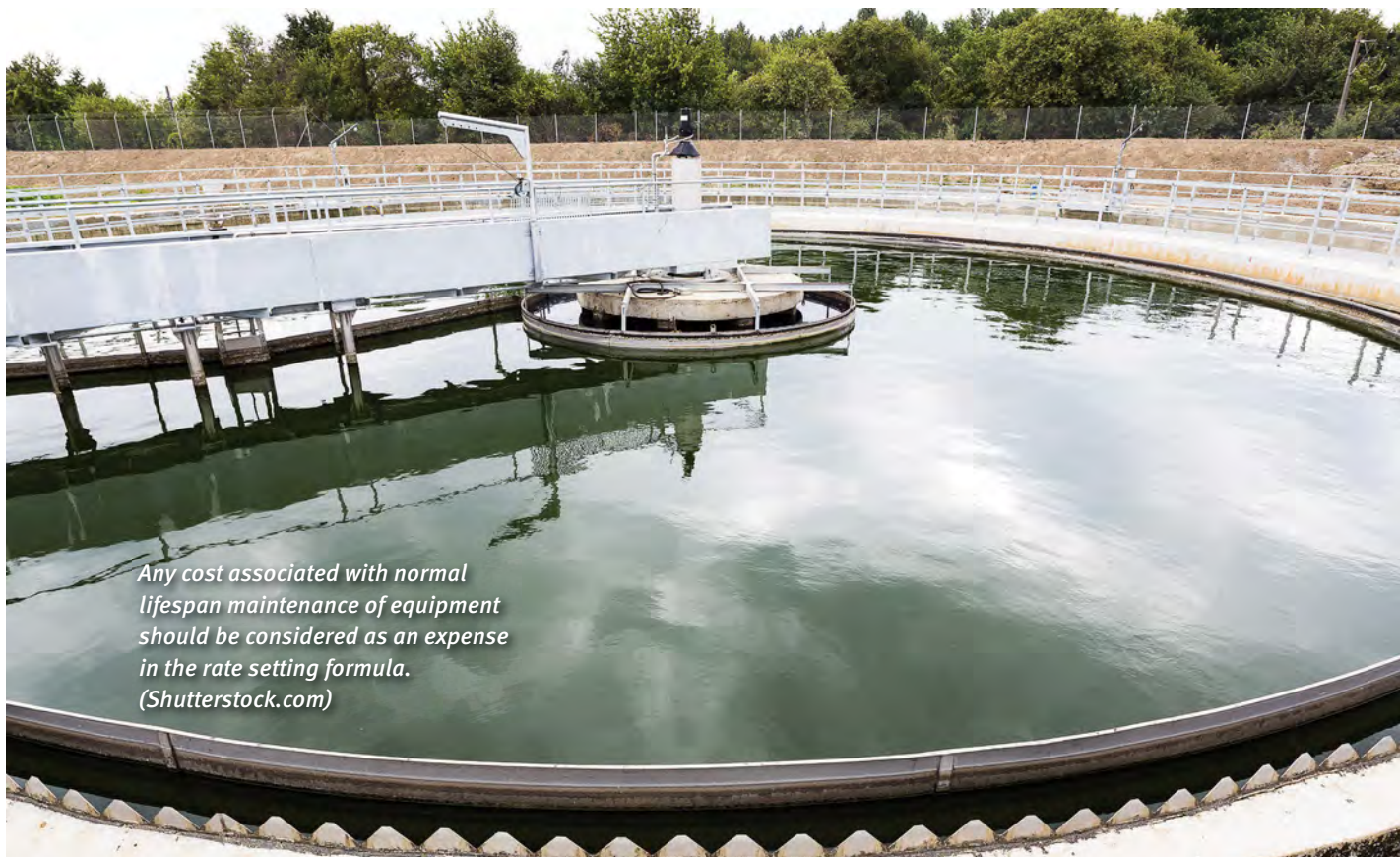
While government administrators and elected officials may not be able to eliminate public uproar and negative feedback, it is possible to be well prepared to silence, or intelligently oppose, the negative comments that often have little merit when it comes to increasing utility rates. Assuming your local officials are controlling cost and operating the utility in a responsible way, the “I’m on a fixed income” and “I already pay too much” arguments aren’t valid, and officials need to be prepared to stand up and justify any cost increase with facts regarding necessary cost to produce clean water and treat sewage.

Many agencies, including the United States Environmental Protection Agency establish water and sewer affordability criteria. It

would be wise to have your community’s affordability data available when preparing to discuss increasing rates with the public. Additionally, it’s always interesting to review rates from adjoining communities to see how your municipality compares. But remember, they may be undercharging and there are many variables that could affect your cost of treatment. Comparing to other communities is only one piece to the puzzle.

The two most important rules when setting utility rates are rates must cover the full production cost of the utility and rates must be fair and equitable to all users. To determine what rate is necessary, a study of all fixed and variable expenses relating to the water and sewer operation must be calculated. Many expenses are obvious such as payroll, chemicals and equipment, but too often expenses are missed such as the cost of electricity to operate the plant and billing department, payroll and billing clerical cost, building insurance, etc. Many of these expenses will need to be calculated on a portion of use basis, but they need to be included in a total cost calculation.

Additionally, any cost associated with normal lifespan maintenance of equipment should be considered as an expense in the rate setting formula. Much like depreciating an asset, rates creating necessary annual revenue must consider the cost of any equipment that will eventually need to be replaced. For example, a pump with an



Any cost associated with normal lifespan maintenance of equipment should be considered as an expense in the rate setting formula.
(Shutterstock.com)

estimated future replacement cost of \$10,000, and an expected life of 10 years, should have an annualized cost of \$1,000 associated with setting the necessary rates. One item often left underfunded in rates is water tower maintenance. Not including adequate maintenance costs, in current rates, leads to an undercharge to today's consumers.

Once all expenses related to providing and maintaining the service have been accumulated and summarized it's time to determine an annual production cost based on a unit cost such as per gallon, per cubic feet, per residence, etc. Generally, different categories should be created for residential, business, industrial, etc. Just as it isn't fair for future users to pay more for underpaying customers today, it isn't fair for residential users to pay the same as industrial users that may be putting a much larger toll on the operation. This is where research is needed to determine who is utilizing the system in what capacity. The data is available; it just needs looked at and analyzed.

When all costs have been considered and needed per unit rates have been determined, there is little argument those rates are what elected officials need to shoot for. Often, if rates have not been reviewed periodically, the jump will seem enormous and it will be impractical to immediately increase to those necessary rates. Steady incremental increases, with annual reviews, can eventually fix the problem. As the saying goes, it wasn't broken in a day and it can't be fixed in a day. But, understanding the full cost of providing the service can justify incremental increase to eventually get rates back to where they must be.

Just as in any business, undercharging must be avoided to have a successful operation. However, a municipality must look at rates

from an even different perspective. Any undercharge is being made up somewhere. It may be through another provided service, by another current user, or worse, future customers. Simply put, there are costs associated with creating freshwater and treating sewage. If the current user is not charged appropriately, then someone else must make up the difference. All too often that customer "making up for it" is the future customer that will inherit an aged and unkept system. They will need to pay a much higher amount, an unfair amount, than if today's user was charged appropriately for their usage.

Public utilities cannot simply close the doors and go out of business if revenue needs aren't met. Public services, such as water and sewer, must be provided and kicking the proverbial can down the road doesn't fix the problem, it lays it in the lap of future generations. For that reason, administrators and elected officials not charging appropriately are truly being irresponsible with public funds and should not fall into the "keep the public quiet today and all is good" mentality because, unfortunately, many of today's citizens are more than willing to allow future generations to make up for the discount they receive today. **M**

Rodd Hale is the village administrator for the village of Versailles, Ohio. He has a Master of Business Administration from Bowling Green State University in Bowling Green, Ohio, and has worked in city and county government administration and also as a freelance writer and consultant. (roddhale@versaillesoh.com)

The Best Cities for

If there's one thing cities are proud of, it is their barbecue. Apartmentguide.com decided to examine nearly 6,300 cities with at least one barbecue restaurant. The site states, "We then calculated the percentage of barbecue establishments to the total number of restaurants in each of those towns to determine the cities with the highest ration of BBQ restaurants."

The site did this through the use of a database of more than 8 million commercially available business listings. It further explains, "We then filtered out all cities with less than 50,000 people, according

to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2018 population estimates. From there, we divided the total number of barbecue establishments by total dining businesses of the remaining cities. This gave us the percentage of all restaurants in a specific city that are barbecue restaurants. The cities with the highest percentage of barbecue restaurants were deemed to be the best cities for barbecue in our quantitative report."

As far as taste and recipes, that debate will have to rage on.

City	Percentage of barbecue restaurants
1. Memphis, Tenn.	12.09%
2. Minnetonka, Minn.	11.63%
3. Desoto, Texas	10.34%
4. Decatur, Ill.	9.77%
5. Bowie, Md.	9.64%
6. Decatur, Ala.	9.30%
7. Kansas City, Kan.	9.22%
8. Saint Cloud, Fla.	8.96%
9. Smyrna, Ga.	8.90%
10. Gary, Ind.	8.79%





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—Nicholas Mancuso, Service Manager, Municipal Repairs Town of Kent



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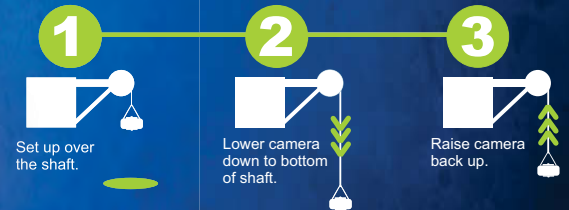


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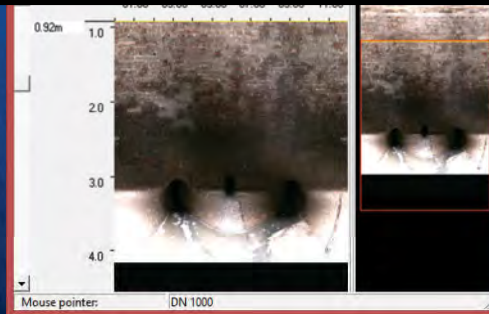
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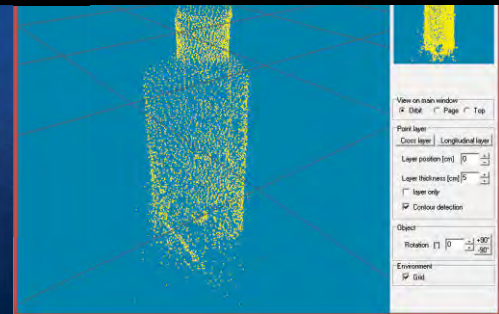
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