

August 2016



The Albert Month-Lea

City Council Sets Goals for the Community

1. Increase community tax base with defined action plan, collaboration with ALEDA and others, and promotion.

City staff is working with ALEDA and the Chamber of Commerce to identify businesses and industries to recruit to Albert Lea. Industry leaders tell city officials that they are suffering from a lack of skilled workers to fill job openings, so the City is outlining ways to develop workforce to meet this need. Initiatives are in the works to attract workers and build skills including apprenticeships for local students. Riverland has implemented classes that train workers for positions at local industries.

2. Increase Workforce Housing in Community through existing initiatives such as tax abatement and/or through new initiatives and partnership.

The City lobbied the state government to pass a workforce tax credit for developers to build more housing in Greater Minnesota. Staff will continue to press for this initiative next session.

An example of workforce housing in Albert Lea is the Wedgewood Cove town homes. The developer built 30 units and plans to add more in the future. Other developers have shown interest in building similar projects. If you would like more information on building housing in Albert Lea, please contact the City Manager's office, 507-377-4330.

3. Implement Facilities Master Plan projects per the present timeline, with priorities being the Airport project, Public Works Phase I project, and new Fire Station project.

The Fire Station and Public Works building are nearing the end of their life cycles. Larger and more modern spaces are needed. The City is considering locations for a new fire station and will complete an expansion of the Public Works building in two phases.

The Airport project has been delayed one year. Modifications will be made to the design and it will be re-bid this winter.

4. Continue recently implemented community communications, conversations, programming, and outreach along with some new approaches.

In addition to this printed newsletter, a weekly email newsletter is also sent. The City has increased its use of social media.

City staff has been door knocking in the fifth and sixth wards and talking to residents one-on-one seeking input on their priorities. Mayor Rasmussen began "Mayor Mondays," the first Monday of every month, when he meets with residents to discuss ward items.

5. Increase Nuisance Abatement Program and Code Enforcement.

The City is increasing enforcement of nuisances, such as junk vehicles, unkempt yards and properties. This includes compliance of zoning regulations for commercial properties such as screening of outside storage. If you have a complaint or questions about a property, call the police department's non-emergency number, 507-377-5210. Police do not disclose who provides information to them.

