



110 N. Poplar Street • PO Box 218 • West Branch, Iowa 52358
(319) 643-5888 • Fax (319) 643-2305 • www.westbranchiowa.org • matt@westbranchiowa.org

City Administrator's Weekly Update

Matt Muckler, City Administrator

December 17, 2016

- **First Water Main Break of the Season:** Public Works received a call yesterday afternoon concerning a possible water main break in the back yard of 125 Foster Street. Lynch's Excavating was contacted and dispatched a crew to make the repair. The leak was on a 4" water main and was repaired without depressurizing the main. Therefore, no boil order was necessary, and all homes maintained water usage throughout the repair. Public Works Director Matt Goodale was on site for the duration of the repair.
- **Special Event Permit Policy:** Parks and Recreation Director Melissa Russell is working on a Special Event Policies and Procedures. The purpose of this policy and related procedures are to regulate special events held in the City so that such events can occur with the safety and health of the participants in mind, the protection of public property considered, and the impact on non-participating residents minimized. It is the recommendation of staff that a permit be required for all special events that are held on City property. Such activities would include community festivals, events, races which involve city streets, sporting tournaments, and private events aimed at drawing crowds that may impact surrounding neighborhoods and traffic flow. Director Russell has also created a field request form for citizens to use when requesting either the Summer League Fields or Beranek Park volleyball courts. Hopefully this will help ensure that all teams are given the same opportunities for practices, games and scrimmages.
- **State Housing Trust Fund:** The December issue of *Cityscape*, the monthly publication from the Iowa League of Cities, included a brief primer on the State Housing Trust Fund (SHTF). This is a program that city staff has been considering with Cedar County Economic Development Commission (CCEDCO) Executive Director Rod Ness as a potential opportunity to provide affordable housing assistance in West Branch. The article, presenting an overview of the SHTF program, is attached to this week's *Update*.
- **Parks & Recreation Commission Update:** The West Branch Parks and Recreation Commission met on Thursday, December 15th to discuss the design of the concession stand and overall theme of the new park space in Pedersen Valley. Commission members discussed specific amenities that they felt should be included in the concession stand building, which will also house storage and restroom facilities. Director Melissa Russell will provide a full report at the December 19th City Council Meeting.

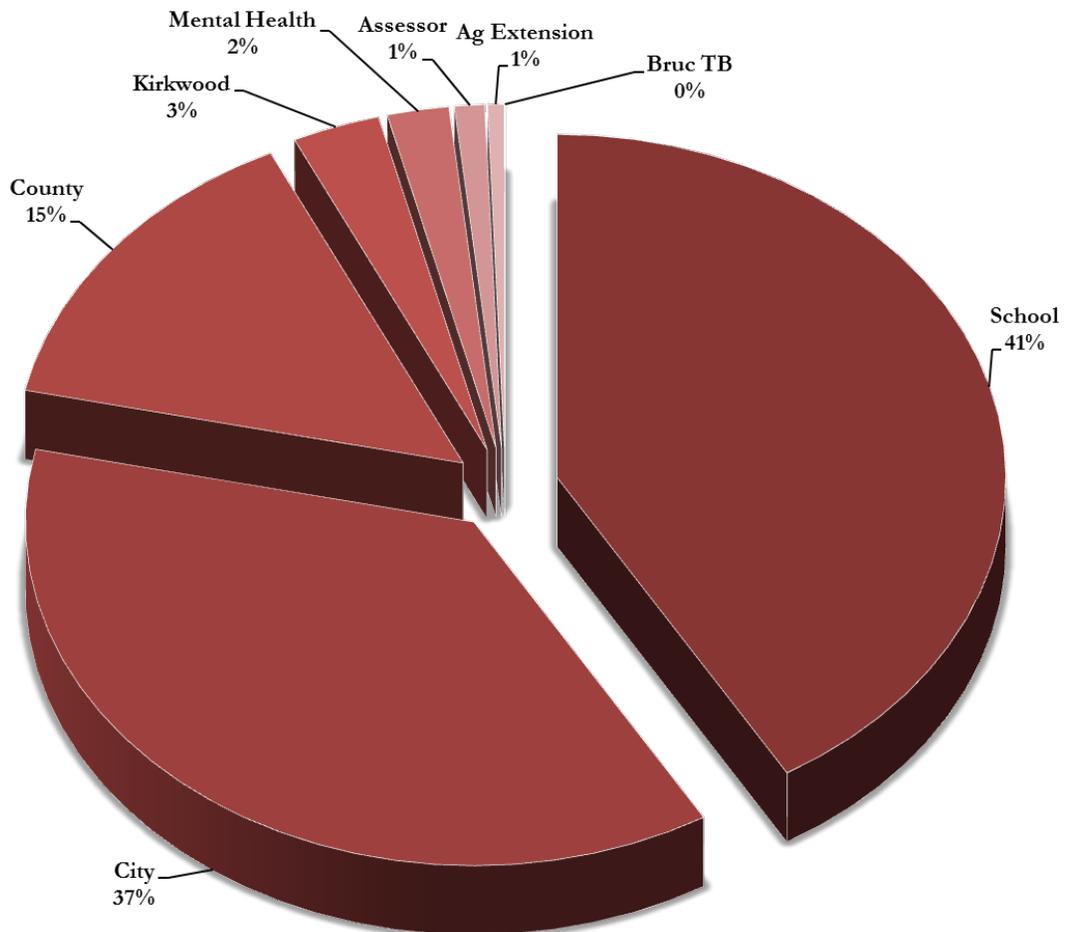
Mayor: Roger Laughlin • **Council Members:** Jordan Ellyson, Colton Miller, Brian Pierce, Tim Shields, Mary Beth Stevenson

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Budget Work Session #2: A City Council Work Session will follow the regular City Council Meeting on Monday December 19th. This work session will be the second of six City Council Work Sessions that are being held in order to consider the fiscal year 2017-2018 annual budget. In addition to a quick review of the budget schedule, review of the Comp Plan, CIP, and City Council Goals, city staff will present a review of both state budget and financial system forms. Library/IT Director has created some updated graphical representations of expenditures, revenue and the distribution of West Branch property taxes (example below). Staff will also discuss how those property taxes are distributed based on the value of property (with examples for homes in the Cedar County portion of West Branch valued at \$100,000, \$200,000 and \$300,000) and how the City Council has budgeted the City's portion of those taxes (37%) for the current fiscal year. Finally, an updated employee compensation schedule will be presented for further Council consideration.





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- **City Holiday Schedule:** City Offices, the Park & Recreation Department and the West Branch Public Library (WBPL) will be closed on Friday December 23rd, Monday December 26th and Monday January 2nd. As a reminder, there will be no changes to the trash pick-up schedule as a result of either the Christmas or New Year's Holidays. Trash and recycling will be picked up on the regular days – Friday December 23rd and Friday December 30th.
- **Snow and Ice Removal:** The snow predicted for last night had Public Works out pretreating sidewalks commonly cleared by the city. Weather conditions will be monitored throughout the weekend and roads will be treated or plowed as necessary. With the chance of more snow later today followed by cold temperatures and high winds on Sunday, drifting snow and/or icy streets are likely. With the extremely low temperatures that are being predicted for tomorrow, ice melting products may not work as well as usual. Sand will be applied at intersections and hilly areas as needed to provide some traction.
- **Pet Registration Now Open for 2017:** All cats and dogs over four months of age residing within the city limits must be registered annually with the City of West Branch. Please [CLICK HERE](#) for the Annual Pet Registration form. Registrations and tags for 2017 are also available at City Offices located at 110 North Poplar Street. When registering your pets, please provide current rabies vaccination papers at the time of registration. The fee for registering pets is \$5 per animal. A \$5 late penalty fee will be applied if an animal is registered after Jan. 31st.
- **Upcoming City Meetings & Events:** Please see the Calendar of Events on the City Website <http://westbranchiowa.org/home> for a complete list of upcoming events. There are several meetings and other community events currently scheduled in the next few weeks:
 - Monday December 19th at 7:00 p.m. Regular City Council Meeting
 - Monday December 19th (after Council) City Council Work Session
 - Friday December 23rd Regular Trash and Recycling Schedule
 - Friday December 23rd City Offices, Library, Park & Rec – Closed
 - Monday December 26th City Offices, Library, Park & Rec – Closed
 - Friday December 30th Regular Trash and Recycling Schedule
 - Monday January 2nd City Offices, Library, Park & Rec – Closed
 - Tuesday January 3rd at 7:00 p.m. Regular City Council Meeting
 - Tuesday January 3rd (after Council) City Council Work Session
 - Monday January 16th – MLK Day City Offices, Library, Park & Rec – Closed
 - Tuesday January 17th at 7:00 p.m. Regular City Council Meeting
 - Tuesday January 17th (after Council) City Council Work Session

The information provided is one-way communication and should not be discussed among you as this could be a violation of the open meeting law.

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By Iowa Finance Authority

The Schelle family of Ogden was able to add space and accessibility to their home with help from the Heart of Iowa Habitat for Humanity and the State Housing Trust Fund. Photo provided by Iowa Finance Authority.

State Housing Trust Fund offers opportunities

Iowa Finance Authority program provides affordable housing assistance.

The State Housing Trust Fund is administered by the Iowa Finance Authority (IFA) and helps ensure safe, decent and affordable housing for Iowans through two programs.

The State Housing Trust Fund programs receive a standing appropriation of \$3 million from the Rebuild Iowa Infrastructure Fund and 30 percent of the Real Estate Transfer Tax, up to a maximum of \$3 million annually.

Local Housing Trust Fund Program

The Local Housing Trust Fund (LHTF) program receives at least 60 percent of the State Housing Trust Fund allocation to provide grants for organizations certified by IFA as a LHTF.

The Iowa Legislature created the LHTF program to allow certified LHTFs the ability to efficiently fulfill unique local affordable housing needs throughout the state.

Eligibility

All LHTF program funding must benefit low-income households at or below 80 percent of the area median income, while at least 30 percent of the grant moneys must be used to serve extremely low-income households at or below 30 percent of the area median income.

LHTF grant funds may be used for initiatives such as:

- Preserving aging housing stock
- Subsidizing local down payment assistance programs
- Providing low-interest loans or grants to assist with:
 - Home rehabilitation
 - Financing construction of new single-family housing for low-income Iowans
 - Supporting housing for persons with disabilities
 - Homeless assistance programs

Eligible Local Housing Trust Fund Program Applicants

There are currently 26 certified LHTFs, serving residents in 92 counties in Iowa. According to the 2010 Census, the geographic service area populations of those 26 LHTFs totals more than 89 percent of the state's population.

LHTFs are the only eligible applicants for the program and must provide a minimum local match of

25 percent of the total grant amount requested. IFA accepts LHTF program applications on an annual basis each fall.

Project-Based Housing Program

Remaining State Housing Trust Fund dollars go to the Project-Based Housing Program, which aids in the development of affordable single-family and multifamily housing in areas that are not served by a certified LHTF or to assist a locally supported affordable housing project that is not eligible to receive funding under a LHTF's Housing Assistance Plan.

IFA accepts State Housing Trust Fund Project-Based Housing Program applications on an ongoing basis until funds are exhausted.

Program Results

The State Housing Trust Fund reached a milestone in 2016, by assisting more than 20,000 affordable housing units for low-income Iowans since the program's creation by the Iowa Legislature in 2003.

Program Accomplishments (since inception through June 30, 2016):

- 20,300 housing units assisted
- \$56.5 million in funding awarded
- \$150 million in other funds leverage
- \$2.66 in other financing for every \$1 of State Housing Trust Fund investment

For more information about how your community may benefit from the State Housing Trust Fund visit IowaFinanceAuthority.gov or contact Terri Rosonke at terri.rosonke@iowa.gov. Iowa Finance Authority is a Partner Program, part of the League's Community Alliance Programs; more information is available at www.iowaleague.org.