

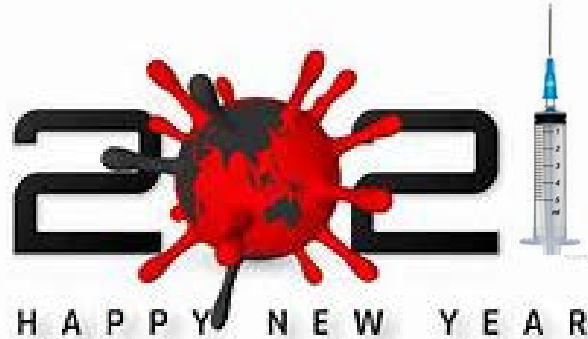
City of Fremont Update

Date: January 1, 2021

To: City Employees/ City Boards/ Mayor & City Council

Happy New Year!

As we prepare to close out what has been a very challenging year, I was thinking back to a time 10 months ago when the world we live in was a drastically different place than the one that lies before us. Yet, it is in this moment that I am filled with gratitude for the steadfast service you have provided to your community and the City. In these situations of crisis, you not only rose to the occasion, but you endured and embraced new ways of serving our community. Thank you!



This New Year's will be unlike any other. I wish you joy and peace amid the difficulties, connections with family and friends, and the warm reflections of holidays past. Please have a safe and Happy New Year's and I look forward to getting back to normal in the new year.

Top City Headlines from 2020

Grants – The number of grants received during 2019-2020 has to be the highest ever. Here are the grants that the City and County have been awarded:

- CDBG – Inglewood/Fremont Levee System Evaluation - \$60,000
- CDBG – Repairs to the Fremont Levee - \$485,000
- CDBG – Repairs to Ames Dike - \$485,000
- CDBG – Repairs to the Rod & Gun Club Dike - \$485,000
- CDBG – New elevator at City Hall - \$475,000
- CDBG – Senior Center improvements - \$350,000
- CCCFF – Renovation to City Auditorium - \$1,125,000
- NET – Electric vehicle incentive program - \$42,500
- NRCS – Resiliency Plan for Rawhide Creek Watershed - \$745,000
- NE Affordable Housing Trust Fund – Renovate flood damaged homes - \$500,000

(CDBG – Community Development Block Grant; CCCFF – Civic and Community Center Financing Fund; NET – NE Environmental Trust; and NRCS – Nebraska Rural Conservation Service)

Southeast Beltway Construction Underway – In May, the City Council approved contributing an additional \$10 million to the State for cost overruns of the Southeast Beltway. The cost overrun will be shared by the City, Costco, Dodge County, Wholystone Farms, Fremont Beef, Fremont Contract Carriers, and Sid Dillon. Construction of the beltway is on schedule and is planned to be complete in 2023.

New Home Developments – Responding to a demand for workforce housing, many new residential developments were approved including, Bluestem Commons (across from Ritz Lake), Fremont Commons (Morningside Road and Hwy 275), Morningside Pointe (Luther and Morningside Roads), Fountain Springs, Gallery 23, Sunridge, and Northside Townhomes.

There is no job so important and no service so urgent that we cannot take the time to do the work safely!

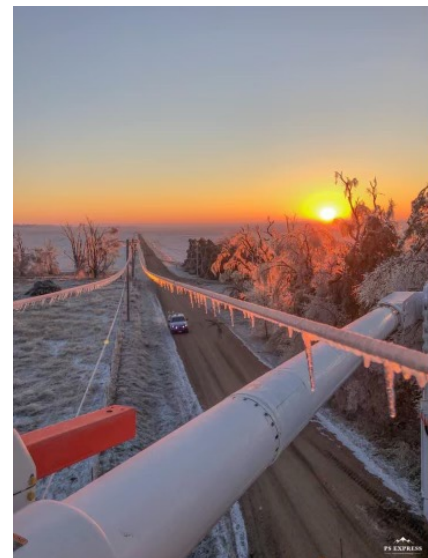
COVID-19 – Much of the year was consumed with COVID-19 issues. In response to the outbreak in March, the City closed Splash Station, Senior/Friendship Center, Christensen Fieldhouse, playgrounds and ballfields across town, and the Keene Memorial Library for several months. It was not until June 1 before the City started reopening the facilities to the public. In April, the Board of Health instituted a directed health measure to close bars, restaurants, and other businesses to the public and then issued a second health directive in November to require masks to be worn indoors in any business open to the public. The City’s Emergency Medical Services (EMS) employees were the first to receive the COVID-19 vaccine just before Christmas (shown in picture).



Industrial Growth – This last year we saw the full impact of Lincoln Premium Poultry/Costco to electric, water, and sewer demand as they achieved full production. We also welcomed the news that Wholestone Farms would be expanding their plant and adding a second shift in the 2022-2023 timeframe. Their expansion will bring 600-800 more jobs to the area and cause the City to expand the wastewater treatment plant to accommodate their needs.

Certificate of Excellence in Reliability – In March we received word that the City earned the award for providing reliable and safe electric service for the third consecutive year from the American Public Power Association. The only other utility in Nebraska to earn the award was Grand Island.

Parks/Street/Utility Projects Completed – The City approved building a new splash pad in John C. Fremont Park, praised the Kiwanis Club for installing new playground equipment at Johnson Park, and saw a new canopy installed at the Senior Center. Some of the street projects completed included overlaying Bell Street (from Linden Avenue to 23rd Street), Johnson Road South Extension (from Jack Sutton to Morningside), and a portion of Luther Road South. For utility projects, the generator for Unit #8 at the Lon D. Wright Power Plant passed its 40,000-hour inspection and is back online producing electricity. More than 2,000 electric customers lost power, some for several days, when Fremont was hit with an ice storm on November 10. The picture on the right is an example of the ice that collected on power lines. The two houses next to the Library were demolished and the City received an AA- credit rating on the issuance of \$8.5 million of utility bonds and an AA credit rating on a \$8 million issuance of general obligation bonds for the Southeast Beltway. The utility bonds netted the City with an interest rate of 1.36% and the general obligation bonds netted the City with an interest rate of .68%; both are amazingly low rates!



City Sees Increase in Sale & Use Tax Receipts – An indication of robust economy in Fremont, despite the pandemic, the City saw an increase in sales & use tax receipts. At the end of the City’s fiscal year in September, sales tax receipts were up nearly \$500,000 from the previous year. Also, from January 2015 to June 2020, Fremont’s sales & use tax receipts have grown by more than 150%.

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