

## City of Fremont Update

Date: October 16, 2020

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

### City Maintains its AA- Credit Rating

In a letter from S&P Global, the City was notified that we have been assigned an AA- long-term credit rating for the issuance of the combined utility revenue bonds. S&P Global (previously Standard & Poor's) is an American credit rating agency and the largest of the three credit-rating agencies, which also includes Moody's Investors Service and Fitch Ratings. S&P Global provides an independent opinion of the City's overall creditworthiness and financial strength. The rating is very beneficial to the City when issuing bonds for several reasons. First, it provides assurance to those purchasing the bonds that the City is a good risk; and second, the rating lowers the interest cost the City pays on the bond financing.

**S&P Global**  
Ratings

S&P Global gave the City a stable outlook. They reported that the City's operational management assessment was rated as strong, saying, "We view management's proactive rate-making practices as a credit positive." The report went on to say that the City's fixed-cost coverage metrics are extremely strong; the City's liquidity and reserves are very strong; and Fremont's debt and liabilities are extremely strong. The report said, "The City has a debt-to-capitalization ratio of 36% as of fiscal year 2019, which reflects a moderately low debt burden."

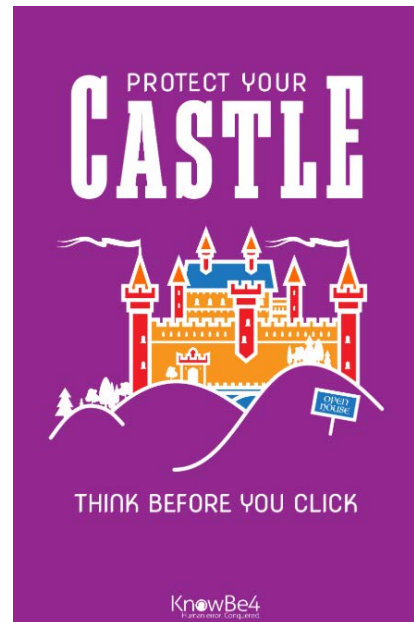
The City has been able to maintain its AA- credit rating with S&P Global for the past 15 plus years. Grand Island has an A1 credit rating from Moody's Investor Services and the City of Hastings has an AA- credit rating from S&P Global. Both are communities in Nebraska with City utility departments, like Fremont, that are credit rated.

### October is Cyber Security Awareness Month

As I shared last week, October is Cyber Security Awareness month. This week we focus on securing devices at home.

As millions of people have grown accustomed to and continue working from home, this delineation between work and home has become increasingly porous. Suffice it to say, devices — no matter the environment in which they are situated — must be secure without any performance trade-offs. Here are some things you can do to keep your devices secure at home:

- Have separate devices for work and personal use
- Connect to Ethernet (wired) or at least WPA2 (Wi-Fi Protected Access 2) for a secure wireless connection
- Use a Virtual Private Network (VPN) whenever possible to access employer systems/data
- Keep router and modem firmware up-to-date
- Secure Internet of Things (IoT) devices (smart speakers, appliances, etc.) by using strong, unique passwords



Cyber-criminals often use current news, sensational topics, and promises of shocking photos and video to get you to click on malicious links. Don't fall for it! Stop and think before you click.

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

## North Luther Road “Blow-up” Repaired

The picture on the right is the new concrete on North Luther Road, replacing a portion of the road that blew-up this summer. A pavement “blow-up” is a fracture that occurs when a roadway surface expands at a crack or joint where moisture has seeped in. The crack weakens the pavement, and the heat causes the pavement to buckle and warp. When the blow-up occurred this summer, many people called asking why the City installed a speed bump on the heat expanded the street enough to create the buckle in the street. Despite the term blow-up, the pavement does not actually explode. The Street Department replaced the blow-up last week causing a temporary closure and detour while the repairs were being made.



Luther Road. We did not;

## City Trying Out Mastic Machine

The Street Department is renting a mastic machine on a trial basis. The machine, similar to the City’s tar machine, uses an aggregate blended with mastic tar. Unlike tar, it can be used to fill large cracks and gaps. The mastic must be applied hot (between 380 and 400 degrees) to cracks that are dry and free from debris and loose particles. Some of the areas that mastic is being applied include Nye Avenue, W. Military Avenue, N. Broad Street, the Bell Street viaduct, some of the alleys downtown, and other various locations around town. The Street Department will monitor the sealed and repaired areas to see how well the mastic fill performs when compared to cracks filled with tar. If it outperforms tar, they may purchase a mastic machine in the future.



## Over-pressure Mistake Destroys Natural Gas Meter

An accident that blew up a natural gas meter was caused by a heating & air-conditioning technician conducting a pressure test of a natural gas line running from the City’s gas meter to the home’s internal gas piping. The picture on the right is the results of this mishap.

Steve Carnahan, the City’s Gas Superintendent, said testing the line is part of a safety test required before natural gas can be turned on. He said technicians are supposed to fill the line with 20-pounds of air pressure for at least 30 minutes to be sure there are no leaks. Apparently, the technician put more than 30-pounds of air in the line before the meter blew apart. Steve said luckily no one was hurt, because the meter register (lower right corner) was blown across the street.



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## Proposed Dodge County & City of Fremont Joint Law Enforcement Center Corner of 29<sup>th</sup> Street & Lincoln Avenue

This is part six of an eight-part series to provide information in regards to the proposed Joint Law Enforcement Center. The entire series can be found on the City of Fremont's website: <http://www.fremontne.gov/826/Joint-Law-Enforcement-Center>

### **BROWN AND BLUE – WORKING TOGETHER**

Despite the color of their uniform (the Sheriff's Department wears a brown uniform and the City Police Department wears a blue uniform) law enforcement is all about protecting the public. This is one of the reasons that the Dodge County Supervisors and the Fremont Mayor and City Council started talks about a new joint law enforcement center over a decade ago.



L to R: Dodge County Sheriff, Steve Hesper; 911 Communications Director, Shelly Holzerland; and Fremont Police Chief, Jeff Elliott

They are not the only ones to start talks as more and more law enforcement departments are pairing up to reap the benefits of a joint law enforcement center. In Nebraska, there are several law enforcement departments that have teamed up including: the Kearney Police and the Buffalo County Sheriff; the South Sioux City Police and the Dakota County Sheriff; and the Plattsmouth Police and the Cass County Sheriff. Other counties and cities our size in other states include: Steamboat Springs Police Department and Routt County Sheriff's Department in Colorado and the City of Moorhead Police Department and Clay County Sheriff's Department in Minnesota; and there are many more.

The joint partnership between Dodge County and the City of Fremont began in 2011 when the County Supervisors and the Fremont Mayor and City Council signed an Interlocal Cooperation Agreement for a joint 911 Communications Center. Then in 2018, an Interlocal Cooperation Agreement was signed by the County and the City to work towards a joint law enforcement center for the benefit of public safety. These early discussions and signed agreements have laid the groundwork for how the men and women in the brown and blue uniforms can work together for taxpayers.

### **CRIME KNOWS NO BOUNDARIES**

Because crime knows no boundaries, brown and blue work side by side to lower crime and protect the public. In fact, since 2016, when Dodge, Cuming, and Saunders Counties and the cities of Fremont, Blair, Wahoo, and Yutan signed an Interlocal

**Questions?** Email us: [publiccomments@fremontne.gov](mailto:publiccomments@fremontne.gov)

Call us: Lt. Shane Wimer 402-727-2630, Deputy Brie Frank 402-727-2700

\*Disclaimer: This is not an endorsement nor a solicitation for a Joint Law Enforcement Center. This is being provided for educational purposes only.



Cooperation Agreement to form III Corps, brown and blue have worked together to apprehend and prosecute drug dealers. These organizations knew then that collaboration between law enforcement agencies opens lines of communications, lowers crime, and provides better protection to the public. In addition, working side by side allows for better and more accurate information shared between departments. Especially in today's high-tech world, having access to information, not only reduces misunderstandings and miscommunications, but it improves services and public safety.

### KEEP THE PEACE – BACK THE BADGE

When we work together as a community to keep the peace, we keep our citizens safe. Similarly, when we have a collective understanding of what we are seeing in our communities, we have a better picture of the threats that faces us. The proposed joint law enforcement center is an example of the community coming together to keep the peace as well as brown and blue working together to discuss and address the things threatening our communities. But most important, a joint law enforcement center represents the citizens commitment and support for our law enforcement agencies.



**Talk Shop with a Cop: Every week in October from 5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. at:**

Tuesdays at Hy-Vee  
Wednesdays at Menards  
Thursdays at Hy-Vee

### Other Public Events:

October 15, 2020, 7:00-8:00 p.m.  
North Bend Fire Hall  
140 W. 7<sup>th</sup> Street, North Bend

October 22, 2020, 6:30-7:30 p.m.  
Fremont City Auditorium  
Community Room  
925 N. Broad Street, Fremont

### Questions and Answers:

**Q:** Why must Fremont voters consider two ballot questions?

**A:** Fremont voters will vote on a County and a City ballot question because they live both in the County and in the City. Voters outside Fremont will only vote on the County ballot question.

**Q:** If the City and the County would consider bond issues to remodel or build separate law enforcement buildings, would Fremont voters still be asked to vote on two ballot questions?

**A:** Yes, constructing two separate facilities doesn't change the fact that Fremont voters live in both the County and the City, so they would be required to vote on bond issues for a new County building and a new City building.

**Q:** Why build a new facility? Can the existing Police Department building be renovated?

**A:** The Fremont Police Department is housed in a 60-year-old building that was originally designed as offices for the Department of Utilities. The major components of the building are failing: roof, windows, HVAC system, electrical and plumbing. These items are replaceable but replacing these components still does not meet the needs of the Department and the building remains land-locked, leaving no room for future growth.

**Q:** How much general obligation bond debt do other similarly-sized cities in Nebraska have?

**A:** Here are the populations and bond debt from other Nebraska cities: Columbus – 23,468 - \$18,655,000; North Platte – 23,659 - \$19,870,000; Norfolk – 24,449 - \$14,168,543; Hastings – 24,692 - \$3,845,000; Fremont – 26,383 - \$1,880,000; and Kearney – 33,867 - \$31,085,000.

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# HALLOWEEN & COVID-19

*Tips on how to keep you and your family safe this Halloween.*



## CELEBRATE WITH YOUR HOUSEHOLD

**Avoid parties and gatherings. Staying home is the best thing you can do to stay safe this Halloween. You can still enjoy Halloween by decorating and planning fun activities at home.**



- Keep groups to 8 or less
- Use hand sanitizer while out and wash hands when you return home
- Don't eat candy while trick-or-treating
- Wear a cloth mask under your costume mask

## TRICK-OR-TREATING?

## KEEP A SAFE DISTANCE

**When outside, make sure to stay 6 feet apart from others at all times. Avoid crowded areas and places where you can't socially distance.**



## OR TRICK? TREAT!

- Set up outside
- Wear gloves when handing out candy
- Don't allow children to reach into the treat bowl

## HANDING OUT CANDY?

