



August  
2020

## West Des Moines eNewsletter

### City to bring high-speed internet choices to WDM!

Mayor Steve Gaer announced during a virtual news conference in early July that the City is constructing a citywide “open access” conduit network that will allow high-speed internet providers to enter the market by leasing space in the conduit network.

This will help increase competition and further the goal that all residents and businesses across the City have access to world-class internet. **Google Fiber** will be the first tenant to lease space in the network and to provide high-speed internet citywide.

“We couldn’t be more pleased to work with an outstanding company like Google Fiber to help make this happen,” Gaer said. “Now more than ever, reliable high-speed internet is critical. It’s amazing that in just four years, West Des Moines is well on its way to achieving the WDM 2036 Plan goal of finding an innovative way to provide access to broadband for all our residents and businesses.”

A key element of the City’s 20-year strategic plan calls for all residents, regardless of their means, to benefit from high-quality and high-speed connectivity. Gaer said that experience in other cities indicates that increasing the number of broadband service providers leads to better pricing and better service throughout the City.

“Equitable and affordable broadband access in all areas of our community is a top priority for our City,” he said.

Property taxes will not be increased to fund this project. The City will fund its share of the project cost by issuing taxable General Obligation bonds. Since West Des Moines has earned the top credit rating from Moody’s and Standard & Poor’s, City officials will be able to finance the project at greatly reduced interest rates.



Every home and business in WDM is eligible for a free connection point from their property to the municipal fiber conduit. The City will be installing these connections and will contact every business and resident in the near future to ensure everyone has the opportunity to participate. As high-speed providers lease space in the conduit, residents will be able to choose a provider and plan that meets their needs and budget.

Residents who are interested can sign up for updates on availability at [google.com/fiber/wdm](https://www.google.com/fiber/wdm).

Construction of the citywide conduit network will begin this fall and is estimated to be finished in approximately 2½ years.

Connect with us!



## Raccoon River Park Boathouse is now open

The first component of the City's Five Waters Project, the Raccoon River Park Boathouse, is now open! The new state-of-the-art facility offers boat lockers, restrooms and non-motorized boat rentals including canoes, kayaks, stand-up paddle boards and more.

Director of Parks and Recreation Sally Ortgies said everyone should have a chance to experience the beauty of Blue Heron Lake whether they own a boat or not. "There are so many nice areas that can only be explored from the water, and rentals at the Boathouse will make that possible," she said.

CanoeSport Outfitters was selected as the Boathouse Concessionaire earlier this year following a



Request for Proposal (RFP) process. CanoeSport Outfitters has been providing quality paddle-sport instruction and adventure travel for more than 25 years.

The Boathouse was funded by LOSST (Local Option Sales and Services Tax) revenue and an Iowa Department of Natural Resources REAP (Resource Enhancement and Protection) grant.

The facility is open Sunday – Friday, 10 a.m. – 8 p.m., and

Saturday, 8 a.m. – 8 p.m. [For more information, visit wdm.iowa.gov/boathouse](http://wdm.iowa.gov/boathouse) or check out the Raccoon River Boathouse Facebook page @RRPBoathouse.

## New website provides an open look at City financial data

The City of West Des Moines is partnering with Tyler Technologies to create a financial transparency website that makes the City's expense and revenue information open and accessible for residents.

Users are now able to view financial data, including budgeted and actual transactions for the current fiscal year, as well as historical information from previous years, through a link on the City's website.

The information is updated weekly and tools within the program sort data and create graphs by category, department, function, fund or vendor. Users have access to information covering every level of finance, from fiscal year total to detailed vendor payments.



City Manager Tom Hadden said the new website has been a high priority for the City.

"Open government is critical for maintaining public confidence and trust in local government," he said. "This website provides an easy way for people to find out how their City allocates resources and funds programs and services that make West Des Moines a great place to live."

The new West Des Moines – Open Finance website is powered by Socrata and offered through Tyler Technologies. [Anyone can access the site by visiting the City's website.](#)

## EAB infestation forces City to issue tree removal notices

As anticipated, the emerald ash borer (EAB) population has reached the level to where untreated trees are declining and dying rapidly.

Homeowners with infested ash trees on their property are now left with no choice but to have the trees removed. Ash trees that die or have substantial dieback due to EAB are extraordinarily dangerous. The dead wood becomes highly unstable and brittle with limbs and branches failing at any time and under any condition.

WDM City Code (7-10-7E) references “Dead, Diseased or Insect Ridden Trees” on private property and the ability of the City to require the removal of hazardous trees. Code Enforcement Officers, along with the assistance of Forestry Staff, will be assessing trees that pose a serious risk to pedestrians, the traveling public and neighboring property.

**Written notice will be served to property owners with dead or dying trees threatening sidewalks and streets.**

Signs that a tree may be infested with the ash borer include thinning or dying branches in the top of the tree, evidence of excessive woodpecker activity, numerous sprouts anywhere on the tree and/or the presence of EAB larvae or adult insects.

Urban Forestry Supervisor John Olds said if you haven’t had your ash trees treated with a chemical injection, it’s more than likely too late.

“It’s time to call a tree care professional and talk about treatment or removing these trees because they are dangerous and prone to breaking apart with no warning,” he said.

The City of West Des Moines has been preparing for the emerald ash borer for about the last seven years.

An initial EAB Management Plan was developed in 2013 and modified in 2014 to reflect advancements in injection treatments capable of protecting an ash tree for approximately two years.

The City has successfully been treating 830 public ash trees since 2015 and has removed several hundred

more that did not meet the criteria for treatment.

**[If you have any questions, contact John Olds at \(515\) 222-3417 or by email.](#)**



# Entrance enhancements signs make their debut

Travelers may notice new Entrance Enhancement Signs that are being installed in six locations along the outer West Des Moines city limits.

The new signs were designed by Shive-Hattery in West Des Moines, and they are meant to serve as a colorful greeting for motorists entering the City. City Engineer Brian Hemesath said the City is excited to finally bring this project to life.

“A monument sign is a welcoming symbol when you enter a community whether you are visiting for the first time, passing through or on your way home,” he said. “We hope it sends a message that you are welcome here in West Des Moines.”

The signs have been installed at:

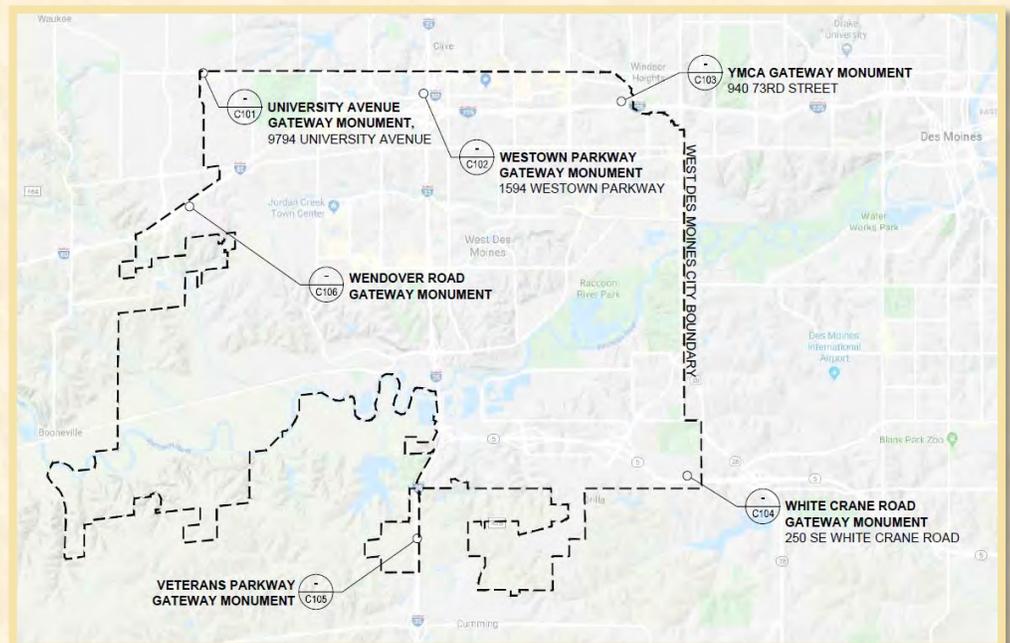
1. University Avenue Gateway Monument, near 98th & University
2. Westtown Parkway Gateway Monument, along I-80/I-35 Southbound
3. YMCA Gateway Monument, along I-235 Westbound
4. White Crane Road Gateway Monument, along IA-5 Westbound
5. Veterans Parkway Gateway Monument, along I-35 Northbound

6. Wendover Road Gateway Monument, along I-80 Eastbound

Crews have now completed the electric connections that will light the signs at night. The lighting will be adjusted over the course of the next few weeks according to how existing street lighting affects the visibility of the design.

The signs are part of the City’s Capital Improvement program and cost \$1.2 million, which was budgeted over a four year period. The City hired Shive-Hattery in August 2017 to study the best locations for the signs and assist staff with the design. After a collaborative effort between elected officials and staff, the design

was approved in August 2018 and fabrication of the signs started in July 2019. Construction of the foundations began in February 2020.



## School supply donations needed

West Des Moines Human Services will be holding its annual school supply distribution for qualifying low-income West Des Moines residents on August 18 and 19.

Last year, 463 kids received backpacks and school supplies due to the generosity of our community.

Please consider donating supplies, or making a monetary contribution which allows items to be purchased in bulk.

**Supplies needed include:** folders, notebooks, colored pencils, markers, calculators, supply boxes, scissors, rulers, paper, pencils, erasers, pens, backpacks, etc.

Donations are accepted on Mondays or Thursdays between 8:30 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. at West Des Moines Human Services (139 6<sup>th</sup> Street).

Supplies also may be ordered from their Amazon Supply List and shipped directly.

[To donate or for more information, please visit our website](#) or contact Mindy Hotovec at (515) 222-3663 or [email her](#).



## School supply distribution for qualifying households

West Des Moines Human Services will be holding a curbside school supply distribution for qualifying, low-income households on Tuesday, August 18 and Wednesday, August 19.

Proof of address and income verification is required. All recipients must be residents of West Des Moines.

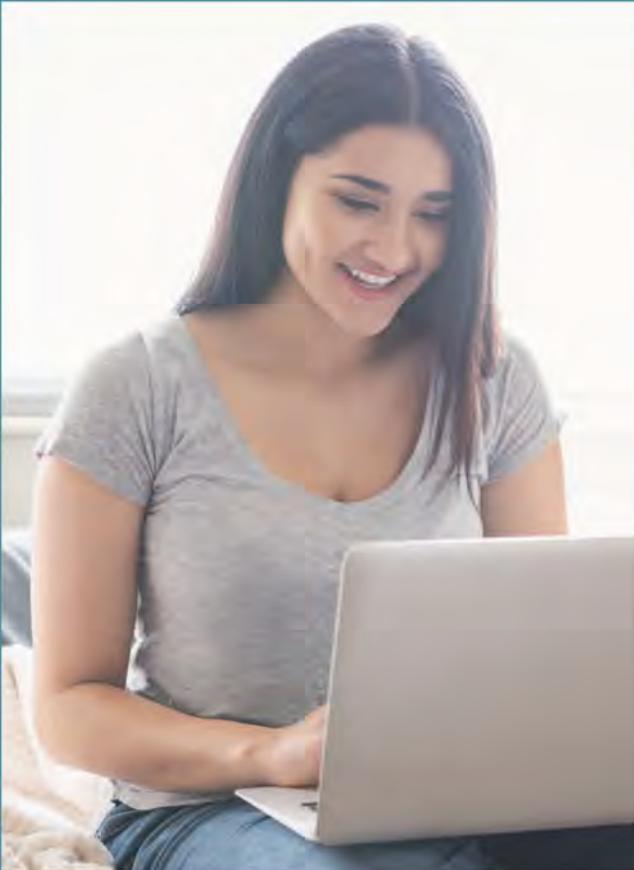
**Registration deadline is Friday, August 14. [To register, please visit our website.](#)**

School physicals are also offered for qualifying low-income,

uninsured or under-insured youth at the Valley Junction Free Medical Clinic located at West Des Moines Human Services.

No appointment necessary. Walk-ins welcome on Tuesday evenings between 7:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. as well as from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. on the third Tuesday of each month.





## Respond your way to the 2020 Census.

By April 1, 2020, every home will receive an invitation to participate in the 2020 Census. You will have three options for responding. All of them are easy!



Online



By Phone



By Mail

The 2020 Census marks the first time you will be invited to respond online—even on your mobile device. The online form is available in many different languages. Visit [2020CENSUS.GOV](https://2020CENSUS.GOV) for more information about responding online.

[2020CENSUS.GOV](https://2020CENSUS.GOV)

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United States\*  
Census  
2020



## Construction Updates



If you would like to learn more about Engineering and Parks and Recreation projects under construction, just visit our [website](#). You can also view drone footage of construction projects by [visiting Engineering Services YouTube Channel!](#)

## Use **YourGOV** to talk to us!

To report a violation or any non-emergency issue, visit our website at [www.wdm.iowa.gov](http://www.wdm.iowa.gov) and select “Online Service Desk” at the top of the page in the horizontal menu.

Then just follow the directions by selecting a location (type in West Des Moines and Iowa, and click on the map so we get an accurate address).

Once you’ve completed those steps, just click



on the “+” icon and select the type of issue you’re reporting from the drop-down menu. You can even send us a photo by browsing for an image on your phone or desktop.

If you don’t like using a laptop or desktop computer, you can download the **YourGOV App** for your iPhone from the iTunes Store or visit Google Play to download the App for Android.

## 2020 Solid Waste Events for WDM Residents

August 1	Tire Drop-off 7:30 a.m. – 4 p.m., West Des Moines Public Services, 560 S. 16th Street
September 12	Scrap Appliance, Metal Drop-off * 8 a.m. – 12:00 (noon), West Des Moines Public Services, 560 S. 16th Street
November 28	Yard Waste Pickup Ends
Dec. 28, 2020 – Jan. 8, 2021	Winter Yard Waste & Christmas Tree Collection

### Scrap Tire Drop-off event rescheduled for Saturday, August 1

The annual **City Scrap Tire Drop-off** event, postponed due to COVID-19, has been rescheduled for **Saturday, August 1**, at the WDM Public Services facility, 560 S. 16th Street.

- ◆ Maximum of five (5) tires per household (no rims)
- ◆ No scrap tires generated by any business
- ◆ No large semi trailer, farm or tractor tires
- ◆ No solid tires such as lawnmower, forklift or golf cart tires
- ◆ No tires containing hazardous materials



\*Paper shredding services will not be provided by the City due to the variety of privately sponsored paper shredding events in our area throughout the year.

Yard Waste and Annual Spring Cleanup events are available to all WDM residents who are eligible for solid waste collection.

For Household Hazardous Waste Disposal Options, [visit Metro Waste Authority's website](#).

For more information, [visit www.wdm.iowa.gov](http://www.wdm.iowa.gov) or call WDM Public Services at 222-3480.

# Keep Your Family Safe From Household Chemicals



**Chemicals you use in your home can be dangerous to your health and the environment. To keep your family safe, follow these safety tips when you use, store or throw them out.**

## Use and storage tips:

- Follow the instructions on the label when you use and store household chemicals.
- Don't mix products. This can cause deadly gases or cause a fire.
- Store products in their original containers.
- Store anything that can catch on fire away from your home.
- Only fill portable gasoline containers outdoors in an airy area. Make sure to place the container on the ground when you fill it.
- Never store materials that can cause a fire in the sun or near an open flame or heat source.
- Store these materials out of the reach of children and pets.
- Use safety locks and guardrails on shelves and cabinets when you store materials. This will prevent them from falling or tipping.
- Wear gloves or goggles when you use these materials.



## When you need to throw them out:

- Follow the instructions on the label.
- Aerosol cans might contain chemicals that can burn. If you put them in the trash, they can explode or start a fire.
- If you have a spill, clean the area and put the containers in an airy place. If you cannot control the spill, or are unsure about cleanup and disposal, call your local fire department.



For more information and free fire-safety resources, visit [www.usfa.fema.gov](http://www.usfa.fema.gov).

