

Update Rock Island News Release

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Update Rock Island is a segment at City Council meetings given by Mayor Mark Schwiebert focusing on news in Rock Island. The video segment from the meeting is available on the home page of www.rigov.org and provides more information on the topics listed.

Metro Agreement To Spur Columbia Park Development

Development will start at Columbia Park. The City will consider a development agreement with Metro to build a new operations and maintenance facility on land east of the Quad City Industrial Center, replacing Metro's existing building at 2929 5th Ave. The plan is to construct a 135,000 square foot building to accommodate Metro's current 60 busses. Future plans include adding up to 210,000 square feet and a total fleet of 120 buses. Staffing at the facility is projected to grow from 149 to 297. The initial project investment is estimated to approach \$30 million.

City Council voted in favor of the development agreement.

City Considers Financial Commitment to Jackson Square

Jackson Square is an \$18 million effort by Rock Island Economic Growth Corporation (GROWTH) to convert the Illinois Oil Products property (321 24th Street) from its current use into a 72 unit, mixed income, rental residential complex. The market rate / affordable unit split is 80% / 20%. The unit sizes will be one, two, and three bedroom with rents ranging from \$372 to \$427 for the affordable units to \$660 to \$850 for the market rate units. The agreement provides for City support in the amount of \$1 million to be made in two payments; an initial \$500,000 when construction financing closes after April 1, 2009 and a second \$500,000 payment after April 1, 2010. The source of funding is the Downtown Tax Increment Finance District. A second element of city support is the conveyance of a parcel of land adjacent to the project. This land will be sold to GROWTH for \$1.

City Council voted in favor of the development agreement.

Bioremediation Efforts Underway West of Quad City Botanical Center

EnviroNET Inc. was hired to implement the IEPA approved environmental clean-up and closure plan for three properties the City owns immediately west of the Quad City Botanical Center and a fourth property on the southeast corner of Third Avenue and 24th Street. These properties formerly housed a motorcycle and engine repair business and a filling station. Remediation of these parcels will facilitate construction of the Quad City Botanical Center Children's Garden and Jackson Square. Bioremediation efforts have started at the sites.

City Council voted in favor of the contract.

Downtown Events

Downtown Rock Island should have many events this summer as 58 applications were submitted to use the Great River Plaza. Events range from The District's summer music festivals such as Gumbo Ya Ya and Ya Maka My Weekend, to the sporting events Quad Cities

Criterion and Rock Island Grand Prix, along with arts events such as Gallery Hop!, and business-sponsored events and concerts.

City Council approved all events.

General Obligation Bond Sale for 2010 Capital Improvements

The City is planning to issue \$8.82 million in general obligation bonds for fiscal year 2010 capital improvements. The sale of general obligation bonds for the following projects is anticipated to occur on March 23, 2009:

- Armory Park Phase II - \$5,440,000
- Rock Island Fitness and Activity Center \$2,500,000
- 11th Street Land Purchase (TIF Project) \$400,000
- Special Assessment Street Project \$ 480,000

City Council authorized the bond sale.

“Good Cents” Program Announced

The City is starting a new program to help homeowners with funding gaps while participating in the City’s roof emergency loan program, which offers up to \$6,000 in funding for roof repair. Called the “Good Cents Program,” citizens are asked to participate in funding the program by rounding up while paying their utility bills; the extra cents will be placed into a fund to help homeowners. The Good Cents Program will offer up to \$1,000 for qualified homeowners in need of supplemental assistance. The Rauch Foundation has already awarded the program \$3,000 to get it started. The program is slated to start March 2, 2009.