



OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
FROM: Patrick Urich, City Manager *Patrick Urich*
DATE: March 8, 2013
SUBJECT: Issues Update

The following are issues related to the City for the weekly Issues Update. If there are additional items you believe should be included, please let me know.

CAPITAL PROJECT REPORT: Please see the attached report.

CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU REPORT: Below are the activities reported to the City Manager's Office by the Peoria Area Convention and Visitors Bureau:

- Through the month of February, we have confirmed 19 conventions with over 8,800 expected room nights, using 30 Peoria Civic Center days. Of these, 7 are new groups.
- Since January 1, we have provided the area hotels and PCC with 26 leads representing 13,400 room nights and 37 PCC days. 21 of these leads were for new groups representing 11,000 room nights and 28 PCC days.
- At the end of February, we had 41 pending bids out to clients. These pending bids total nearly 20,000 room nights and 65 PCC days.
- On a down note... we were not awarded the contracts for 17 bids. These lost opportunities totaled almost 12,500 room nights and 26 PCC days.
- The Tourism Reserve Fund Committee met in February to review 14 applications. This is the largest number of applications presented in recent history.
- We hosted a meeting with about 40 area hotel General Managers and Directors of Sales in February to update these stakeholders on our marketing and sales activities.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT REORGANIZATION UPDATE:

One of the Council Goals for the City Manager during 2013 is to complete the reorganization of departments and divisions within the City organizational structure.

To that end, a further step has been taken in the amalgamation of the Planning & Growth Management, Inspections, and Economic Development departments into the new Community Development Department. The combination of these three departments creates significant economies of scale and far better coordination and communication in all City development processes.

The three departments had a combined total of 51 employees during the 2011 budget year. The 2013 budget authorizes the new department to have a total of 37 employees; a 27% reduction in staff. With new procedures that have already been put in place and with an ongoing program targeted at identifying and implementing efficiencies, the new Community Development Department will be able to provide enhanced service to the community with far fewer employees than in past years.

The new Community Development Department will continue to provide the same suite of services that were provided under the prior three departments. These services include planning, zoning, mapping & analysis, neighborhood development, grants management, code enforcement, building inspections, economic development, and real estate management.

The City Manager has appointed Ross Black, currently the Interim Planning & Growth Management Director to the position of Community Development Director. Ross has served as the Interim Planning Director for the past fifteen months. Prior to the interim assignment, Ross held positions in Code Enforcement, Neighborhood Development, Grants Management, Financial and Management Analysis, Planning, and Zoning during twenty years of employment with the City. Ross received a bachelor's degree from Knox College and a master's degree from Illinois State University. He holds various HUD program certifications, is LEED and CNU accredited, and is an AICP planner.

The new Community Development Department is authorized to have three supervisory positions; the Director and two Assistant Directors. A job posting was released this past week for an Assistant Director Position with a focus on economic development (as directed by Council during the budget sessions). The first screening of applicants for this position will take place in early March, with the goal of having a qualified candidate in position by the early second quarter. The focus on this Assistant Director will be to re-build the internal City economic development function and to integrate that function with the ongoing regional economic development effort. The other Assistant Director position will be filled by Joe Dulin, currently the Interim Inspections Director. Joe has served as the Interim Inspections Director for the past fourteen months. Prior to the interim assignment, he held positions in Code Enforcement and Financial Analysis during his employment with the City. Prior to joining the City of Peoria, Joe held positions in financial and management analysis for the City/County of Denver. Joe received a bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Illinois at Springfield. The responsibilities assigned to Joe will include management of the building inspections and code enforcement function, operational direction for the department (including the Development Center), department technology items, and department budget.