

2019 IONA STATE OF THE CITY

The time has come for us to reflect on the happenings of this last year.

First, I would like to say thank you to the “great employees” that we have here in Iona. They continue to impress me day by day as I see their professionalism and the dedication that they have for our community. I am grateful for their efforts on our behalf.

Many thanks to those involved in the planning, preparation, and execution of the Iona Day celebration. It was a huge event this year that was very well attended and a great success. I would like to personally thank Larie Elliott for her efforts in planning and organizing this event. Her efforts will be missed this coming year as she has stepped back as Event Coordinator this coming year. I would like to also thank Meridee Wobig for accepting the challenge this coming year of Event Coordinator for Iona Day. If there are any in the community that would like to get involved in the Iona Day celebration, please contact the staff at the City Office. An event as big as this requires a lot of individual help.

This year, we started the construction on our new water tank. I am pleased to say that the new water tank is built and that it turned out just as planned. If you drive to the east end of 49th North, you can see the completed tank. We still need to complete the well house and finish the site work. These things are planned to be finished in the spring of 2020. We are also to receive a grant from the Army Corp of Engineers in the amount of \$500,000. This grant is a match funds grant, but the monies the City has thus far contributed for the water tank will cover our portion. This is great news for us. This money will allow us to finish all of the original goals we identified as needs for all of the water system, for example, a new generator on Well #2. We originally hoped we could do this work within the water system upgrades. As the bids came in, we realized we were going to have a shortfall in revenue to complete this portion, so we scaled back on the things we didn't positively need to accomplish. We will now be able to complete everything.

One of the needed improvements that were accomplished this year was the walking path extension on the north side of Denning Avenue, from Ashwood Acres all the way to the Barnes subdivision. We were able to pay for this with a grant from the State Tax Eliminator Fund through the Local Highway Technical Assistance Council (LHTAC). This should greatly improve the safety of our children as they attend Iona Elementary.

The City continues to grow, which can be a blessing and a detriment. The Planning & Zoning Commission and the City Council continue to work hard to try and control what that growth looks like and how it affects all of us in the community. Growth will continue to be a big issue and a challenge for our community in the future.

This year, we started an agreement with the Bonneville County Sheriff's Office for providing police protection in Iona. I am happy to report that this collaboration is going very well. Patrolling in Iona is vastly greater than it has been in the past. We don't have enough time in this agreement to tell if the crime rates in Iona have been significantly lowered, but so far comparative numbers show a decrease.

The City has installed radar speed signs on four streets in Iona and they have had a very positive result. Citations on those roads have come down and all reports have shown those signs as a significant contributing factor. Over the next couple of years, the City is trying to install radar signs on all of the ingress roads into Iona. Hopefully they too will show an improvement in speeding.

The Planning & Zoning Commission has taken on the task of updating our current Comprehensive Plan. This will be a significant task for them. We are not looking to produce a new plan, but to update our existing Comprehensive Plan. If you have any suggestions, please contact the City Office.

The Iona Sports Program continues to grow and the cost for such is not being paid for by the taxpayers of Iona, but by those participating in it. Heidi Gummow, the Sports Director, continues to do an outstanding job!

We started the purchase of a 1.57 cfs water right late in 2018. The final payment will be made in the next couple of weeks and our obligation to that debt will be done. That is great news.

All in all, Iona City is in great shape. We have savings for emergencies and the financial obligations going forward. The water project will be finished this coming spring and the new well will be coming on line to serve the communities' needs for many years to come.

Iona is such a great community to live. The reason for our past and for our future successes continues to be the great and positive folks who call Iona home. It is my hope that this success as a community, will continue well into future generations. If the past is any indicator, than our future is very bright indeed!

Thanks,

Mayor Dan Gubler

* Delivered by Mayor Dan Gubler at the City Council Meeting held on Tuesday, January 21st, 2020.