



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Janet Wilwerding
Communications Specialist
O: 515.727.7781
C: 515.414.0662
jwilwerding@cityofjohnston.com

Johnston City Council Unanimously Approves FY 2020 Budget

JOHNSTON, Iowa – The Johnston City Council unanimously approved the City’s budget for Fiscal Year 2020 on Monday, March 4, 2019. The budget adopted will facilitate growth while ensuring priorities are met. The new budget will go into effect on July 1, 2019.

The \$56.9 million budget increases the property tax rate slightly from \$11.52 to **\$11.65** per \$1,000 of taxable assessed value. The \$0.13 increase is necessary due to the community’s growth and the need for additional public safety personnel. The general fund levy for Johnston is **\$6.83** per \$1,000 valuation of assessed value – second lowest in Polk County, \$1.27 below the legal cap of \$8.10.

“I am very pleased with where the budget ended up this year,” said City Administrator Jim Sanders. “There was a lot of hard work put into getting this budget finalized by city officials and staff. City leaders prioritized projects based on the needs of our community and feedback received during the recent community survey. As our community continues to grow, so does the demand for services, especially first responders and those who maintain city streets. It is imperative we maintain a tax rate that not only allows our city to grow but allows maintenance of our existing infrastructure and equipment as well.”

Highlights of the FY 2020 Capital Improvement Plan include the following projects:

Road and Trail Projects

- Continuation of public improvements east of Merle Hay Road including construction of improvements on NW 54th Court from NW 60th Avenue to NW 62nd Avenue, and reconstruction of NW 60th Avenue from Fareway to NW 54th Court
- Preliminary design and right-of-way acquisition for the continuation of NW Beaver Drive Overlay and trail
- Begin design for Merle Hay Road and NW 62nd Avenue intersection to prepare for the Town Center project
- Phase 3 reconstruction of NW 70th Avenue
- Roadway planning improvements along NW 62nd Avenue including trail/sidewalk connection along NW 62nd Avenue from Lawson Elementary to Four Pines Street
- Begin reconstruction design of NW 54th Avenue from NW 86th Street to NW 100th Street
- Complete trail construction from Northglenn Drive to NW 62nd Avenue
- Begin planning for a recreational trail along Pioneer Parkway and NW 86th Street
- Begin construction of trail connection from NW 48th Street to NW Beaver Drive, just north of Public Works
- Development of cross country/soft trails in the Beaver Creek Natural Resource area

Service Enhancements

- Begin planning and inspection for the sidewalk repair/replacement program
- Improvements to NW Beaver Drive booster station

Recreational Improvements

- Installation of dock/platform for canoe access into Terra Lake Park
- Replacement of restroom at Dewey Park
- Installation of a playground at Ray Schleihs Park
- Construction of a shelter at Greenwood Hills Park
- Begin construction of water trail access points at NW 70th Avenue and NW 86th Street

Water Quality Improvements

- Construction of stormwater improvements in Orchard Meadows off of Ridge Crest Drive
- Construction of stormwater improvements to the Northglenn drainage way
- Design stormwater improvements along Crescent Chase Pond, just west of NW 86th Street
- Design stormwater improvements west of Hyperion Point Drive and north of NW Beaver Drive

The City of Johnston currently has 110 full-time staff. Two new positions will be added in July 2019 – **a full-time sworn Police Officer and a full-time firefighter**. Adding a full-time police officer would take the Johnston Police Department to 30 full-time sworn position. The Police Department has also been granted the authority to increase authorized staffing of sworn personnel to 31 officers effective with the new budget, but funding has not yet been allocated. This decision is a proactive measure being implemented to provide necessary personnel resources and field training when routinely operating below full staff due to shortages related to unplanned vacancies, injuries, military leave, and one anticipated retirement.

The FY 20 Budget also includes **utility rate increases which had been previously approved by the City Council**. Each Johnston household will see an average monthly bill increase of approximately \$3.61. The increase was deemed necessary following a fiscal analysis of each enterprise fund to account for system and operational costs resulting from the continued growth of the community. The purchase cost of water from Des Moines Water Works will increase 7 percent on April 1, 2019.

For each dollar paid on property taxes, the City receives approximately \$0.28. There are eight other entities collecting revenue from property taxes paid by Johnston residents including:

- Johnston Community School District – 44%
- City of Johnston – 28%
- Polk County – 17%
- Other 11% – (Broadlawns Medical Center, DART, DMACC, Polk County Assessor, Polk County Ag Extension and the State of Iowa)

More information about the City's FY 2020 budget can be found on the [City of Johnston's website](#).

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