2019
City of Marion
Annual Report

PHOTO CREDIT: CAST OF THOUSANDS
Dear Friends,

I am pleased to share with you the 2019 Annual Report for the City of Marion.

In recent years we’ve focused on reaching higher in everything we do and energizing our community with forward momentum. We’ve come together around a clear common purpose of serving the needs of people and giving them an unequaled quality of life.

The pages of this report will show that 2019 was game-changing on many fronts. We’ve added significant commercial development that provides residents with greater options and celebrated the opening of Prospect Meadows Sports Complex, groundbreakings for our newest fire station and a new YMCA/community recreation center, the launch of the Marion Youth Center, the opening of a skate park and an inclusive playground, and the addition of 11 new, free community events. These are just some examples of how we’ve been deliberate in our efforts and are delivering on our promise to make Marion the best place in Iowa to raise a family and grow a business.

Amid unprecedented growth and change, our city government, schools, the business community, non-profit organizations, and residents are collaborating to identify the right opportunities to build the community we all desire. Our success is reflected in part by the results of the 2019 National Community Survey™, which found that 93 percent of residents rated Marion as an excellent or good place to live.

While we have accomplished much, we recognize there is always more to be done.

To provide additional direction, Marion City Council and the City’s administration embarked on a robust strategic planning process last fall to help prioritize local government initiatives. In the coming year you’ll hear more about this and see a renewed focus on:

- **EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE GOVERNMENT** a fiscally responsible city government that makes investments in employees and is accountable and transparent in its practices
- **ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY** a community that provides for excellent job opportunities, attracts and retains quality businesses, and engages in partnerships and services that allow for ongoing growth in Marion
- **CREATING A VIBRANT COMMUNITY** a community that is accessible, attractive, and open to all community members and visitors; one that aligns to having a high quality of life in Marion
- **SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE** a community that invests in roads, water, and sewer facilities and creates a long-term approach to maintaining the physical infrastructure for residents and visitors
- **SAFE COMMUNITY** a city that is considered safe for residents and visitors to the community

Thank you for taking the time to read this Annual Report. I hope you’ll agree that we have much to celebrate and a bright future ahead. Let’s keep reaching higher, together!

Nicolas AbouAssaly
Mayor
FRONT ROW, L–R: Paul Draper, At Large; Nicolas AbouAssaly, Mayor; Colette Atkins, Ward 1
BACK ROW, L–R: Steve Jensen, Ward 2; Will Brandt, Ward 3; Randy Strnad, At Large; Rene Gadelha, Ward 4
Marion Welcomes Consul-General of Japan

In July, City and economic development leaders were proud to host Consul-General Naoki Ito and his team from the Consulate-General of Japan in Chicago on their first visit to Marion in furtherance of building business connections and exploring improved trade opportunities for the benefit of both U.S. and Japanese companies.
FOCUS ON ECONOMIC VITALITY

The region’s first world-class baseball and softball complex, **PROSPECT MEADOWS**, opened in May 2019. The first phase features eight fields and one Miracle Field, an inclusive field for the special needs community, as well as modern concessions, restrooms, walking trails, gardens, a pond, and wetlands. The complex has been a catalyst and driver of economic development. In its first year, 450 traveling teams played at the complex, over 300 local play games took place, and the inaugural Kiwanis Miracle League allowed 42 children with special needs to enjoy America’s favorite pastime.

**SQUAW CREEK CROSSING** | Squaw Creek Crossing is Marion’s first large scale, multi-faceted development of over 20 acres to include potential development in retail, service, hospitality, commercial, and residential uses at the northeast corner of Highways 13 and 151.

Dupaco Credit Union and a KwikStar convenience store were the first businesses to open in the development. More recently, plans were approved for an 88-unit, contemporary multi-family housing complex as well as a 93-room Holiday Inn Express. The hotel has a tentative opening slated for February 2021. A Pizza Ranch FunZone Arcade is currently under construction, making this both a dining and entertainment destination.

**CENTRAL CORRIDOR REDEVELOPMENT** | Marion’s Central Corridor is one of the most prominent and identifiable areas within the community. The completion of 6th Avenue as a second main thoroughfare parallel to 7th Avenue will diffuse the heavy traffic and make our central business district safer, more walkable, and attractive for retail, commercial, and residential uses.

Kinseth Hospitality opened its 88-room TownePlace Suites by Marriott in the heart of the Central Corridor in the summer of 2019. Having served an industrial purpose for many decades, the location is now a hub for planned business, retail, and commercial development.

Two multi-tenant commercial buildings are under construction on lots adjacent to the hotel. Arby’s, Sanctuary Spa, and Domino’s Pizza recently opened to the east while Starbucks and Your Pie will go to the west. First Federal Credit Union is under construction to the east of Lebeda.

The final segment of 6th Avenue should be completed in 2020, with the buildout of the former railroad right-of-way from 19th Street to the East End Roundabout. Then, the focus will shift to the reconstruction of 7th Avenue.

**MEDCO**

In 2019, supported projects in the community valued at $88 million while retaining and creating 649 jobs. Currently engaged in 35 potential projects that represent up to $180 million in new investment.

**UPTOWN MARION DISTRICT**

Since 2013 (program inception)

- $20 million in private investments through building acquisitions, rehabilitations, and new construction projects
- $885,000 in state grants to rehabilitate our historic buildings
- 89 business starts and expansions
- 10,000 volunteer hours

**CHAMBER**

In the last year,

- 59 new or expanding businesses
- 31 groundbreakings and ribbon cuttings
- 13 free community events with 24,000 attendees
- 121 programming and networking events with 3,500 attendees
FOCUS ON QUALITY OF LIFE

LIBRARY
6th busiest library in the state
653,412 items were circulated FY19
344,397 people came through the doors
28,794 public computer sessions were accessed
21,794 people attended library programs
16,553 were children

PARKS AND RECREATION
118 new trees planted in city parks and rights-of-way, supported by $10,000 in grants and donations
6 Tree City USA – 26 years and running
15,000+ attended the 11 free community events hosted at the Lowe Park amphitheater
13 new recreation programs offered

PARKS & RECREATION | The Marion Parks and Recreation Department provides a wide range of recreational and educational opportunities that encourage healthy, active lifestyles, and lifelong learning.

Highlights from 2019:
› 13 new recreation programs and four new bus trips were added to the program catalog
› The skate park at Butterfield Park and the inclusive playground, pavilion, and restroom facility at Lowe Park opened
› A single-track mountain bike trail was installed in partnership with the Linn Area Mountain Bike Association at Boyson Park
› Outdoor fitness equipment was added to the Hanna Park Fitness Trail
› More than 24 acres of prairie pollinator habitat were planted

Looking ahead to 2020:
› Marion's new YMCA will take shape. The new building is currently under construction along Tower Terrace Road. The state-of-the-art, multi-purpose structure will be more than double the size of the current facility. It will feature 7,000+ square feet of fitness space, three full-size basketball courts, an indoor track, plus leisure and lap swimming pools. In addition to being a functional fitness center, the regional YMCA will be a place where the community can learn, grow, and connect.
› Rollout of new recreation management software
› Development of master plans for Gill Park and Prairie Hills Park
› Construction of a new pavilion at Lininger Park
› Construction of a shared track and football field in partnership with Linn-Mar Community Schools
› Reconstruction of the Taube Park parking lot
› Plus, an aquatics feasibility study which will look at future pool/aquatics needs
In late August, City staff, Park Board members, and park enthusiasts gathered to celebrate the highly-anticipated ribbon cutting of the inclusive playground at Lowe Park. Accessed via the Irish Drive entrance, the playground designed for children and families of all abilities and ages to enjoy.

MARION PUBLIC LIBRARY >> Marion Public Library continues to grow the amenities, programs, and unique benefits offered to patrons. In the last year, the Library made a conscious effort to rethink its collection, space, and services. Walls were painted, shelves rearranged, dedicated programming space carved out for teens and toddlers, and new materials were added to the collection.

In addition to collection enhancements, the Library pioneered Early Bird Hour in September. The early access (at 8:30 a.m.) is intended for power users who visit the Library to pick up holds, utilize public computers, read newspapers and periodicals, check out materials using the self-check, access the DOT kiosk and more. The extra weekday hour of access is designed to be a self-service time. Marion Public Library is proud to be the first library in the state to introduce this service.

New Building Update >> Library and city leaders are envisioning what is next for the Marion Public Library. When plans for the library to be built as part of a mixed-use project on the Marion Square Mall site proved to be cost-prohibitive, leaders identified the Katz Lot (between the current library and City Hall) as its future home. The lot was secured several years ago for Library expansion.

Over the summer, Library leadership formed a Building Committee and began its pursuit for a Construction Manager. Bush Construction was selected for the project. Additionally, the architect, Engberg Anderson, has been working on space planning and presented preliminary design plans to the Building Committee.

In December, the City Council made a unanimous decision to support the Library building project with a commitment of $7 million to be paid for through bonds. The project could begin as early as the fall of 2020.

PUBLIC/Private Partnerships

Be Well Marion >> Well-being matters in Marion. Initiatives and activities such as the Safe Routes to School Plan, Sunrise Yoga at Lowe Park and the Uptown Community Garden have been successful thanks to the leadership of the Be Well Marion committee and dedicated community partners.

In 2019, this committee identified Healthy Hometown™ powered by Wellmark as a statewide initiative that could take the work already being done around the built environment and well-being and provide a framework for moving forward.

An overarching strategic plan for community well-being was developed to guide the next two to three years centered on the three pillars of Healthy Hometown: Eat Well, Move More, and Feel Better. Tactics include community gardens, access to fresh options at food pantries, and community outreach opportunities; expanding safe routes to school, sidewalk connections and greenspace enhancements; and enhancing public art, volunteerism, worksite wellness, and zoning initiatives.

Marion Youth Center >> The Marion Youth Coalition is a community collaboration with more than 30 organizations and agencies working to meet the needs of area youth. In September, the group celebrated the opening of the Marion Youth Center. The center is located at 440 S. 15th Street and is open Monday through Friday from 3-6 p.m. It provides afterschool programming for approximately 50 students in fifth and sixth grades from Marion Independent and Linn-Mar Schools. The Boys & Girls Club of Cedar Rapids is providing the staffing and is serving as the fiscal agent for the center. Students and their families are enjoying the activities and safe, structured programming that the Marion Youth Center offers.

Homelessness Response Team >> A new coalition has formed to connect those that are experiencing homelessness with local resources. The Homelessness Response Team is a partnership between nine city departments, county agencies, and nonprofits. The group works to bring resources to Marion for those in crisis, as opposed to sending individuals or families outside the city to get help. Willis Dady Homeless Services has a weekly presence in the Library to provide counseling services. The response team introduced a Two Sleeps Kit protocol to give an immediate 48-hour solution (food and shelter for 48 hours) until help can be accessed from a social worker or formal agency. This initiative has garnered national attention, and groups within Iowa and across the country have adopted this collaborative model.

Marion’s Trails System Continues to Expand

With $10 million in federal grants designated for trails over the next few years, expansion of Marion’s trails network continues. The CeMar Trail will eventually connect Downtown Cedar Rapids to Uptown Marion.

In the coming year, the deteriorating railroad bridge over 7th Avenue will be removed. A national call for artists occurred in 2019 requesting proposals to enhance the trail bridge that will go in its place. Local artist Cara Briggs Farmer was selected to design the artistic elements of this community gateway.

Other portions of CeMar Trail currently in the planning stage are bridge rehabilitation over Indian Creek and paving part of the limestone trail that runs through Thomas and Legion Parks. Future phases include the construction of the trail from Menards south into Cedar Rapids and the installation of the gateway bridge over 7th Avenue.

Staff are evaluating alignment options for a new trail that is expected to follow Indian Creek and extend from Boyson Trail to a future segment of Tower Terrace Road. It is aptly named Indian Creek Trail.

A much-needed connection in the trail network is expected to go out for bid next winter. Tenth Avenue sidepaths will be installed on both the north and south sides of the road between Hy-Vee and Wal-Mart. The paths will accommodate future hard-surface bus stops and enclosures, as well.
ENGINEERING
14+ active subdivisions
16+ active commercial sites
19+ active Capital Improvement Projects under construction
15+ Capital Improvement Projects being designed

WATER
100% of water accounts upgraded to radio-read meters
4,516 feet of new water main installed in new subdivisions
7,740 feet of old water main replaced
33 new fire hydrants installed
232 new water accounts

PUBLIC SERVICES
Crews stop at 12,100 houses per week to collect garbage/recycling
22,000 cars visited the Recycling Drop-Off Center
35,000 cars visited the Yard Waste Facility
City officials and community leaders gathered to break ground on the **runway expansion project at Marion Airport** in October. The existing runway will be expanded from 23-feet to 60-feet wide along with additional grading, drain tile, runway lighting, and other safety improvements. The Iowa Department of Transportation awarded over $424,000 to the project.

**ENGINEERING**  
The Engineering Department is responsible for the construction and reconstruction of the city’s transportation network and underground infrastructure. In 2019, the newest section of Tower Terrace Road from Winslow Road to Lennon Lane opened to traffic. Another phase of the Central Corridor Project, between 13th and 19th Streets, was also completed. The 3rd Avenue rehabilitation project, a sanitary sewer study, and another segment of the Grant Wood Trail were completed.

In 2020, work on the next stretch of Tower Terrace Road, from C Avenue to Alburnett Road, is expected to gain momentum with design work and property acquisitions. Airport runway improvements should be completed in 2020, along with the next phase of the Central Corridor Project from 19th to 26th Streets. Planning efforts will ramp up for 7th Avenue through the heart of Uptown Marion. The department is expecting to implement pavement management software, proceed with additional phases of the CeMar Trail, and complete Segment 7 of the Indian Creek Trunk Sewer Project.

**WATER**  
The Marion Water Department is dedicated to providing its customers with a safe, high quality and reliable water supply that meets or exceeds all federal and state drinking water requirements. In 2019 the Water Department installed 2,900 feet of new water main along 10th Avenue and 22nd Street. The department completed the radio-read meter change-out program, a project 10 years in the making, which enables staff to access usage information remotely. In addition, a local contractor performed maintenance on Well #4.

In 2020, a water main relay project is anticipated on 14th Street from 12th Avenue to Brockman Avenue, ground storage tank #4 will be recoated, and an iron removal plant will be added at Well #8. The most significant change for the department will come in the summer with the relocation of the office staff and general manager of the department from City Hall to 3050 5th Avenue.

**PUBLIC SERVICES**  
The Public Services Department is responsible for maintaining the City’s infrastructure in a cost-effective and efficient manner. Department activities include street repair and maintenance, traffic maintenance, snow and ice control, street cleaning, stormwater and sanitary sewer maintenance, and garbage collection. The department provides services to Marion residents as well as to many neighboring communities.

Construction began on a new Eco Industrial Park/Public Services Maintenance Facility in 2019 due to the existing facility not being structurally sound and limited on space. The new 135,000 square foot facility will be one of the largest geothermal facilities in Iowa, incorporating renewable energy systems that will power operations for the facility. When completed, a new fleet will be introduced that runs off of Compressed Natural Gas. This will translate into significant transportation fuel and energy savings for Marion residents. The project is slated for completion in late 2020.
| BUILDING       | 9,968 inspections completed in FY2019 |
|               | 2,897 permits issued FY2019           |
|               | 206 new homes or housing units created from 149 permits issued |
| FIRE          | 4,420 calls for service, 83% were medical calls |
|               | 10% increase in call volume over previous year |
|               | Educated 9,467 people on fire prevention through public education events |
| POLICE        | 31,481 calls for service |
|               | 779 accident reports |
|               | 703 motorist assists |
|               | 695 business checks |
Marion’s population has doubled since its second fire station was put into service in 1991. The population increase, coupled with the geographic growth to the north, has dictated the need for a third station. It will keep Marion’s response times within the national standard for emergency response times for fire and medical service. Fittingly, on Sept. 11, members of the Fire Department and community leaders gathered to break ground on Marion’s newest fire station.

BUILDING | The Building Inspection Division within the Community Development Department works to assure a safe, secure, and stable built environment through uniform and fair enforcement of all building and related codes. Inspectors are required to have a thorough knowledge of building codes and construction techniques. To maintain proficiency in all areas of the challenging field of building construction, inspectors are responsible for maintaining certifications and continuing education hours as well as understanding new technologies in an ever-evolving industry.

In 2019, nearly 10,000 inspections were completed, the most current construction codes were adopted, and almost 3,000 permits were issued. A contractor meeting was held in the spring to educate contractors on the permit process and share common issues identified during inspections. This allows builders to do their jobs more efficiently and reduces the time spent on each inspection, further enhancing customer service.

Looking ahead, Building Inspection staff will facilitate a review of the 2021 International Building Code by the Marion Construction Code Review Board. It will make recommendations to the City Council for adoption in early 2021. The next year will also see the implementation of a digital plan review process to eliminate the need for paper copies. Staff will continue to attend training and obtain international code certifications and participate in and influence regional, state, and national building safety organizations to ensure a safe built environment throughout Marion.

FIRE | Marion Fire Department (MFD) is charged with the responsibility of protecting the lives and property of Marion residents and visitors. Whether the emergency is fire, illness, trauma, hazardous material release, or special rescue, MFD maintains a trained staff and equipped vehicles to meet this responsibility. In 2019 the department hired four new firefighters and five new paid-on-call personnel.

The highlight of the year came on Sept. 11, 2019, with the groundbreaking for the community’s newest fire station/department headquarters. It will incorporate biophilic design elements, decontamination, and training areas, along with the department’s administrative offices. It will also include a community safe room/storm shelter and the City’s disaster emergency operations center. Despite wet conditions this fall, the target completion date is December 2020.

POLICE | In 2019, the Marion Police Department (MPD) answered over 31,000 calls for service, hired five new officers and a K-9 named Kain, and Mike Kitsmiller was named its new chief of police. The department continued to integrate technology and intelligence-driven processes into everyday practices to effectively and efficiently maintain the exceptional level of police services the community expects.

In September, the department launched the Security Camera Registration program, which allows businesses and homeowners to identify locations where they have security cameras installed. The registrations are voluntary, and locations are kept confidential by the MPD. In the event a crime occurs, officers can contact the owners of a nearby surveillance system and ask to review footage that may have captured the crimes. This process has been instrumental in solving major crimes in other parts of the country, and the department appreciates the assistance of those that have already registered. Community members who want more information, or want to register a device or location, can find a link on the City’s website.

The department upgraded the body cameras worn by officers and dashboard cameras mounted in squad cars to aid in investigations, stops, and prosecutions. The new cameras are designed to sync with each other, should multiple officers be on the scene, and allow investigators and supervisors to review incidents from multiple angles.

In 2020, the Police Department will continue to make progress on its 5-year strategic plan and begin targeted recruitment efforts to fill employment vacancies. The department will also initiate efforts to put on a Community Academy, which will give select Marion community members an insider’s view of what the department does daily.

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS CENTER | The Marion Public Safety Communications Center has worked hard in establishing effective and cohesive communication strategies with the Police and Fire Departments to improve response time and quality of service. To continue to improve service and accommodate the peak hours for 911 calls, the Communications Center increased staffing minimums during these hours. Staff look forward to continued investment in advanced training and new technology in the upcoming years.
FOCUS ON

FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY
FY2020-FY2024 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM | Capital project priorities are identified through the City’s multi-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP). The proposed FY2020-FY2024 CIP represents approximately $135 million in projects and establishes the City’s blueprint for investments in capital infrastructure. The CIP is used as a tool to ensure that the City’s long and short-term capital investments are made in the context of careful consideration of the City’s needs as well as the resources available to fund all projects.

STRONG BOND RATING | The City of Marion continues to maintain its strong Aa1 bond rating, as assigned by Moody’s Investors Service. Marion has received this rating consistently since 2010 with each issuance of bonds.

Of the 900+ communities in the state of Iowa, only three have a higher rating (Clive, Iowa City, and West Des Moines). Only five other communities share the same rating as Marion (Ames, Ankeny, Cedar Falls, Cedar Rapids, and Urbandale).

This rating allows the City to borrow at lower rates and stretches taxpayer dollars further.

The independent annual audit by Hogan-Hansen indicates that Marion’s financial statements are presented fairly and accurately according to accounting principles accepted nationwide.

OPERATING BUDGET | The City Manager’s Office and Finance Department are responsible for preparing an annual operating budget that is consistent with the objectives of the City Council and the Strategic Plan.

The chart at the right depicts the General Fund actual revenues and expenditures from FY2019. The General Fund is one of several funds in the City’s annual operating budget. The total operating budget would also include utility funds and road use tax collections. In FY2019 this added $12,608,718 in revenues to support city services and accounted for $10,105,987 in expenses. Additional budget information is available at www.cityofmarion.org.

Property Tax Distribution

In FY2019, the owner of a $100,000 home in Marion paid $783.34 annually ($65.28 monthly) for City services, including public safety, public works, culture and recreation, and more. This is how the funds generated by the City’s portion of the property tax bill were distributed.

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FOCUS ON FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

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Awards & Designations

**Marion is proud to be the best place in Iowa to raise a family and grow a business. Here we reach higher and achieve more, in business and in life.**

- Marion landed in the top 12 percent of [Best Small Cities in America](#), according to WalletHub, in the fall of 2019. WalletHub’s analysts compared more than 1,200 U.S. cities with populations between 25,000 and 100,000 based on five key dimensions: 1) affordability, 2) Economic Health, 3) Education & Health, 4) Quality of Life and 5) Safety. Marion maintained its number two spot among all 1,200 communities for the lowest housing costs.

- Uptown Marion, A Main Street Iowa District – received the [20 Million Dollars Benchmark Community Award](#) for realizing 20 Million Dollars in private investment into the district through renovations, new construction, and acquisitions since the program inception in 2013.

- In March 2019, the City of Marion and Uptown Marion District received the [2018 Best Beautification Award](#) for the Uptown Veteran Banner Program.

- In July 2018, an effort led by the Marion Chamber of Commerce resulted in our community being re-designated as one of [Iowa’s Great Places](#). The program celebrates communities with a bold vision for the future and supports the development of new and existing infrastructure. Marion will be able to apply for funding for projects tied to the community’s vision plan, established as part of the ImagiNEXT visioning process.

- For the **19th year in a row**, Marion was recognized as one of the [safest cities in Iowa](#) for towns of similar size.

- In April 2019, the National Arbor Day Foundation and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources Forestry Bureau awarded Marion the [Tree City USA Growth Award](#). Marion has achieved Tree City USA status every year since 1993.
In 2019, the City of Marion added a part-time event coordinator to expand on the programming currently being offered at its public venues such as the Klopfenstein Amphitheater and Uptown Artway. Eleven new event dates were added to the calendar as a result, catering to various age groups and interests. Look for more in the way of Tiny Fairs, Dog Fashion Shows, board game events, and concerts in the Uptown Artway in 2020.

**QUALITY OF LIFE RECEIVES HIGH MARKS**

This summer, the City of Marion contracted with the National Research Center, Inc. to conduct its biennial community survey. An invitation to participate in the National Community Survey™ (The NCS™) was mailed to a representative sample of 1,700 Marion residents. The survey measured the overall livability of communities, taking into consideration the partnerships between government entities, the private sector, community-based organizations, and residents – all of which are geographically connected.

For Marion, 93 percent of residents rate the community as an excellent or good place to live, and 88 percent rated the overall quality of life positively. Marion ranked well above the national and peer benchmarks, with 94 percent of respondents indicating that Marion is an excellent or good place to raise children. K-12 education also ranked higher than both benchmarks, and 9 in 10 residents positively rated the overall feeling of safety in Marion. Nine in 10 respondents would also recommend living in Marion to someone who asked. Streets and infrastructure improvements and code enforcement were identified as opportunities for improvement. The results are being used to inform the strategic plan, the budget process, and department work plans.

**IMAGINEXT OUTLINES COMMUNITY VISION**

Over the past year Future Four committees have been hard at work taking community ideas and turning them into actionable plans for Marion. Here’s a look at what’s been happening behind the scenes and in front of your eyes.

**The Heart of It All | Adding Amenities to Marion’s Historic District**
- Grant applications have been submitted to Iowa Great Places and the National Endowment for the Arts Our Town Program for design assistance for a Marion Plaza project.
- A welcome kiosk has been installed at Prospect Meadows to help drive traffic to Marion’s business district.

**Just Keep Swimming | Aquatic Opportunities**
- The Marion Parks Department will issue an RFQ in 2020 for an aquatic study of current assets and future demand. This is an eight-month study timeline. The community will be invited to provide feedback during the process.

**Creekside Pride | Educational and Recreational Opportunities along Indian Creek**
- The first organized canoe float down Indian Creek took place in July. City staff and Council members were invited to experience the potential for recreation. Future floats will include assistance from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources to relocate rocks and create a better float path.
- Preliminary design plans are being created for additional trails along the west side of Indian Creek north of 29th Avenue.
- Annual spring clean-up days continue to keep trash and debris clear of the creek.

**It’s The Little Things | Small Ideas with Big Impact**
- The inaugural Fireworks and Fireflies event took place on July 3. Well over 5,000 people were in attendance for the free concert and fireworks show at Lowe Park.
- Keep up to date on community events directly to your phone! Now you can subscribe to get text updates. Visit marioncc.org/event-notifications
- The committee is working with the City of Marion to establish food truck policies.

**STAFF/COUNCIL ACCESSIBILITY**

Community engagement isn’t the responsibility of one division within the City of Marion; it is a way of doing business. From public meetings to social media interaction, there are countless opportunities for engagement between Marion’s civil servants, elected officials, and the residents who call Marion home.

Staff and Council Members strive to be accessible and want to gather feedback and ideas from residents. The Mayor and City Council members held weekly office hours in the lobby of the Marion Public Library or at a local park during the farmers’ market season. Nearly every Saturday, between 9:30-11:30 a.m., members were available for questions and conversation.

Engaging with members of the community continues to be a strong focus, with emphasis placed on meeting people in places where they are already gathering. The City hosted an informational booth at the Tiny Fairs, Linn County Fair, Swamp Fox Festival, and each Uptown Marion Market through the summer. The City’s responsive website and social media sites provide access to city information at your fingertips.
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www.cityofmarion.org

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**PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT**

**Administrative & Operations Offices**
Thomas Park – 343 Marion Boulevard
319-447-3580 • mcarolan@cityofmarion.org

**Recreation Office**
Lowe Park – 4500 N 10th Street
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**PUBLIC SERVICES DEPARTMENT**
(solid waste, sewer, streets)
195 35th Street • 319-377-6367
public-services@cityofmarion.org

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1095 6th Avenue • 319-377-3412
info@marionpubliclibrary.org

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