



CITY OF DECATUR ILLINOIS

#1 GARY K. ANDERSON PLAZA

DECATUR, ILLINOIS 62523-1196

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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City Council approves Tillamook development, ADM carbon sequestration, new childcare facility, sewer rate adjustments

Decatur, IL – Highlights from the March 20, 2023, Decatur City Council meeting include a redevelopment agreement with Tillamook for the former Prairie Farms ice cream plant, an approval for ADM to conduct carbon capture sequestration underneath the City, an agreement for a new childcare facility in the City's urban core, and a sewer rate increase to keep pace with inflation.

Tillamook coming to former Prairie Farms facility

On Monday night the Decatur City Council approved a redevelopment agreement with Tillamook County Creamery Association (TCCA) to retrofit the former Prairie Farms plant along Martin Luther King, Jr. Dr. into Tillamook's first Midwest ice cream plant. Tillamook plans to invest \$50 million to retrofit the facility and acquire adjacent property for future expansion. The ice cream plant will bring approximately 45 new jobs to Decatur.

The development also advances the City's Neighborhood Revitalization efforts as this will beautify the area and eventually clean up some existing eyesores around the site. The City's side of the agreement is to assist in clearing antiquated structures from adjacent property, generally help in clearing and cleaning the campus site, and provide other assistance as they develop the plant.

Tillamook intends to send out a media release with more information in the coming days. Their goal is to be operational in October 2024.

ADM expanding carbon capture sequestration

Another item the Council approved was an easement granting ADM the ability to sequester captured carbon 1.25 miles underneath land owned by the City of Decatur. The process involves liquifying captured carbon dioxide and injecting it deep into subterranean seams, cracks, and voids in geological layers that are unique to our area. It will be stored under several thick and stable shale and rock layers.

ADM has been engaged in carbon capture sequestration (CCS) for ten years, principally on sites

owned by their company. They hold the only Class 6 injection well permit from the USEPA for this purpose. ADM's CCS project is closely watched by the U.S. Department of Energy and the Illinois Geological Survey at the University of Illinois. Additionally, the City reached out to its own CCS consultant, Intera, for additional analysis. Intera corroborated the Federal government's review and supervision of ADM's CCS process and they predict very little risk from this expansion.

In addition to reducing the quantity of CO₂ in the atmosphere, CCS is another economic development incentive for Decatur. The City and the EDC has already been contacted by companies interested in locating in Decatur to obtain access to CCS. The federal government provides incentives and credits to companies that capture and sequester CO₂ emissions. ADM has agreed to pay \$450 per acre under which it would inject and/or store CO₂.

New childcare facility at old Wee Folks

Council also approved an agreement with Love Learning and Laughter Daycare (LLLD) to provide another much-needed childcare facility in Decatur's urban core. The City has purchased the former Wee Folks building located on North Jasper Street and will be improving this facility to house LLLD.

Through its workforce development study, the City found that there is a significant shortage of childcare facilities in our community. Staff identified LLLD as an organization willing to re-start a childcare facility at the Wee Folks building, which will be one of the few in the City's urban core. The City will invest close to \$75,000 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG-CV) COVID-19 funds to revitalize the building.

This project will fit nicely with the Great Streets, Great Neighborhoods initiative occurring for the Jasper Street Corridor as the City attempts to revitalize this area.

Water/Sewer rate adjustments

The City continues to see rising costs due to inflation and that led the Council to approve an adjustment to sewer rates. City staff estimates new construction funded by the Water and Sewer Funds could increase 20 percent in 2023. To help pay for – and keep pace with – these necessary infrastructure improvements, the Council agreed to a 5 percent increase in sewer rates.

Council was reluctant to pass this increase onto Decatur citizens but heard from City staff that an increase is necessary to keep up with important capital infrastructure projects. A flat increase of 2.5 percent, like last year, would start to undermine the City's ability to use water and sewer infrastructure as a major economic development recruiting asset.

Additional action on changes to the water ordinance were tabled.

In other business

In other business...Council approved an agreement with Alfred Benesch & Co. to complete a Transit Comprehensive Operations Analysis (COA) for the Decatur Public Transit System (DPTS). DPTS

was awarded an IDOT grant to complete this analysis, which will help evaluate current transit operations and routes to determine where improvements can be made to make DPTS more effective and efficient.

The COA will analyze operations data, rider input, staff input, and community and stakeholder needs to draft recommendations on how and where resources should be focused, reallocated, or discontinued. This will include recommendations on a new fixed-route system that includes micro transit operations.

More information about these topics can be found in the City Council Agenda packet, downloadable/viewable here: www.decaluril.gov/mayor-and-council/council-meetings/

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