

# City of Alma

Volume 17, Issue 3

**April  
2023**

**KNOW  
WHAT'S  
BELOW.  
CALL  
BEFORE  
YOU DIG!  
DIAL 811**



## Inside This Issue

- Auditorium Renovation
- Downtown Drainage Project
- Annexation Litigation Dismissal
- 7th Street Road Construction
- Swimming Pool
- Severe Weather
- City Employee Recognition
- Library News
- Code Red
- Compost Hour Changes
- City Wide Clean-up
- Gas Safety

## \$1,000,000 WORKFORCE HOUSING LAND DEVELOPMENT GRANT AWARDED

The City of Alma received notification on March 27, 2023, that it was awarded the full amount of \$1,000,000 in funding applied for. Alma is one of twelve Nebraska rural communities receiving funds from the Nebraska Department of Economic Development (DED) in the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF). The Rural Workforce Housing Land Development Program was created under LB 1014 to respond to the negative economic impacts of the coronavirus public health emergency. Awarded projects will revitalize communities that were disproportionately impacted by the pandemic by increasing long-term housing stability.

DED opened applications for the program on November 15, 2022, and received 27 applications totaling over \$19 million in funding requests. The funds awarded through the Rural Workforce Housing Land Development Program will aid communities in their economic recovery from the negative impacts of the COVID-19 public health emergency through projects resulting in the preparation of land for workforce housing pursuant to the Nebraska Rural Workforce Housing Investment Act in conjunction with the Rural Workforce Housing Fund (RWHF) program. This project is being supported, in whole or in part, by federal award number SLFRP1965 awarded to the City of Alma, as a subawardee, of the funds awarded to the State of Nebraska (Department of Economic Development) from the U.S. Department of Treasury.

## AUDITORIUM RENOVATION

In 2020, the City of Alma started holding public meetings to determine the value and need of the City Auditorium. In a Community Needs Survey conducted in 2016 by the South Central Economic Development District, responding residents indicated there was enough historical value to keep the auditorium viable for the residents to utilize. A Civic and Community Center Financing Fund (CCCCF) grant was received in 2021 to conduct a Feasibility Study. Thru public input and working with Professional Architectural and Engineering Firms, a design concept was developed for a proposed renovation.

The next step in the renovation was to apply for a construction grant from the CCCCCF. However, due to COVID, this funding was reduced to half the amount and was not feasible for the City to proceed with the lesser amount of grant funds. In 2023 the grant funds were once again fully funded, and the City of Alma has applied for the total amount of \$562,000. The announcement of awards is scheduled for May 2023. If awarded, the City will match these funds and renovate the interior of the auditorium while keeping the historical mezzanine and outside features.

As the CCCCCF grant funds does not cover the exterior work needed, the City Council has hired a construction company to begin the tuckpointing of the brick work. Currently, the brick work is in such poor shape that bricks are loose and have completely fallen out in places. The brickwork is expected to last thru the summer and fall and possible be completed by next spring.

## DOWNTOWN DRAINAGE PROJECT

I am sure you have noticed the ice that builds up along the curb on the south side of Main Street in the winter. This problem has been addressed by the City Council numerous times over the years.

Engineered plans have been drawn up over the years but due to budget constraints has been put off. In 2020 the City received ARPA funds with a variety of restricted uses attached. The City determined this project would be a great use of these funds as stormwater was one of the restricted uses. Construction for the Drainage project is scheduled to begin this spring. Two blocks on the south side of Main Street from Church Street to Jewell Street will be closed to parking. The north side will not be affected. Please be patient navigating downtown during this time as the construction crew may have traffic blocked off on the street as well as the sidewalk.

## **WANTED-Alma Swim Team Coach, and Assistant Swim Team Coach:**

The City of Alma is accepting applications for the positions of Swim Team Coach and Assistant Swim Team Coach until filled. The applicant(s) should be trained and certified in aquatics and water safety. The Swim Team Coach will coach the team and attend all swim meets and events. For an application visit [www.almacity.com](http://www.almacity.com) (under Government/Human Resources/Application Process/Relevant Documents) or stop by City Hall at 614 Main Street, Alma, NE 68920. EOE.



## **Help Wanted—Lifeguards for Alma City Pool**

The City of Alma is accepting applications for the positions of lifeguard. The positions are open until filled. The lifeguard applicant must be or be able to become certified in CPR, First Aid, and Life Guarding. Wages are based on experience. For an application visit [www.almacity.com](http://www.almacity.com) (under Government/Human Resources/Application Process/Relevant Documents) or stop by City Hall-614 Main St.,

### **ANNEXATION LITIGATION DISMISSED**

In the City of Alma's Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 2011, the Future Annexation Areas indicate three areas in which Alma should expand. In July 2016, the City Council approved annexing one of these areas which included property to the northwest and north of the current city limits. In July 2021, several Plaintiffs living and owning businesses in the annexed area filed a Petition for Detachment. Per the Petition, the Plaintiffs allege the City did not adopt or implement an adequate plan to provide substantially the same benefits to the annexed area as the rest of the city within the one year of the annexation adoption time frame as required by state statute. They further stated they were receiving no benefit from the annexation, and, in fact, the annexation has been financially detrimental to them.

The City's legal counsel filed a Rebuttal and Motion to Dismiss stating it did fully, publicly, and officially adopt the Plan to provide substantially the same benefits in the same Ordinance as the annexation itself. The City then proceeded to install a gas main and water main to loop the systems for better flow and coverage. After a lengthy legal debate, providing documentation requested, and taking depositions from the Plaintiffs involved, the Plaintiffs filed a Motion to Dismiss in February 2023.

### **7<sup>th</sup> STREET ROAD CONSTRUCTION**

The City has been addressing and researching flooding and other road issues on 7<sup>th</sup> Street from Highway 183 west to the city limits. In meeting with the County Road Superintendent and the Nebraska Department of Roads, a plan has been created.

This spring, the State Dept. of Roads will begin shoulder work on Highway 183 from the railroad tracks south to 7<sup>th</sup> Street to address stormwater drainage. This will assist stormwater to flow into the ditches rather down businesses driveways and on 7<sup>th</sup> Street.

The City and County will work together bringing in dirt to then build up 7<sup>th</sup> Street to the proper level. Again, this is to correct the water flow into the ditches properly.

Please be aware when this project is started, this section of the road may be down to one lane or closed to traffic.

# SEVERE WEATHER

The Harlan County Sheriff's Department would like to remind you we are entering the time period when we will start to see severe storm activity. The Sheriff's Office is notified by the Holdrege Police Department or the National Weather Service when severe weather is threatening our area. Upon notification, deputies and local fire departments then dispatch trained spotters to predetermined locations. The spotters receive yearly training from the National Weather Service and education on how to watch for developing storms and tornados. When a Severe Weather Warning or Tornado Warning is issued, the Sheriff's Office also notifies the school, nursing home, hospital, campgrounds, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers office, and various other public use facilities.



If the siren is activated it will be one long single blast lasting approximately 3 minutes. This siren means to take cover immediately. Do not get in your vehicle and drive around to look for a tornado as many do.

Do not call the Sheriff's Office to inquire about the siren or the approaching weather. The staff is busy during this time with incoming and outgoing phone calls to local fire departments who are tracking the storm. Please do not let your curiosity inhibit law enforcement from protecting the public.

The Sheriff's Department tests the sirens the first Monday of each month (weather permitting). The school, hospital, nursing home, businesses, etc. are encouraged to perform a practice drill during these tests. Parents should take this time to educate their children about what to do and where to go in their home in the event of severe weather.

The public is encouraged to have an emergency kit stocked with first aid supplies, a portable radio, flashlights and batteries, bottled water, snack bars, and other non-perishable foods-enough to care for themselves for a minimum of 72 hours. Also include phone numbers of family members or those you would want to contact in the event of devastation, along with photocopies of insurance documents for both home and health.

For more information on preparedness refer to <http://www.bereadynebraska.com/>

## Watch or Warning

A **Tornado Watch** is issued when conditions are favorable for them to develop. Be prepared to take action.

A **Tornado Warning** is issued when radar indicates a tornado, or if a funnel cloud has been sighted. Seek shelter immediately

## Take Action

Stay tuned to the media when the watches are sounded and be prepared to seek shelter if a Tornado Warning is issued in your area.

## Years of Service



Mayor Hal Haeker presenting City employee Scott Kuhl with a Certificate of Appreciation for 10 years of service.



Mayor Hal Haeker presenting City Council member Tom Moulton with a Certificate of Appreciation for 10 years of Service.



# HOESCH MEMORIAL LIBRARY



## LOCATED IN THE CITY PARK

*The Library is open:*

*Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday from 10:00 a.m.- 8:00 p.m.*

*Friday from 10:00 a.m.- 5:00 p.m. &*

*Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon*

### **PART-TIME HELP NEEDED**

*Hoesch Memorial Public Library has an opening for a part-time Library Clerk. This position involves working 3 evenings/per week along with one to two Saturdays per month generally. Computer skills for checking books, etc. in and out, along with assisting patrons using the computers, shelving and keeping books neat and in order, ability to bend and lift, a friendly personality and good work ethic are needed. Also will help plan and carry out programming for different age groups throughout the year.*

*For an application and more information, please stop at the library, located in the Alma city park or call 308-928-2600. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.*

### **"READS" BINGO THROUGH MAY**



*The library wants people to be more aware of, and use, our webpage, created by Jennifer. So there is a "READS" bingo currently underway. This bingo will go through May. Any adult can pick up a "READS" card from the library, and lightly circle or cross out the numbers*

*that are drawn each week. You will only need to get a horizontal, vertical or diagonal bingo on your card and return it for a prize.*

*Three numbers will be drawn each week and posted on our webpage at [libraries.ne.gov/alma](http://libraries.ne.gov/alma) – they will also be on our Facebook page and taped on our circulation desk. One card/one prize per person.*

### **SUMMER READING PROGRAM**

*It will soon be time to register your children for this year's "All Together Now" Summer Reading Program. Children ages 18 months through 6<sup>th</sup> graders can read 20 minutes a day to get coupons provided by local businesses so be sure to sign them up by June 1<sup>st</sup> at the library. Registration begins May 17. Those who complete their 30 days of reading and turn in their sheets by July 5<sup>th</sup> will get to come to the Summer Reading party on Wednesday, July 12.*

*No registration is needed for weekly story times, which is the other part of Summer Reading. Any child 3 to 5 years old can attend Wednesdays at 10:15 a.m. – 11:15 a.m. from June 7 through July 5. Those who were in Kindergarten through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade can participate in story times Wednesdays at 12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. from June 14 through July 5. Their June 7th story time will be from 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. at the Johnson Center. This is a Nebraska Humanities "Music From Around the World" program for the public (More details below).*

***TEENS** (7<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade) can pick up a Summer Reading Bingo sheet beginning May 17<sup>th</sup> to complete for a prize through the end of August. If you need a library card, or need to renew yours, please be sure to bring proof of your physical address (bring a parent along and they can show proof for you!)*

***ADULTS** – we are still considering some kind of Bingo Sheet for you to complete as well. There will be prizes, so check in with the library beginning May 17<sup>th</sup> to complete for a prize through the end of August also. If you need a library card, or need to renew yours, please be sure to bring proof of your physical address.*

### **NEBRASKA HUMANITIES PROGRAM**

*Thanks to our Central Plains Library System, this summer we will have a Nebraska Humanities program "Music From Around the World" presented by David Marsh to go along with our Summer Reading Program. Mark your calendar for Wednesday, June 7<sup>th</sup> from 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. This will be a multi-generational program, open to the public, from children to Sr. Citizens. Bring your friends and let's fill the Johnson Center – this is a wonderful program! This will also be the kick-off for the Kindergarten through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade Summer Reading weekly story times, so bring them to the Johnson Center (that day only) rather than to the library.*

*This program is brought to you through the use of funding from Central Plains Library System*



# CITY WIDE CLEAN UP

The Alma Community Clean Up is on Saturday, April 22, 2023. The pickup crews will make one pass per street beginning at 8 am. You must have your items out on the curb before 8 am. If you need help getting an item to the curb, please call the school at 928-2131.

The volunteers of the Community Clean Up will NOT pick up the following items: paint, concrete, batteries, remodeling castoff materials, tires, and shingles. We wish to remind residents – **if it fits in your trash toter, PLEASE throw it away.** The community cleanup is meant to be for those larger items that you cannot fit into your toter and do not have a means to take to the landfill on your own.



Anyone who would like to volunteer their time or supply a truck or trailer to help the Community Clean Up is welcome and may call the school and leave a message for Chris Mahalek.

The Community Clean Up was initiated in 1996 by Jon Davis as part of his American Government community service project. Throughout the years, the project has continued under the direction of various teachers and the help of the Alma Student Council, Senior Government class, students, public organizations, community members, and businesses. The City of Alma and Alma Public Schools sponsor this event.

## Summer Compost Hours

Monday & Saturday 9 AM-3:30 PM

Wednesday 9 AM– Dark

Starting April 1st

If these hours do not work for your schedule, you have another couple options. You may rent a key for the year (Jan 1 thru Dec 31) for \$100 or you can check out a key for 24 hours for \$5. Both require a \$20 security deposit check. Occasional closures can happen depending on the weather.

The City of Alma has a **Fair Housing Ordinance** that is designed to prohibit discrimination in housing. It is the declared policy of the City of Alma that all persons shall have an equal opportunity for housing, regardless of sex, race, color, handicap, religion, national origin, sex or marital status of the person maintaining a household, lawful source of income, age or ancestry. The ordinance is deemed an exercise of the police powers of the City for the protection of the welfare, health, peace, dignity and human rights of the people of this City. For more information regarding Fair Housing, please visit [https://www.hud.gov/program\\_offices/fair\\_housing\\_equal\\_opp/online-complaint](https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp/online-complaint).

City Council Meetings are currently the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month at 5:30 pm at City Hall. Starting in May, Council meetings will move to the 1st and 3rd Monday of each month at 5:30 pm. The meetings are open to the public and the public is encouraged to attend.

## ALWAYS REVIEW EACH AND EVERY UTILITY BILL

It is a very good idea to review each bill and reference back to the previous bill. Is there a significant difference? We have had customers discover they have a water leak because their bill was huge. If they had only reviewed the prior bill, they may have avoided a huge water bill! Leaky toilets and broken water lines can be costly on your bill!



**Bike Race Across Nebraska** will be coming to Alma!

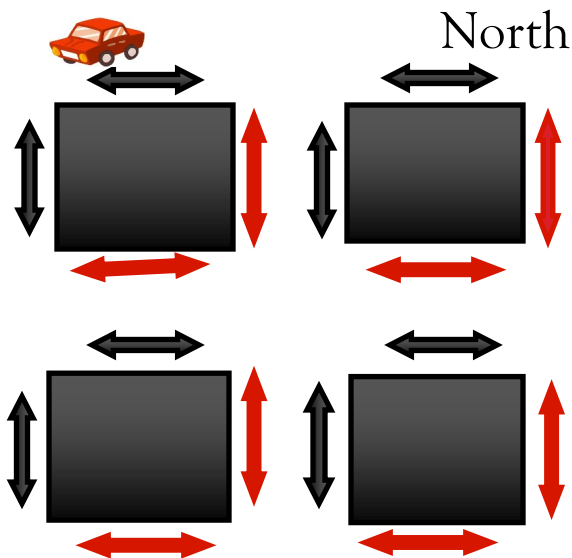
Riders from all over the US and different Countries will be traveling across Nebraska and will make Alma their home on Monday, June 5th. It is in the works for entertainment, food, fun and festivities so keep an eye on the city Marquee as well as flyers that will be coming out around town for more information.



Did you know that parking on the street in a residential area needs to be either on the north side or on the west side of the block?

No motor vehicle shall be parked or stand on any street for longer than 48 continuous hours.

Black indicates where to park. **Red** indicates where **NOT** to park.



The **CodeRED** notification system sends important alerts and time-sensitive message to our residents, but you must sign up for it. Residents can choose several different methods of notification—landline, cell phone, email, text, TTY, or a combination of them. Visit our website [www.almacity.com](http://www.almacity.com) and click on the CodeRED phone symbol to sign up.



## GAS PIPELINE SAFETY

As one of the thousands of people who live or work near pipelines, you can help keep it safe and reliable by doing the following:

- A) notify us with your intention to dig;      B) identify our pipelines;      C) recognize a leak;  
D) take appropriate steps if you notice a leak;      E) immediately report a leak

The City of Alma cares about your safety. Our employees are thoroughly trained to operate and maintain the system safely. We want you to be aware of our pipelines. We ask for your help in preventing accidental damage to pipelines. The City of Alma supports the Nation's Homeland Security efforts and the City of Alma encourages you to immediately notify and report any suspicious persons and/or activities near the pipeline to your local law enforcement authorities by calling 911.

### A) NOTIFY US WITH YOUR INTENTION TO DIG – CALL 811—"diggers hotline"

We need your help in preventing pipeline emergencies. The number one cause of pipeline leaks is damage from earth-moving and construction equipment and tools owned by parties other than the pipeline company. If you plan to dig or do any type of excavation or construction work, call **Diggers Hotline at 811**. Call at least 48 hours (excluding weekends and holidays) before you:

Excavate	Install drain tile	Repair or rebuild roads or driveways
Grade	Blast for clearing	Build homes or additions
Auger	Dig postholes	Install water lines, sewer lines
Bore	Cut or deepen ditches	septic systems, or drains
Tunnel	Install swimming pools	Install telephone, TV or power, cables
Dredge	Plant trees or shrubs	

### B) IDENTIFY OUR PIPELINES -HOW TO IDENTIFY WHERE THE PIPELINE IS LOCATED

Since pipelines are buried underground, line markers are used to indicate the approximate - *not exact* - location of the pipeline. Line markers can be found where the pipeline intersects a street, highway, or railroad. However, they cannot be relied upon to indicate the exact position of the pipeline. The pipeline may not follow a straight course between markers, which provide no information on the depth or number of pipelines in the vicinity. Don't try to guess the pipeline's location or route by the marker's placement. Call Diggers Hotline at **811**.

### C) RECOGNIZE A LEAK

HOW TO RECOGNIZE A PIPELINE LEAK WHEN NEAR A PIPELINE RIGHT OF WAY. **LOOK FOR:** Fire or explosion near pipeline, a white cloud or fog, dying plants amid healthy ones, unusual blowing of dirt or dust, persistent bubbles in water, or pool of liquids, possibly bubbling. **LISTEN FOR:** Hissing or roaring sound. **SMELL FOR:** A pungent odor, sometimes like rotten eggs.

### D) TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTIONS IF YOU NOTICE A LEAK— WHAT TO DO?

Immediately leave the area - on foot - in an upwind direction.	Avoid making contact with es- caping liquids or vapors.	Warn others to stay away from
<b>DO NOT</b> drive into an area in which you encounter a leak or vapor cloud	Abandon all equipment being used in the area.	<b>DO NOT</b> try to operate any pipeline valves yourself
<b>DO NOT</b> light a match, start an engine or automobile, use a telephone, or switch on/off an electric light or appliance.		

### E) IMMEDIATELY REPORT A LEAK— WHO TO CALL?

From a distant phone, call the City of Alma (308-928-2242) or the On-Call phone if after hours (308-920-1047) OR call 911 or your local fire, police or sheriff's office. DO NOT use a cell phone while near the suspected emergency area.



## CITY OF ALMA

614 Main Street  
PO Box 468  
Alma, NE 68920



Phone: 308-928-2242  
Fax: 308-928-2683  
E-mail: [cityclk@almacity.com](mailto:cityclk@almacity.com)  
[www.almacity.com](http://www.almacity.com)



PRSRT STD

ECRWSS

U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

EDDM RETAIL

Local

Postal Customer

**Alma!**  
is for  
**YOU!**

Visit us online at:

[www.almacity.com](http://www.almacity.com)

**Utility Emergency**  
**(after hours)**  
308.920.1047

**City Hall**  
308.928.2242

**City Hall Office Hours**  
Mon-Wed-Fri  
9 am-4 pm  
Tues & Thurs  
9 am-3 pm

**Golf Course**  
928.2341  
**Library**  
928.2600  
**Sheriff**  
928.2147  
**School**  
928.2131  
**Hospital**  
928.2151

**Compost Site Hours**  
Mon & Wed 9 am — Dark  
Sat 9 am to 3:30 pm

**Library Hours**  
Tues-Wed-Thurs  
10 am-8 pm  
Fri— 10 am-5 pm  
Sat- 9 am—12 pm  
Sun & Mon - Closed

## City of Alma—Contact Information

### COUNCIL

#### East Ward

Dyann Collins 999-0070  
Tom Moulton 920-1105

#### West Ward

Chris Tripe 920-1417  
Larry Casper 512-484-4377

#### Mayor

Hal Haeker 928-2900

**Utility and Gas  
Superintendent**  
Russ Pfeil

**Water Superintendent**  
Scott Kuhl

**Waste Water and Street  
Superintendent**  
Travis Dunse

**Sanitation  
Superintendent**  
Bowde Johnson

**Utility Floater**  
Kent Fleischmann

**Library Director**  
Keri Anderson

**Golf Superintendent**  
Jordy Slocum

### CITY STAFF

**Administrator**  
Lorri Bantam

**Treasurer**  
CeeAnn Affolter

**City Clerk**  
Dawn McNulty