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Williston City Manager plans for the future



Williston City Manager Scott Lippmann and City Planner Jackie Gorman are seen Tuesday afternoon (Feb. 12).

Story and Photo

By Jeff M. Hardison © Feb. 15, 2019 at 2:09 p.m.

WILLISTON – Williston City Manager Scott Lippmann, like other city managers, leads his city on a daily basis by keeping operations flowing, and he looks to the future too.

As City Manager Lippmann looks toward the future, he is assisted by City Planner Jack Gorman, whom he sees as an excellent asset for the city's residents and visitors.

Recently Dennis Davis, senior client service manager, and Bartt Booz, senior project manager, with Wright Pierce Engineering, spoke to the City Council about a 20-year plan for replacement of and addition of equipment in the city's wastewater treatment facility.

The city has obtained and is obtaining grant funding for this project.

Meanwhile, Lippmann, Gorman and Utilities Department Director C.J. Zimoski are reviewing documents, which Lippmann wants converted to a digital record. This will lead to the creation of planned replacement for underground pipes.

Fitting in with this operation is the review of work orders to determine if certain sections of pipe are showing a frequency of calls for service to an extent that it is more cost-effective to simply replace the clay, cast iron or Orangeburg (also known as "fiber conduit" or "bituminous fiber pipe" or "Bermico") pipes, rather than to keep answering service calls.

Lippmann said he strives to meet the demands placed on the infrastructure before anything reaches a critical need for attention.

While there are the day-to-day operations, and the planning for future needs, there is

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hope. Positive additions can have a domino effect on a city's economic engine.

Two things could be game-changers for positive growth in the Williston economy, Lippmann said Tuesday (Feb. 12) during an impromptu interview.

First, is high-speed, fair-priced broadband Internet service.

Likwid Communications is the current frontrunner to potentially offer that in the Williston-Bronson-Chiefeland market, Lippmann said. However, if some other company comes to town with an offer, then that may be the company that captures the deal.

If Williston had superior Internet service, he said, then people who operate primarily on the Internet, such as consulting firms, could have their business in the city. Beyond the addition of companies, existing residential and commercial Internet users would welcome an improvement in that aspect of the infrastructure.

The second significant potential benefit for the city, he said, would be the addition of a hotel with 70 to 80 rooms.

If a nice hotel existed in Williston, beyond what already is here, then people could come from farther away and stay to visit places like Kirby Family, Farms, Two Tails Ranch, Devil's Den, Blue Grotto, the Annual Levy County Fair, botanical gardens and other attractions within a stone's throw of Williston.

In the meantime, the city continues to move forward with progress especially around Heritage Park – home of the Annual Peanut Festival.

Williston has the biggest municipal airport in Levy County as well as the only hospital in the county. City Manager Lippmann said if a hotel developer wants to contact him, he will gladly help that project as much as possible.