

TimesCitizen

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BRIEFS

IF ethanol plant will be sold

A Kansas company announced Thursday that it will buy the Hawk-eye Renewables ethanol plants in Iowa Falls and Fairbank, Iowa.

Flint Hills Resources officials said the deal is expected to close early in the first quarter of 2011. The purchase price will not be disclosed.

"We're very pleased to add the Fairbank and Iowa Falls plants to our growing renewables business," said Brad Razook, president of Flint Hills Resources. "The acquisition enhances our existing renewables business and contributes to our market leadership in producing transportation fuels."

Originally constructed as a 50-million-gallon-per-year plant in November 2004, the Iowa Falls ethanol plant doubled its capacity to 100 million gallons per year in March 2006. The Fairbank plant was built in 2006 and is capable of producing 115 million gallons of ethanol annually.

"These are quality plants with excellent workforces and strong supplier networks," said Razook.

Each plant employs approximately 50 people and conducts business with hundreds of local suppliers.

"As with all of our facilities, our top priorities for these plants will be their continued safe and environmentally responsible operations," added Razook.

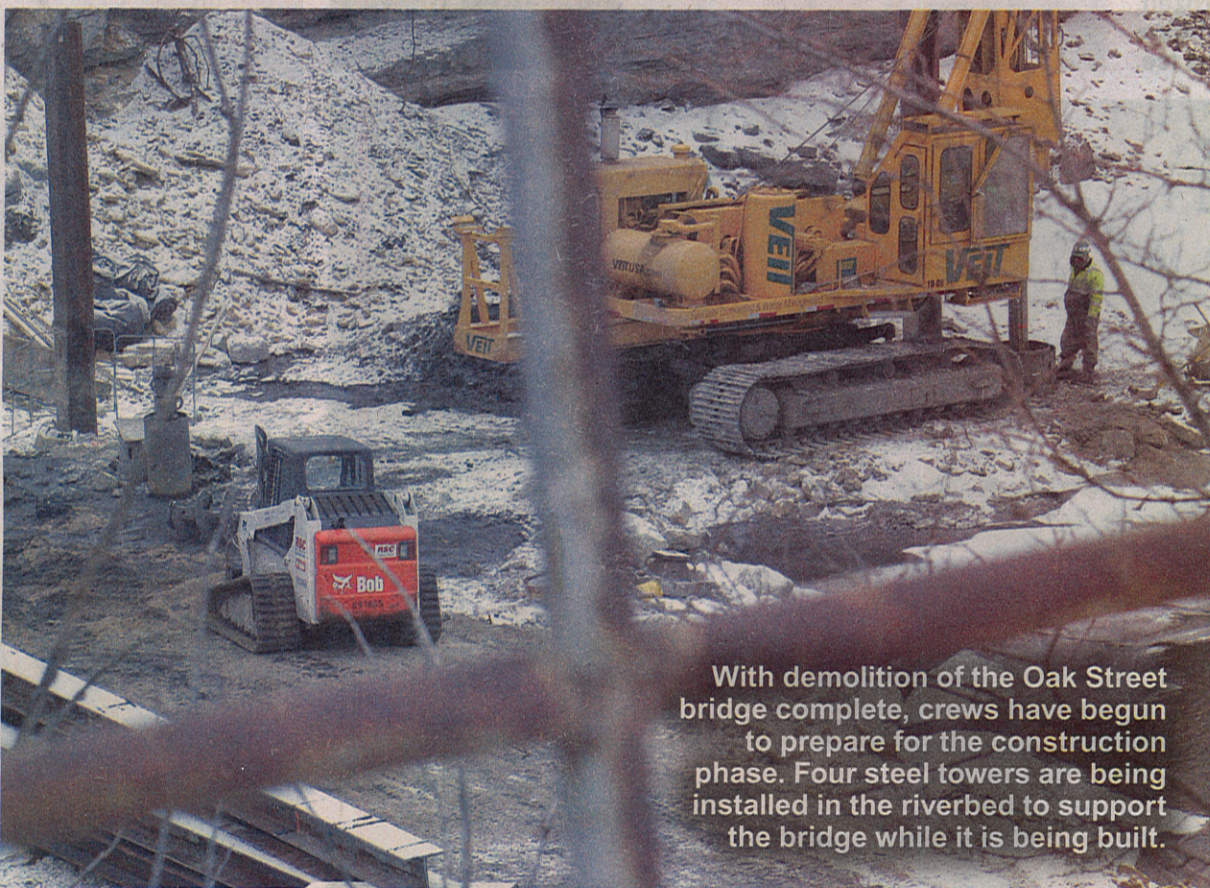
Flint Hills Resources' Iowa operations include a fuel terminal and asphalt plants in Algona, Davenport and Dubuque. The company also distributes refined fuels throughout the state.

Last fall, Flint Hills Resources acquired ethanol plants in Menlo and Shell Rock, Iowa.

Flint Hills Resources is based in Wichita, Kan. ■

CITIZEN

OAK STREET BRIDGE



With demolition of the Oak Street bridge complete, crews have begun to prepare for the construction phase. Four steel towers are being installed in the riverbed to support the bridge while it is being built.

BRIDGE WORK

Demolition complete, construction begins

BY SARA KONRAD
editor@iafalls.com

The concrete Oak Street bridge that spanned the Iowa River in Iowa Falls for eight decades may be just a memory, but work is chugging along to replace it with a steel structure by the end of the year.

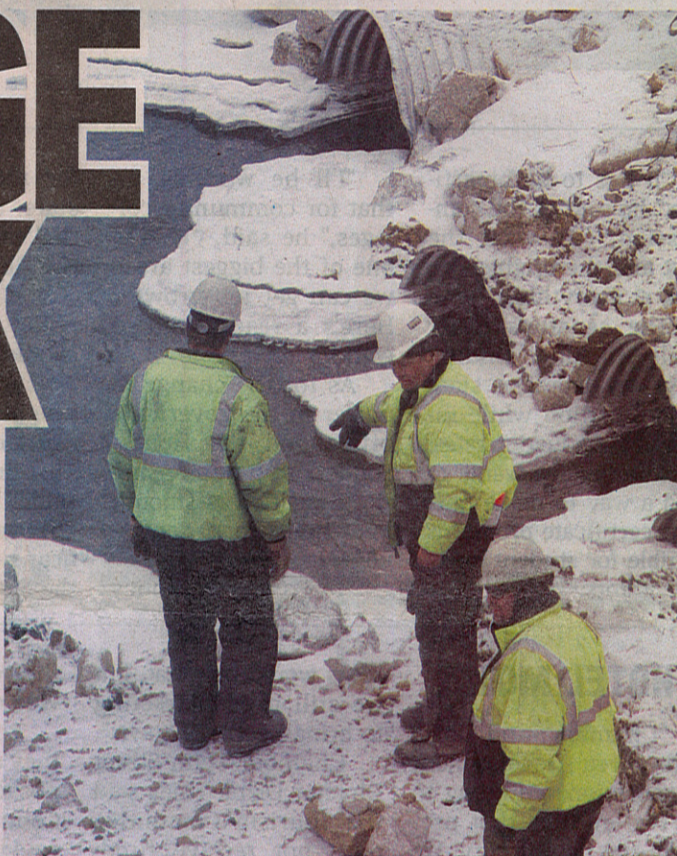
The new bridge, which is being constructed by Cramer & Associates of Grimes at a cost of \$12.7 million, should start to take shape this spring, according to Richard Schoene, Cramer & Associates' vice president of operations.

Schoene said the project has remained on schedule.

"The destruction went as we thought," Schoene said. "We're 100 percent complete with that."

Now, he said, crews have moved on to installation of four temporary steel towers. The beams will be anchored in the river bed and will hold the new bridge in place until it's complete. That installation will take about six weeks. Once the new bridge is complete, the towers will be pulled out and hauled away on barges.

As work continues on the towers, crews are also excavating for the new bridge's abutments. Schoene said they will remove



PHOTOS BY ELI HAMANN / TIMES CITIZEN

Cramer & Associates won the bid for the bridge project. The DOT will pay \$12.7 million for the new bridge.

4,300 cubic yards of rock from the north and south rock faces along the river, using a hydraulic breaker and a backhoe.

"We can't use explosives, but we probably wouldn't on this project. It's a limited space," Schoene said. "And the rock has been easier to excavate than we anticipated."

The abutment work should be completed in the next couple of months.

Right now, Schoene said, the company is in a race against time to get its work done in the riverbed before the river's water level is raised again in mid-March.

It will likely be late April or early May before the public begins to see construction of the new bridge. Steel installation will take two to three months and will be fol-

BRIDGE P2

CADETS
WHIP RIVAL
BULLDOGS
70-43 P8

GOVERNMENT

Board: IF needs better signs

BY SARA KONRAD
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Members of the Iowa Falls Hotel/Motel Tax Funding Advisory Board want to see signs directing drivers around the Oak Street bridge to the downtown area — and they're giving the Iowa Falls Chamber/Main Street Tourism Committee 30 days to come up with a plan.

Representatives of the Tourism Committee went before the board Wednesday to request \$18,000 in hotel/motel grants. The committee walked away with \$8,000 and a promise to return for more money for signs.

Hotel/motel grants are awarded quarterly by the board and the City Council. The money is revenue from a voter-approved tax that's assessed on all hotel, motel and bed and breakfast room rentals in Iowa Falls. Grants are awarded for tourism and economic development projects.

The Tourism Committee's request for funding was to cover the cost of its 2011 marketing plan. The plan includes the purchase of shopping and dining brochures, local and statewide advertising, Web site updates, postage, workshops and events like legislative night, a tourism conference and Wine Around Town.

As has become routine, some board members questioned whether the funding request qualified for hotel/motel funds.

"We're somewhat concerned with funding similar things every year," said Hotel/Motel Board Chair Craig Miller. "We would prefer to fund an item or two, rather than the marketing. We see that as a routine expense."

But board member Jody Anderson defended the committee's grant request.

HOTEL MOTEL P2

GOVERNMENT

Difficult session awaits lawmakers

Local legislators

"I always have to keep in mind

GOVERNMENT

Sodders, a Democrat in the

...BRIDGE

lowed by concrete work.

Schoene said his crew of 10 is working seven days a week to stay on schedule. If, for some reason, crews fall behind schedule, Schoene said manpower can be adjusted to compensate.

"You'll see nothing for a long time and then all of a sudden a bridge will pop up," he said.

Traffic woes

For most members of the public, travel around town is more difficult because the bridge is closed. Iowa Falls Police Chief Ron Kuhfus said his department received a number of complaints about traffic immediately following the bridge closure in September.

"People have come to realize they are going to run into trains and they just have to be patient," Kuhfus said. "Everybody is impatient."

Kuhfus said his officers have been patrolling routes around the bridge closure and have written some speeding tickets. But he said he's most worried about drivers' laziness when crossing train tracks.

"My fear is we're going to have a car-train collision," he said. "There are some drivers who stop and go without even looking to see if there's a train coming," Kuhfus said.

Meanwhile, some community members are concerned about the decrease in traffic through downtown and how that may affect businesses. At a Hotel/Motel Tax Funding Advisory Board meeting Wednesday, board members suggested new signs be erected to direct traffic to businesses that may be more difficult to access while the bridge is closed. The Hotel/Motel Board said it would consider funding such a project. ■



ELI HAMANN / TIMES CITIZEN

It will take crews six weeks to install four temporary steel towers in the river bedrock. They will be removed when the new bridge is complete.

sides of town, as well as downtown.

Diane Meier proposed funding \$8,000 of the committee's \$18,000 request. She said the board would also set aside \$5,694 in grants for bridge detour signage.

The board approved the proposal and asked

that the committee come back to them in a special meeting next month with a plan for signage.

Because the request was not fully funded, Thies said Thursday that several of the committee's planned advertisements and projects may have to be canceled. ■

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