

2025

Annual Highlights



City of Fremont

Table of Contents

Background	2
Mayoral Leadership	3
Mission, Vision and Values	4
Administration	5
Human Resources	9
Finance	10
Fire	11
Police	12
911 Dispatch	13
Planning	14
Inspections Department	15
Public Works & Engineering	16
Streets	18
Information Technology	20
Keene Memorial Library	21
Parks and Recreation	22
Fremont Transit Program	24

City of Fremont

Fremont was established in 1856 and is located between the Platte and Elkhorn Rivers. Fremont was named after the explorer John C. Fremont. The town became permanent with the arrival of the Union Pacific Railroad and was designated as the seat of Dodge County in 1860. Fremont experienced rapid growth in the late 1800s and, by 1910, had evolved into a major industrial and railroad center. After World War II, Fremont continued to expand, with its population doubling from 1940 to 1970, largely due to the presence of industries such as Hormel (now Wholestone Farms) and a robust service sector. As of 2023, the U.S. Census Bureau estimates Fremont's population at 27,602, reflecting its transformation from a prairie town to a vibrant community with a rich industrial history. The development of transportation routes, such as the US 275 bypass, has further facilitated growth and connectivity with nearby metropolitan areas.



A Year of Leadership Transition

2025 marked an important transition in the City of Fremont's leadership. Former Mayor Joey Spellerberg, who led the community since 2020 and was re-elected in 2024, was appointed by Governor Jim Pillen to serve as Nebraska State Treasurer. His appointment reflects his long-standing commitment to fiscal responsibility, community engagement, and statewide service. During his time as Mayor, Fremont advanced economic development initiatives, strengthened public safety efforts, and continued the work of growing the Fremont Inland Port Authority.



**Former Mayor
Joey Spellerberg**



Mayor Dev Sookram

With Mayor Spellerberg's transition to state leadership, the City of Fremont activated its succession process. City Council President Dev Sookram was sworn in as Mayor and now serves the remainder of the term. Mayor Sookram's leadership is grounded in collaboration, transparency, and community-focused progress. Under his direction, the City continues to advance infrastructure improvements, expand partnerships, and support initiatives that enhance the quality of life for all residents.

This transition highlights Fremont's stability, forward momentum, and the shared commitment of City leadership to serve the community with integrity and purpose.

FREMONT

Here We Grow

➔ Mission

To be good stewards by fostering a welcoming, collaborative, and distinct community that provides the resources necessary for sustainable growth and an excellent quality of life.

➔ Vision

To create an environment for growth, opportunities, and be welcoming to all.

➔ Values

- Strong Leadership
- Public safety
- Fiscally Responsible
- Quality of Life
- Teamwork



Here We Grow

Administration

City Administrator

As we close another year and step into 2025, I am excited to share our accomplishments, ongoing projects, and future initiatives that continue to shape our vibrant community. This past year has shown the resilience and spirit of Fremont, and we can be proud of what we have achieved together.



City Staff continue to improve City facilities and services to Fremont citizens through thoughtful construction. The renovation of the 2nd floor of City Hall is now complete, providing more transparency to the public with enhanced audio and visual equipment for broadcasting the City Council meetings. Work continues on the Streets – Parks – Fleet Maintenance building being constructed on South Luther Road, with a projected completion date in August 2026. The Amphitheater at John C. Fremont Park has sprung up, along with the Concessions and Restroom ancillary building. Footings for the new Police Headquarters and Fremont/Dodge County Communications building are being poured in January 2026. Engineering and design are underway for the new satellite fire station at the southwest corner of Military and Johnson Road.

Safety is one of the City's core values, so training is essential. With the addition of the Assistant Fire Chief/ Emergency Manager position, emergency management training has had a renewed focus. From the March Blizzard and resultant power outage in the City to the wood pellet plant explosion that tragically claimed three lives in late July, the City's response has evolved and become more comprehensive. I would be remiss to not acknowledge you, the citizens of Fremont and the surrounding area, for your heartfelt response to these emergency situations.

Together, we are better!

Grant Coordinator

2025 Grant Awards Summary (excludes airport grants):

Grant	Department	Award
Development Grant	Creative District	\$100,000
Grid Resiliency Grant	DU Distribution	\$1,900,000
Safe Drinking Water Revolving Funds	Water/Sewer Dept.	\$5,600,000
5311 Rural Public Transportation	Transit Program	\$229,246
EDA Tourism SLFRF	Parks and Rec	\$190,734
Assistance to Firefighters Grant	Fire Dept.	\$250,090
Grant Funds Awarded in 2025		\$8,270,070

Fremont Creative District:

In 2025, the Fremont Creative District continued to grow as a vibrant hub for arts, culture, and community connection. The Creative Council met monthly throughout the year, helping guide projects and worked with The Next Level Marketing Group to develop branding and a marketing strategy. District staff also advocated for Fremont at the state level, traveling to Lincoln on February 14, 2025, to testify in support of LB560, legislation that would give communities with creative districts greater access to Nebraska Tourism Commission marketing grants.



The district celebrated major momentum with the award of a \$100,000 Development Grant from the Nebraska Arts Council and acceptance into the Sculpture Walk Across Nebraska (SWAN) program. Development Grant funds will support the SWAN sculpture



installations in Fremont during 2026 and 2027, along with a community kickoff event celebrating the opening of the new amphitheater and improvements to JCF Park in 2026. The grant will also help expand marketing efforts to invite more residents and visitors to experience all the district has to offer.

Grant Coordinator continued

Facade Improvement Program:

The Downtown Facade Improvements Program, launched in 2024, continued successfully through 2025 with funding from Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Downtown Revitalization funds. The program is designed to restore, enhance, and create historic architectural features on commercial building facades located within Fremont's Business Improvement District #1, as outlined in the Fremont

Downtown Plan. By improving building exteriors, the program supports downtown revitalization efforts, strengthens local businesses, and enhances the overall visual character of the downtown area.

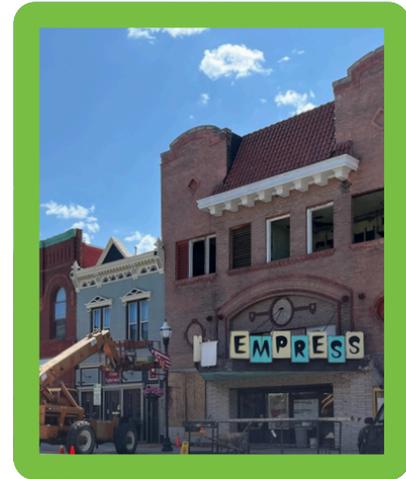
The program operates as a forgivable loan and is administered jointly by the City of Fremont and the Northeast Nebraska Economic Development District. In 2025, two downtown businesses, the Empress Theater and the Nebraska Quilt Company, implemented facade improvement projects through the program. The Downtown Facade Improvements Program will continue into the next year, and a grant extension request to the State is anticipated to allow additional time for remaining funds to be utilized should more downtown businesses apply.

Rental Rehabilitation Program:

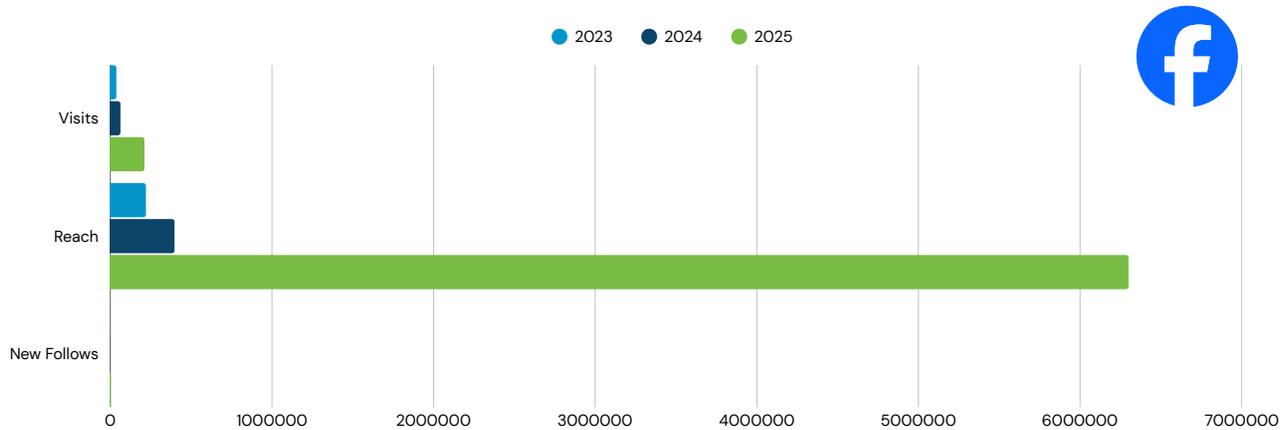
The Rental Rehab program, funded through a Nebraska Affordable Housing Trust Fund award, wrapped up in 2025. The program was aimed at providing decent, safe and quality housing to Fremont's low to moderate-income families and to improve housing in a responsible way. This program is operated by the City of Fremont through its Housing Rehabilitation Board and in partnership with Northeast Nebraska Economic Development District. One local property owner utilized the funding opportunity.

Local Option Economic Development Plan Administrator

Staff continued to serve as Plan Administrator for the Local Option Economic Development Program. Working in coordination with the Citizens' Advisory Review Team and the Local Option Review Team, the Administrator met with local businesses to discuss the application process, monitored existing award projects, and assisted three organizations with the preparation of full applications. In early 2025, Waterflex was awarded a \$200,000 performance-based forgivable loan. At the close of 2025, the fund is at \$3,120,111 in uncommitted funds.



Communication: Social Media Stats



City staff primarily use Facebook and Instagram for social media outreach. The reach of these platforms continues to grow each year (Facebook statistics are provided here). In 2025, there was a significant increase in reach and viewership, driven by steady audience growth as well as heightened engagement during the March storm. These stats reflect the City of Fremont Facebook page (not other departments like the Keene Memorial Library or Police Department).

City Clerk

In 2025, the City Clerk’s Office continued to support transparent governance, efficient operations, and public accessibility. The year marked the opening of the new Council Chambers, which hosted its first City Council meeting on January 14, 2025. The updated space provides improved accessibility for residents and enhanced functionality for public meetings.

The department remained a central point of coordination for City Council activities, completing agendas and official minutes for 28 City Council meetings. In collaboration with multiple City departments, the City Clerk’s Office reviewed and approved more than 20 special event applications, supporting community events while ensuring compliance with City policies and public safety requirements.

Licensing and records management continued to be a significant focus. During 2025, the department issued more than 900 pet licenses and over 1,000 occupancy licenses. The office also processed more than 225 public records requests, ensuring timely access to information and compliance with Nebraska public records laws.

Professional development remained a priority, with the City Clerk attending the League of Nebraska Municipalities Mid-Winter Conference in February and the Annual Conference in September, staying current on legislative updates, governance best practices, and evolving municipal requirements. In addition, leadership continuity was strengthened with the appointment of Michael Chatterson as City Clerk on February 11, 2025.

Human Resources



The Human Resources Department experienced another year of high activity and organizational growth in 2025. Applications, interviews, and hiring continued their upward trend, with more than 1,450 applications received and a significant rise in staffing actions across departments. HR supported major leadership hires, internal promotions, expanded training initiatives, and completed several key audits. The team also advanced employee benefits, modernized job classifications, and strengthened recruitment and hiring processes.



Key Leadership & Technical Hires

- Public Works Director
- Police Captain
- Gas System Supervisor
- Water/Sewer Superintendent
- Wastewater Superintendent
- Power Plant Shift Supervisor
- City Clerk

Organizational & Classification

Established or updated positions:

- Dispatch Supervisor
- Director of Infrastructure
- GIS Analysts (in progress)
- Park Maintenance Supervisor / Forestry Supervisor
- City Tree Trimmer
- Payroll Specialist

Recruitment & Hiring Improvements

- Implemented Command Staff interviews as part of Firefighter Civil Service hiring
- Utilized an Assessment Center for Police Captain selection
- Hosted an Open House for prospective firefighter candidates
- Represented the City at multiple job fairs, meet-and-greets, and recruiting events
- Collaborated with Finance to eliminate duplicate employee numbers

Finance Department

In 2025, the Finance Department led several major citywide financial initiatives while maintaining high standards of accountability and transparency.



Budget Planning & Coordination

Staff led the FY2026 budget process from February through September, aligning Citywide resources with operational priorities and long-term goals.

Disaster Recovery & FEMA Reimbursement

Following the March blizzard, the department prepared and submitted FEMA reimbursement documentation and continues work to recover approximately \$2 million in disaster-related expenses.

Audits, Bonds & Long-Term Financing

To ensure continued financial transparency, the department completed annual bond and audit reviews in May. In September, the City successfully issued Department of Utilities revenue bonds, strengthening long-term infrastructure funding.

Modernizing Financial Reporting

Between February and April, Finance launched The Reporting Solution (TRS), automating the production of City and Department of Utilities financial statements and improving reporting accuracy and efficiency.

Specialized Programs & Compliance

The department completed the Medicare Ground Ambulance Data Collection System (MGADCS) project and is finalizing the Nebraska Ground Emergency Medical Transportation (GEMT) payment program project, scheduled for completion between October and December.

Training, Certifications & Professional Development

Ongoing professional development remained a priority in 2025. The Finance Director attended the League of Municipalities Finance Conference in June, while the Assistant Finance Director attended the League of Municipalities Conference in September. Additional staff participated in GAAP Annual Update Training in November, ensuring continued compliance with evolving accounting standards.

Fire Department



This year, the Fremont Fire Department continued to strengthen its leadership team while advancing major department initiatives. The department focused on long-term growth and operational preparedness through facility planning, modernization of reporting systems, and continued investment in firefighter safety.

Staffing: The department has successfully hired additional firefighters, bringing our department to full staffing with 11 personnel per shift. This will help us effectively meet the community's needs.

Equipment Upgrades: Through a \$250,909 FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grant, the department will replace 27 outdated Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) units, significantly improving firefighter safety and operational effectiveness. EMS patient care reporting standards were also upgraded to meet new national data requirements.



Facility & Infrastructure Planning: Design of the future Satellite Fire Station began in June with FGM Architects. In November, Boyd Jones was selected as Construction Manager at Risk to lead the design and construction process for the department's fire station projects.

Training and Development: Firefighters continued to strengthen their skills and certifications throughout the year by attending the Fire Department Instructor Conference (FDIC) in Indianapolis, Dive Rescue training in Michigan, Firefighter II certification through the Nebraska Fire Marshal's Training Division, Grain Bin Rescue training in collaboration with Metro Community College, and Rope/Confined Space Rescue Technician training at the Roco Training Center in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The department also hosted the National Fire Academy's Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Firefighting course for regional departments. In addition, one firefighter was accepted into the Creighton University Paramedic Program beginning January 2026, one firefighter graduated from the Metro Community College Paramedic Program, and two additional firefighters were accepted into the same program with training continuing through March 2027.

The Fremont Fire Department is committed to improving safety, operational readiness, and education in our community. Thank you for your continued support!

Police Department



Building the Future of Public Safety

In 2025, the Fremont Police Department broke ground on the new Police Headquarters and 911 Dispatch Center, marking a major investment in public safety infrastructure that will enhance operational efficiency and emergency response.



The department also partnered with Lutheran Family Services to pursue grant funding that expanded the Mental Health Co-Responder Program. Multiple grants allowed the program to transition to a full-time co-responder, strengthening crisis response services within the community.

Prepared, Skilled, and Ready

This year, officers participated in a wide range of training opportunities to strengthen skills across the department. Officers attended the Police Officers Association of Nebraska (POAN) Conference in Kearney, completed a full-day crime scene photography course to meet updated investigative standards, and expanded the department's drone capabilities with four newly certified drone operators. Staffing development included the graduation of one officer from the academy and the onboarding of an additional certified officer.

Promotions & Staffing Updates: The department recognized several personnel advancements in 2025. A new detective was promoted, enhancing investigative strength within the division. Additional staffing progress included successful completion of training milestones by new officers and the hiring of a certified officer to support patrol operations.

Community-Focused Initiatives & Recognitions: The department continued its commitment to community wellness through advanced training efforts. Two officers completed a 40-hour Crisis Intervention Training course to improve response to mental health-related incidents. In recognition of leadership and service, Lieutenant Ed Watts received the Civic Leadership Award from Civic Nebraska at the Strengthening Democracy Awards. The appointment of Dominic Savio to Police Captain further strengthened department leadership and operational oversight.

Fremont Dodge County 911

The Fremont/Dodge County Communications Center experienced an impactful year in 2025. Dispatchers responded to a wide range of emergencies, including managing more than 2,100 calls during the March blizzard, ensuring uninterrupted service throughout the severe weather event. The team also advanced interagency coordination by supporting the Fremont Rural Fire app-based system, which provides responders with real-time access to critical dispatch information and is planned for future presentation to the City Council.



Technology improvements played a central role this year. The center implemented state-provided software designed to enhance language translation and improve location accuracy for incoming 911 calls. A new agreement with Fremont Public Schools now provides dispatch access to school camera systems during emergencies, strengthening response capabilities. Staff also worked closely with vendors to begin the equipment planning process for the new 911 Center located within the future Police Building.

Training and development was ongoing, with Crisis Intervention Training for Telecommunicators led by Lutheran Family Services, advanced certifications including FBI NCIC credentials, and attendance at the Resuscitation Academy to strengthen emergency response skills.

The department also secured a **FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant** for a new generator at the future Police/911 building, ensuring long-term operational reliability.

The year also brought recognition with the Fremont/Dodge County Dispatch Team receiving the **Nebraska APCO-NENA "Team of the Year" Award** for exceptional service.

Planning Department

In 2025, the Planning & Zoning Department supported Fremont’s continued growth through a wide range of subdivision activity, zoning actions, development initiatives, and regulatory updates. Staff reviewed and processed numerous applications to guide responsible development while maintaining compliance with City standards.

Subdivisions	Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 Administrative Plats • 2 Preliminary Plats • 3 Final Plats • 1 Corrective Plat • 1 Subdivision Agreement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blight Study completed (Inland Port Area) • “Deblight” (N. Board Street Area) • Redevelopment Plan: 1 • Development Agreement: 1

Zoning Activity	Zoning Permits Issued
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Change of Zone • 6 Conditional Use Permits • 8 Zoning Compliance Letters • 4 Sign Plans • 1 Variance • 3 Landscape Waivers • 4 Small Wireless Facilities • 1 Planned Unit Development (PUD) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sign Permits: 137 • Fence Permits: 169 • Floodplain Development Permits: 53 • Floodplain Maintenance Permits: 300 • Plan Reviews for Planning: 3,358

Study	Regulations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fremont Housing Conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UDC Update with 16 study sessions • FFRMS Flood Tool

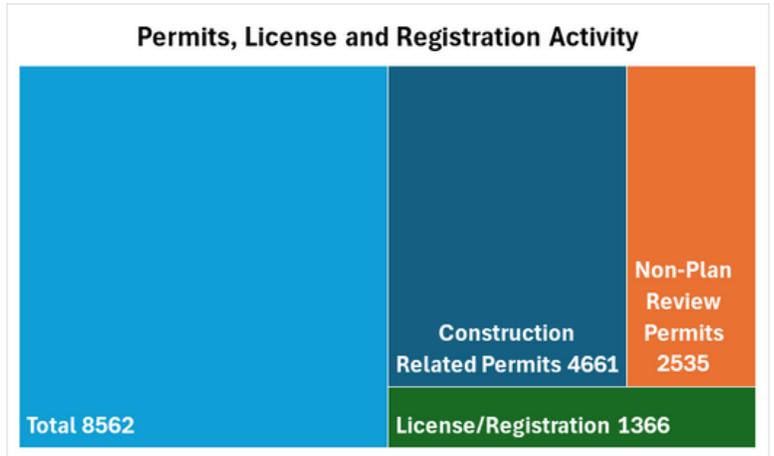
The Planning Department completed UDC study sessions 17 through 20 and coordinated an open house to support public engagement throughout the update process. The City collaborated with planning consultant RDG to finalize the Unified Development Code, which was approved by City Council on November 25, 2025, and officially took effect on December 10, 2025.

Staff also worked closely with multiple City and DU departments on major facility developments, including the Amphitheater, Streets-Parks-Fleet Maintenance Building, Police/911 Station, and Fire Station.

Overall, 2025 was a productive and forward-moving year for the Planning & Zoning Department, as efforts remained focused on guiding sustainable development, strengthening regulations, and supporting long-term community growth.

Inspections Department

The Building and Inspections Division had a highly productive year, issuing a total of 4,661 construction-related permits, including general construction, electrical, plumbing, mechanical, and grading permits. In addition, staff processed 2,535 non-plan review permits for roofing, siding, windows, and gutters. The department also issued and renewed 1,366 licenses and registrations throughout the year.



Together, these projects represented a total valuation of \$122.4 million in development activity within the ETJ, highlighting continued growth across the community.



To improve efficiency and customer service, the department implemented Bluebeam software, enhancing digital plan review and collaboration. The plan review process was further strengthened, with the creation of new, project-specific handouts that provide clear, step-by-step guidance for homeowners and contractors.

This summary highlights the department's efforts in permitting, inspections, and showcasing a commitment to maintaining high standards in the Fremont community.



Public Works & Engineering

The Public Works and Engineering Department has made significant strides over the past year, showcasing progress and commitment to enhancing infrastructure throughout the City of Fremont.

Broad Street Overlay (4th Street to 23rd Street)

All major construction work is complete, and the roadway is open to traffic. The Broad Street Overlay from 4th Street to 23rd Street improved pavement conditions, ride quality, and long-term durability along one of Fremont's most important transportation corridors. Despite weather-related delays earlier in the year, the project successfully enhanced a key route used daily by residents, businesses, and emergency services.

16th Street Overlay (Nye Ave to Lincoln Ave)

All major construction work is complete, and the roadway is open to traffic. The 16th Street Overlay improved pavement conditions. A final walkthrough is planned for Spring 2026, after which the project will be officially closed.

2025 Pavement Rehab Project

The 2025 Pavement Rehab was completed in 2025, delivering targeted roadway and intersection improvements across Fremont. Work was completed along Linden Avenue, Downing Street, 17th Street, and Elm Street, as well as at key intersections including Linden & Hancock, Jones & Nebraska, and other neighborhood locations.

After completing the initial project, Public Works was able to add additional rehabilitation locations, allowing the City to address more intersections and connectivity routes than originally planned. By expanding the scope, the City maximized the impact of the 2025 project.

Safe Streets 4 Fremont

In 2025, Fremont launched Safe Streets 4 Fremont, a federally funded traffic safety initiative focused on reducing serious injuries and fatalities. The planning effort began in summer 2025 and will result in a data-driven Action Plan in 2026 to improve safety for all roadway users.



Public Works & Engineering

continued

23rd Street Traffic Improvements & New Arm Mast

In 2025, the City of Fremont advanced a major traffic improvement project along the 23rd Street corridor to enhance safety and reduce congestion. A dedicated turn lane was added on 23rd Street between North Luther Road and Diers Parkway. Notably, a new mast-arm traffic signal pole was installed at the 16th Street & Broad Street intersection, replacing the damaged signal equipment.

Kavich Parking Garage

After structural safety concerns prompted closure in early 2024, Public Works advanced rehabilitation efforts at the Kavich Parking Garage to ensure long-term

safety and functionality. The garage reopened in September 2025 after final inspections, reinforcing the commitment to maintaining essential downtown infrastructure.

Fremont Municipal Airport

The Fremont Municipal Airport advanced both infrastructure improvements and long-term planning in 2025. Crews completed taxiway lighting repairs, fencing upgrades, and hangar re-sheeting projects, strengthening airfield safety and facility durability by November. Progress continued on the Airport Layout Plan (ALP).

In August, Fremont was selected to host the 2026 Nebraska State Fly-In, in coordination with the Nebraska Aeronautics Division, positioning the community as a statewide destination for aviation tourism and economic activity.

Overall, these initiatives reflect the Public Works Department's dedication to providing safe, efficient, and sustainable public infrastructure, with ongoing updates and enhancements planned for the coming year. As we continue to address community needs, we remain committed to transparency and collaboration with the residents of Fremont.



Streets Department

Projects & Operations

The Streets Division completed key maintenance and infrastructure support projects in 2025 while continuing to strengthen operational readiness. Select equipment operators began heavy equipment training on the new excavator, expanding in-house capability and efficiency.

In October, crews completed storm sewer repairs and replaced overhead street signs along Broad Street, with assistance from the Parks Department using bucket-truck operations—demonstrating strong interdepartmental teamwork.

Training, Certifications & Workforce Development

Investment in staff training remained a priority throughout the year. In January, employees began cross-training in sign production and installation, allowing for greater workforce flexibility and faster response times. In February, staff were cross-trained in snow operations and concrete repair, ensuring continuity of service during peak seasons and staffing challenges.

Further professional development included four employees attending the LTAP Sign Maintenance Workshop in Lincoln in October, strengthening skills in signage safety, visibility, and compliance.



Streets Department continued

Snow Operations & Winter Response

The City maintains a highly capable Street Department team and contracts with outside assistance to ensure effective snow and ice control throughout the winter season. During extreme winter weather in February 2025, the Streets Division was formally acknowledged for maintaining road operations and snow removal under challenging conditions, helping keep critical routes open for emergency services, commerce, and residents. (continued)

Operational Demands

Snow removal often requires extended operational hours, with crews regularly working 12–15 hour shifts, taking short rest periods, and returning to service as needed.



CITY OF FREMONT SNOW OPERATIONS

17

Seventeen dedicated employees from the Street Department ensure effective snow operations throughout the winter season, maintaining safe and navigable roadways for the community.



2 Motor Graders

Essential for large snow removal

12 Plow Trucks

Equipped for highway and road clearing (5 with sanders)

1 Pickup with Plow

Used for light snowfall conditions

1 Apex Truck

To distribute liquid magnesium

4 Loaders

For heavy snow loading operations

Applications • Ice Slicer - Road Salt - Liquid Magnesium

Snow Response Criteria

- Snow Routes: 2 inches of accumulation
- Residential Streets: 3 inches of accumulation
- Plowing may occur earlier in cases of extreme drifting

The Personnel Supporting Snow Operations are crucial during winter, ensuring that roads remain accessible. Their well-coordinated efforts and resources prevent disruptions due to snow and ice, enhancing public safety and mobility in the community.

FREMONT

Here We Grow

Information Technology

In 2025, the Information Systems Department strengthened the City's technology infrastructure, cybersecurity readiness, and public-facing data systems by coordinating with fiber providers, Dodge County, and Fremont Police on fiber and radio connectivity; advancing switch and server configuration; and continuing GIS system data integration to support public safety and operational reliability.

In 2025, the department responded to 4,143 incidents and service requests, a 14% increase over 2024 with more than a month remaining, and managed 2,062 technology assets citywide.

Major Upgrades

- Rolled out Windows 11 and completed lifecycle replacement of computers, mobile devices, and network switches.
- Upgraded VMware virtual server architecture and the City's email archiving system.
- Replaced UPS batteries at City Hall and the Warehouse to improve infrastructure reliability.
- Installed and rewired new desks at the 911 Dispatch Center to enhance operational readiness.
- Expanded GIS services with public online maps and updated citywide aerial imagery supporting multiple departments.



Certifications, Training & Professional Development

City staff completed KnowBe4 cybersecurity awareness training in April 2025, strengthening organization-wide security awareness. The Director of Information Systems attended the American Public Power Association (APPA) Cybersecurity Summit in September, while multiple IT staff members participated in the Nebraska Cybersecurity Conference to remain current on evolving threats and best practices. T

IT Department is dedicated to continuing to support and innovate to meet the evolving needs of our organization.

Keene Memorial Library

Keene Memorial Library had a strong, community-focused year, expanding engagement through new cardholders, diverse programs for all ages, robust circulation of physical and digital materials, and increased access to regional cultural institutions. The accompanying chart provides a summary of these key activities and outcomes.

Enhancements to the library included the installation of new outdoor furniture funded through the Keno Grant program with matching support from the Friends group.

Community partnerships continued to flourish. The library collaborated with Parks & Recreation on major events such as Big Trucks Day and the Summer Reading Kickoff, and partnered with the American Red Cross to host four blood drives, collecting 59 total units in 2025.

Library staff remained committed to professional growth, including presenting youth literacy and outreach initiatives at a statewide professional retreat in September 2025.

Throughout the year, library staff demonstrated exceptional teamwork - maintaining operations during power outages with mobile circulation equipment and offering charging stations.

Staff also supported the Utilities Department during the March storm response and provided periodic assistance to Accounting.

We look forward to continuing to serve and engage our community throughout the upcoming year! Thank you for your support.



2025 Key Highlights

GROWTH

1,128 new library cardholders reflect an increasing commitment to community engagement and educational resources. Library meeting rooms hosted 1,211 meetings with 6,858 attendees.





PROGRAMS

With 547 programs, the library engaged 21,784 participants, fostering learning and community connections across all ages.

CIRCULATION

Circulating 203,694 items, including over 97,000 digital downloads, showcases the library's extensive resources and digital reach.





FAMILY PASSES

147 family pass checkouts to cultural institutions show how we support regional cultural experiences to places like:

- Fontenelle Forest
- Omaha Children's Museum
- Durham Museum

This program is supported by the Friends of Keene Memorial Library.

SUPPORT LIBRARIES

We enhance community access to resources.

Parks and Recreation



In 2025, the Parks and Recreation Department continued to enhance community spaces, expand programming, and invest in long-term infrastructure improvements across the park system. A major operational milestone was the implementation of the CivicRec online registration platform in October, significantly improving customer service efficiency for program enrollment and facility rentals.

Construction progressed on several key projects, including the John C. Fremont Amphitheater, which advanced despite encountering underground obstructions. Phase 1 of the John C. Fremont Park project officially broke ground in August. The Van Anda restroom project, with the precast structure also progressed in 2025.

Forestry and Beautification

Forestry and park beautification efforts remained a strong focus throughout the year. Through the Fremont Canopy Keepers initiative, 50 trees were planted in partnership with community organizations. An additional 14 trees were planted at Johnson Park through a donation from the David Christensen Family, along with 16 more trees added throughout the park system.

The Fremont Friends of Area Parks also supported improvements with new flower beds and signage at the Clemmons Park entry. Following spring flooding and a March winter storm, staff completed seasonal park maintenance, storm cleanup, and trail re-clearing at Hormel Park.

Parks and Greenspaces	18	
Total Trees	4,000	
Park Staff Members	11	
Arborists	3	



Parks and Recreation

Continued



Capital investments were made to modernize equipment and improve maintenance efficiency, including the purchase of a new aerial lift for Forestry, a one-ton utility truck, two drop-deck trailers, and a new zero-turn mower for Cemetery operations. Metal trash cans were also replaced with plastic containers compatible with automatic dumpers to improve efficiency and safety. Additional site improvements included a new park sign installation at Moller Park and parking lot upgrades at Wildwood Park, supported by additional funding through an EDA Tourism Grant amendment.

Programming

The department supported a full calendar of community events and educational programming throughout the year, including concerts in the park, Bike Ride Across Nebraska (BRAN), the Scarecrow Contest, Pumpkin Painting at Clemmons Park, the Haunted Trail Run at Hormel Park, and a Crop Cover educational event in partnership with Nebraska Extension.

Preservation

Historic preservation efforts were also completed at Ridge Cemetery, where fifteen headstones, most over 100 years old and without next of kin on record, were reset on new foundations to improve safety and appearance.

Professional Development

Staff continued professional development through CivicRec software training to enhance customer service delivery.



Fremont Transit Program

The Fremont Transit Program continued to grow in 2025. After two full years of operation, staff evaluated opportunities to optimize services and strengthen revenue streams. With the assistance of state and federal funding, the program acquired an additional expansion van. This new vehicle increases service capacity and allows for the accommodation of multiple wheelchairs simultaneously

Route Optimization

Staff are collaborating with the Fremont Housing Authority to implement a flex-route service between the Fremont Towers and Walmart twice per week, improving access to essential services for residents. In addition, staff continue to work with the Transit Task Force to raise local match funds to support the program’s sustainability. Looking ahead to 2026, revenue enhancements will include scheduled fare increases effective January 1 and August 1.

Looking ahead to 2026, revenue enhancements will include scheduled fare increases effective January 1 and August 1.

