

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: **AMES FRINGE PLAN AMENDMENT**
(Oaks Public Golf Course from Parks and Recreation Area
to Rural Residential)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Chuck Winkleblack, representing the applicant, seeks to develop the Oaks Public Golf Course at 630 W. 190th Street as four residential lots while retaining the existing clubhouse/apartment on an additional lot. Mr. Winkleblack is requesting the entire area of the Oaks Public Golf Course be designated as Rural Residential. The subject area is 41.43 acres.

Land Use Policy Plan and Ames Urban Fringe Plan: The Oaks Public Golf Course comprises three separate parcels. The Ames Urban Fringe Plan designates the northern parcel of this site as Parks and Recreation Area and the southern two lots as Natural Area (See Attachment A). The Parks and Recreation Area designation is a subclass of the Rural Service and Agricultural Conservation Area. To accommodate the proposed development (four large residential lots and an additional lot to accommodate the existing golf clubhouse), the site would need to be designated as Rural Residential, also a subclass of the Rural Service and Agricultural Conservation Area.

Portions of the site are covered, also, by the Gateway Protection and the Watershed Protection Area overlay designations. No changes to these overlays are sought.

The site is not in an Allowable Growth Area of the Land Use Policy Plan. In 2008, it was considered for inclusion within the North Growth Area for purposes of the Targeted Growth Study. **However, due to the impracticability of extending sanitary sewer service to this area, it was ultimately excluded from the North Growth Area. Since the applicant is not seeking annexation, a change to the LUPP Allowable Growth Designation is not needed.**

A map of the Ames Urban Fringe Plan designations is found in Appendix A of this report. The policies concerning these designations are found in Appendixes C and D.

Zoning: The Oaks Golf Course is currently zoned A-1 by the County (with a small I-2 Heavy Industrial zone at the south near the service entrance to Ada Hayden Park).

Applicant's Statement: The applicant's Narrative for LUPP Change is included in Appendix B.

Applicable Law: The Land Use Policy Plan describes the process for considering amendments to the Plan as well as specific considerations when reviewing those amendments. Below is an excerpt from the Land Use Policy Plan.

When reviewing major and minor proposed amendments to the Land Use Policy Plan, consideration should be given to whether or not the proposed amendment is consistent with the Goals for a New Vision described in the Land Use Policy Plan. These goals, and the related objectives below each goal, should apply to review of both minor and major amendments...

ANALYSIS:

The applicant wishes to repurpose the land upon which the Oaks Public Golf Course currently sits. Even though it is adjacent to the City limits, it was determined that extending City utilities, especially sanitary sewer, would be prohibitively expensive. In determining the growth areas of the City in the recent Land Use Policy Plan amendment to the Implementation Chapter, the City Council explicitly decided to exclude this area from the identified Allowable Growth Areas.

The Ames Urban Fringe Plan confirms the growth expectations of the LUPP. The designation of this area is Rural Service and Agricultural Conservation Area. This designation anticipates that the City will not annex and grow into this area during the life of the Plan in order to meet Ames' population projections. Among the subcategories of the Rural Service and Agricultural Conservation Area are Parks and Recreation Area (the current designation of much of the subject site) and Rural Residential (the proposed designation of the entire site).

The Rural Residential designation, if approved, would allow for residential development at 1-acre minimum lot sizes (on average). The size of the development could allow for nearly 40 lots. The applicant, however, seeks to develop just four new lots in addition to retaining a lot for the existing clubhouse/apartment. This designation is what the applicant seeks to develop the property.

The Natural Area designation over approximately the southern two parcels (about 300 feet deep on the west and about 600 feet deep on the east) protects the Ada Hayden watershed by serving as a buffer from future residential encroachment. This protection is limited, however, only to preventing it from being subdivided for residential development. **Although the land within the Natural Area is currently developed with the golf course, the Natural Area policy precludes subdivisions for new residential development. If the Natural Area is removed, development could then occur anywhere on the golf course site. The applicant seeks to remove this designation from the property.**

The Watershed Protection Area provides justification if the City or County sought the development of regulations to protect the Ada Hayden Watershed. In this instance, the City adopted a conservation subdivision ordinance that governs all subdivision within the Ada Hayden Watershed for which the City has jurisdiction. A subdivision of this property, however, is not with the jurisdiction of the City of Ames. The County, though, also has a conservation subdivision ordinance. The applicant is not seeking a change to this designation.

The Gateway Protection is described in the Ames Urban Fringe Plan as applying to entrances into Ames along major transportation corridors. This designation has led to the adoption of the Northeast, Southeast, and Southwest Overlay Zoning districts within Ames. No such overlay has been proposed along this US Highway 69 corridor. The applicant is not seeking a change to this designation.

The 28E Implementation Agreement with Story County and Gilbert allows for Story County to retain full subdivision review authority in the Rural Services and Agricultural Conservation Area. The agreement also allows for notification and participation by Ames in any development action proposed in the Fringe. This participation allows the City to provide input on any specific mitigation measures that may be necessary for the County to apply and are supported by the Urban Fringe Plan designations.

There is an area in the northeast corner of the site that is in a designated General Flood Plain. The Plan states that, in general, flood plains should be designated as Natural Area. For instance, the flood plain downstream (on the east side of US 69) is designated as Natural Area. The Story County Planning and Zoning and the Ames Planning and Zoning Commission both recommended that the flood plain on the golf course property be designated as Natural Area.

CONSIDERATION OF GOALS AND POLICIES:

As noted in the Applicable Law, above, the Goals and Policies of the Land Use Policy Plan are to be considered in evaluating any proposed amendment to the LUPP. The Goals and Policies are included in Appendix C of this report. Below are staff comments related to each Goal.

Goal 1: Regarding planning and managing growth for sustainability, predictability and quality of life:

The LUPP has identified this area as not suitable for annexation to accommodate the City's growth. The Ames Urban Fringe Plan allows for development to certain standards in those areas of the fringe that are not identified for annexation. Rural Residential (the proposed designation) is consistent with the intent of the Ames Urban Fringe Plan.

Goal 2: Regarding assuring provision of land and compatibility with natural resources.

This area is not identified as being needed to accommodate the target population and employment growth needs of Ames. A portion of the area abutting Ada Hayden Park is designated as a Natural Area, which by current policy is not to be further subdivided for residential development. This proposed change will allow a residential development of as many as 40 homes, based on Urban Fringe Plan policies (maximum densities of one dwelling unit per acre). However, the developer is proposing five lots.

Goal 3: Regarding Ames as an "environmentally-friendly" environmentally sustainable community.

Certain Urban Fringe Plan designations are founded on the desire to be “environmentally-friendly.” These designations include Natural Area, Watershed Protection Area, and Gateway Protection. The City Council may consider whether the proposed amendment and anticipated development will result in an appropriate “Gateway” to the City’s north entrance.

Goal 4: Regarding a sense of place and a healthy, safe, and attractive community.

It is not apparent whether the proposal will create a greater sense of place or assure a more healthy, safe, and attractive environment.

Goal 5: Regarding a cost-effective growth pattern and the timing of infrastructure and services.

This area lies outside the Allowable Growth Area of the City. There are no City costs to allow this development, nor are City services to be extended to serve the area.

Goal 6: Regarding supply and choice of housing.

The proposed development will add four housing sites to the community.

Goal 7: Regarding mobility and modes of transportation.

The proposed development is served by 190th Street and will likely contain an internal road to access the proposed lots. There are no shared use path linkages adjacent to the site. Neither is the area proposed to be served by CyRide.

Goal 8: Regarding downtown as a community focal point.

The proposal would have no bearing on retaining downtown as a community focal point.

Goal 9: Regarding expansion and diversification of the economy.

It is not apparent whether the proposal will expand and diversify the economy.

Goal 10: Regarding Ames’ cultural heritage.

The City Council may consider whether Ada Hayden Park is a cultural asset as envisioned by this Goal of the LUPP and, if so, what the impacts of this development may have. Impacts can include the viewshed from the lake, looking northward towards the proposed residential development as well as impacts of on-site sanitary systems in the watershed.

Regarding other broader goals of the Urban Fringe Plan and LUPP

The proposed change to a Rural Residential designation is consistent with the Ames Urban Fringe Plan’s determination that this area is not anticipated for

annexation and urban development.

The proposal is also consistent with the Allowable Growth Policies of the Land Use Policy Plan which has determined that the area is not needed to accommodate the future housing and population needs of the City.

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION:

The Planning and Zoning Commission, at their regular meeting of July 5, 2012, recommended that the City Council approve the proposed amendment to the Ames Urban Fringe Plan Land Use Framework Map to change the land use designation of all three subject properties of the Oaks Public Golf Course from Parks and Recreation Area to Rural Residential. The recommendation included retaining no existing Natural Area on the southern two parcels but to protect the environmentally sensitive area in the northeast corner of the site. The recommendation also included a condition that the development of the site would allow no more than five dwellings. The recommendation retained the existing Watershed Protection Area and Gateway Protection overlay designations.

ALTERNATIVES:

Consistency with the Goals and Objectives of the LUPP is the most important factor in making land use policy. When the City Council determined that the proposed change was a "minor amendment," the Council found that there were nothing in the request that was inconsistent with the broad Goals and Policies of the City. **However, the proposed development raises a number of site-specific issues as noted in the report. These issues include, among others, protection of the Ada Hayden Lake watershed; the impacts of the gateway into the City from US 69; the impact of development on the viewshed from the lake property; how many lots should be considered for this site; and whether the Natural Area should be retained for protection of Ada Hayden Lake.**

Considering to what extent the proposed amendment to the Future Land Use Map is consistent with the Goals and Objectives of the LUPP can lead to four possible decision alternatives:

1. The City Council can approve the proposed amendment to the Ames Urban Fringe Plan Land Use Framework Map to **change the land use designation of the Oaks Public Golf Course from Parks and Recreation Area to Rural Residential and designate the flood plain in the northeast as Natural Area. The alternative also includes a limitation on subdividing this area into no more than five lots. As part of this alternative, this lot limitation would be documented in the resolution approving the change and would also be placed as a notation on the Urban Fringe Plan map.**

This option would retain the existing Watershed Protection Area, and Gateway Protection designations. This option would **not** retain the Natural Area on the southern two parcels. This option would be consistent with the Ames Planning and Zoning Commission. The Story County Planning and Zoning Commission

approved a similar recommendation; however it did not include the condition to allow no more than five lots. The Gilbert City Council has decided to accept the decisions of Ames and Story County on this Plan change.

City staff has discussed this alternative with Mr. Winkleblack, representing the applicant. He has indicated that he supports this alternative.

2. The City Council can approve the proposed amendment to the Ames Urban Fringe Plan Land Use Framework Map to **change the land use designation of the entire Oaks Public Golf Course from Parks and Recreation Area to Rural Residential.**

This option would retain **no** existing Natural Area. The floodplain in the northeast would not be designated as Natural Area nor would there be a limitation on the number of potential lots to be developed. The Watershed Protection Area and Gateway Protection designations would be retained.

This alternative is consistent with the original request of Mr. Winkleblack.

3. The City Council can consider other alternatives that could include different land use designations or other limitations that may need to be followed. This option would allow the City Council to address any specific issues that the Council feels would require the County to address during subdivision approval, rezoning, or site plan review.

Possible mitigating factors for the City Council to consider could be to retain the Natural Area on the southern two lots, require the creation or maintenance of landscaping to buffer or screen the housing from the lake, or limitations on the placement of homes on the development to minimize impacts on the viewshed or watershed.

4. The City Council can deny the proposed amendment to the Ames Urban Fringe Plan Future Land Use Framework Map to change the land use designation of the Oaks from Parks and Recreation Area to Rural Residential.

This option would retain the status quo. Few land use options would be available under the Urban Fringe Plan designation of Parks and Recreation Area, although the existing county designation of A-1 allows a very limited uses (agriculture, schools, housing with a minimum of 35 acres, cemeteries, kennels, stables).

5. The City Council can refer this request back to staff or the applicant for more information or to develop other alternatives. This alternative could also accommodate, if the City Council desires, the creation and implementation of City or County standards for watershed management or gateway protection.

MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION:

The proposed repurposing of the Oaks Public Golf Course is consistent with other trends in Iowa and the Midwest—golf courses are being reduced in number and alternate uses created. In this instance, the immediate reaction that staff has heard is that a residential housing development certainly would have less of an environmental impact than a golf course with its associated chemical usage. While the applicant states that he has reduced phosphorus on the course in order to protect the watershed, other chemical usage occurs. Staff has also heard comments about what the visual impact of this development on the lake would be.

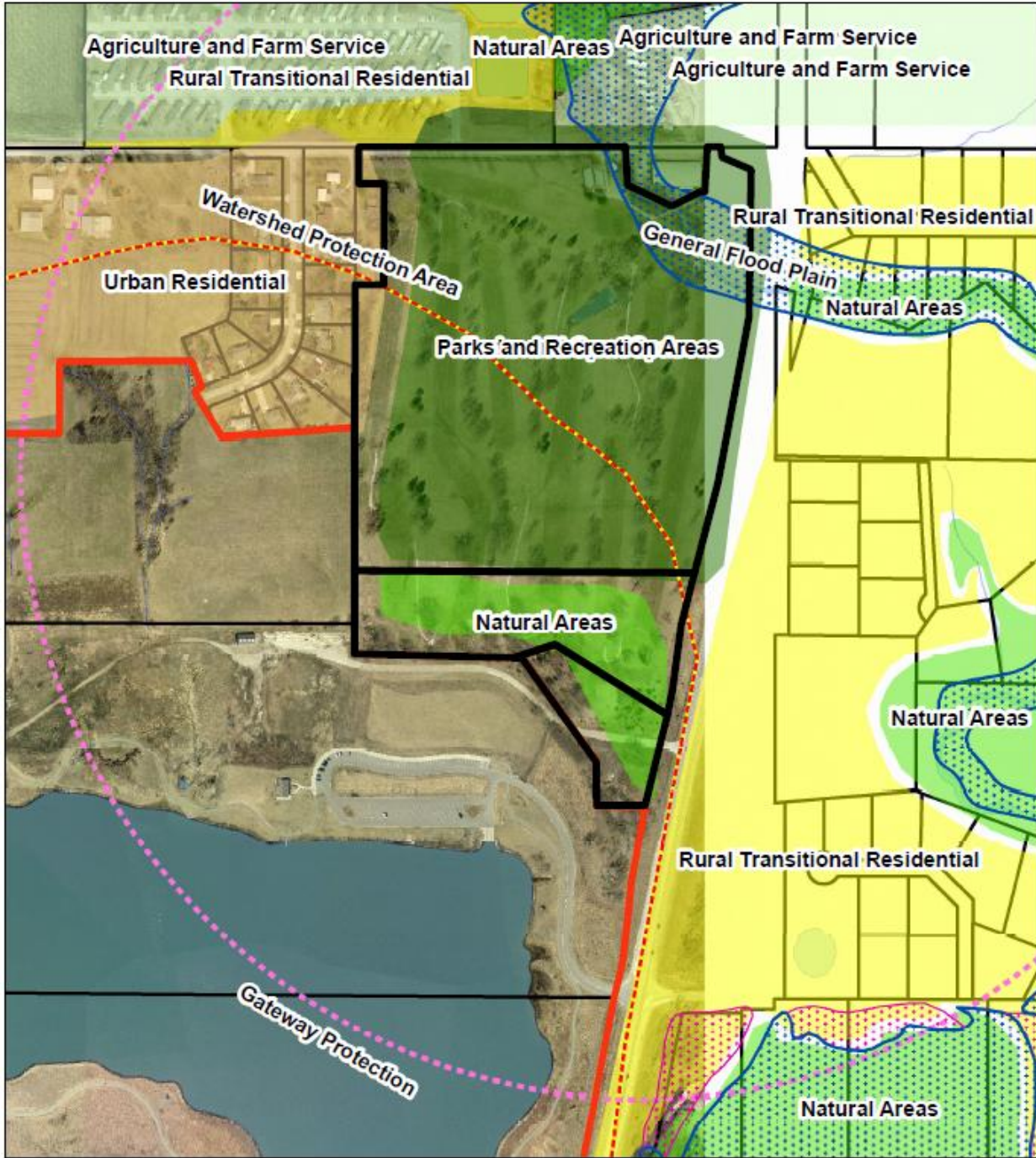
If the golf course is not economically viable and another use is sought, there are limited options within the existing Parks and Recreation Area designation and the current County A-1 zoning. The current zoning would allow agricultural uses which would have its own challenges on the quality of the lake.

The Planning and Zoning Commission conducted a public hearing and discussed this proposal thoroughly. The recommendation they developed strikes a balance that allows for the repurposing of the Oaks Public Golf Course while retaining protections for the flood plain in the northeast corner of the site.

The limitation of no more than five lots for residential development is consistent with the developer's request but also limits impacts on the watershed and viewshed on Ada Hayden Lake. Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council approve Alternative #1, which is to change the land use designation of the Oaks Public Golf Course from Parks and Recreation Area to Rural Residential and designate the flood plain in the northeast as Natural Area. The alternative also includes a limitation on subdividing this area into no more than five lots and documentation in the form of a resolution approving the change and would also be placed as a notation on the Urban Fringe Plan map.



The 28E Implementation Agreement with Story County and Gilbert requires that all three bodies have to approve a proposed amendment in order for an amendment to be effective. As noted above, Alternative 1 is similar to that of the Story County Planning and Zoning Commission and that Gilbert will accept the final decisions of Ames. City staff will provide the decision of the City Council to Story County staff for presentation to the Board of Supervisors at their meeting on July 31, 2012.

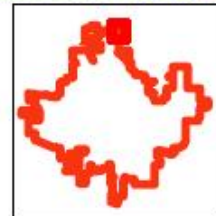
Attachment A: Location Map



0 100 200 400 Feet

Legend

-  Oaks_Parcels
-  Ames City Boundary



Attachment B: Letter from Applicant

Narrative for LUPP change for the Oaks Golf Course

April 25, 2012

This LUPP change will allow the area to be stabilized for the foreseeable future insuring protection for ADA Hayden Park. The site can not be developed under the current land use designation because it is currently rural service and agricultural conservation area as well as park and recreational and natural areas. Single family homes can not be built in that LUPP designation.

The owner is not requesting that this land be annexed into the city. There are not however lots within the city that would allow the proposed type of development.

There should not be any adverse affects on the city and more likely there will be long term benefits to the city. To my knowledge there are no other lots or land that will be negatively impacted by this request.

The new designation will allow for a very few large lots. Over half of the area is not in the Ada Hayden watershed. However by establishing a buffer zone and minimizing the grading and development on the property it will be secure the future of the land adjacent to the park.

Current this property is used for a commercial use (golf course). By allowing only 4 building structures it will create far less traffic then is currently coming off of the site and the traffic will be farther away from the intersection with HWY 69.

The property will be using septic systems so there will be no impact on the City of Ames sanitary sewer system.

The property is currently served by the rural water system and that is the plan after the development takes place so this development will have no impact on the city water system.

Storm sewer will be handled and detained on site and will not add to the city's storm sewer infrastructure. The my sense is that there will be less groomed grass after development then there currently is on site so it will likely have less run off then currently exists. The owners are aware that this is a key issue and will take great care in ensuring that these issues are correctly dealt with.

Currently there is one apartment on site and it is planned that four residences will be built on the 42 acre parcel. There will not be ongoing employment on the property.

Attachment C: Goals For a New Vision (Excerpt from Land Use Policy Plan, Chapter 1)

Goal No. 1. Recognizing that additional population and economic growth is likely, it is the goal of Ames to plan for and manage growth within the context of the community's capacity and preferences. It is the further goal of the community to manage its growth so that it is more sustainable, predictable and assures quality of life.

Goal No. 2. In preparing for the target population and employment growth, it is the goal of Ames to assure the adequate provision and availability of developable land. It is the further goal of the community to guide the character, location, and compatibility of growth with the area's natural resources and rural areas.

Goal No. 3. It is the goal of Ames to assure that it is an "environmentally-friendly" community and that all goals and objectives are integrated with this common goal. In continuing to serve as a concentrated area for human habitat and economic activity, Ames seeks to be compatible with its ecological systems in creating an environmentally sustainable community.

Goal No. 4. It is the goal of Ames to create a greater sense of place and connectivity, physically and psychologically, in building a neighborhood and overall community identity and spirit. It is the further goal of the community to assure a more healthy, safe, and attractive environment.

Goal No. 5. It is the goal of Ames to establish a cost-effective and efficient growth pattern for development in new areas and in a limited number of existing areas for intensification. It is a further goal of the community to link the timing of development with the installation of public infrastructure including utilities, multi-modal transportation system, parks and open space.

Goal No. 6. It is the goal of Ames to increase the supply of housing and to provide a wider range of housing choices.

Goal No. 7. It is the goal of Ames to provide greater mobility through more efficient use of personal automobiles and enhanced availability of an integrated system including alternative modes of transportation.

Goal No. 8. It is the goal of Ames to enhance the role of Downtown as a community focal point.

Goal No. 9. It is the goal of Ames to promote expansion and diversification of the economy in creating a base that is more self-sufficient and that is more sustainable with regard to the environment.

Goal No. 10. It is the goal of Ames to maintain and enhance its cultural heritage.

Attachment D: Land Use Policies (Excerpts from Ames Urban Fringe Plan)

RURAL RESIDENTIAL (RR)

Residential land uses within Rural Residential designated areas are developed at a rural density and in areas where urban infrastructure may not be in place for a time period beyond the Ames Urban Fringe Plan. The Rural Residential designation recognizes a residential market segment seeking large lots in a rural setting, benefiting from agricultural activities on a small scale

RR Policy 1: This land use designation includes all single-family residential land uses/developments that involve maximum average net densities of one unit per acre.

RR Policy 2: Full urban infrastructure standards are not required. (Relates to RSACA Goal 2.6)

RR Policy 3: Decentralized wastewater treatment facilities and wells shall meet IDNR, county, and city standards. (Relates to RSACA Goal 2.6)

RR Policy 4: Encourage clustering of residential sites within these land areas to limit the short-term and long-term costs associated with infrastructure improvements and the distribution of public services. (Relates to RSACA Goal 2.6)

RR Policy 5: Make provisions to protect environmental resources, environmentally sensitive areas and adjacent Natural Areas. (Relates to RSACA Goal 2.3, 2.4)

RR Policy 6: Mitigate and manage stormwater run-off, soil erosion, and wastewater discharge from Rural Residential land uses according to IDNR and county standards. . (Relates to RSACA Goal 2.3)

RR Policy 7: Protect the rural character of the Rural Service and Agricultural Conservation Area through residential density requirements, buffering requirements between conflicting land uses and other appropriate transitions from urban to rural areas. (Relates to RSACA Goal 2.1)

RR Policy 8: Limit rural residential development on prime agricultural land. Assure that the development on prime agricultural land is farm-related and has adequate access to road systems and potable water. Development should not interfere with agricultural-related activities. . (Relates to RSACA Goal 2.1, 2.2, 2.5, 2.6).

RR Policy 9: Minimize the impact of non-agriculture development in rural areas on existing agricultural operations. . (Relates to RSACA Goal 2.1, 2.5)

PARKS AND RECREATIONAL AREAS (PRA)

This designation involves private areas for recreation that do not fall within areas designated as Natural Areas, such as golf course facilities.

PRA Policy 1: Include in this designation recreation, conservation and closely related uses.

PRA Policy 2: Uses in this designation are highly intensive and limited in duration.

PRA Policy 3: Locate these areas to utilize as much as possible existing adequate access, road capacity and other public facilities. (Relates to RSACA Goal 2.2, 2.5, 2.6)

PRA Policy 4. Full urban infrastructure standards are not required. Decentralized wastewater

treatment facilities and wells shall meet IDNR, county, and city standards. (Relates to RSACA Goal 2.6)

PRA Policy 5: Make provisions to protect environmental resources, environmentally sensitive areas and adjacent Natural Areas. (Relates to RSACA Goal 2.3)

PRA Policy 6: Development of parks and recreational areas should not interfere with agricultural-related activities. Minimize the impact of non-agriculture development in rural areas on existing agricultural operations. (Relates to RSACA Goal 2.1, 2.5)

NATURAL AREAS (NA)

Natural Areas are vital to the region. They provide habitat for wildlife, minimize storm water run-off, stabilize soils, modify climactic effects, provide for visual attractiveness, and serve some recreational purposes. This designation seeks to conserve such natural resources. This designation is intended to prevent development encroachment and encourage greater mitigation standards. A buffer or other mitigation device may be necessary to fully protect Natural Areas.

NA Policy 1: Natural Areas are composed of the following features and locales that intermingle with each other.

Environmentally Sensitive Areas – flood-prone areas, wetlands, water bodies, areas of steep slopes and sensitive soil conditions, and other designated areas that should be protected from detrimental impacts from other land uses.

Significant Natural Habitat -- areas surveyed and evaluated based on vegetation type and condition in the “Norris Study.” These Significant Natural Habitat Areas may also occur outside of the designated Natural Areas. In such locations, the underlying land use designation applies.

Parks and Open Spaces – facilities, land, and/or structured programs for a variety of public recreational opportunities. The term "Open Space" refers to primarily undeveloped areas; such areas are typically maintained and managed as natural areas for passive recreational uses.

Future Parks -- general areas where future parks are anticipated.

Greenways -- stream ways, parks, improved and unimproved trail systems, and open spaces that provide linkages that in effect create a continuous "greenway" or recreational system. Greenways provide recreational and open space linkages in both rural and urban areas.

Particular features and locales in the Natural Areas often are appropriately described by more than one of the above labels. This is a reflection of the multiple benefits of, and the diversity of landscapes represented in the areas designated Natural Areas. Regardless of type, Natural Areas are protected from negative land use impacts.

NA Policy 2: Prevent subdivisions for new non-farm residential development. However, Natural Areas may include farm and non-farm residences existing at the time of this Plan or remaining scattered building sites where farmstead homes once existed or homes on very large parcels of ground typical of the agricultural setting.

NA Policy 3: Mitigate negative impacts to Natural Areas, including, but not limited to: agricultural chemical application, animal confinement and feeding, agricultural irrigation, miscellaneous agricultural activities like manure and fuel storage, outdated and non-functioning

on-site wastewater systems, underground storage tanks, and nutrient-loaded urban stormwater run-off.

GATEWAY PROTECTION (GP)

The Gateway Protection land use designation provides the opportunity to enhance the perception of significant entrances into the urban areas and to link major areas or activity centers.

GP Policy 12: Gateway Protection designation applies to entrances into the City of Ames from major transportation corridors (Highway 30 and Interstate 35).

GP Policy 3: Require distinctive design characteristics and other standards more specific than in other land use designations, including, but not limited to, more restrictive signage regulation, higher landscape standards, building placement standards, limited ingress and egress, limited parking in front of uses, and compatibility standards that promote the continuation and preservation of distinctive design elements associated with the entrance area. (Relates to RUTA Goal 3.2)

WATERSHED PROTECTION AREA (WPA)

The existing natural/man-made resources of the Skunk River, underground alluvial aquifers, and quarried lakes provide vital water resources to the area and surrounding region. Stormwater run-off from increased urban and agricultural development can have negative impacts that jeopardize water quality. The Watershed Protection Area designation includes watersheds for existing wetlands and other vegetation that protect and/or improve water quality. Within a Watershed Protection Area, buffers and other mitigation measures filter out and prevent pollutants from entering the region's water resources.

WPA Policy 1: This designation applies to watershed areas of Ada Hayden Lake and other important water resources particularly sensitive to negative impacts of stormwater run-off.

WPA Policy 2: Construct mitigation facilities at nodal locations where they can protect effectively the water resources within the watershed. Develop mitigation facilities or Best Management Practices according to city standards.

WPA Policy 3: Accommodate or provide Best Management Practices within all development within Watershed Protection Areas.

WPA Policy 4: Name Watershed Protection Areas named according to the waterway, water body, or aquifer they are designated to protect.