



# Friendship Ark

HOMES & COMMUNITY SERVICES

June 2, 2021

Mayor Haila and Council Members Gartin, Corrieri and Beatty-Hansen,

Friendship Ark Homes and Community Services is a community-based organization that serves adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families. We were started from a grassroots movement of families working to develop supports to meet the diverse needs of individuals seeking community services. Our agency [website](#) provides more information about our work. In October 2020, we opened our sixth home, each serving 5 core members with 24-hour staffing.

In August 2021, we will open another home recently purchased at 3811 Fletcher Boulevard. It will be home to four core members, who will live together as a community learning from and supporting each other. Staff will be available daily, but not 24 hours, which is a new model of support for the agency and our core members. We are excited about the possibilities for the entire community of Ames as we expand our ability to serve more individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

The core members who will live in the Fletcher House will be sufficiently independent that they will use CyRide, which runs east and west along Bloomington Road. We are concerned about the safety of the intersection of Fletcher Boulevard with Bloomington Road. The most significant concern is getting to and from the bus stop on the south side of Bloomington where Fletcher Boulevard intersects with it. The combination of Bloomington's slight rise toward the west, the curve of the roadway to the east, the 30-35 mph speed limit on Bloomington, and the vehicle traffic traveling south on Fletcher Boulevard results in a complex situation for pedestrians and bike riders to navigate.

Fletcher Boulevard is a primary entry and exit point for the Stonebrook neighborhood, a collection of single-family homes, town homes and condos. There are 300 garage spaces for the residences on Fletcher Boulevard, the various circles and courts off of it, and Stonebrook Road going east from Fletcher. The Boulevard is also an entry point to the Ada Hayden recreation area, which can be accessed on foot or by bike at its northernmost end. We

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expect that many walkers and bikers would also benefit from improving the safety of the Fletcher Boulevard/Bloomington Road intersection.

Recently, on a Saturday afternoon, when one wouldn't expect heavy traffic in that area, a future resident in the Fletcher House was on a bike ride with family members to see their new home and use the Ada Hayden bike trail. It took four bike riders at least five minutes to cross Bloomington and that is with a parent supervising and making the decision that it was safe to cross the road. Watching for and assessing the flow of traffic from the east and west on Bloomington and from the north on Fletcher Boulevard was very challenging and very likely beyond the capabilities of our core members on their own.

We are asking that the City evaluate this intersection and implement improvements that will increase its safety for all who use it including some combination, perhaps, of a stoplight that could be initiated when pedestrians or bikers are present, a median for a "safe landing" midway across the street, painted crosswalks, better signage that pedestrians and bikers will be crossing, etc.

We are certainly willing to provide input or to assist with the evaluation of the intersection and any options that are considered. My contact information is below. I look forward to hearing from you. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Ellis, Executive Director  
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