

Dear Councilmembers,

My name is Eric Mathre, my wife Shelly & I have owned Campus Garage at 102 N Hyland for 25 years & the vacant lot at 116 N Hyland for about 15 years. Since removing the house on the 116 N Hyland property & covering it with rock, we have been using the lot for overflow parking during business hours. Over the last 15 years the basement of the old house that had been filled in had settled & there was quite a mess when it rained. In mid February of 2023, I contacted Public Works & Planning inquiring if it was acceptable to add gravel over the existing gravel & it was the consensus between several public works & planning staff that we could. We hired Ames Trenching & Excavating to remove 3 old tree stumps & add gravel to level out the lot. Fast forward to early June of 2023, I was contacted by Planning & was told that we could not have gravel on the lot & the gravel would need to be removed. After speaking with Planning staff, I set up a quick start meeting to explore my options. Planning said that it would be best if we could combine both lots & rezone the property to HOC, that way we could develop a site plan & pave the 116 N Hyland lot, making it possible to park the majority of our customers cars on the north lot. This would free up the 102 N Hyland lot for improvements that would make the lot more visually appealing. When we remodeled the shop some 20 years ago, we hired a renowned architect to achieve the unique look we have today. We were featured in Iowa Architecture Magazine & are proud of the results. We pride ourselves on trying to maintain a professional look while providing a convenient & trustworthy business serving the Ames & Campustown community. We have the highest google rating of any shop in the Ames area at 4.9 stars. There has been an auto repair facility located on this corner for many decades & we are also the only repair facility west of Grand Avenue & provide a valuable service to our customers who live & work in the Campustown area. Ideally, we would like to continue parking on the 116 N Hyland lot, but would love to come up with a solution that would help us utilize that lot while complying with the city code. A paved drive along the northern edge of the lot & paved area on the rear of the lot, & greenspace along Hyland with a remote parking agreement would be another option if rezoning is not possible. I would like to work with the city for an agreeable solution.

This letter is requesting your consideration & advice on the possibility of combining & rezoning these 2 lots to HOC (highway-oriented commercial) & working with the city council & planning & zoning to make these lots more functional and aesthetically pleasing. We hope to come up with a plan to make these lots as unique & visually appealing as the Campus Garage building. Any thoughts about the council's vision would be greatly appreciated. We look forward to working with the Council & Planning & Zoning on this project. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely Eric & Shelly Mathre