

ITEM #: 1
DATE: 10-30-23
DEPT: Admin

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: REQUEST TO PROVIDE FREE PARKING FOR POLLING PLACES

BACKGROUND:

The Story County Auditor supervises the election process, including all 20 polling places within Ames. Two of these city polling locations (Ames Public Library and Collegiate United Methodist Church) use metered parking as the primary public parking resource. The other 18 locations in the city have private parking associated with the facility or, in the case of Iowa State University, already allocate parking for poll workers and voters.

The next local election is on November 7, 2023. The Story County Auditor has requested the following allocation of 29 parking spaces and the waiver of meter fees, as done in previous election years.

- Up to 20 parking meters on Douglas Avenue between 5th St. and 6th Street.
- Up to nine parking meters on the south side of Lincoln Way in front of Collegiate Methodist Church.

These waivers result in an estimated loss of \$75.38 to the Parking Fund. **While there is no statutory requirement to provide parking, meter fees may serve as a potential barrier to voting.**

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Approve the request from the Story County Auditor for election day-related allocations of parking spaces and the waiver of fees at the locations noted above for November 7, 2023, election only.
2. Do not approve the waiver of fees for election-related parking spaces.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

The allocation of parking spaces and the waiver of meter fees will assist in making polling places accessible for Ames voters. The total estimated loss of meter revenues will not have a significant impact on the health of the Parking Fund. Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative No. 1, as noted above.