

To the Members of the Ames City Council, City Manager, and Mayor of Ames:

1. As a co-owner of Pure Bridal, a bridal shop that has been ranked #1 bridal shop in the state of Iowa for 7 years, and resident of Ames for over twenty years, I want what is best for the city and community. We are part of the City of Ames Smart Business and we want Ames to continue to be progressive.

In 2018, Ryan Gurwell of A & R Land Services, sent an email about the Grand Avenue extension project. Ryan discussed the project with my sister and since I was not there, he emailed us, stating "The City is planning to extend South Grand Avenue to South 16th Street and also make improvements to South 16th Street from extended South Grand Avenue to Duff Avenue. Attached for your reference is an overall view of the draft plans for these road improvements. Also attached for your reference is a temporary easement exhibit that is specific to your real estate owned by Pure Bridal, LLC. As you can see on this exhibit, the City is requesting to essentially rent a strip of land from you along South 16th Street on the North side of your property in order to complete the road improvements planned. This will include grading and new paving of the road, sidewalk, and driveways. 100% of the construction costs will be paid for by the City of Ames. Typically \$100 is offered for a temporary construction easement only with the understanding there will be no special assessments incurred by the landowners, the City will be responsible for repairing your property as described in the 1st paragraph below from the City's Temporary Easement agreement, and the easement will automatically terminate when the project is complete and accepted by City Council as described in the 2nd paragraph below."

When I came back in the office, I responded that we were not interested in having our front area torn up, as we have worked with local landscapers and entomologists to create a beautiful, environmentally friendly space that faces South 16th Street. I understand that that area is Ames property we have to maintain, so we made it useful for the water runoff and for the pollinator insects. Ryan told me "Project construction still needs to be bid and is subject to contractor schedules, but the assumption at this point is the project construction will commence in the Spring of 2019. The City and project team is aware of the landscaping along the frontage of your property. The City can allow you or someone you hire to relocate the landscaping as necessary so it's not destroyed from project construction. We could keep in touch with you on construction scheduling as well as stake the area in question as needed to visually show what landscaping would need to be moved. Unfortunately we cannot move the temporary easement to a neighboring property because the City is planning to complete improvements to South 16th Street and connecting driveways as well as install a sidewalk on the South side of 16th Street from the golf course clubhouse to Duff Avenue. This requires a temporary easement from your property in order to complete the project construction." Since it was going to happen whether I wanted it or not, I signed the papers and turned them in. Not because I wanted this, but because Ryan left me no choice.

Have surveys been taken to track the number of pedestrians who currently use the north side sidewalk? I believe if there was a survey done, the city would realize that a north side of South 16th Street sidewalk is not needed!! When I recently talked to a city employee about the project, I was told that the city has to install new sidewalks when a new project construction is proposed. I found that interesting, because there was new construction on Dawes that only has a path on one

side and a sidewalk on the other. This shows me that exceptions to the rule can be made! There are other areas in Ames that only has sidewalk on one side of the street, or no sidewalk at all. I know that my neighborhood does not have sidewalks on either side of the street. Also, there is no sidewalk on the southwest side of Duff, so if a pedestrian using the proposed south side of South 16th Street sidewalk wanted to walk south on Duff, they would have to cross South 16th St to get on the North sidewalk to cross Duff. It seems like a waste of taxpayers money and unnecessary to add the south side of South 16th Street sidewalk, just because there is a random policy that states you must do it.

It is my understanding that the city has a policy that exempts sidewalks from being put in when an industrial area is involved. I recently heard that the old K-Mart store would be turned into storage. With all of the businesses in our area having their own drive ways, we are as close to an industrial area in Ames as you can get. This sidewalk is not going to drive foot traffic. We don't get foot traffic. We have cars come speed in and park in our driveway! Our area of town has even less foot-traffic then two years ago, when people were allowed to use the K-mart parking for tailgating, which is no longer allowed. If we had areas that were empty that were going to be developed, I would understand, but that is simply not the case. I just don't see any need for the added sidewalk, especially on the south side of South 16th Street sidewalk. If someone wants to use a sidewalk on South 16th Street, they can simply walk across the street to the north side where there is already a sidewalk (that mostly goes unused).

In the last three years there have been over five accidents that I can recall that occurred in the entry of our parking lot, in our front grass area, or on South 16th Street in front of Pure Bridal. I know the sidewalk would be set back from the street, but it is still not a place I would want my children to walk, knowing the amount of accidents that occur in front of Pure Bridal. Within the last three years, we have had food trucks pull in and burst in flames (where the proposed sidewalk will be) and multiple-car accidents (with injuries that have taken out our Media-com box, landscaping and mailbox). In fact, our mailbox is currently on a homemade sawhorse from one accident just a month ago. It's not safe! We have asked the Post Office to allow us to move our mailbox, as you literally have to stand in the street, where cars are supposed to be going 35 MPH (often times they are going much faster!). The speed cars pull in to the driveway is also unsafe. If a pedestrian was in the walk, they could easily be "taken out". It's not safe and the south side of South 16th Street sidewalk is not needed.

We already pay thousands of dollars a year to have snow plowed from Pure Bridal's driveway. With the amount of snow that the plows throw up from the street, it will take more maintenance than our existing driveway to keep it clear. Adding the south side of South 16th Street sidewalk is going to cause our overhead to go up and probable our insurance as well, because of the new added liability of having a sidewalk. As a small business, that is the opposite of what we like to see. And even if the city was going to maintain it, I still hold my ground that I don't think a south side of South 16th Street sidewalk is needed.

In conclusion, as a co-owner of a business on South 16th Street, I don't see the need to spend taxpayers money to add another sidewalk to the South 16th street. We don't get foot traffic, have our own driveways, have high-speed vehicles pull in and out of the driveways and really don't need the added maintenance that would come with the sidewalks. Please reconsider the existing

policy and reconsider the added sidewalk on the south side of South 16th St.

Thank you,

Rita Gartin

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