

Voss, Diane

PKTs 4-22-22

From: Grace Lee <glee1@iastate.edu>
Sent: Sunday, April 17, 2022 11:44 PM
To: City Council and Mayor

[External Email]

Dear Mayor Haila and City Council,

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter. One of the things I've noticed as an Ames resident for the past 17 years is how this city is designed for cars rather than people. In regards to your climate action plan, if the City Council is dedicated to bringing down the levels of CO2, then I believe this is an issue that must be addressed in order for the plan to succeed.

I'd like to note that I, personally, do not like to drive. While I do care about CO2 emissions, my reason for not wanting to drive is that it is dangerous. Every time I'm behind the wheel, I have to trust strangers to make level-headed decisions that do not endanger my life and others. When I'm not behind the wheel, I still have to trust that the drivers are paying attention. But I still drive because that's the most efficient way to get from one place to another in this town. It's even the safest method of transport if you take into account the weather and subsequently, the condition of the sidewalks. As a child, I had to rely on my parents to drive me to every single event whether they were a school activity or an extracurricular. While this makes more sense for elementary school, this persisted all the way until high school. The expectation for people to own some type of vehicle in high school is outrageous for countries outside of the US. Aside from the accidents, teens are expected to have the money and insurance when they could be spending that on college savings or other investments.

With all that said, Ames is a city designed for the usage of cars and not for the usage of people. This is why many attempts within our country to reduce CO2 emissions by decreasing car usage don't work. These attempts often depend on the decisions of our country's residents but we can't give it up because most suburban-styled towns, including Ames, are designed for the needs of cars and not people. My suggestion is for the Ames City Council to prioritize pedestrians over cars for the sake of the environment and its people. One method is to develop CyRide even further to the point that residents will prefer it as a main mode of transport over cars. Some suggestions for CyRide's future includes better shelters with Wi-Fi hotspots as well as the quality of sidewalks leading to the bus stop. If the shelters are attractive and designed accordingly, they may even become an Instagram hotspot! If all is done correctly, we'll successfully decrease CO2 emissions as well as the number of car accidents in the city. Another method is to have local shops and businesses within neighborhoods so residents don't have to own a car in order to live. Personally, I really love going out to eat or drink, but the best way to go to these activities at a business is to drive. My family and I love walking and exploring new places in Ames, so the fact that we can't really do that is a pretty disappointing aspect of our daily lives.

Thank you,

Ace Lee

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