

## Hall, Renee

---

**From:** gregg lovin <gnlseven@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 5, 2023 9:01 PM  
**To:** City Council and Mayor; Joiner, John  
**Subject:** truck route for industrial zone

[External Email]

I'm writing with concern regarding a truck route for the growing industrial area on the east side of Ames. I'm certain this topic is part of an ongoing discussion among the council already, but I'm wishing to add some information from a residential perspective.

For years the roads in the area have been affected by the construction of the DuPont plant, and with what is now the Verbio plant. Presently a significant amount of semi trucks have been using East 13th St. and the gravel roads between E-29 and 220th St. As more industry is added to the already problematic traffic in this area, the need becomes a more urgent matter. Besides additional truck traffic complicating these routes, there is road construction on Dayton, as well as at the intersection of I-35 and 13th St., further slowing down and restricting travel on these roads. There are heightened dangers to drivers and workers of all kinds due to this situation.

The gravel roads in this rural country neighborhood are not presently suited for industrial semi truck traffic. They are used by residents for walking, riding bikes, running, walking dogs, and horseback riding. Ragbrai participants train on our roads. Families with small children live on these farms. Sometimes a tractor or pick-up truck stops on the road, flashers on, near a field, or neighbors stop for a short hello on their way coming and going. In the winter, when the roads are packed with snow and ice, we sometimes drive more slowly, even using a single lane and taking turns passing if meeting another car. Oftentimes a vehicle has become stuck on the road and is temporarily blocking all traffic. In the spring when the frost comes out of the ground, we slip and slide through the soft mud, our car leaving deep trenches in the road. This is the nature of a country road in an agricultural area.

Things will need to be different with the decision to rezone and develop this area for industry.

I understand it means change for those of us who live in the area, and I don't expect to stop "progress", however it's also necessary that the cities of Ames and Nevada, and our county, do their duty to provide the infrastructure necessary to accommodate the decision to develop the area. This means an appropriate truck route needs to be established and a wider, hard-surface road built for the industries that are using these routes.

I'm sure you're aware of a recent fatal accident in this area at an unmarked intersection. While it did not involve a Verbio semi, the same could happen with any kind of truck. Semis travel east on 13th St. where the road narrows after the intersection with I-35,

and there is no smooth shoulder on which to pull off. Sometimes the road feels too narrow for meeting such a large load. Gravel roads are notorious for problems with dust, and semi trucks kick up much more dust than what a car does. I've met semis on gravel where I must pull over and pause, checking the rear view to be sure no one coming from behind might also be blinded, and I stop to wait long enough for the cloud to settle so I can see the road, and resume my travel. Obviously these roads are not marked for two-way traffic, posing yet another threat. The edges of gravel roads collect loose gravel on which drivers can accidentally "fishtail".

One problem is that people who use these roads are not acclimated to the change in traffic. It's important to consider what can be done to solve the growing problem.

The engineers and road departments need to designate a single truck route which will accommodate all of the industries and their routes on these roads.

While we wait for the designated route to be widened and paved, maybe we need a provisional truck route established with clear signage put in place. We would need a solution for the unmarked intersections on that route. There needs to be communication with the industries both to select and design the best route, while also looking ahead to what the growing needs may be. Industries need to inform truckers of the designated route. Is it then possible to restrict their use of alternative routes?

There are many who are excited and eager to make changes that will bring industry to this area. As residents and people traveling these routes every day, we are needing to make many adjustments from our routine use of the once-quiet back roads of our rural community. While this is required of us, there is also a requirement that planners provide infrastructure and safety for the truck drivers, the farmers with their large, slow equipment, the 14 year-old with a new learner's permit, families and people young and old who travel the roads of this changing landscape.

Thank you for your attention to this problem.

Naomi Lovin