

42nd Annual Report

**Ames Residential
Satisfaction
Survey**

2024



2024 Ames Resident Satisfaction Survey

42nd ANNUAL STATISTICAL REPORT

The City of Ames, Iowa, conducts an annual satisfaction survey of residents. In April 2024, the City mailed questionnaires to 1,350 city residents whose names were randomly selected from the City of Ames utility customers list (population= \sim 20,000+). Additionally, 1,000 Iowa State University (ISU) students were randomly selected from a mailing list generated by the ISU Office of the Registrar. Stratified random sampling was used to have representation from the students based on classification (sophomore to graduate levels). First-year students were intentionally excluded from the ISU sample due to their minimal exposure to and use of the City of Ames' services.

Utility bill customers received a 12-page survey booklet via the U.S. mail. The booklet included the same standard benchmarking questions as presented in the 2023 survey. Questions on diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) and organized trash were deleted this year. However, there were new questions added pertaining to sustainability (i.e. important climate action steps for Ames and biggest reason to be committed to environmental sustainability). For the communication section, other sources of information added this year were: Facebook-City of Ames, Instagram-City of Ames, X/Twitter-City of Ames, Threads-City of Ames, Nextdoor-City of Ames, and LinkedIn-City of Ames.

Questions for the Police Department were changed this year. Sixteen activities that the Police Department should prioritize (less, the same or more) were changed to selecting three things that the department should prioritize (from eight provided issues). Also, added to this section, was the type of interactions the respondent had with the Police Department.

The survey was also available online. A link to the online survey was provided in the letter of introduction that was mailed out with the paper version of the survey. This link ensures that only randomly selected respondents have access to the survey. The online survey was available in five languages: English, Spanish, Chinese, Arabic, and Korean.

The selected ISU students received the same online survey via email developed using the Qualtrics Survey Software. The analysis was completed with assistance from Nora Ladjahasan, Amy Logan, and Eli Wilson from the Institute for Design Research & Outreach, College of Design, Iowa State University.

This statistical report summarizes results from 450 respondents who returned usable questionnaires: 225 came from Ames's utility bill customers, referred to as non-student residents in this report (50%) and another 225 from ISU students (50%). Everybody who received a paper copy of the survey was classified and analyzed as non-student residents as some of them did not answer the question if they are full-time ISU student (missing information).

Thirteen percent of non-student residents ($n=30$) took the online survey. This is slightly lower than last year (15%, or 46 non-student respondents). No one responded to the online survey using any of the other languages available. Only 225 surveys from the students were included in the analysis to have the same representation as the non-student residents. Incomplete surveys and those who had lived in Ames for a shorter period were excluded from the student samples.

The response rate for the Ames residents' group (non-student residents) was 16% and 29% for ISU students. The overall response rate for this year is 22%, which is 4% lower than last year (26%).

The number of questionnaires mailed or emailed included an oversampling of students in order to come up with the desired sample size that reflects target populations. The sample size needed to confidently generalize the findings was 377 for both groups (95% confidence level and a confidence interval of 5). The 450 completed surveys indicate we are over the required sample size. In other words, the findings or the data significantly reflect the responses of the total population. For more details on calculating sample size, refer to: <https://www.checkmarket.com/sample-size-calculator>.

Respondents' Personal and Social Characteristics

Table 1 illustrates the personal and social characteristics of respondents who completed the questionnaire. Column 1 lists characteristics of the respondents who participated in the survey. Column 2 shows personal and social characteristics of Ames residents collected from secondary data sources such as the world population review and Bureau of Labor Statistics. Columns 3-7 show personal and social characteristics of the individuals who completed surveys between the years of 2020 and 2024.

Of the respondents in this year's survey, there are more female respondents than male respondents (58% and 39%, respectively). This follows a trend in 2021 and 2022. Two percent of the respondents opted not to respond to the gender question, and another 1% indicated the third category (non- binary/3rd gender). Male respondents are lower than the census statistics (54%).

A majority of respondents were White (84%), 9% were Asian, 3% stated "Other," 1% were mixed, middle eastern, and 4% preferred not to answer. The racial composition was almost the same as last year.

The survey also asked respondents if they identified as having Hispanic or Latino heritage. Four percent of respondents preferred not to answer the question on whether they are of Hispanic or Latino heritage. Of those responding to the survey question, only 4% indicated they were of Hispanic or Latino heritage. A majority (92%) were not. This is almost the same as last year.

Educational attainment was another demographic characteristic requested in the survey. Seventy-two percent of the respondents have bachelor's degree or higher (including some grad work and graduate degree) which is 9% higher than the 2024 secondary data estimate <https://worldpopulationreview.com/us-cities/iowa/ames> (2024).

Sixty-seven percent of the respondents are employed (34% had full-time employment, 33% part-time). Twenty-four percent were retirees, which is lower than last year (28%). Seven percent declared that they were unemployed (this is higher than the June 2024 labor department estimate of 2.3% unemployment rate from Bureau of Labor Statistics (https://www.bls.gov/eag/eag.ia_ames_msa.htm) (June 2024)).

Thirty-four percent of respondents reported their household income to be less than \$25,000, 16% reported their income to be between \$25,000 and \$49,999, 25% reported earnings of \$50,000 to \$99,999, and another 26% of respondents make more than \$100,000 annually. The distribution of this year's respondent based on income was almost the same except that there are fewer respondents with income of \$100,000 or more (26% for 2024; 29% for 2023). The Labor of Statistics estimates for June 2024 suggests those with income of more than \$100,000+ should be at 25% (versus 26% for this survey).

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics

Characteristic	2024 2nd Data	Survey Year				
		2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Length of Residence						
Less than 1 year	-	<1	0	1	12	<1
1-3 years	-	33	35	34	24	36
4-6 years	-	23	27	24	12	16
7-10 years	-	5	5	8	6	8
More than 10 years	-	38	33	34	46	41
Gender*						
Female	46	44	57	55	39	58
Male	54	54	41	42	58	39
Non-binary/3rd Gender			1	1	<1	<1
Prefer not to answer		1	1	2	3	2
Age (18 and over)*						
18-24	52	46	37	36	34	30
25-44	23	21	31	27	23	30
45-64	14	16	14	14	16	16
65-74	6	11	11	13	16	16
Over 75	3	6	7	10	10	8
Education *						
Some HS	2	<1	<1	1	<1	<1
HS diploma	12	4	5	3	6	3
Some college	23	39	30	30	31	24
College degree	32	30	22	23	27	33
Some grad work	-	6	13	13	9	11
Graduate degree	31	20	30	30	27	28
Employment Status**						
Employed part-time/ Employed full-time	98.7	34 35	37 35	36 30	30 31	33 34
Retired	-	16	18	23	28	24
Unemployed	2.3	15	8	10	9	7
Full-time homemaker	-	<1	1	1	2	2
Household Income*						
Less than \$25,000	25	42	40	42	34	34
\$25,000-\$49,999	19	16	19	16	15	16
\$50,000-\$74,999	19	10	15	14	12	15
\$75,000-\$99,999	13	10	8	6	10	10
\$100,000 +	25	22	18	21	29	26

* <https://worldpopulationreview.com/us-cities/iowa/ames> (2024)

** https://www.bls.gov/eag/eag.ia_ames_msa.htm (June 2024)

Less than half of the survey respondents (48%) own their residence; the others rent. Most renters (69%) reported renting due to their short-term stay in Ames. Other reasons for renting were lack of adequate income (39%), followed by little or no upkeep (11%), and more security (6%) (Table 2).

Respondents who are homeowners differ from renters on several personal and social characteristics. Homeowners have lived in Ames longer than renters (25.8 years and 5.2 years, respectively). Of those who have lived in Ames more than 10 years, 87% are homeowners. On the other hand, 87% of the renters have lived in Ames for less than 4 years.

Not surprisingly, the average age of respondents who are homeowners (60 years old) tends to be older than renters (27 years old). Of those between 25 and 44 years old, more half (66%) are renters, 34% are homeowners. In contrast, 97% of those under 25 years of age are renters, and 91% of full-time college students currently rent. For those with a college degree or higher, 48% are homeowners and 52% are renters.

Finally, homeowners typically have higher household incomes than renters. Eighty-one percent of homeowners earn \$50,000 or more, whereas only 19% of the renters earn more than \$50,000. (Statistics from this paragraph are not shown in any tables.)

Table 2. Housing Characteristics

Characteristics	2024** 2nd Data	Survey Year				
		2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
		Percent				
Housing type*						
Rent	58	55	57	53	47	52
Own	42	45	43	47	53	48
If rent, for what reason?						
Short-term stay in Ames	-	77	77	79	74	69
Lack of adequate income	-	39	37	44	45	39
Little or no upkeep	-	24	23	26	15	23
More security	-	5	6	7	8	6
Location of home						
Northwest	-	42	46	40	50	41
Southwest	-	32	29	34	25	33
Northeast	-	11	14	11	12	12
Southeast	-	15	11	15	12	14

*<https://worldpopulationreview.com/us-cities/ames-ia-population>

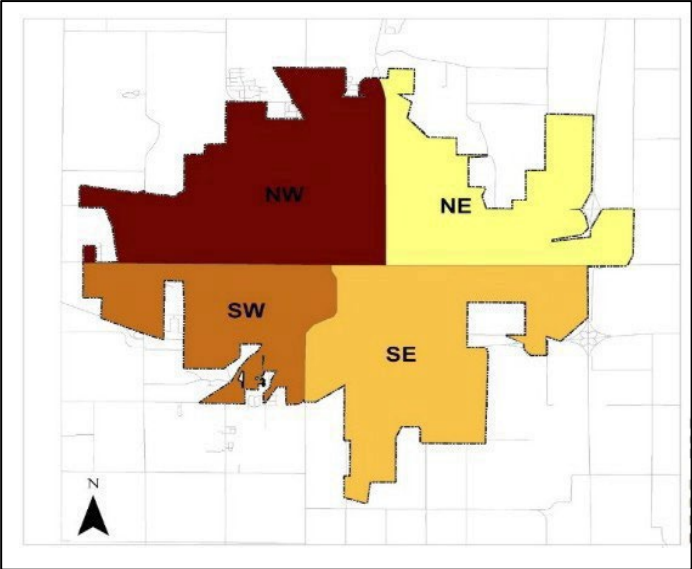
* <https://worldpopulationreview.com/us-cities/iowa/ames>

Respondents also were asked to identify the location of their home in Ames, as seen on Figure 1 below. Forty-one percent of the respondents reside in the northwest part of the city (compared to 51% in 2023), 33% are from southwest (25% in 2023), 12% from northeast (12% in 2023), and 14% from southeast side (12% in 2023) (Figure 1).

There are more respondents from northwest and southeast parts of the town compared to last year and less from southwest. Northeast respondents are the same as last year's survey.

Figure 1. Geographic Sections

- 41% = Northwest
- 33% = Southwest
- 14% = Southeast
- 12% = Northeast



Priorities for On-Going Services

Respondents were asked to indicate their priorities for the upcoming City budget by indicating allocation levels (less, same, or more) on various services paid for by property or sales taxes. Budgeted funding amounts for each of the services were indicated. Table 3 shows the residents' preferences about spending priorities. A majority of respondents reported that they would like the City of Ames to spend the same amount as the previous year on all 10 service priorities. Over 82% of the respondents agreed that fire protection should remain at the same funding level as last year.

On a scale of 1 to 3 (1 – less spending, 2 – same spending, and 3 – more spending), nine out of ten of the programs received an average score of 2.1 or higher, indicating that most residents are pleased with the current budget. The budget for law enforcement received a score of 1.9. An average score below 2.0 indicates that although a majority of respondents (59.1%) would like the spending to remain the same, there was a strong enough minority (23.5%) who would like less spending to bring down the average score.

Other ongoing services that received high support for funding reductions were arts programs (Public Art and COTA) (17.1%) and the Ames Public Library (14.7%); however, both also received similar support in favor of raising funding: arts programs (23.2%) and APL (19.7%).

There were several ongoing services that received support for increased funding. The services that had the highest support for increased funding included 35.0% of respondents supporting more spending on Ames Animal Shelter & Animal Control, followed by 29.1% on parks activities, human service agency funding (ASSET) (28.8%), recreational opportunities (26.6%), and 20.7% for CyRide public transportation. These findings are in Table 3.

Table 3. On-going Service Priorities, 2024

On-going Service (budgeted amount)	Should the city spend?			
	Less (1)	Same (2)	More (3)	Average
Ames Animal Shelter & animal control (\$615,007) (n=357)	5.0	59.9	35.0	2.30
Parks activities (\$1,775,279) (n=357)	3.9	66.9	29.1	2.25
Human service agency funding (ASSET) (\$1,924,578) (n=351)	6.0	65.2	28.8	2.23
Recreational opportunities (\$1,089,587) (n=357)	5.6	67.8	26.6	2.21
CyRide (public transit) (\$2,173,044) (n=358)	6.1	73.2	20.7	2.15
Fire protection (\$6,640,581) (n=354)	1.7	82.2	16.1	2.14
Arts programs (Public Art & COTA) (\$286,931) (n=357)	17.1	59.7	23.2	2.06
Ames Public Library (\$5,212,979) (n=361)	14.7	65.7	19.7	2.05
Land use planning (both current and long-term) (\$1,010,469) (n=356)	13.2	71.1	15.7	2.03
Law enforcement (\$11,667,108) (n=357)	23.5	59.1	17.4	1.94
Other (please specify) (n=43)	4.7	79.1	16.3	2.12

“Other” Suggestions for On-Going Services

Respondents were asked to specify “Other” on-going services that they felt needed funding or priority. Out of the 43 respondents who selected “other,” only 14 respondents provided specific suggestions. The topics included community amenities, outreach services & programs, housing, property tax, road conditions, waste disposal, and mental health issues.

Several people commented that they feel things should remain status quo.

- Community Amenities
 - I think we need to keep investing in nature spaces, parks, and green spaces to promote a higher quality of life in Ames. I can't imagine Ames without Ada Hayden! What about another place like that that we haven't imagined yet? How about access to clean rivers that kids can play in safely? How about safe and clean non-polluted river access in Moore Memorial Park or Brookside Park?
- Community outreach services and programs
 - Community outreach services and programs
 - Cultural Events
 - Should have more diverse entertainment activities or public events
- Career Development
 - Job training
- Housing
 - More money should be going to support on homelessness
- Property tax
 - Because property taxes have been increasing, services provided by the city should decrease.
- Road condition
 - I would spend more on snow removal and creating better road conditions at street intersections.
 - Road construction, always the worst thing in Ames every summer. Projects take forever and happen very frequently.
 - Road repair
- Status Quo
 - N/A (2X)
 - The same
- Waste Disposal
 - Recycling mandatory for apartment complex
 - Resource recovery
- Mental Health Issues
 - More money should be going to support mental health issues

Table 4 shows the five-year trends of the “spend more” responses for ongoing City services. In 2024, the categories that received the most support for increased spending were Ames Animal Shelter and Animal Control, with 35% of respondents suggesting an increase in funding, followed by park activities (29%), recreational opportunities with 27% and ASSET (human services funding) with 26%. It should also be noted that there is fairly strong support for increased funding for four additional categories: arts program (23% of respondents), CyRide (21% of respondents), and Ames Public Library (20%).

This year, the most noteworthy change was an 6% increase in support for more funding for Ames Animal Shelter (15% in 2023 to 35% in 2024), fire protection (10% in 2023 to 16% in 2024), and

park activities (23% in 2023 to 29% in 2024). Comparing 2023 to 2024, the other three categories that had year-to-year changes of between 2% and 3% were law enforcement and Ames Public Library (2% increase, respectively), and recreational facilities (3% increase). Art program is the only category that remained the same as last year (23% for both 2023 and 2024). Human service agency funding (ASSET) and land use planning (both current and long-term) were the only categories that decreased by 2% from 2023-2024 (28% in 2023 to 26% in 2024 and 18% in 2023 to 16% in 2024, respectively). Over the past three years, CyRide public transportation services has become a stronger priority for respondents to receive additional funding, moving from only 13% supporting an increase in funding in 2021, then jumping to 24% on the 2022 survey, 27% in 2023. However, it decreased by 6% (21% in 2024).

Table 4. Trends in “Spend More” Responses for On-going Services (%)

Services	Survey Year				
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
	Percent				
Ames Animal Shelter and Animal Control	28	20	26	29	35
Park activities	23	16	25	23	29
Recreational opportunities	21	9	25	24	27
Human Service Agency funding (ASSET)	25	27	32	28	26
Art programs	23	28	25	23	23
CyRide (public transit)	19	13	24	27	21
Ames Public Library	16	28	17	18	20
Law enforcement	15	27	23	15	17
Fire protection	11	27	12	10	16
Land use planning (Both current and long-term)	15	18	21	18	16

When comparing the demographics of respondents with their support of certain services some statistically significant differences have been identified. The demographic data examined included years lived in Ames, age, gender, full-time student status, home ownership, education, employment status, household income, and geographic residence in town.

These groups of respondents **supported increased spending** for the following programs and services:

- Arts Programs (Public Art & COTA)
 - Homeowner
 - Some graduate work

- Fire protection
 - Renter
 - Non-student residents
- Human service agency funding (ASSET) agency
 - Non-student residents
- Law enforcement
 - Non-student residents
 - Older respondent (older than 75 years of age)
 - \$200,000+ income
 - Long-term residents (more than 10 years in Ames)
 - Non-whites
 - Retired
- Ames Animal Shelter and Animal Control
 - Female
 - Renter
 - Older respondent (older than 75 years of age)
 - Lives at Northeast part of the city
- Ames Public Library
 - Renter
 - Non-whites
- Land use planning (both current planning and long-term)
 - Renter
 - ISU Student
 - Non-whites
- Parks and amenities
 - Renter
 - Graduate degree
 - Non-whites
- Recreational opportunities
 - Renter
- CyRide (public transit)
 - Male
 - Renter
 - ISU student
 - \$25,000 to \$49,000 income

Comments on Programs and Services

The most common response from respondents pertaining to funding priorities was a tie between being unsure how the city should be spending money, and that money needs to be spent on improving city services and infrastructure.

For those responding saying they were unsure, many claim to not be well-informed enough to make decisions on how the City of Ames should be allocating its funds and to what program or service. One respondent said, “I do not feel like I know enough about each of these line items to give you feedback on how to change the budget.” Another said, “(I) do not know enough to complete this section.”

For those responding saying the City needs to improve City services and infrastructure, a variety of topics were brought up. These topics range from infrastructure improvements, Police in schools, good urban planning decisions, animal shelters, and more. One comment said, "I'd like more funding to go into community outreach and services for those in need. Programs that provide basic job skills, teach people how to use CyRide, etc. Also, more funding should be given to programs who care for people living with disabilities." Another said, "I feel like more money should be funneled into make infrastructure and places that are human-centered, and that people want to go to without the need for cars."

In conjunction with City services, a few comments highlighted the desire to have more funding allocated to improving social services in Ames. In terms of social service improvement, many comments revolved around needs for the disabled and those in need.

With the third highest count of comments, respondents displayed their satisfaction and trust with city spending. One said, "The City has a better overall picture of the need and wants of the citizens of Ames." Another put simply, "if that's what it takes!"

Further respondents commented most on how the City should reallocate current spending to other categories. For example, "Wow I didn't know the police had such a high budget. Maybe if other depts. got their funds, it would reduce the stress on them." Another said, "you spend more on the library than animal control and safety?"

For additional and specific comments, see the appendix.

Capital Improvement Priorities

Respondents were asked to prioritize seven suggested capital improvement project (CIP) areas. Table 5 shows respondents' 2024 capital improvement priorities. This year, the five highest priorities were reconstruction of existing streets and sustainable solutions (84% rated these as somewhat or very important priority); traffic flow improvements, improvements to existing recreational facilities (e.g. aquatic center, auditorium, etc.), and improvements to existing parks (82% rating as somewhat or very important, respectively). Reconstructing existing streets received a mean value of 3.3 and 3.2 for sustainable solutions being incorporated to the above projects. This is based on a 4-point scale (1- not very important, 2 - not important, 3 - important and 4 - very important).

Table 5. Capital Improvement Priorities, 2024

	<u>Somewhat or Very Unimportant</u>	<u>Somewhat or Very Important</u>	<u>Average*</u>
	%	%	
Reconstructing existing streets	16	84	3.3
Traffic flow improvements	18	82	3.2
Sustainable solutions are incorporated to the above projects	16	84	3.2
Energy-efficient upgrades to municipal buildings	21	79	3.1
Improvements to existing recreational facilities (e.g. aquatic center, auditorium, etc.)	18	82	3.1
Improvements to existing parks	18	82	3.1
Greenway trails (recreational) improvements	21	79	3.1
Storm water drainage improvements	24	76	3.0
Off-street bike facilities (commuter) improvements	31	69	2.9
Other (please specify)	39	61	2.9

*1=very unimportant; 2=somewhat unimportant; 3=somewhat important; 4=very important

Other responses: (n=15)

Fifteen survey respondents answered with "other" specified priorities, listed below.:

- Better management and add substance into buzz words!
- Council & city leaders will do good jobs doing these
- Cut spending
- Finding ways to make trails not 1.1 million dollars per mile
- Improvement of city landscape

- Increase parking areas
- Increasing bike lanes
- Need light (traffic) Hyde and Bloomington. Do NOT put roundabout at 190th (Hyde) or on Hwy69!
- Public Transportation
- PulsePoint
- Recycling
- Resource Recovery
- Upgrading/adding business to Lincoln Way/Mall
- Use of photoluminescent technology in building egress as well as exit signage would be a major energy and safety benefit.

Table 6 shows trends in survey respondents’ views of the importance of CIP priorities in the last five years. Two of the top three project priorities have remained quite consistent over the past five years: reconstructing existing streets as the first important priority, and traffic flow improvements as the second. This year, greenway trails (79%) narrowly edged out storm water drainage improvements (76%) for the fourth priority spot.

In 2024, most of the CIP priorities held steady from the previous year. Although reconstructing existing streets continues to hold the top priority, the percentage of people indicating decrease in importance was 5% (from 89% in 2023 to 84% in 2024). However, there was a big increase in the priority of on-street bike facilities (commuter) improvements from 62% in 2023 to 69% in 2024. This trend is almost the same with improvements to existing recreational facilities (e.g. aquatic center, auditorium, etc.) (76% in 2023 to 82% in 2024). Comparing this year’s responses with last year, only one category that remained the same as 2023 was traffic flow improvements.

Table 6. Trends in Capital Improvement Priorities

<u>Service</u>	Survey Year				
	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>
	Percent very or somewhat important				
Reconstructing existing streets	83	83	84	89	84
Traffic flow improvements	81	78	83	82	82
Improvements to existing recreational facilities (e.g. aquatic center, auditorium, etc.)	63	78	76	76	82
Greenway trails (recreational) improvements	62	77	77	76	79
Storm water drainage improvements	80	73	75	78	76
Off-street bike facilities (commuter) improvements	57	69	67	66	69
On-street bike facilities (commuter) improvements	55	66	65	62	69
Other	60	96	68	81	61

Survey respondents ranked their three highest CIP priorities. Table 7 shows the results of those rankings. Reconstructing existing streets was ranked the highest priority. In addition, storm water drainage improvements ranked as first and third highest priorities while greenway trails (recreational) improvements were ranked second highest priority in 2024.

Table 7. Ranking of Capital Improvement Priorities, 2024

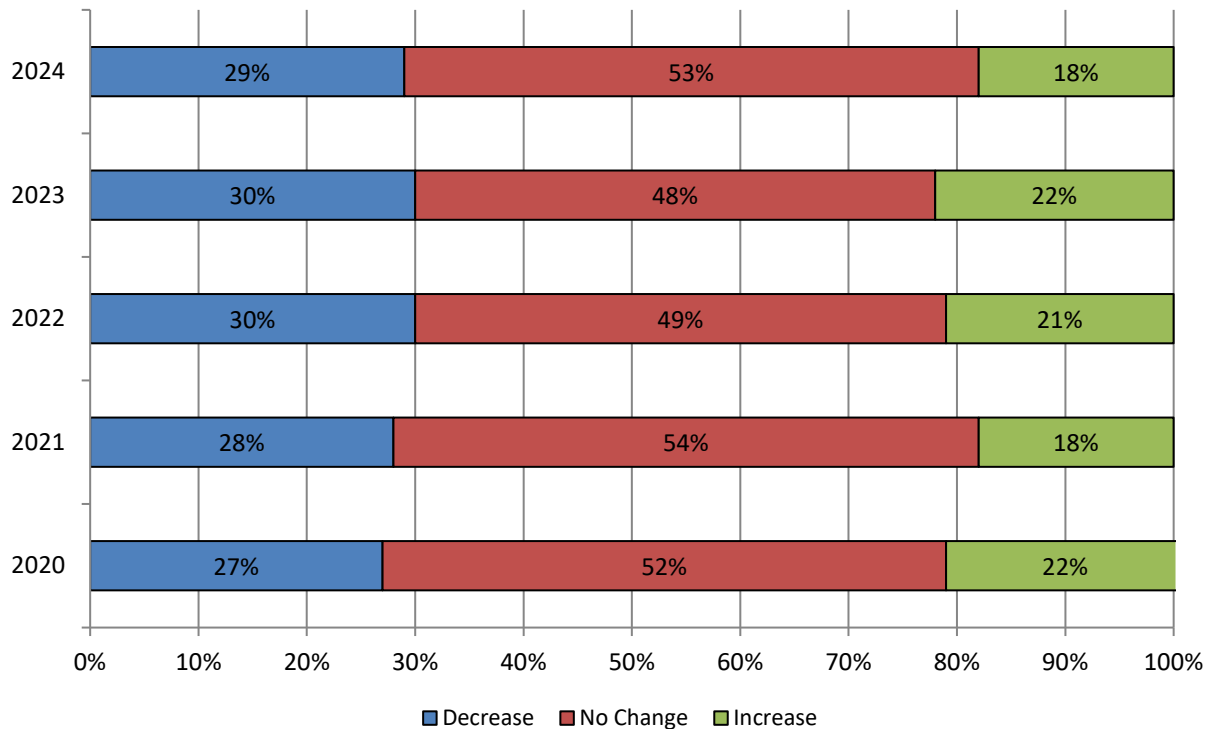
	1st Priority (n=336)	2nd Priority (n=364)	3rd Priority (n=358)
Storm water drainage improvements	18.0	13.7	13.4
Reconstructing existing streets	18.0	13.2	10.9
Traffic flow improvements	13.1	12.4	11.7
Sustainable solutions are incorporated into the above projects	9.3	11.0	12.0
Greenway trails (recreational)Improvements	9.0	15.1	10.1
Improvements to existing parks	7.4	9.1	9.8
Off-street bike facilities (commuter) improvements	6.0	9.1	7.3
Energy-efficient upgrades to municipal buildings	4.4	9.9	9.8
Improvements to existing recreational facilities (e.g. aquatic center, auditorium, etc.)	4.4	2.7	5.3
Others	0.8	0.5	0.3

Property Tax Adjustment

The city levy for the next year is \$10.09 per \$1,000 of taxable valuation. This means that the City portion of the property tax on a \$100,000 home in Ames is about \$468 after rollback. When respondents were asked their view about adjusting property taxes next year, 53% indicated they would prefer no change, 29% suggested decreasing property taxes, and 18% suggested an increase in property taxes.

Figure 2 shows preferred property tax adjustments over the past five years. This year, the percentage of respondents indicating they would prefer a decrease in property tax slightly decreased by 1% (30% from 2023 and 29% for 2024). Eighteen percent would accept an increase in property tax, which is also less compared to last year (22%). The percentage of “no change” increased by 5% (from 48% in 2023 to 53% in 2024).

Figure 2. Trends in Preferred Property Tax Adjustments for Next Year



Resident Satisfaction with City Services

Respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with nine services provided by the City of Ames. Responses were based on a scale of 1 to 4 (1 = “very dissatisfied”, 2 = “somewhat dissatisfied”, 3 = “somewhat satisfied”, and 4 = “very satisfied”) as well as a fifth option, “don’t know.” Figure 3 shows the level of satisfaction with city services continues to be high. From 2020 to 2024, all nine services were rated highly (satisfied to very satisfied) by the respondents.

Figure 3 shows that in the past five years, the level of satisfaction was steady with only minimal changes. In 2024, the level of satisfaction on the services provided by the city was either the same as 2023 and/or slightly increased by 0.1 to 0.2. Services that remained the same as 2023 survey were fire and rescue services, drinking water system, electric services, law enforcement services and public nuisance enforcement (five out of nine services). The satisfaction levels CyRide (highest increase of 0.2), public library services, parks and recreation, and sanitary sewer services were slightly higher by 0.1 than in the 2023 survey.

Figure 3. Perceived Satisfaction Levels on Services, 2020-2024 (1=very dissatisfied; 4=very satisfied)

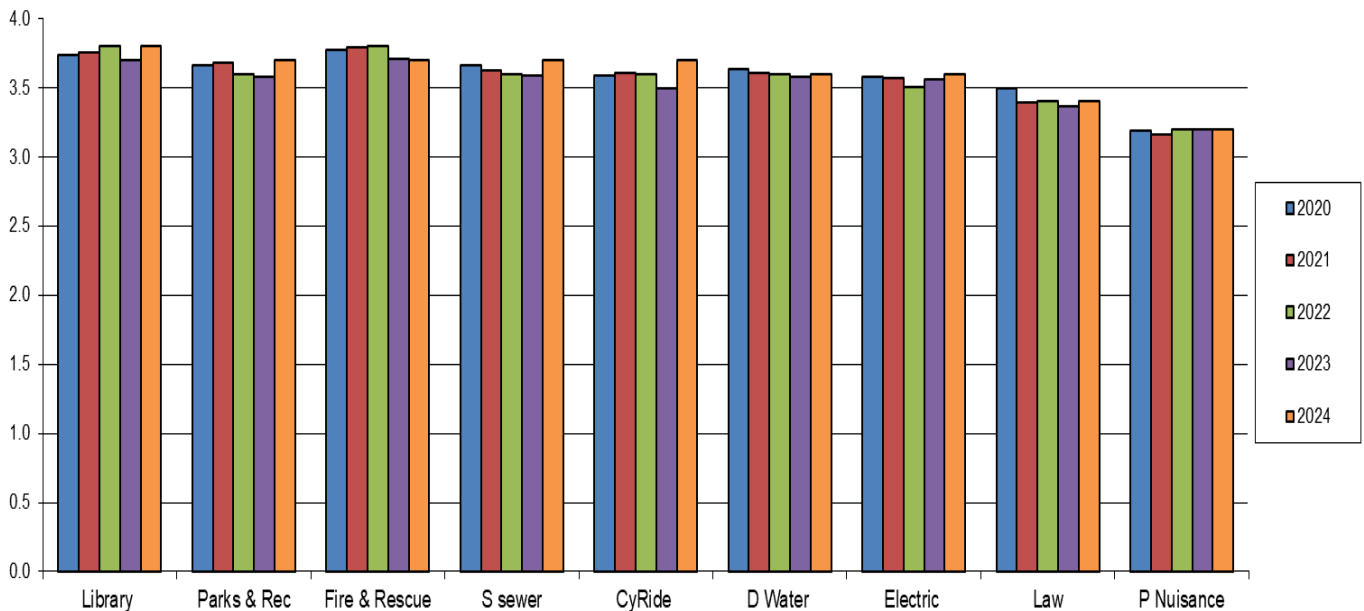


Table 8 summarizes respondents’ satisfaction with City services. Overall, respondents are quite pleased with City services, as six of nine service areas received more than 95% “somewhat or very satisfied” responses. Respondents were least satisfied with public nuisance enforcement services, with only 83.8% of respondents “somewhat or very satisfied,” followed by law enforcement services (90.8%).

Table 8. Summary Table of Satisfaction with City Services (removing “don’t know”)

	<u>Very/Somewhat Dissatisfied</u>	<u>Very/Somewhat Satisfied</u>
Fire & Rescue Services (n=289)	1.4	98.6
Library Services (n=314)	1.6	98.4
Electric Services (n=363)	3.3	96.7
Parks & Recreation Services (n=362)	4.1	95.9
Sanitary Sewer System (n=356)	4.2	95.8
CyRide Bus service (n=290)	4.8	95.2
Drinking Water Services (n=381)	6.8	93.2
Law Enforcement Services (n=347)	9.2	90.8
Public Nuisance Enforcement (e.g. noise, over-occupancy, yard upkeep). (n=302)	16.2	83.8

Comments on City of Ames Services

Respondents made comments that generally fell into one of two categories. The first being level of satisfaction with the City’s services as a whole, and the second being their thoughts on specific services. For feelings on overall services, most respondents claimed City services in Ames were satisfactory. Comments include...

- “Overall, I think these services makes Ames a good place to live and think City employees should be appreciated.”
- “I like Ames. I feel like they run the city well. Everything here is well structured and organized.”
- “We have great water, and the electric services are great, Ames does a pretty good job providing these to the citizens of Ames”

Of those who were unsatisfied, topics they mentioned range from civic project durations to upkeep of City parks. One commenter said, it seems like major projects such as the indoor aquatic center and the line project take longer to complete than necessary. Another said, “Upkeep at Inis Grove has been poor as far as garbage and trash at the park! Having the bathroom burnt out from fire for a year was a real eyesore.”

The rest of the comments highlight a specific City service with issues, suggestions, or things they like about the service. Topics include CyRide, trash, Library, parks, water, and nuisance enforcement.

- “Ames has an outstanding public library”
- “City can improve by taking a better care of trees, introducing new varieties of vegetation, increasing number of trees”
- “I’d like to see more CyRide bus stops in west Ames residential areas”
- “If anything, look at implementing more sidewalks for the west end of West Ames. Also, picking up trash.”
- “Wish for more bike trails for long distance riding along green belt are a wish for steam room-like Beyer Hall had”

For additional and specific comments, see the appendix.

Police Department

Survey question on the Ames Police Department was changed this year. Questions related to respondents' opinions whether the department needs to give less, the same, or more emphasis on 16 law enforcement activities were deleted this year. Instead, questions asked this year were types and levels of interaction with the Ames Police Department, and three important things the police department should prioritize.

When respondents were asked if they ever interacted with the Ames police department in the last 12 months related to an investigation, traffic, accident, etc., less a quarter (20%) said yes (n=87). Of this, 45% were non-student residents and 55% were ISU students.

Respondents were presented eight possible Ames police department outreach events and were asked to indicate if they have attended any of those events. Table 9 shows that less than a third (31%) have attended training or education program, followed by Shop with a Cop (12%), and National Night Out. The rest were attended by less than 10% of the respondents except for Cop on Top (none attended). Comparing the non-ISU resident and ISU students, more ISU students had attended a Training or Education Program (36%) compared to non-ISU resident (26%). None of the ISU students had attended the Citizen Police Academy compared to non-ISU residents (15%). However, there were more ISU students (13.6%) who attended the National Night Out while only 10% of the non-ISU residents attended.

A sizeable number of respondents (43%) mentioned other outreach events offered by the Ames police department that were not listed in the survey. These are:

- Fly-In, EcoFair
- 4th of July Parade (2)
- ALICE training through ACSD
- Neighborhood Block Party (2)
- Out of the darkness walk on ISU campus (2)
- At ISU for an event
- Environmental Fair last Sept
- Event at Campustown Court
- Meetings-committees- all positive
- Ragbrai last summer
- School resource officer
- TX Roadhouse- cops serving fundraiser- special Olympics

Table 9. Outreach Events interacting with Ames Police Department, 2024

Outreach Event (n=49)	Percent		
	Total	non-ISU resident (n=27)	ISU student (n=22)
Training or Education Program (n=15)	30.60%	25.9%	36.4%
Shop with a Cop (n=6)	12.20%	18.5%	4.5%
Citizen Police Academy(n=5)	10.20%	7.4%	13.6%
Citizen Police Academy (n=4)	8.20%	14.8%	0.0%
Donuts in the Park (n=4)	8.20%	11.1%	4.5%
Carving with Cops (n=2)	4.10%	3.7%	4.5%
Coffee with Cops (n=2)	4.10%	3.7%	4.5%
Cop on Top (n=0)	0.00%	0.0%	0.0%
Other (n=21)	42.90%		

Thinking about priorities for law enforcement, the first three priorities for the law enforcement that should be emphasized were Traffic Enforcement in High Accident Areas (first priority, 66%), followed by Safety Programming and Training (Active Shooter, SCAMS, Alcohol regulations, etc.) (second priority, 63%), and lastly, Residential Patrolling (41%) as the third priority. (Table 10)

Table 10. Three Priorities for law enforcement, 2024

Priorities (n=415)	Percent	Priority
Traffic Enforcement in High Accident Areas (n=275)	66%	1st
Safety Programming and Training (Active Shooter, SCAMS, Alcohol regulations, etc.) (n=260)	63%	2nd
Residential Patrolling (n=172)	41%	3rd
Police Outreach (n=164)	40%	
Retail Alcohol Monitoring/Enforcement (n=97)	23%	
Animal Control and Sheltering (n=95)	23%	
Business District Patrolling (n=91)	22%	
Parking Regulations (n=45)	11%	

Previous years data included 16 Ames Police Department activities and rating them as those needing less, same and more emphasis. Out of these 16 activities, only four activities were included in this year's survey. Three activities were included with slightly different wording. (Column 2 of Table 11 shows the new wording italicized.) Also, two new activities were added to the 2024 survey.

Table 11 shows the five-year trends for Police Department activities that should receive “more emphasis/ more priority” (for 2024 survey). The following are the noticeable changes by year.

- Two of the new activities added in this year’s survey were chosen to be high priorities for 2024. Those two were traffic enforcement in high accident areas and safety programming and training (Active Shooter, SCAMS, Alcohol regulations, etc.).
- “Traffic enforcement in high accident areas” which was either the third or fourth priority in the previous years was the top priority activity for 2024.
- Residential patrolling remained second priority for 2023 and 2024 surveys.
- Business district patrolling and Parking Regulations remained the last in the priority list.

Table 11. Trends in “More Emphasis” for Police Department Activities

<u>Police Department activity</u>		Percent				
Previous Years Activity Wording	2024 Activity Wording	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>
		-				-
Traffic control and enforcement	<i>Traffic Enforcement in High Accident Areas</i>	10	11	10	17	66
<i>Residential patrolling</i>		19	19	13	21	63
	<i>Safety Programming and Training (Active Shooter, SCAMS, Alcohol regulations, etc.)</i>					63
	<i>Police Outreach</i>					40
Alcohol-related crimes enforcement	<i>Retail Alcohol Monitoring/Enforcement</i>	16	19	23	22	23
	<i>Animal control and sheltering</i>	19	15	15	18	23
	<i>Business district patrolling</i>	9	8	8	10	22
Parking laws enforcement	<i>Parking Regulations</i>	6	5	5	9	11

*2024 data was based on respondents’ priority list (indicating which needs more priority) while 2020 to 2023 data is based on percent of those who rated items that needs more emphasis)

Comments on Police Department

- Satisfied
 - Ames is a safe place to live in partly due to our police dept
 - I am a white person- my interactions have been positive. I hope that is true for our black and brown friends and neighbors
 - I have positive feelings about the Ames PD

- I mentioned a bicycle that was down in the woods behind Ames high Stadium bleacher and received good service
- I work at Food at First and have several occasions to see the quick and appropriate response to difficult clients on our property.
- In general, I think they do a fine job.
- Live South of campus and really appreciate the extra effort to enforce parking regulations, The one time we have a drunk student trying to enter our home, police were prompt and efficient. Always surprised that animal control is part of law enforcement.
- Not Sure. I have had several interactions with the department over the last 15 years, I've been in town. Situations have always been fair and professional.
- Ok- not friendly, but do their jobs
- only one contact and he was very polite and helpful
- our police dept seems to be doing good enforcement. I like their Facebook posts
- Overall, my interactions with the Ames Police Dept. have been very positive.
- Thank you for everything you do.
- they seem to be doing a fine job
- They seem to be doing a good job
- very favorable
- Very professional every time I interact with them.
- Enforce Traffic Violation
 - I do see some people get pulled over, but not as frequently as they should. Some of the drivers on Duff can be ridiculous (I almost watched someone get run over since the car turning didn't yield to pedestrians).
 - I mostly commute by bike. I see countless motorists on their cell phones while driving. Makes me feel unsafe. Please enforce texting while driving laws.
 - I see people run red lights everyday...
 - Living on Dawes Drive and our road is a racetrack. Lots of speeding on Hwy 69, but Dawes is dangerous with the pedestrian traffic. Hwy 69 by Ada Hayden is especially bad with motorcycles speeding out of town.
 - Speeders and cars with broken mufflers on Lincoln Way between Beedle and Dakota make noise all day and night.
 - Stop spending your valuable time and effort on people going 5 over not hurting anyone
 - Texting while driving and when stopped at red lights seems to be the No. 1 problem in Ames. Wish you could enforce that law
 - They need much more traffic control
 - Way too many drivers that do pull down Lincoln Way and other heavily traveled roads make conditions unsafe for pedestrians. Definitely an area to monitor continuously if resources are available.
 - What does it take to get a speeding ticket? I've been passed by kids going in a school zone in front of a cop & the cop just sits there.
 - would love to see more hands-on enforcement of distracted driving in this town which is atrocious. I've even seen CyRide drivers on their phones while the bus is at a red light. Let's crack down on distracted driving before we see major injuries or worse with this dangerous practice which needs shut down.

- More Outreach
 - Building engagement with community to avoid an us vs them culture. Especially with kids and younger adults. I have always considered police officers to be people who are there to help all of us
 - Didn't even know outreach events were going on
 - greater emphasis on serving the community
 - I think I would like to see the police being part of the community more & taking steps to engage in programs/services that benefit at risk populations before emergency situations arise.
 - It would be nice to know the police force in Ames better. I feel that there is a disconnect between the police and the people of Ames.
 - more contact & the police have been mini use I understand their work is well in place
- Excellent
 - Excellent department. Very professional. Need to increase budget to be sure officer retention is maintained. Can always use more monies for equipment and training
 - Good department
 - I think you are doing great! I think it is a shame the school district discontinued their contract with SROS
 - Love them
 - they do a fantastic job
- More Education
 - 9. education and partnership with community Police are needing to go the extra mile and learn when/ how to use their authority. Make sure they know the laws
 - I think the police department needs to focus on intrinsic improvement before they can better serve the community
 - Implementation of comprehensive de-escalation training programs for law enforcement personnel, emphasizing social awareness and cultural sensitivity to prevent situations from escalating unnecessarily. Prioritization of community policing strategies aimed at building trust and mutual respect between law enforcement agencies and civilians, particularly in diverse or racially sensitive areas. Establishment of accountability measures and transparent reporting systems to address instances of police misconduct and ensure that all civilians are treated with dignity and respect regardless of their background.
- Little Interaction
 - I have nearly never seen a police person in any neighborhood in which I have lived
 - I have not had any interactions with Ames police
 - N/A have not motor stop by one
- More Mental Health Services
 - investing in mental health/ comm. resources instead of funding the police more
 - Mental health services and outreach. Wellness checks
 - More importantly, mental health officers who can help get people out of a bad place.
- Less Public Intoxication
 - If students are walking home and NOT being a nuisance, a public intoxication is not ideal, especially when the alternative could be to driving drunk.
 - Obviously, we are a college town and there will be underage drinkers. However, everyone has done it and I believe they can be more laid back unless actions need to be taken.
 - too much petty alcohol arrests (does not include drunk driving)

- Unsatisfied
 - ACAB
 - I feel we are a pretty safe city.
- Concerned with Safety
 - I am most concerned about violence prevention and safety for our community.
 - Lots of domestic issues not taken seriously
- Parking
 - I wish there was less emphasis on if your parking meter ran out 5 mins ago, and more time spent ticketing people who park on no parking side or res. street (narrow) and making driving down the street challenging.
 - Parking regulations-just stop the over thinking and please remove meters downtown! Return to Ames H.S. and M.S. as outreach. Remove parking meters and reassign meter staff to save money.
- Need Police at School
 - As an employee of ACSD, police presence lack of on grounds is a growing use as evident in the number of incidents and calls in the past year
 - It would be a good thing to have a police presence in the high school.
- Good Outreach
 - Ames Police Facebook page is a great place for community safety updates!
- Drug Control
 - Drug control
- Clean Sidewalks
 - There is broken glass on the streets. police can take time to clean sidewalks

The word cloud is the visual representation of the comments. (Figure 4). For original responses, please refer to the appendix.

Figure 4. Comments on Police Department



Fire Department

Survey respondents reported their satisfaction with Ames Fire Department activities. Table 12 shows respondents' satisfaction ratings. For each activity, at least 55% of survey respondents responded with "Don't know" (which was excluded in the analysis in Table 12). Nearly all the respondents were somewhat/very satisfied with emergency response times (97%) efforts followed by 96.8 % extinguishing fires, and approval for emergency medical response, respectively, and lastly, fire prevention and community outreach (96%).

Table 12. Satisfaction with Fire Department Activities ("don't know" removed)

Fire Department Activity	Very/Somewhat Dissatisfied	Somewhat/Very Satisfied
Emergency response time (n=169)	2.9%	97.1%
Extinguishing fires (n=126)	3.2%	96.8%
Emergency medical responses (n=156)	3.2%	96.8%
Fire prevention activities and community outreach (n=190)	4.2%	95.8%

Comments on Fire Department (n=65)

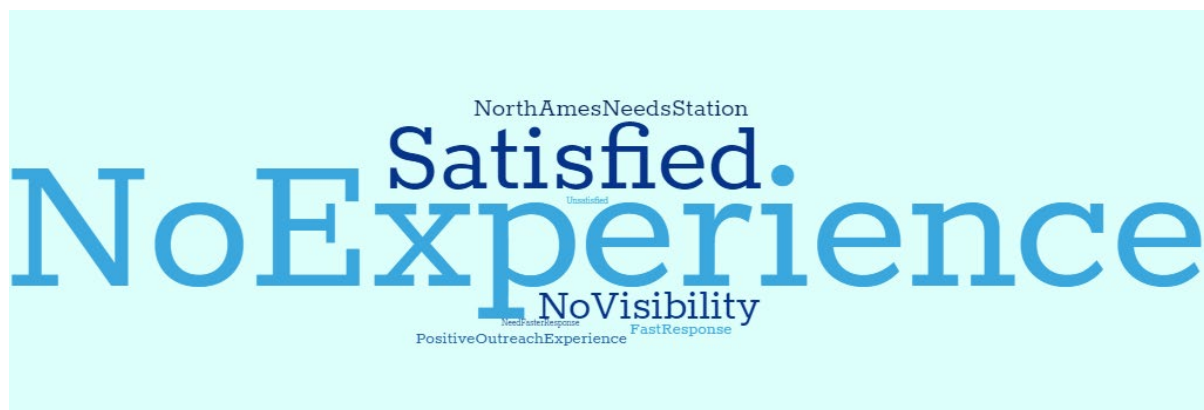
- No Experience
 - Fortunately, I had no need for fire dept, service. Glad to know they are available though, thanks!
 - Fortunately, we have not needed these services
 - Fortunately, have not had to use them
 - Fortunately, I have not needed the fire dept
 - Glad I do not know
 - Have never needed fire dept
 - Have never needed to call the fire dept. (yet).
 - Have not had to use the Fire department and hope that I never do.
 - Have not needed it
 - I am glad it is there, and I am glad I haven't had to use it.
 - I feel like I mostly see firefighters when they're responding to something, but I don't think that is really a problem since that's their job.
 - I have never had to need them for anything yet
 - I have never needed the fire department, but I know several fire fighters and know that our community is in good hands
 - I have not had to use them Thank God.
 - I've never had to use this before
 - Luckily, we have not needed their services
 - My very limited experience from past years, facility is great. I hate metered parking. Location is just far enough away it's hard to make it there
 - Never had the chance or need to call them.
 - never had to deal with them outside of inspections
 - Never had to use Fire Dept or EMT
 - Never have used.

- Seem good- just have not "needed"
- Thankfully haven't needed their assistance. No complaints. Keep doing what you're doing.
- Satisfied
 - Although I have not had to use this resource, I think they do a good job in our community
 - am very satisfied with all aspects of the fire staff, etc.
 - Fortunately, we only experienced one small fire in all these years. The response was quick and handled well- thankfully
 - I appreciate it when the fire department comes to campus and teaches PASS.
 - Keep doing what you're doing.
 - keep up the good work
 - Our fire dept seems good. I see lots of community activities at our neighborhood fire station
 - Our only interaction with the fire department was positive. Our neighbor improperly called us in for a small campfire. We were complying and had a great conversation with the fire department team.
 - There was a fire at my complex last year and the only damage was the laundry room; they responded/acted quickly to minimize the damage. They've also been quick to the scene with false alarms, but they still go and check everything out, which I appreciate; you can never be too careful even with false alarms.
 - They seem to do their job as Ames has not burnt to the ground yet
 - very quick and professional when medical help is needed
 - Well run department. Could always use more monies for training and equipment
- Great
 - Great fire department
 - Great!
 - I heard they are good
 - I interacted with the fire dept when I was a county house director, and they were great
 - I just know how fast the fire department gets to places when the alarm goes off
 - Love those brave men and women!
 - Proud of them!
 - They are always kind even when they are in a high stress situation.
 - We had a pipe burst and the fire department responded promptly even though it was a late night. I appreciate that.
- No Visibility
 - Don't hear or read anything about this fire department does come to our block party
 - Have not heard anything for the fire department in terms of community outreach
 - I love Ames fire department; but Gilbert could give you more ideas for community outreach
 - We do prescribe burning and I wish it was easier to inform the fire department. Filing a permit yearly once the fire department has been out once seeming unnecessary. Permitting process takes too long when burning is so weather dependent.
 - Would love to hear about community outreach
- North Ames Needs Station
 - Love fire prevention day. Not enough information to judge response times. Would seem like Northridge and West Ames at Sunset Ridge could use stations, Advanced life-support response time to these areas would seem slow, the city should implement PulsePoint to improve medical response time
 - North Ames needs a fire department, heard from department response is too long

- This city is greatly expanding west and north. We need another fire station in Sunset Ridge. Northridge could greatly benefit from a station out there. EMS takes forever to get to West Ames. To my residence, it's nearly a 5-mile trip for MGMC EMS and a two-mile trip for station #2 to get here. The EMS ambulances are only dispersed in this community for special events and in those times ALS response to west Ames is reduced by almost half, but again, it is only during Special Olympics, RAGBRAI, etc. Otherwise, the EMS ALS units are centralized downtown which makes sense for hospital transfers, etc. and 911 coverage for central and east Ames/east Story County. Dispatch here needs to be utilizing citizen and professional responders with Pulse Point, as they're doing in WESTCOM. Communities who've implemented Pulse Point have seen a drastic reduction in SCA collapse victims receiving CPR and AED application in a fraction of the time it takes professionals to arrive and begin care. QA/QI from medical direction should be involved in every cardiac arrest call involving AED use from Ames Fire, Ames PD, ISU PD, City of Ames Electrical Services trucks, etc. This is what is done in Rochester, MN and the early defibrillation program has received national awards. Ames is a wonderful and progressive community. Let's improve/overhaul the response model here so we set a leadership/model example for every other community to follow!
- Positive Outreach Experience
 - We appreciate the fire station open houses!
 - We love the yearly open house
- Fast Response
 - Showed up promptly when needed at a car accident I was in
 - they responded quickly to my emergency and very nice guys
- Need Faster Response
 - Emergency response time could be quicker
- Unsatisfied
 - One time, a bird got stuck in the perch and we couldn't access it to set it free. We called them, but they didn't come to help.

For additional and specific comments, see the appendix.

Figure 5. Comments on Fire Department



Ames Electric Services

Survey respondents were asked a series of questions regarding Ames Electric Services, including questions about power outages, satisfaction with various aspects of the Electric Services department, and SunSmart Ames project. Almost two-thirds (73%) of the respondents have their electricity in their homes provided by the City in 2024.

The number of respondents who have experienced a power outage fluctuates every year and is nearly always connected to weather conditions. Table 13 demonstrates this fluctuation. By 2020, that number climbed to 48%, and in 2021, over 80% of those surveyed reported experiencing an outage due to the derecho in August 2020. However, the rate sharply declined to 43% in 2022 and 53% of respondents in 2023 reported experiencing a power outage. This percentage declined by 5% in 2024 (48%)

Fifteen percent of respondents experienced a power surge which affected their computer operations in 2024, compared to 18% in 2023.

Table 13. Respondents’ Experience with Electric Service Interruption

<u>Service outage</u>	<u>Survey Year</u>				
	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>
Experienced power outage	48	80	43	53	48
Experienced power surge which affected computer operations	18	24	12	18	15

Table 14 shows satisfaction rates with Electric Department services. “Does Not Apply” responses were excluded in this analysis. Ninety-six percent of Ames customers were somewhat or very satisfied with the quality of power, and 94% were satisfied with the response of employees. There was also a high rate of satisfaction with the ease of reporting an outage and time to restore service (93%, respectively). Respondents indicated favorable rates of satisfaction for the communication of progress in restoring services (90%).

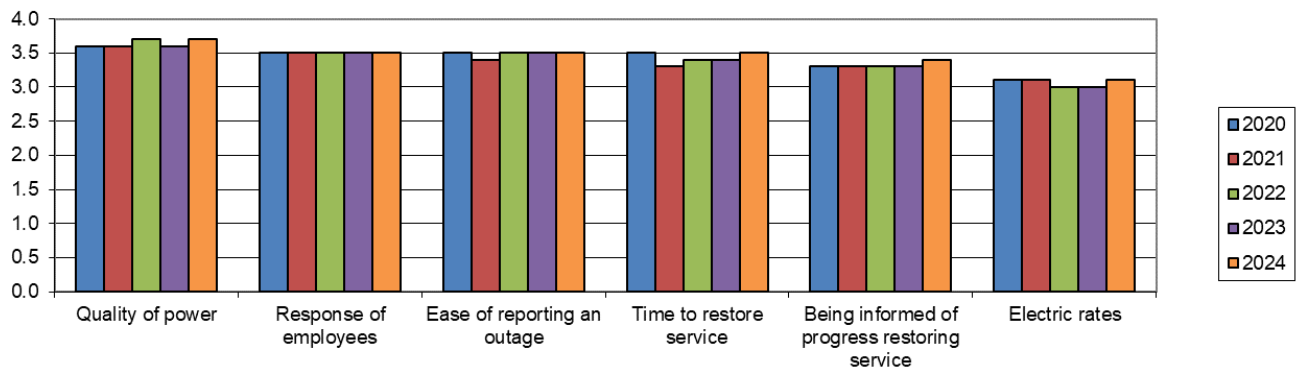
Twenty percent of respondents reported being very/somewhat dissatisfied with electric rates.

Table 14. Satisfaction with Electric Department Services, 2024

	Very/somewhat dissatisfied	Somewhat/very satisfied	Average
	Percent		
The quality of power(n=307)	4	96	3.7
Response of employees(n=215)	6	94	3.5
Ease of reporting an outage(n=236)	7	93	3.5
Time to restore service(n=246)	7	93	3.5
Being informed of progress restoring services(n=264)	10	90	3.4
Electric rates(n=310)	20	80	3.1

Figure 6 shows the five-year trends in the level of satisfaction with the Electric Department. The satisfaction levels have remained constant across each category over the five-year period, with some slight variations from year to year. Level of satisfaction increased by 0.1% from 2023 to 2024 across each category, except for these two categories (response of employees, and ease of reporting) which remained the same as 2023.

Figure 6. Satisfaction with City Electric Department activities, 2020-2024



Respondents were asked to gauge their interest in participating in the SunSmart Ames community solar farm (<https://www.CityOfAmes.org/Solar>). Ames Electric Services established a 2MW solar farm to provide renewable energy to customers. Ames Electric Services customers may purchase shares of the project at \$240 per "Power Pack." Participants will receive a monthly credit on their bills (more information at www.CityOfAmes.org/Solar).

Only 8% of respondents indicated that they are participating in the project. The survey then asked for feedback on why they are not participating. Of those who were not participating, 51% specified that their stay in Ames is short-term, 23% responded that it was too expensive, and 7% stated that they were not interested.

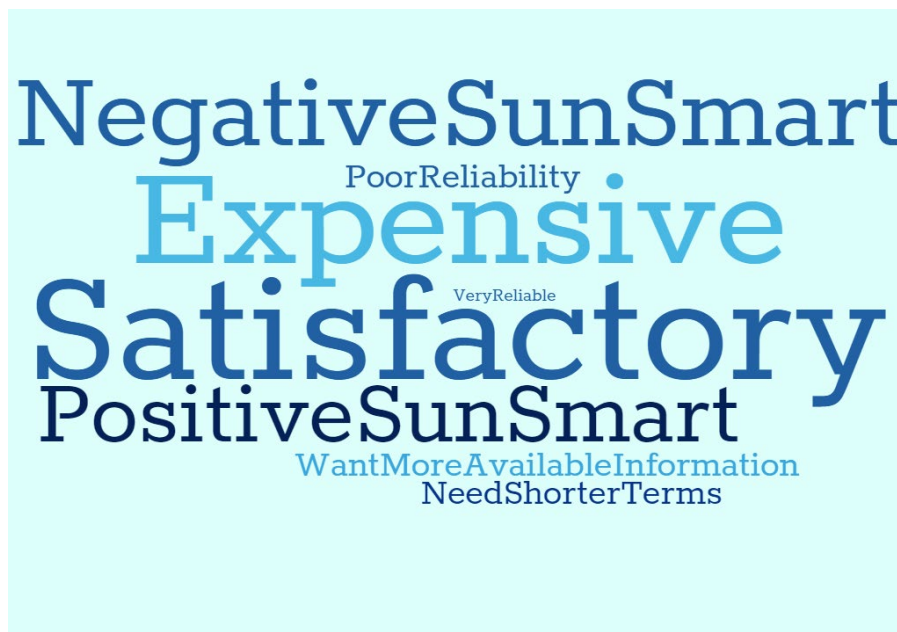
Other reasons (35%) for not wanting to participate in the program include not knowing enough about the project or not aware of the program, will not qualify for the project because they are still living in an apartment, old age, not cost effective, apathy, and not thinking it's sound long-term project.

Comments on City Electric Service

- Satisfactory
 - Does a great job
 - Excellent
 - Fine, Communicate through social media well
 - Good job (2x)
 - overall outstanding and really appreciate all the LED streetlights installed as well as the use of wind power for at least 10% of our energy. Kudos!
 - Satisfied
 - The service is amazing
 - They are good
 - Very good! (2x)
 - We are fortunate to have the electrical services we have in Ames. They are quick to get electricity back online
 - Well done - no complaints
- Expensive
 - Expensive
 - Focus on natural gas, it is cheap and reliable
 - If the cost is low enough, I can consider solar service. (significantly low)
 - Interested in solar panels but the company who came out wanted \$40,000
 - My power bill continues to be inordinately high. Not sure why as I am very mindful of my usage
 - We are too old for it to be affordable
 - we signed on when it was \$350 a panel
 - What is the monthly discount? Electric rates- rates are related to market demands so they are what they are.
- Negative SunSmart
 - As a participant, we find the (return on investment) quite low. We now consider it a donation to support sustainable power for the community.
 - I am 82, I see no advantage in this.
 - I am not aware it's been in this city a short time
 - SunSmart is more a donation than investment
 - The return on investment is too small.
 - We live in the woods- no sunshine due to the canopy of the trees
- Positive SunSmart
 - It may not be expensive for many families, but we have 4 kids, so our budget is pretty tight. We do support the solar farm initiative, though
 - It seems like a cool idea, hope it goes somewhere!
 - Sounds like a good program if you plan on being a permanent resident
 - Sounds like an awesome Idea!!!

- The City of Ames Electrical Services should purchase more renewable energy and explore partnerships with other area large organizations. Also, I would like more information shared about its role as a waste management system for multiple area communities.
- Need Shorter Terms
 - If I could participate in the "Power Pack" for a shorter time (5 yrs say) I would definitely do so.
 - offer a shorter term
- Want More Available Information
 - I do not think I have ever been notified about outages. I always have to look it up. It would be nice to get text updates. but power seems to be restored very quickly.
 - I wish you offered a web portal to monitor usage in real time.
- Poor Reliability
 - 54% reliability? Ridiculous! Quit throwing money at that dinosaur!
- Very Reliable
 - Ames electric is very reliable-thank you! The \$5 monthly credit for prime time is relatively small but better than nothing.

Figure 7. Comments on Ames Electric Services



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Drinking Water Service

Of the respondents who use City of Ames drinking water and sanitary sewer services, the majority reported never having problems such as too much pressure (94%), soft water (90%), rust (83%), disagreeable taste or odor (78%), too little pressure (75%), sediment or cloudy appearance (74%), and hard water (70%).

Figure 8a shows the frequencies of water service problems as reported in 2024. Most respondents experiencing water problems indicated they had problems once or twice in the past year. These problems range from too much pressure (2%) to sediment or cloudy appearance (17%). Twelve percent of respondents reported experiencing hard water on seven or more occasions in the last year.

Figure 8b shows the number of percentage of respondents reporting no water problems for the past five years (2020 to 2024). Historically, Ames residents are pleased with their water. The chief complaints are having hard water and sediment or cloudy appearance.

Figure 8a. Frequencies of Water Service Problems, 2024

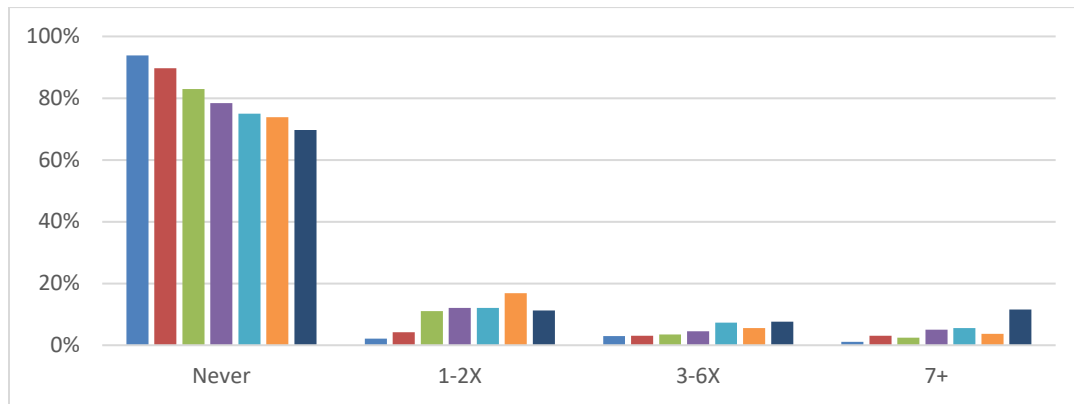
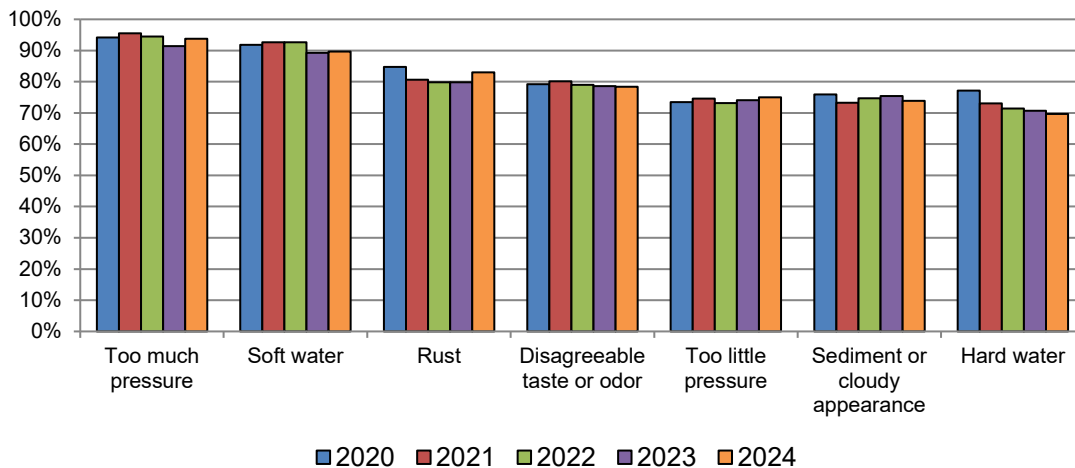


Figure 8b. Respondents Reporting No Water Service Problems, 2020-2024



Comments on Drinking Water Services

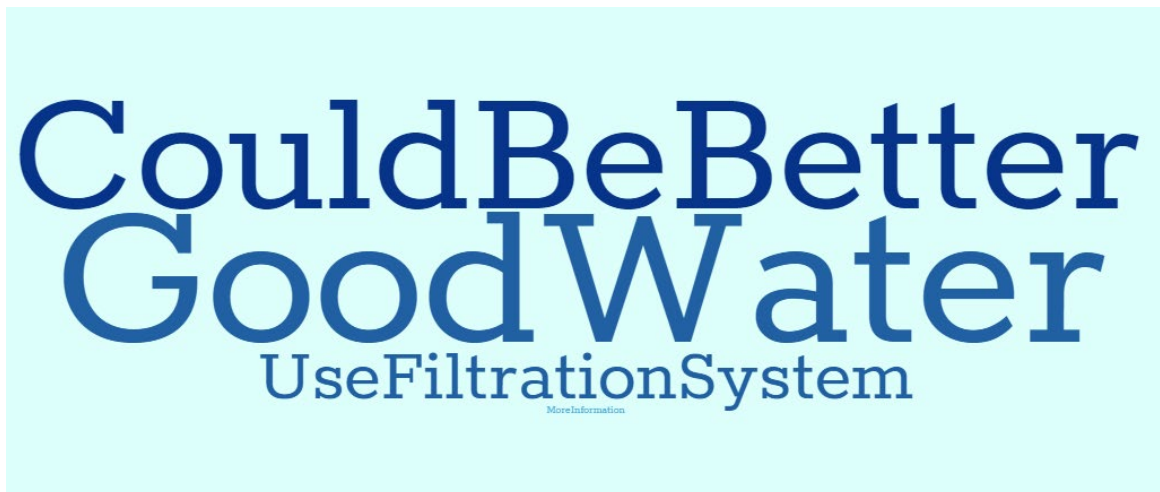
Many respondents commented positively about Ames tap water. Most comments indicated that they were pleased with the quality and taste through words like: excellent, best water, delicious, good, and great. “Very happy with the water in Ames. Appreciate the city ‘partially’ softening the water so a home water softener is not required.” Another said, “I love Ames’ water! It tastes so good right from the tap. We are so lucky. Thank you!”

While there were many positive comments, respondents also shared their concerns including hard water, pressure issues, poor taste, and sediment in water. A common sentiment was that Ames water used to be better than it is now.

Other residents use filtration systems and believe they are not in a place to comment on the Ames services, as they are cleaning the water themselves at home out of their tap. “I use filtered head for my shower and filter my water before drinking it or use it for cooking.” Another says, “We have an inhouse softener”

For additional and specific comments, see the appendix.

Figure 9. Comments on Drinking Water Service



Water and Pollution Control Department

Survey respondents were asked to provide their level of satisfaction with water quality and rates on a scale of 1 – Very Dissatisfied to 4 – Very Satisfied. Respondents could also choose “Does not apply.” The satisfaction rates are reported in Table 15. Ninety-one percent of those surveyed were satisfied with water quality, 85% were satisfied with water rates, and another 85% were satisfied with sewer rates.

Comparing 2024 data to the previous year, overall, the numbers remained steady from the previous year. Customer satisfaction is high among all three categories. Water quality ranked highest with an average score of 3.5 out of 4, indicating a high level of satisfaction.

Table 15. Satisfaction with Water & Pollution Control Department Services, 2024

	Very/somewhat dissatisfied	Somewhat/very satisfied	Average
Water quality (n=363)	9	91	3.5
Sewer rates (n=310)	15	85	3.1
Water rates (n=324)	15	85	3.1

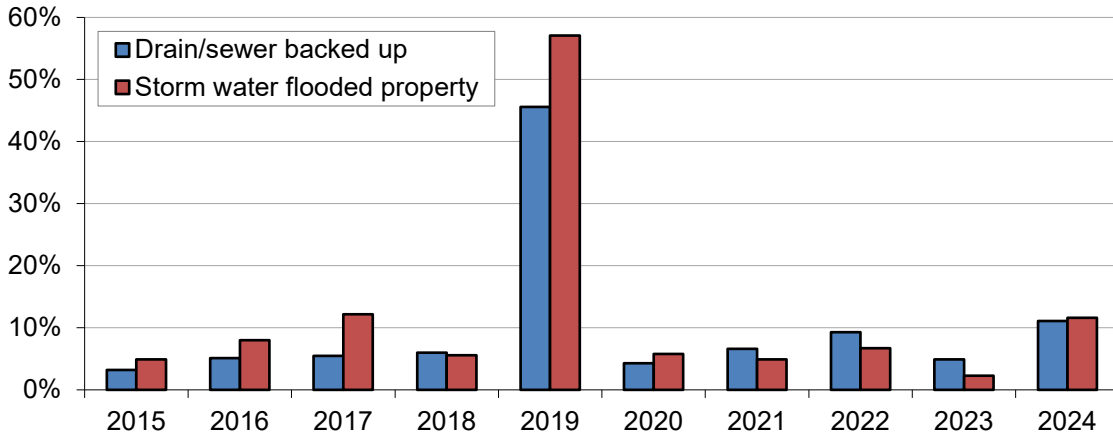
*“Does not apply” excluded when calculating percentages for “very dissatisfied” to “very satisfied.”

Figure 10 shows trends in the number of people experiencing problems related to the City’s sewer or stormwater system over the past decade. Generally, fewer than 10% of respondents experienced back-up or flooding problems. Major weather events have caused these numbers to change. For example, in 2017, there were slightly more stormwater-flooded properties, but the numbers from 2019 far exceed any of the other years. In June 2018, Ames received 5.5 inches of rain in one rain event, leading to a historic flash flooding event that affected many in the community.

This year, more respondents experienced flooding or sewer backup events on their property. Only 11% of survey respondents indicated they had a backup in their home (compared to 46% in 2019). However, it was 100% more than the previous year (5% in 2023). Of the 47 people who had a drain backup problem, 39% (n=30) reported the problem to the City, of whom 23 respondents (79%) were somewhat or very satisfied with the response and assistance they got from the city.

The survey also asked respondents if they had experienced stormwater flooding onto their properties from the street in the past year. In 2024, only 11% of respondents reported stormwater flooding from the street. Of the 45 respondents who experienced flooding, only 17 people reported the problem to the City. When asked how satisfied they were with the City’s response to the flooding problem, 11 reported being somewhat satisfied with the response.

Figure 10. Respondent’s Experience with City Sewer System Problems, 2015-2024



Comments on Water and Pollution Control

There were 19 comments connected to the Water Pollution and Control section. Comments range from topics of satisfaction levels, water rates, stormwater systems, and water quality.

Most comments were positive. Respondents used words like good and great to describe water and pollution control or noted that they did not have an issue. “They are great!” Another said, “No noticeable issues here.”

However, there was some concern expressed about Ames’ water rates. One comment said, “all rates are high compared to a household (home) of 3.” Another said, “Try to keep rates low. Sneaking up.”

Some respondents highlighted how their homes have poor stormwater drainage, and that it can pose an issue during heavy rainfall or flooding events. “it’s a low area and flood during big rain falls so it’s just part of living here.” Another said, “My yard has a cuvette & a drainage easement. I wish my yard was not a drainage structure. It is awful.”

Beyond this, a couple respondents report poor water quality and are wanting more information pertaining to water contents and infrastructure. One comment says, “I am concerned about quality of water in Ames. Can they put suggested filters on their website... Do we need additional filters to eliminate forever chemicals/ particles.” Another says, “I think we should not only ensure the quality of the water, but also check whether the water pipe materials meet health standards. Such as the content and release of heavy metals.” In a similar vein, one respondent was unsatisfied with the city’s action on a stormwater issue. “It did several years ago and found our outlet to storm sewer was blocked by tiling and road construction materials from Duff Ave. City did nothing!!”

For additional and specific comments, see the appendix.

Figure 11. Comments on Water and Pollution Control Services



Neighborhood Nuisance Enforcement

Table 16 illustrates survey respondents' satisfaction with the City's neighborhood nuisance enforcement efforts. Almost half of respondents surveyed indicated that they did not know about nuisance enforcement activities. "Don't know" ranged from 51% (yard upkeep – overgrown vegetation) to 77% (rental over occupancy). These individuals were excluded from the calculated satisfaction percentages.

Among those who expressed opinions regarding their satisfaction with neighborhood nuisance enforcement, more than two-thirds reported being "somewhat satisfied" to "very satisfied" with each enforcement effort: front yard parking on residential property (80%), noise limits (76%), dangerous structures (73%), over-occupancy in rental property (72%), outdoor storage on property (70%), and yard upkeep (68%).

When satisfaction level was compared against geographic residences of the respondents, the level of satisfaction was the same regardless of where a respondent lives for five out of six nuisance ordinance enforcements except for outdoor storage on property (old cars, tires, furniture, garbage). Those living in the northwest were more satisfied compared to those living in southwest part of the city.

Table 16. Satisfaction in Neighborhood Nuisance Enforcement

	<u>Very/Somewhat Dissatisfied</u>	<u>Somewhat/ Very Satisfied</u>	<u>Average</u>
	Percent		
Front yard parking on residential property (n=142)	20	80	3.1
Noise limits (n=183)	24	76	3.0
Over-occupancy in rental property (n=98)	28	72	3.0
Dangerous structures (dilapidated, unsecured, holes, collapsing) (n=165)	27	73	3.0
Over-occupancy in rental property (n=98)	28	72	3
Outdoor storage on property (old cars, tires, furniture, garbage (n=177)	30	70	2.9
Yard upkeep (overgrown vegetation) (n=204)	32	68	2.9

Comments on Neighborhood Nuisance Enforcement

- Unkept Properties
 - Dilapidated house at 1514 Duff. It's been deteriorating for quite a long time, red notice on door, not certain if anything is being done about it. Feel sorry for my neighbors!

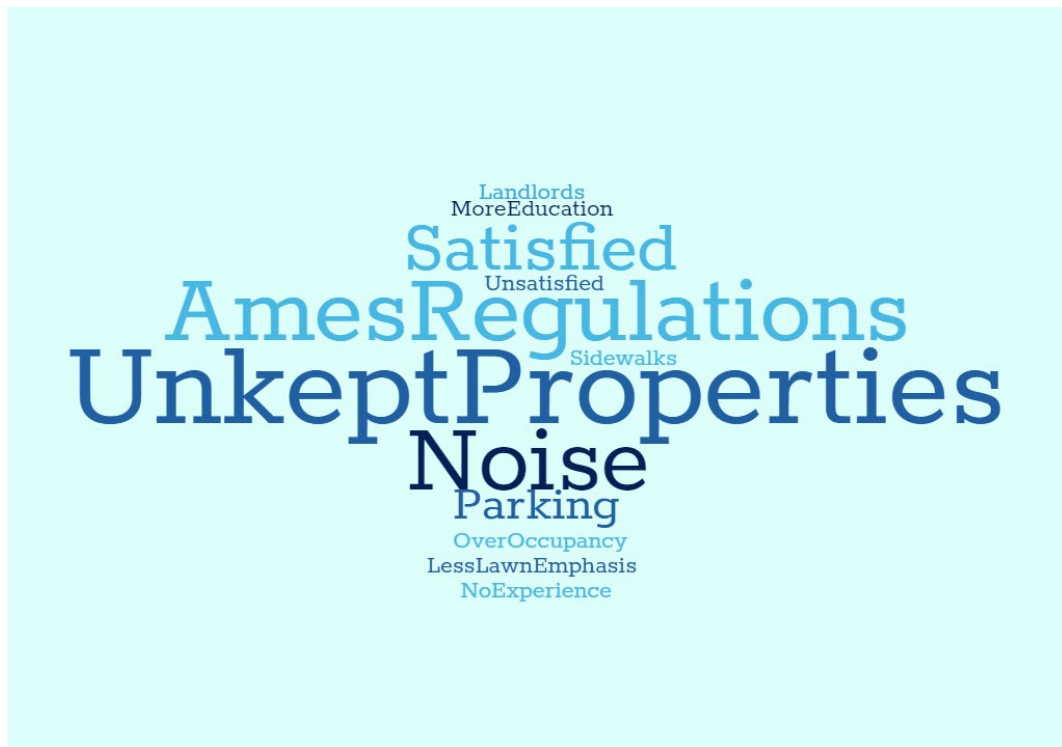
- Hopefully with the changing of the property laws in January, it will make a change this year that something will be done with properties that are not kept up
- I am dissatisfied with the nuisance ordinances for yard upkeep. Several yards had 12" vegetation following 1 week or rain. Consistent and equal enforcement seems like a waste of time
- I noticed that some houses did not keep their grass mowed, e.g. 420 Beedle Dr. 2 also hit a curb when I drove on a road due to too narrow passway and dark light at night
- our neighbors contacted: an unkempt lawn and the concern was properly delt with
- Our yard is majorly overgrown but at the same time has huge dirt spots. Our parking lot is almost always full of broken glass.
- Please treat residential properties the same as rental properties
- There are some things I don't feel neighbors should have to complain about to be enforced. Like can see someone hasn't mowed their lawn all summer.
- There are some yards with tremendous overgrowth and some places that have huge RVs parked in their driveways and it's such an eyesore.
- What's with the rolling house on the east side of Duff near 15th street or so??? It's gone on far too long
- Noise
 - 4th of July very noisy in our residential area- contacted police- they did help with the noise. Sad residents still want to shoot noisy fireworks- harmful to animals and scare them as well as annoying to neighbors. Hopefully people are being fined for residential fireworks
 - neighbors than run loud power equipment after 6pm
 - noise limits- barking dogs' problem
 - Noise will be an issue in campus town. I wish the city could do more
 - Private fireworks use on and around the 4th of July continue to be a major nuisance, and there doesn't seem to be much effort to limit them.
 - The city responds too harshly to noise complaints. It is a college town, let us be kids.
 - There needs to be enforcement about broken mufflers. Ames is louder than the city.
 - We have claimed many times an AC unit in our building that is very noisy and is placed on the other side of our bedroom wall. They have tried to reduce the noise but are still not very successful. We don't know whether is appropriate to claim this with the city of Ames since this matter has been 'taken care of' by our tenant.
- Ames Regulations
 - City of Ames has become an HOA with its' new "regulations"
 - I think the city is overreaching by setting ordinances on parking, storage, and maintenance of personal property.
 - Keep the city out of individual property rights. If safety is a concern, then attention seems warranted. If someone voices a complaint, I am hesitant to over legislate property ordinances.
 - not a fan of ordinances concerning personal property
 - Overall, while living in Ames is a positive experience for me, I cannot say I like the property maintenance law that went into effect on January 1st, 2024. While I understand the desire to keep citizens safe and the city clean, I think that there were better means to achieve these goals than the one the city council implemented.
 - People talking and children playing are much louder than your outdoor music ordinance... It makes no sense!
 - Some go too far and seem to be selectively enforced

- Why do people care so much about lawns being perfectly trimmed? I think there are far more important things to be concerned about than that
- Satisfied
 - I do not mind much
 - I don't see many of these issues in our city
 - I guess I don't see enough of it to really gauge any major ordinances.
 - I live in a well-established neighborhood area that is close knit and very friendly for 50+ years
 - I reported a downed power line, and it was fixed in a few hours
 - Neighbors had contacted the city & issues were addressed.
- Parking
 - Ames's parking is ridiculous
 - Let people park on their front lawn. It's their property
 - We reported a situation at 815 Top O Hollow Ave too many vehicles parked in the driveway and other areas on the lot and the situation has not changed
 - You might consider allowing only parking on one side of residential streets!! Very difficult to get through residential streets when are parked on both sides of the street! (west Ames)
- Unsatisfied
 - problems persisted
 - train horns, motorcycles and loud cars on hand, etc.- appear to be speeding even racing don't appear to enforce over occupancy in rental units.
 - Years later the same issues were not been resolved.
- No experience
 - I live in an apartment complex and never had to report to the city
 - none, do not know much about them
- Landlords
 - Ames City Council is absolutely toothless in front of predatory landlords. Haverkamp properties have been running a scam on their tenants and I have tried and failed repeatedly to get any sort of actionable response from the Ames City Council. They exploit international students. They are racists. They are vultures in the truest sense of the word. How Ames City council ever lets Haverkamp properties operate and exploit its most vulnerable population is beyond me. Maybe Iowa was, is and will always be racist. So honestly these surveys are pointless (with all due respect to the survey designers) if the residents do not get to reap any actionable benefits from it. I am sure the results will help some researchers flash some graphs to some granting agency to pour money into more research that will amount to more of nothing.
 - Old neighbors used to blast music & scream into the wee hours of the morning. Police told us to take it up with our property managers.
- Less Lawn Emphasis
 - The city should be less concerned about lawns. Obsession with lawn upkeep just encourages more noisy mowing and leaf blowers. These machines are nuisances and are detrimental to the health of the users and anyone around. Please ban leaf blowers. Please also enforce loud motorcycles and trucks.
 - We called the city about a streetlight out and they fixed it in a few days. much appreciated. Our neighborhood area. is seeing more and more front yards having overgrown vegetation. It affects the home values in the area. If the people want to have overgrown vegetation in backyards, I have no problem with that bur when it affects others home values, it is not right
- More Education

- I am not familiar with these ordinances. Can these be published in a city newsletter? I would be interested in reading these and understanding them
- I don't even know where/who to report these things to thought I would like to have the knowledge.
- Over Occupancy
 - I live in an HOA and the Ames PD does not have jurisdiction on over-occupancy apparently
 - Over occupancy is a continual issue in our neighborhood- how much of a nuisance this is often depends on how well behaved the students are. i.e.- our current students hold most of their parties indoors; the previous group held parties which made it hard to enjoy our yard.
- Sidewalks
 - Sidewalk clearing in winter is terrible. there are hundreds of sidewalks that are never cleared once during a winter
 - They ("nuisances", many nuisances are safety related) seem to be all citizens complaint driven. I would be calling daily if I reported all sidewalks, vegetation impeding ability to walk, damaged sidewalks. These are dangerous to pedestrians and cause visual obstructions (vegetation) for pedestrians and cyclists and auto drivers.

For additional and specific comments, see the appendix.

Figure 12. Comments on Nuisance Enforcement



Street Maintenance

Residents were given the opportunity to rate street maintenance using a four-point scale from “very poor” (1) to “very good” (4). The average values ranged from 2.8 to 3.3, meaning the road services were rated from nearly good to very good. When “very good” and “good” responses were combined, responses ranged from 66% for snow plowing in your neighborhood to 94% for street sweeping in business areas, as seen in Table 17.

Table 17. Road Service Ratings, 2024

	Very Poor/ Poor	Good/Very Good	Average
	Percent		
Maintenance of bike path system (on street lanes & paths) (n=315)	6	94	3.3
Appearance of medians and parkways (n=388)	8	92	3.3
Condition of streets in your neighborhood (n=405)	12	88	3.3
Ice control at intersections (n=400)	14	86	3.2
Snow plowing in your neighborhood (n=404)	11	89	3.2
Snow plowing on major streets (n=411)	14	86	3.1
Street sweeping in business areas (n=288)	20	80	3.0
Street sweeping in your neighborhood (n=339)	21	80	3.0
Surface condition of major streets (n=399)	34	66	2.8

Figures 13a and 13b compare the respondents’ ratings of the quality of street maintenance over the past five years. Eight out of nine street maintenance features were ranked “good” with an average score higher than 3.0. “Snow plowing in your neighborhood” got the lowest rating of 2.8 (poor) this year. Comparing this year’s rating with the previous year, the rating was higher than last year (2023) except for two features: snow plowing on major streets, and snow plowing in your neighborhood. The average value decreased by 0.1.

In 2024, eight of the nine street maintenance features mentioned in Table 17 were viewed the same regardless of geographic residence. However, maintenance of bike path system (on street lanes & paths) was rated higher by those living in the southeast and southwest parts of the city.

Figure 13a. Quality of Street Maintenance Features (2020-2024)

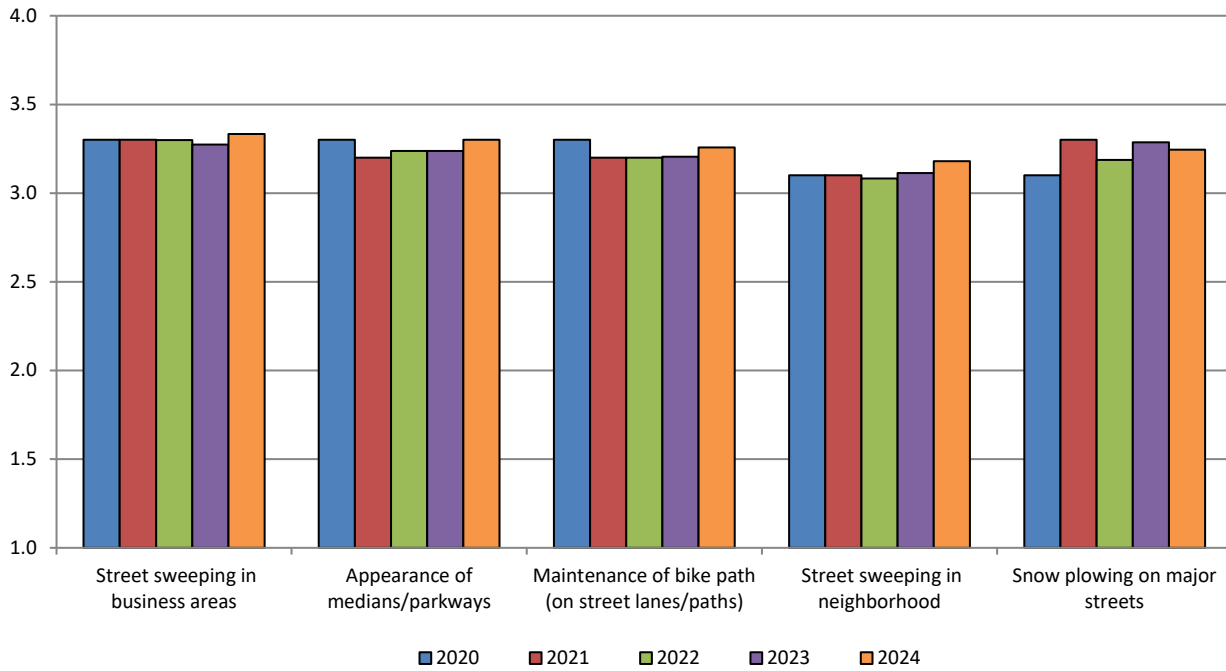
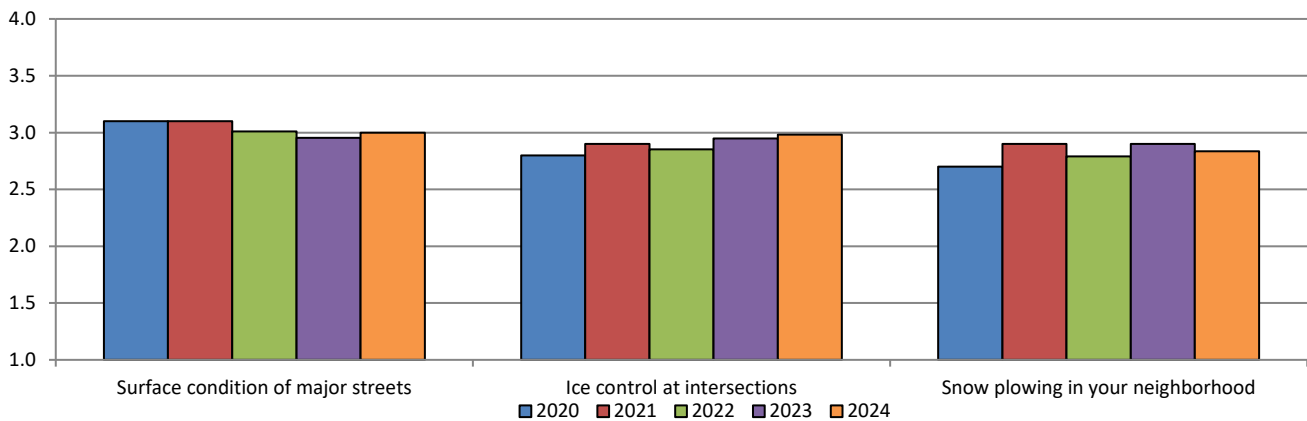


Figure 13b. Quality of Street Maintenance Features Continued (2020-2024)



The survey also asked respondents to rate the effectiveness of coordination between traffic signals. Table 18 shows that when categories were combined, 57% of respondents perceived that the traffic signal coordination was “often and/or almost always” effective, compared to 32 percent who perceived the coordination to be “rarely to sometimes” effective. Nine percent indicated they don’t know.

Table 18. Signal Coordination Effectiveness (n=413), 2024

	Percent
Often effective	34
Sometimes effective	25
Almost always effective	23
Don't know	9
Rarely effective	7

Comments on Traffic Signals

- Better Light Coordination
 - better coordination on busy days. Like football games; major events (concerts, graduation)
 - Cannot tell they are supposed to be coordinated. Traffic was very backed up at times especially Duff from South 4th on South to out of Ames. Could not even turn south off South 16th one day- all red lights backed up to next light.
 - if you hit a red on Grand, you hit every light red!
 - It is hard to discern coordination between signals.
 - Lights going east on Lincoln Way are not timed very well.
 - Lincoln Way is a stressful and dangerous route due to a lack of traffic signal coordination.
 - Long cycle times lead to pedestrian delays, especially when bog button use is required to get a walk signal
 - Need to look at the traffic signals at Duff & Crystal
 - On major roads such as South Duff, Lincoln, and University, I can count on one hand the number of times that the traffic signals felt coordinated. The overwhelming majority of the time, it is incredibly stop and go. It feels very fuel inefficient for many cars.
 - One of my biggest complaints about living in Ames are the traffic signals... they cause backups even under low-traffic sections
 - Red light after red light after red light - seemingly no coordination city-wide
 - Something needs to be done on how you manage the ISU FB & BB traffic after a game. Rumor has it there is one person who won't change how he manages it!
 - Sometimes the timing seems off allowing 2-4 cars to go North/South and then 20-30 to go East/West
 - Stop them alternating, it's annoying when the light turns green at the same time the next light turns red
 - The change in programming of lights at Stange & 13th and Stange & 24th results in longer wait time which in turn, has caused more people to run the intersection on late yellow and red.
 - The light stops at intersections of smaller streets and Lincoln way have very poor traffic time signals where you have to wait for a long time especially in the morning.
 - The lights on Duff seem poorly timed.
 - The Lincoln Way/N Elm Ave and Lincoln Way/Grand Ave lights, particularly the pedestrian crossing at N Elm, have very poor coordination.
 - The traffic lights are a constant irritation because I am constantly hitting every red light. Please work on improving this in the future.

- There have been improvements on 13th St. Duff is a mess. At least a few times a year I will have to stop at each light from downtown to South Duff.
- Timing on Grand Ave is off. You just stop at each light as you drive north.
- Intersection Light Adjustment
 - 13th and Duff is the worst, often changing to give green to the other direction even though no cars are coming that way, making those actually approaching where it was green need to wait to (SLOWLY) cycle through the lights to turn green again. All without any cars coming the other way.
 - 13th St. East & West lights need help for turning
 - Can be a little shorter wait time.
 - Compared to other cities, the ability for the whole street to be green lights. They need left turn arrows from 13th on to Grand.
 - I hate Lincoln lights- never coordinated.
 - I travel from N Duff to S Duff a lot & stop very often. Can you cancel a red light that comes on after someone turns right on red? (from a side street onto Duff)
 - The intersection of Grand Ave & E 13th Street should have a green arrow for turning left from 13th street towards Lincoln Way. It is stressful to turn left, especially if multiple cars are waiting to turn - sometimes have to wait through multiple traffic light cycles since not every driver sneaks into the intersection on yellow to turn left when cross traffic stops
 - Lights on East/West Bound Grand, no turn signal very congested. Lincoln Way
 - Some intersections (especially later at night or early morning... University Blvd one off Mortensen) there is no traffic and at times you'd have to wait 30 seconds to take a left. Also, some intersections don't allow pedestrians to cross, and they have to wait for a whole light cycle to walk or cross. Intersections should be made with pedestrians (and furthermore cyclists, anything that isn't a car) in mind and allow them to move more freely around.
 - Some lights are way too long/short. Going from Hyland to Ontario takes an extremely inconvenient amount of time
 - Some stoplights take forever to change (Franklin and Lincoln Way). Also, the traffic light for people turning S. from Target needs an arrow. There is nearly an accident there every time I am over there. Light turns green, and people don't yield to those going straight.
 - The light on 13th and Grand Ave heading west and east makes it extremely difficult to make a left turn in high traffic times of the day. It is a high-traffic intersection, so I think it warrants a protected turning arrow. The light on Duff and 11th Street will cycle randomly when no cars or pedestrians are waiting. This slows and accumulates traffic for no apparent reason.
 - The light on South 16th heading west- the turn arrow will only allow 6 cars and there can many times be 10-12 waiting- needs to be LONGER
 - The lights on Lincoln and Sheldon are terrible when going north and south. When someone hits the pedestrian walk light, that somehow counts as a green light because then people get even less time to go through the light. It does not help that there is no left turn area only because that is taking away valuable time and would create less traffic right there. This light goes west, and east is almost too long during heavy traffic hours of 4-6 pm because it causes a backup in the small block between Sheldon and Hyland. Overall, this section needs heavy revamp.
 - The one stop light leading up to the police station from Brookside Park on Grand is extremely slow to change if you're not driving on Grand in the evening.
 - The pedestrian lights are good. The transition from yellow to red lights seems too fast
 - The traffic signal at S. Dakota and HWY 30 is rarely if ever helpful. I spend a lot of time sitting there while no one is going through.

- The wait at the intersection of Dayton and 30 (when exiting from the west) is way off. You can sit there for minutes without it changing, even though no vehicles are going south through the intersection. Major streets can get congested and backed up during busy times.
- There are a few places where it would be nice to have more turning arrows. Especially during rush hours
- There are certain intersections that should add a green arrow on left turns to improve safety.
- Infrastructure Improvements
 - 13th and grand east-west traffic needs a protected left turn, sometimes the yellow light is too short
 - Grand and 13th seems to be the most problematic intersection for me. The lack of turning lanes/signals and the emphasis on northbound traffic seems to be troublesome. Additionally, 13th and Stange Rd seems odd that the priority for left hand turning is on northbound traffic as well, and North/South bound traffic is hardly ever coordinated with the Hawthorn Court Dr since the signal seems only to be a sensor prioritizing lefthand turning westbound traffic. This results in southbound traffic on Stange Rd to get stopped again quite often at this intersection. Finally, there may be reasons for this that I have not considered, but the usage of lanes on University Blvd between Stange Rd and Wallace Rd seems underutilized. There is significant space for a right-hand turn lane for eastbound traffic at the Wallace Rd University Blvd intersection. A right-hand turn lane/middle eastbound lane would prevent the blocking of traffic in the morning when CyRide busses must stop after turning left from Stange Rd on to University Blvd. Additionally, the left-hand turn lane on east bound University just past the Wallace intersection is hardly used and could easily be replaced by the middle east bound lane through the traffic signal.
 - I have a landscape architect here who says the medians should have more native pollinator plants (specifically on Lincoln Way near Campustown)
 - In general, there are multiple places in the city with 3 lanes of traffic at a light - left turn lane, and two "other" lanes where drivers could be going straight or turning right. Please consider making the right lane a turn only lane as one car going straight can significantly back traffic up. Examples are 13th St east at Dayton light, and 13th St. west at Stange light.
 - Maybe go you blinking lights after 11 pm? The length of signal on Grand Ave intersections is truly unnecessary. Also, would eliminate the no turn on red sign at University and 6th- was added a few years ago-not necessary ever.
 - more intersections need sensors. Particularly at CyRide and 6th, LW and University, Stange and 24th, 13th and Stange- left turn lane onto stage needs to be longer
 - The crosswalk next to Cousin Vinny's I think could use flashers
 - The prairie strips on Ash near Mortensen need weeding and replanting
 - Traffic signal detection systems don't always work
 - We need a traffic signal near University Community Childcare (Bruner Drive and Stange Road) especially with school buses and CyRide frequently utilizing this area!!!
 - Why do I have to stop at the stoplight at 11th and Duff by Mary Greeley at 5:30 am because it is no longer on sensor! There is no pedestrian or other vehicle traffic around!
- Satisfied
 - Don't like the constant stop & go but understand it.
 - I would guess it is since I haven't noticed it
 - In general, they are regulated properly
 - much better than previous
 - No complaints

- Seems like getting stopped at one light gets you stopped all the way down the street, but turning onto the street and making the first light gets you through the next 2-3 lights consistently
- So long as people drive the speed limit and not 2-6 over, they work great
- They seem fine.
- With lots of repairs work this year I would pay letting us know where there are detours, etc. It's pretty good
- More Street Cleaning/Snow removal
 - Do not see street sweeping in my area, but the streets are clean. Snow plowing/ removal could be better in area parking lots
 - I feel snow removal has opportunities to be faster. Grand and 13th light needs work. Those turning left onto Grand really need a signal/arrow.
 - Snow plowing for circles really depends on who is doing it. Contractors are much quicker than city. Several streets need redoing, but am aware city is gradually redoing streets
- Dissatisfied
 - Terrible on Duff
 - Time and gas are wasted daily.
 - Waiting over 20 years for resolution of 13th and Grand
- Better Bike/Ped Infrastructure
 - I find the bike paths very frustrating- they seem random
 - Make it easier for bike commuters to trigger signals. We should not have to trigger from the sidewalk
 - Sheldon & Lincoln Way signal - Additional time for N-S transit during 4-6 PM would be an improvement - pedestrian crossing uses up almost all the time if you have turning cars thus few cars get through during each green light. Additional turn lanes at Stange & Ontario and 13th & Grand would be good.
- Long Wait Times
 - Often waiting for a very long time at lights when no one is coming in either direction.
 - Some places you sit forever when there is no traffic going the other direction
 - They usually work as intended, but lots of major areas have been getting longer and longer of wait times
- Good Timing
 - good yellow times
 - Grand Ave seems good at timing, often long waits.
- More Enforcement
 - put cameras on them to catch all the speeders, light runners, and cell phone abusers.
- Better Road Construction Timing
 - Road construction could be more isolated. Doing all Grand at once seems like it has caused too much congestion

For additional and specific comments, see the appendix.

Figure 14. . Comments on Traffic Signals

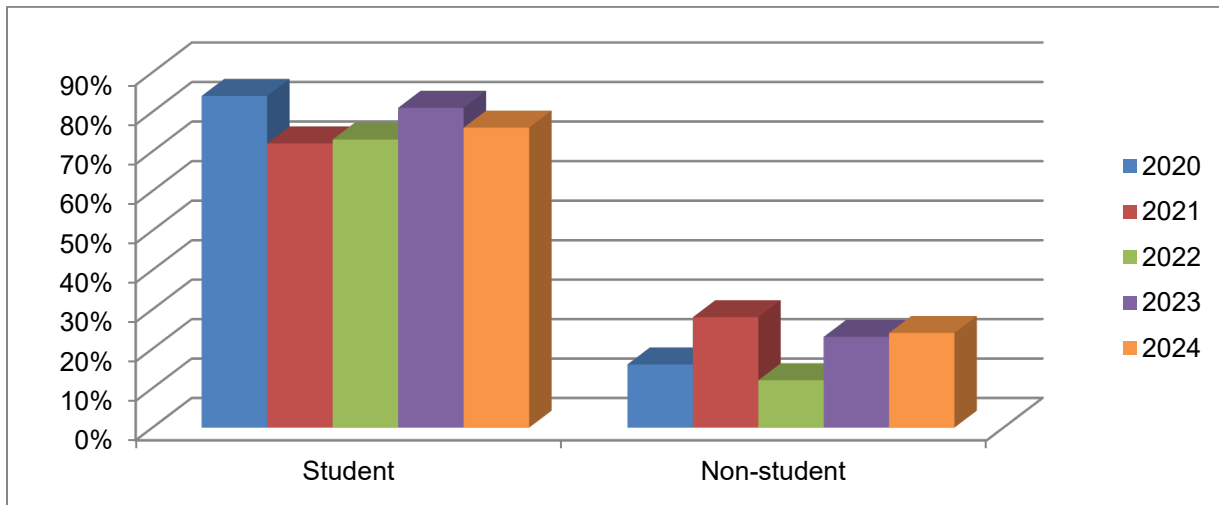


CyRide

CyRide is the community-wide transit system serving both Iowa State University and Ames. It is funded through the City of Ames (from property taxes), ISU administration (from the general fund), and ISU students (from student fees).

Figure 15 shows the difference in ridership between those identifying as students and non-students. Among those respondents who used CyRide at least once a week, 76% were students and 24% were non-students.

Figure 15. Use CyRide at least once a week, 2020-2024



In 2024, 42% of survey respondents reported some weekly use of CyRide, which is a little lower than last year (46%). In the past five years, the use of CyRide has averaged around 44% (between 42% and 46%). In 2024, 58% of respondents reported they never rode the bus.

There was a no change in those using CyRide 7 to 10 times in a week compared to 2023, 3% decrease in more than 10 times in a week and another 3% decrease in 2 to 6 times per week. There is 2% increase in those using CyRide once in a week. (Table 19).

A correlation was found between resident demographics and CyRide usage. CyRide users are mostly younger (under 28 years of age) and have stayed in Ames for a shorter period (average 6.4 years). The non-CyRide users were older (average age 52) and have lived in Ames longer (average 20 years). The majority of those who used CyRide were students (78%) and mostly renters (87%).

Table 19. Respondents' weekly CyRide usage, 2020 - 2024

Weekly use	Survey Year				
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Never	55	56	56	54	58
2 to 6 times	17	25	18	19	16
7 to 10 times	12	8	12	13	13
More than 10 times	13	5	7	10	7
Once a week	3	6	7	4	6

When respondents were asked what would make them consider using CyRide, if they are not currently using it, more than half (51%) said “nothing.” Twenty-one percent mentioned they would use the service if services were provided to more areas of Ames. Additional factors that would encourage increased CyRide ridership included fare-free rides (17%), service was more frequent on routes near their residence (16%), if service is being offered on my route longer during the day (earlier or later times), and if fare when boarding the bus was lower (5%). (Table 20).

Table 20. Services that would make you consider using CyRide if not currently using this service (n=211), 2024

Reason (n=211)	Number	Percent
Nothing	108	51.2%
Services were provided to more areas of Ames	45	21.3%
The fare when boarding the bus was at no cost	36	17.1%
Service was more frequent on routes near me	34	16.1%
Service was offered on my route longer during the day (earlier or later times)	14	6.6%
The fare when boarding the bus was lower	10	4.7%
Other (specify)	36	17.1%

Other Responses to Consider Using CyRide

- Better scheduling for disability pickup
- Better knowledge about how the fare system works

- If any route went nearer to my place of work (far East Lincoln Way)
- If I could ride w/out cash - a prepay
- More efficient routes (takes much longer than driving)
- Transfer-free routes to other destinations from S. Duff
- Need more shelter areas for CyRide particularly in student areas and apartments

Comments on CyRide

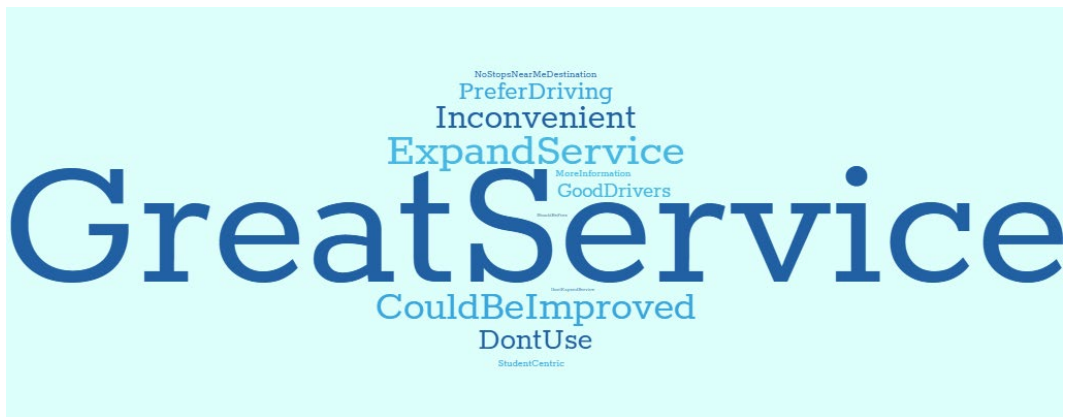
- Great Service
 - About 6 times a year. When I have needed has been great
 - Amazing
 - Amazing Service!!!
 - Ames has a great and inexpensive bus system
 - CyRide must be one of the top bus services in the state if not the country! The cost is crazy reasonable and fair. Two thumbs up across the board.
 - CyRide is a great service, I would not have been able to attend physical therapy without the Brown line.
 - CyRide is always on time and provides frequent service on the routes I use (Gold, Brown, Cherry). I am thankful that we have it, and I hope it continues to be as great as it is now.
 - CyRide is always timely and helpful. Truly one of the best public services I've gotten to use anywhere.
 - CyRide is amazing. I wish the buses had a permanent clock on them. Also wish they had Wi-Fi but that's revolutionary. Amazing lost and found reliability but that's in part due to the good people of Ames.
 - CyRide is great! (2x)
 - Excellent for those who choose to use it.
 - Excellent service
 - Excellent! What an asset for our city
 - A fantastic system, nearly always on time and frequent service in my area makes it very useful and convenient to use. Bus stop shelters could use some improvements.
 - Glad it is there when I need it
 - Great
 - Great service and used for years, now would have to transfer and much longer ride
 - I am grateful for the convenience of the CyRide and how accessible it is; there are so many routes that can get me where I need to go, and the app typically works well.
 - I am so glad we have it. I wish more people would use it. The times and locations aren't convenient for me. I would rather ride my bike. Maybe there should be a class/field trip on using CyRide in the middle school?
 - I did take the CyRide to an ISU game one time- it was fine. Love that it is free to ISU students
 - I feel it is a valuable service for those that need it
 - I have heard from frequent riders that it is a great service
 - I love having CyRide as an option, thank you for providing a great public transportation service!
 - I rode often to work at ISU for 30 years. In general, the service was reliable and efficient. I was surprised how good it was in relation to the size of the community.
 - I use it for getting to school. Thank you to all the bus drivers who made it possible for me to get to my classes.
 - I used to ride every day. Very happy that Ames has & supports public transportation.

- I used to use it when I worked on campus. Now- easier to hop in car for errands. Great to see others using bus
- It is a very good service. I tried a couple of times and was very happy with the service.
- Nice service that I might use when I no longer can bike or walk as much as I do now.
- The only service in Ames that holds any meaning. The rest of the town I could do with or without.
- But CyRide is the lifeblood, and every driver/employee deserves a raise. The most consistent well-run city service.
- They are always on time and the application is amazing.
- Used to ride before retirement. Glad they are here
- Very effective service
- We are happy there is the CyRide option even though we do not use it. Smaller buses in lower use area? just a question
- We don't use it now but was a great resource while attending ISU and working for ISU.
- Expand Service
 - A direct route on game days from the Somerset/ Northridge area would be fantastic!
 - a stop in areas that provide social services would be helpful (i.e. MICA, Salvation army, Access, AEA)
 - At times I wish CyRide had more frequency (during evenings/during breaks). CyRide also needs to extend its night-time/early-morning bus service as at times I find myself unable to get home since I work at a job that is open early (5am) and closes later in the evening when service is sparse.
 - connection could improve. That is why we do not use so often
 - Good service, but I have been curious as to why #5 (Yellow), #9(yellow), and #14 (Peach) have such limited service, especially in the evening and over the weekends. When new students come to Ames, especially international students, they don't know which areas have better bus service as they choose where to live. So, their movement becomes very restricted when they settle in places where 5, 9, and 14 operate. Doing basic things like going grocery shopping becomes very hard. I am basing my experience from 2021 during the COVID lockdown, so if things have changed, you can ignore my comment.
 - I suggest the availability around slightly north area, such as W 19th St.
 - I wish 11 Cherry had more routes since it is the only bus out to west Ames.
 - Needs more routes/drivers
 - No routes in newer housing developments in West Ames. Would be nice to have later routes
- Could Be Improved
 - Ames Ride is not always accurate, I use it the most in the mornings and if I miss the bus because the app says a different time, I don't always have time to wait for the next
 - I think CyRide could do better to space the available buses. It is almost always an issue that multiple buses come at the same time. If you miss the bus, then you must wait 10 to 15 minutes for the next one because all three of them came at the same time. When instead you would only have to wait 5 or less minutes if they were spaced out appropriately.
 - I think CyRide is great, but it takes too long to get to campus from Mary Greely (around 40 mins)
 - make schedule slower and more realistic to slow down
 - Some buses get to stop early and leave before the app or website says they will
 - some routes have a lot of seat capacity compared to demand while others do not have enough buses. more optimization is required for the routing
 - The buses often get crowded and sometimes the drivers are not professional. Additionally, the wait time for each bus is about 30 minutes, which is quite long.

- The routes going to South Ames, by the airport, need to be better.
- Inconvenient
 - During the summer, the 6 route is out around 6:30 PM, which makes difficult to commute between campus and sunnyside
 - Getting to vet med with CyRide can be a hassle
 - I do periodically ride CyRide. Think its availability is important for the community. At 70 it would be multiple buses to get groceries. It took me several rides to know that the bus stop could be lowered- important to know if you have mobility issues.
 - I probably still would not use it because I have a car which is more convenient. I would be wasting my time waiting for it and riding it around places I didn't need to go.
 - use of CYRIDE for the most part is time consuming and would add almost an hour a day to use
 - We live North of Ames ... Ada Hayden area It is difficult for college students to reach ... they need rides to get here.
- Don't Use
 - Find it a waste watching CyRide go by our house late in the evening EMPTY!!
 - Historically it has been faster to walk or bike to campus from South Ames. I don't know if that situation has improved but I always avoid CyRide. Now I am retired and don't go where CyRide goes.
 - I have to drive to other towns for my job and that primarily limits my use. 1/3 limit my use as related to leisure. Shorter ride times would also increase my usage
 - I like public transportation, but I am not in the habit of using it. As my child grows older, I would like to teach her how to use it to get around
 - I work at ISU & would be very happy to take CyRide but not at the same cost of a parking pass & less flexibility.
 - never used it
- Prefer Driving
 - I always used it when employed. Now I volunteer and need the use of my car to transport items.
 - I have used it when car was in the shop
 - If I didn't have a car then it would be quite a ways to stop
 - If I was unable to drive myself and if a bus stop were near me and my drop off was very close, I might use CyRide
 - We love CyRide, but now that are sharing rides to work it is cheaper to get an ISU parking pass
- Good Drivers
 - Drivers are great and extremely friendly
 - I love that 65 and older pay 50 cents. All the bus drivers are kind and courteous
 - I wish the CyRide drivers would encourage people to move and sit in the back of the bus more often and fill seats, especially on morning rides and other busy times when everyone gets crammed onto the lower section when there is totally open space and seats up top.
 - Very nice drivers most of the time. Some of them could do better by not braking so hard that all the kids on the bus lose their balance.
- No Stops Near Me/Destination
 - I live near Daley Park. the nearest stop to me is about a mile walk
 - I would be interested in using this again (used as a student) but there is no stop near me. Is too far to walk to one
- Student Centric
 - I would consider riding CyRide to events on campus

- Should not only be concentrated on the University
- More Information
 - Do not know enough about routes or fares
 - Send info via email every 6 mo.
- Don't Expand Service
 - Too many times I see large, full-sized buses with very few people in them. During low usage times use smaller buses
- Should Be Free
 - I think it is a valuable service for the people of Ames. Eliminating the fare would be wonderful for many people in Ames. I've "aged out" of using public transportation.

Figure 16. Comments on CyRide



Community Parks and Recreation

Residents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with various Ames Parks and Recreation features on a four-point scale from “very poor (1)”, “poor (2)”, “good (3)”, “very good (4)” or “don’t use.” The individuals who did not use a park feature were excluded from the ratings in Table 21.

Parks and Recreation features continue to receive high levels of satisfaction among those surveyed. When positive ratings of “good” and “very good” scores were combined, participants gave an overall satisfaction rate of 77% for restrooms up to 98% for the overall quality of parks. The average rating ranges from 2.9 (restrooms) to 3.5 (overall quality of parks) on the 4-point scale.

Table 21. Users’ Satisfaction with Parks and Recreation Features, 2024

	<u>Very Poor</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Very Good</u>	<u>Average*</u>
Overall quality of parks	0	2	44	54	3.5
Overall quality of wooded/natural areas	1	3	42	54	3.5
Quality of trails in the parks	0	3	48	50	3.5
Overall quality of recreational facilities (e.g. Homewood Golf Course, Gymnasium, etc.)	0	4	56	40	3.4
Variety of playground equipment in the parks	0	7	49	44	3.4
Overall quality of recreational programming	2	6	51	41	3.3
Variety of recreational programming offered	0	9	49	41	3.3
Overall quality of shelters and picnic amenities	1	6	59	35	3.3
Number of restrooms in the parks	2	21	58	19	2.9

Don't Use" excluded when calculating percentages & average for “very good” to “very poor.”

*1=very poor; 2=poor; 3=good; 4=very good

This year questions concerning parks/recreation features were reworded. There were also additions and deletions. The three new features added were:

1. “Overall quality of recreational facilities (e.g. Homewood Golf Course, Gymnasium, etc.)”
2. “Variety of recreational programming offered”
3. “variety of recreational programming offered.”

The other features that were reworded for this year’s survey are the following (previous years’ wording are enclosed in parenthesis ()):

- Overall quality of parks (*Overall appearance*)
- Overall quality of wooded/natural areas (*Wooded areas*)
- Quality of trails in the parks (*Hard surface trails*)
- Variety of playground equipment in the parks (*Playground equipment*)
- Overall quality of shelters and picnic amenities (*Shelter houses*)
- Overall quality of shelters and picnic amenities (*Picnic areas*)
- Number of restrooms in the parks) (*Restroom*)

Figures 17a & 17b show the ratings of the parks in the past five years (2020-2025). Table 17a shows the first three features that were rated the highest for 2024. The highest rated parks feature was “overall quality of parks” (with an average rating of 3.5, which is the same as 2023 rating), followed by “overall quality of wooded/natural areas”, and “quality of trails in the parks” (both rated as 3.5 for 2024, which is a slight increase from 2023 ratings).

Two features, the variety of playground equipment in the parks and the overall quality of shelters and picnic amenities were rated the same as last year (3.4 and 3.3, respectively). Overall quality of shelters and picnic amenities satisfaction ratings increased slightly compared to 2023 average rating. The number of restrooms remain the lowest ranked parks and recreation feature, with an average score of 2.9 (3.0 for 2023). (Figure 17b)

Figure 17a. Rating of Parks and Recreation Features in the Past 5 Years (3.5+)

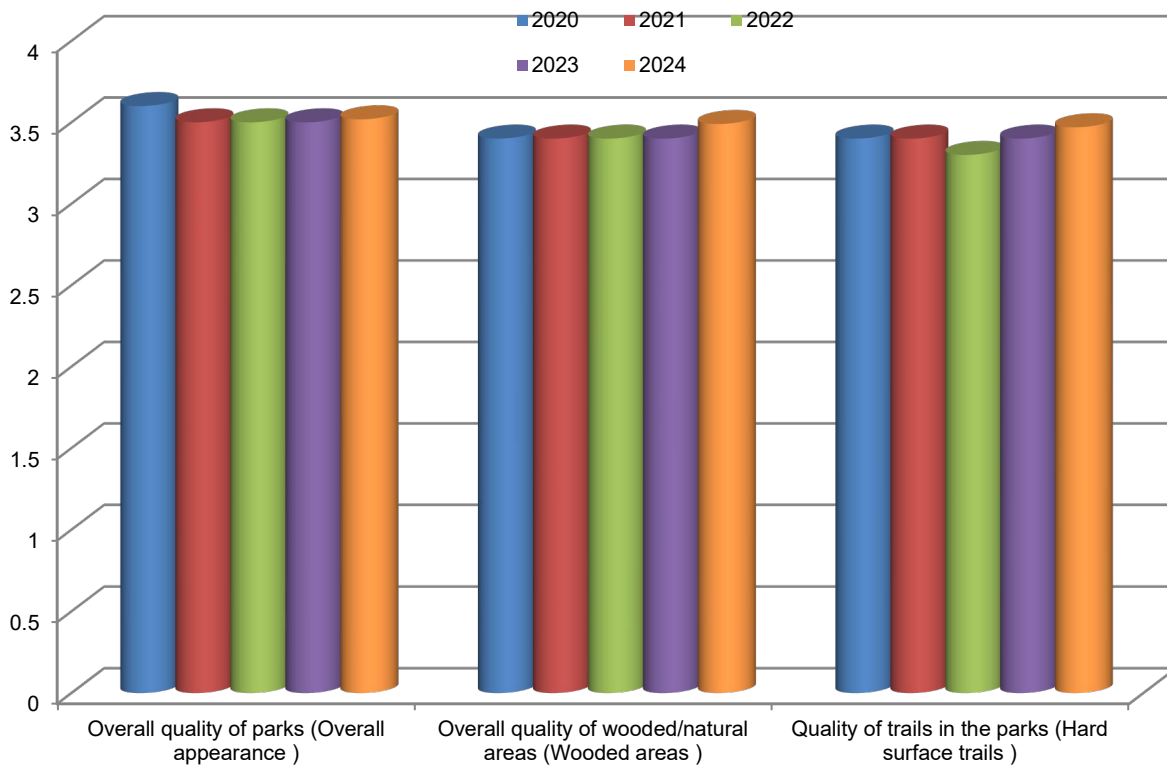
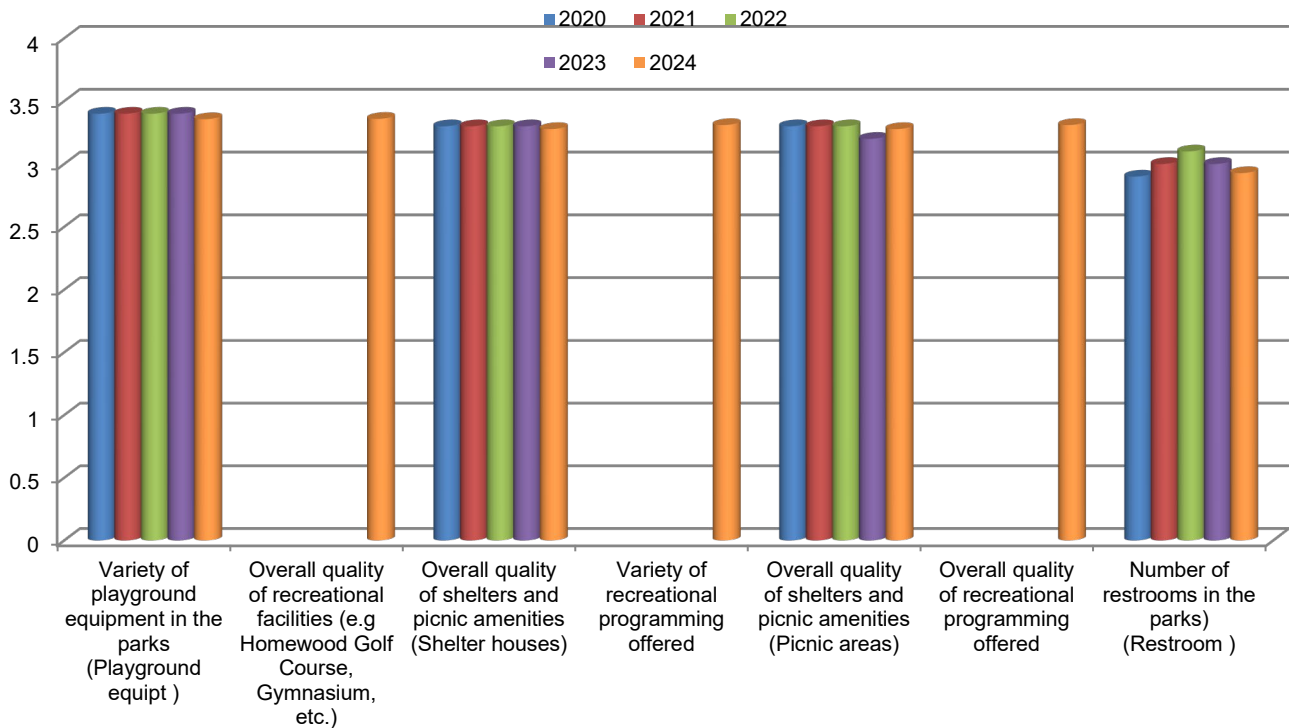


Figure 17b. Rating of Parks and Recreation Features in the Past 5 Years, (<3.5)



Comments on Community Parks and Recreation services

- Needs Improvements
 - I have always had a problem with insufficient lights in the washroom and some places do not even offer washrooms. The process of booking a shed however is easy.
 - I wish some of the trails I felt safer on by myself; maybe adding emergency phones would help, but I'm not sure. I don't always feel safe on them by myself.
 - Indoor facilities are very lacking for both adults and children and private resources are too costly for most families
 - Need a bigger splash pad
 - Need to address the southeast entrance to Ada Hayden by restrooms. Trucks do not stay on the path and create huge ruts and mud all over the trail because concrete is not wide enough.
 - Need to return lights to Brookside. Tennis and pickleball courts- threw away the original ones and then did not pursue free lights from high school. Try harder to restore services to Brookside courts.
 - Too old to use.
- More Upkeep
 - Lots of public space doesn't have good washroom, most are locked or unclean
 - Need dog poop bags available or at least trash cans more available.
 - Restrooms could be cleaner and open for a longer season. Sometimes my family and I go to the parks in October/November - February/ March because the weather is good, and restrooms are closed.
 - Restrooms feel poorly maintained. Seem to be closed more often than they're open

- several parks could use more bathrooms
- The bathrooms should be unlocked more frequently
- The overgrowth of Inis Grove means that other parks have fewer amenities than they need, and Inis Grove gets overused.
- Don't Use
 - Have not used, maybe advertise more about these!
 - I have lived in Ames since July 1967 and have used the parks twice and never the recreational anything
 - I just looked at it around never stopped
 - I'm a college student. I don't go outside.
 - Newer to Ames so haven't had the opportunity to use many of the recreational areas or programs.
 - While I am an ISU student, I do not currently live w/in the city of Ames. I have visited multiple times and plan to live there next year.
- More Nature
 - I wish there were more forests and prairies, especially on the outskirts of town
 - Invasive species dominate most of the wooded/natural areas
 - Plant more trees, extend forests, Ames currently looks like it's been stomped by a big elephants' foot and there's very little natural beauty
 - please do NOT remove any more beavers and/or beaver dams. educate residents who complain about this to use hardware cloth to cover their trees and prevent damage from beaver activity. They are crucial to our ecosystem and do NOT need to be taken out of Ames area creeks.
 - too many invasive species
- More Variety
 - I wish there was a badminton field with a set of rackets and birdies.
 - need more tennis/ pickleball courts
 - Parks could use more swings that older children can use
 - We desperately need indoor pickleball for all community members and gymnasium capacity for all community members. increase # of tubes for lazy river please
- More Advertising
 - I was not aware of any available recreational programs. Maybe they can be better publicized.
 - I would use the recreational things more I think if I knew about them, also I'm very excited about the indoor pool and plan to use that.
 - Sometimes it a little hard to find info on the website for sports leagues and how to get involved (e.g. Tuesday night pick up volleyball)
 - Wish program came in mail of trails, parks, events, etc.
- Longer Hours
 - 5) Need more, need to be open sooner and stay open later.... McFarland Park, Carr; Peggy's trail, etc.
 - It would be nice to have water fountains turned on earlier/off later
 - The number of restrooms is acceptable, but they close too late in the spring and too early in the fall.
- Great Programs
 - I love all the parks and rec programs!
 - I think Ames City manages so well
 - My children were involved in Parks and Rec activities, and loved swimming
- More Programs

- maybe some programs for us older folks
- more swimming lesson options. City hall indoor gym is tight and there is little accessibility to get through building
- Update City Gym
 - An updated city weight room is badly needed. Those who aren't students have very limited (and often expensive) options, and the current city gym/weight room is inadequate.
 - excited for new swim and splash pad facilities. Thankful for trails, wish there were even more paved ones. The city gym is getting old. Would be near if city had childcare options for parents working out
- Dog Park
 - A dog park or something in North Ames for dogs would be great!
 - only use Ada Hayden and the dog park
- Great Access
 - Great access!
 - I believe there is adequate access to parks and natural walking areas. I just have not had the opportunity to utilize them as much as I would like to.
- Great Hiking
 - I love hikes off the paved trails so thanks for having dirt path options!
 - I love to walk through the parks! They are well maintained and can be a true adventure!
 - Prioritize Parks
 - Continue to prioritize this - it's a quality-of-life thing

Figure 18. Comments on Community Parks and Recreations Services



Ames Public Library

Generally, survey respondents rated the Ames Public Library’s features highly. The survey asked respondents to provide opinions on 13 features provided by the Ames Public Library. Table 22 shows the results. Many respondents indicated that they don’t use the various library features. The least used library feature is the library newsletter - Page One; 72% of respondents indicated they don’t use it. On the 4-point scale, average scores ranged from 3.5 (good) to 3.7 (very good).

The highest rated feature, with an average score of 3.7, was the welcoming atmosphere of the library. Other highly rated (3.7) library features included asking questions of library staff by phone or email, customer service, and variety of materials available (books, movies, online resources).

The feature receiving the lowest rating was wait time for requests/holds, Page One – the library newsletter, and programs (Storytime, book discussions, lectures).

Table 22. Users’ Ratings of Ames Public Library Features, 2024

Feature	<u>Very Poor</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Very Good</u>	<u>Don't Use*</u>	<u>Average*</u>
Welcoming atmosphere (n=431)	<1	1	16	54	29	3.7
Customer service (n=425)	<1	1	20	48	32	3.7
Building accessibility (n=429)	<1	1	24	45	29	3.6
Variety of materials available (books, movies, online resources) (n=434)	0	1	22	44	34	3.7
Availability of seating (n=433)	<1	2	21	38	38	3.6
Asking questions of library staff by phone or email (n=432)	0	0	13	35	51	3.7
Use of library online resources (n=431)		1	21	32	46	3.6
Meeting/study rooms (n=434)	<1	0	18	32	50	3.6
Internet/computer services (n=432)		1	18	29	52	3.6
Wait time for requests/holds (n=431)	<1	3	23	29	46	3.5
Programs (Storytime, book discussions, lectures) (n=430)	<1	1	15	22	62	3.5
Bookmobile service (n=434)		1	12	21	67	3.6
Page One – the library newsletter (n=427)		0	14	14	72	3.5

*Don’t Use response not included in calculating the average

Forty-eight percent of respondents use the Ames Public library as often as they would like to use it. Of those respondents who use the public library, 39% were ISU students.

Both students and non-students reported the same major reasons: not having time and acquiring materials from other sources as the reasons for not using the Ames Public Library.

While 13% of Iowa State students listed parking as a barrier for not using the Ames Public Library more often, only 5% of non-ISU students listed that as a reason.

Table 23. Comparing Students & Non-students' Reasons for Not Using the Ames Public Library (respondents could choose multiple responses), 2024

Respondent Status	I don't have time	I get materials from other sources	Parking (Transportation) is a problem	Other
Iowa State University student (n=66)	67%	43%	13%	14%
Non-ISU student (n=50)	46%	40%	5%	29%

Other reasons mentioned for not using the Ames Public Library were:

- By non-student (n=24)
 - Old Age
 - Doing other things - a phase in my life
 - Health
 - I use the internet at home a lot and I wish the marketing behind the library would increase as well as all of the great perks it offers other than books.
 - I usually purchase paperback
 - Lack of adult, senior, programs
 - No free parking! Nearby
 - Not well incentivized
 - Parking problem
 - Wait times for eBooks and paper book for newer books is very long.
 - wish for Friday nice hours

- By ISU students (n=19)
 - I don't like going to the library
 - I hate having to pay for parking to go to the library. There should be free parking available
 - I like to study in private spaces, and I don't find a lot of those at the library
 - I often forget about the library as a resource for me
 - I use the resources at ISU that I pay for
 - ISU library is closer
 - It's not a very cozy atmosphere to do work in
 - Often the books I want are unavailable or not in the library system at all
 - Parking is an issue

Comments on Ames Public Library

- Great Resource
 - A great resource
 - Ames Library is great. Online offerings could be improved.
 - APL is an exceptional library
 - consistently impressed. thankful for so many options for kids
 - Great place very useful!

- I download most reading materials. Very convenient, thank you. I can usually get what I wish for; except movies on Kanapy and Hoopla are quite limited but that's ok! I watch movies on my very overpriced TV service
- I had a charming lady help me out and talk me through what the library offered. It was greatly appreciated.
- I hear good comments about it!
- I love the Ames Public Library! It is such an amazing resource for our community, used in so many ways and the librarians are wonderful!
- I love the library! We could use a greater number of audiobooks for popular titles. There are long wait times for many books
- It is an excellent resource!
- It seems like a great resource I wish I had more availability to explore
- Looking forward to getting library access as I enjoy access to a lending library for audiobooks.
- LOVE our library! It is a fantastic resource for the community
- mainly use online, but used PEO room
- Pretty good selection
- Recently retired. More time to visit the library & discover all the available resources, the public library in Ames is one of the most valuable assets that this community offers. The public library is the jewel of the city's amenities, as far as I am concerned
- wonderful essential source of information and entertainment
- Excellent
 - Excellent
 - excellent library would like to see more native American movies books
 - I love the public library! I have always had good experiences with the staff and the quality of items I check out.
 - I think we have a wonderful library!
 - It's a nice library, easy to use, I get there when time permits. Read mostly periodicals I don't get at home.
 - keep up the good work!
 - love the library- their cooperation with the history museum
 - superb
 - The Ames Public library is outstanding,
 - The AP is a wonderful part of living in Ames. We are very fortunate!
 - We have a beautiful library; Ot is bright and welcoming. I use the online service a lot and I like it. It seems like the web pages change frequently though
 - We love visiting the library
 - When I have gone, I'm always impressed by the library. I do wish they had more programs for adults (like 25-65 yr olds who can't go to stuff at 2 pm on weekdays)
 - Wonderful Facility
 - Worth every penny
- Good Services
 - excellent services, immaculately clean
 - I go to the library to vote
 - I love the fact that they have great book sales and welcoming staff who are always friendly.
 - I will probably use it more once I have kids. I know many people who are very happy with the children's facilities there.

- Is a gem! I love it! So, appreciate the services it provides!
- It is nice to know that they offer services if I ever need them
- Online resources are good for local history; ISU library, more than meets general library needs
- really enjoyed Pub Fiction last year, looking forward to similar events.
- Superficially (I have not been inside the library, although I plan to), based on driving by the downtown library, it appears to be a welcoming facility for a diverse community. I love the fact the downtown library is next to the "Rainbow Crosswalk" and seems to be inviting to the LBGTQ community. We moved to Ames in August of 2023. I am pleased to see these symbols of kindness near public places like the library and other nearby places.
- The university doesn't have enough quiet and comfortable study areas. Ames Public Library could fill this void.
- Don't Use
 - Actually, I have not been there, but I heard about the library, and it is really nice.
 - Do not use
 - don't really need to use it at all, and I'm not much of a reader, do not have kids
 - I am disabled, cannot drive
 - I have never been to the public library (have lived in Ames 4 years)
 - I like to read on my Kindle, and I don't want to go to other activities.
 - We moved here during Covid. I just haven't used the library as much as I should.
- Good Atmosphere
 - Going to the library about once a week, it's a very nice atmosphere to focus in and a nice change of environment.
 - I personally enjoy spending time in Ames public library.
 - Nice and quiet place to study
 - One of the best features of Ames. The library is top notch. Good bike parking. Wonderful atmosphere.
 - Sigma Alpha sorority used Ames Public Library to host meetings, and it worked out great!
 - Very nice library! Inviting atmosphere, printing services are convenient and affordable. Would go there more often if I didn't have access to the Parks library
- Parking
 - I did not use the library mainly due to parking problem
 - I have learned that there are no free spaces in the north lot- for staff nor for library visitors. Why limit accessibility to the library? Take out the parking meters. no reason to punish staff or residents.
 - I would really appreciate a drive-up book drop. It's often difficult to find parking, get kids out of the car, pay for the meter, etc. to quickly return books (even on the walk up).
 - if you are going to check out multiple books, carrying them all the way behind main St. is cumbersome. Free parking across the street especially during summer daytime would increase our visiting 100%
 - Parking a problem- better access at Lincoln Way Center. They should NOT expose children to LBGTQ issues in programming and books!
 - Parking accessibility is difficult
- Use University Library
 - As a student, I use the Iowa State University library rather than the Ames public library.

- As an Iowa State Student that cloisters themselves, I mostly frequent the Parks Library, if necessary. I may be oblivious, but what is the relationship and reach of the public library with Parks library?
- I am an Iowa State Student, so I mainly use the on-campus library
- I go to Parks Library instead
- I use the ISU library
- More Accessible
 - Better marketing (especially towards different demographics)
 - home delivery? It is hard to get around to bus stops where I live
 - maybe could use some more darker spaces as I have trouble with reading in lit areas during the day
 - please get tall toilets in the women's handicap stalls- they are much too low for my knees and hips
 - Seating is not as comfortable as it used to be. Used to visit book mobile when it stopped at Crawford. Inter library loan is a great service. Always look forward to book sales!
- Clean
 - clean, good facilities, helpful staff
 - The library is well organized and clean. Very nice and knowledgeable books and play areas. The seating is very good, and their staff is very cooperative and helpful.
 - The layout is very neat and quiet. Perfect for a library
- LibbyApp
 - I love listening to audiobooks from the library on Libby! Finally able to get back into reading without worrying about not being able to return a physical book on time. Plus, they allow multi-tasking, especially when driving. Wish I would have started sooner
 - I mostly now use on-line books through hoopla and Libby
 - use online books all the time
- Support Library
 - only use the library for making donations
 - Please support a diverse library, book banning just makes the population less educated. A great library has something to offend everyone and that is the way it should be.
 - Support Libraries not banning books
- More Selection
 - Book and DVD section is a bit thin, but otherwise excellent
 - If you want to add more X-Men comics go crazy.
- More Online Books
 - Have more online books available
 - We use the library a lot & enjoy spending time there. At my age I don't read books online & it seems that trying to find a book I'm interested in results in an "online book" available. Searching has become more difficult on your website.
- Comfortable
 - A very comfortable place to browse and find books
 - Love the library! Great place for studying/meeting.
- Too Loud
 - I do not think that loud voices should be tolerated like they are being allowed now
 - Sometimes the noise level is too much - patrons should be required to silence their cell phones (maybe put up signage to that effect).
- Fun

- My grandchildren always ask to go to Ames Library when they stay at my house!
- My wife and I love taking our toddler there to play. Especially on cold and rainy days
- Political Agenda
 - Please stop hosting DRAG events. They have nothing to do with educating our kids
 - We don't agree with the types of kid's programs offered and find a particular ideological agenda forced through the programs to kids inappropriate.
- Fund Less
 - Waste of taxpayer money. Waste of space

For additional and specific comments, see the appendix.

Figure 19. Comments on Ames Public Library



Information Dissemination (Communication)

The next section of the questionnaire focused on residential preferences for City of Ames communications. Respondents were asked to rate the usefulness of City communications sources on a three-point scale: 1- “not useful”, 2 - “somewhat useful”, 3 - “very useful,” as well as “don’t use.” Table 24 shows the results. The most frequently used sources for local government information included the City of Ames website (www.CityOfAmes.org) (66%), and CitySide (utility bill insert) (54%). The least accessed sources of government information were LinkedIn – City of Ames, Threads - City of Ames, Ames Television/Cable TV 12, X/Twitter – City of Ames, and Nextdoor – City of Ames

When asked about the degree of usefulness of those sources, the most useful source was reported to be social media, including Facebook (average of 2.5 on a 1-3 scale), followed by CitySide (utility bill insert), and City of Ames website (www.CityOfAmes.org) with average score or 2.4, respectively). Also, the City of Ames website was the most highly used source, and second in terms of usefulness (2.4).

Table 24. Usefulness of Media Sources for Government Information, 2024

Media	Don't Use Percent	Use	
		Percent	Average*
Facebook - City of Ames (n=374)	55	45	2.5
CitySide (utility bill insert) (n=375)	46	54	2.4
City of Ames web (www.CityOfAmes.org) (n=374)	34	66	2.4
ISU Daily newspaper (n=375)	53	47	2.3
Instagram – City of Ames (n=374)	78	22	2.3
X/Twitter – City of Ames (n=375)	83	17	2.3
KASI/KCCQ radio (n=375)	76	24	2.3
KHOI Community Radio (n=374)	78	22	2.2
Des Moines Register newspaper (n=376)	63	38	2.2
Ames Tribune newspaper (n=375)	62	38	2.1
Nextdoor – City of Ames (n=375)	81	19	2.1
Ames Television/Cable TV 12 (n=373)	86	14	2.1
LinkedIn – City of Ames (n=373)	88	12	2.1
Threads - City of Ames (n=376)	88	12	2.1

*1=not useful; 2=somewhat useful; 3=very useful

Next, those surveyed were asked to choose one preferred method for communications about construction projects, programs, meetings, and other news in their area. Figure 20 shows that email (63%) is the first preferred method of communication, followed by hard copy letter (51%), and thirdly by social media (36%). Figure 20 also shows the least popular method of communication with the City regarding programs and projects. These methods are radio, local newspaper, and City of Ames app.

When asked what other means of communication they prefer, the following items were mentioned: QR code printed on local shopping receipts, signage throughout city to prepare us for projects or rules, television news (KCCI or WHO-TV), and yard signs on corner. The responses varied slightly between non-ISU students versus ISU students.

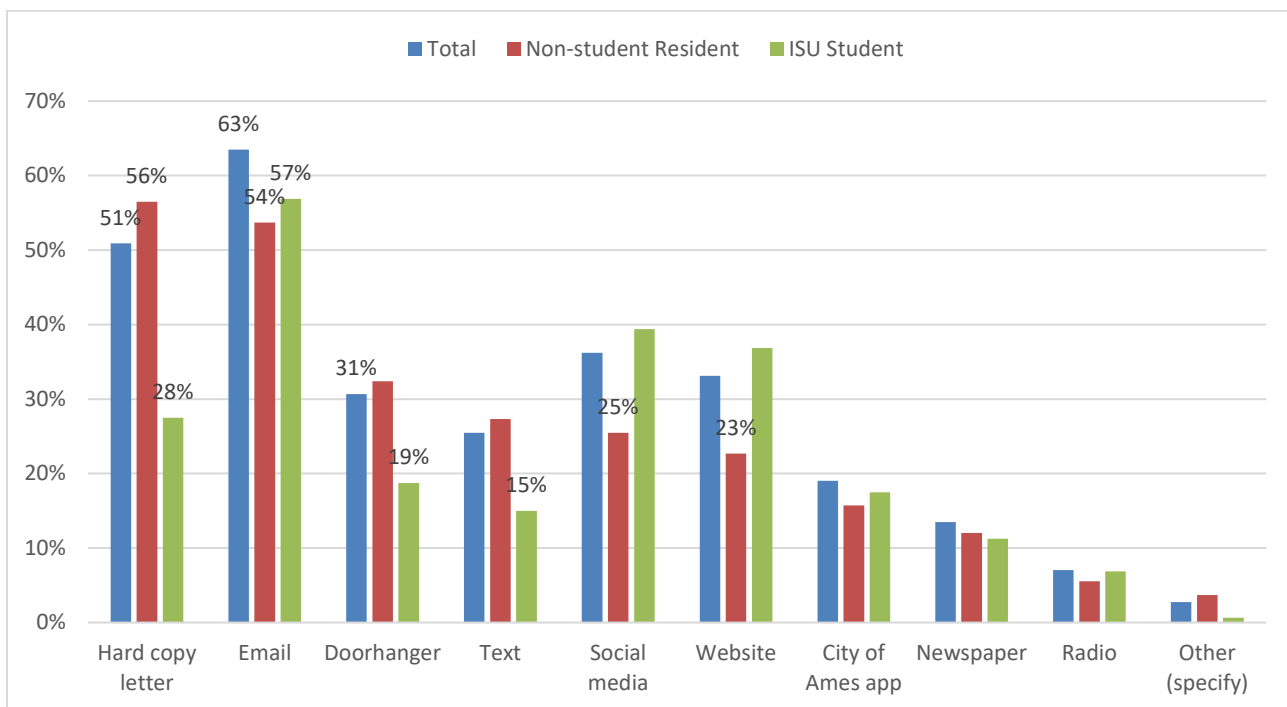
For ISU student:

- first preference as email (57%)
- second preference as social media (39%), and the
- third preference as website (37%).

For the non-student resident:

- first preference as hard copy letter (56%)
- second preference as email (54%), and the
- third preference as doorhanger (32%).

Figure 20. Preferred Method to Learn about City Services, Programs, or Projects, 2024, top 3



Figures 21a and 21b illustrate trends in the perceived usefulness of City communication sources over a five-year period. In this year’s survey, six news sources were added: Facebook-City of Ames, Instagram-City of Ames, X/Twitter–City of Ames, NextDoor-City of Ames, Threads–City of Ames, and LinkedIn–City of Ames.

Those rankings have stayed generally consistent over the years with a slight increase in average scores this year compared to the previous year. CitySide (utility insert), social media such as Facebook/Twitter/YouTube combined remain the most useful sources of City information.

There was a slight increase in the perceived usefulness of all the 14 communication sources of information regarding construction projects, programs, and meetings this year compared to last year except for Facebook/Twitter/YouTube. Table 21b shows the usefulness of seven news sources that had the lowest usefulness ratings (below 2.0 or somewhat useful). However, those ratings were above 2.0 in this year’s survey.

Figure 21a. Usefulness of News Sources Over the Past 5 Years (Users only)

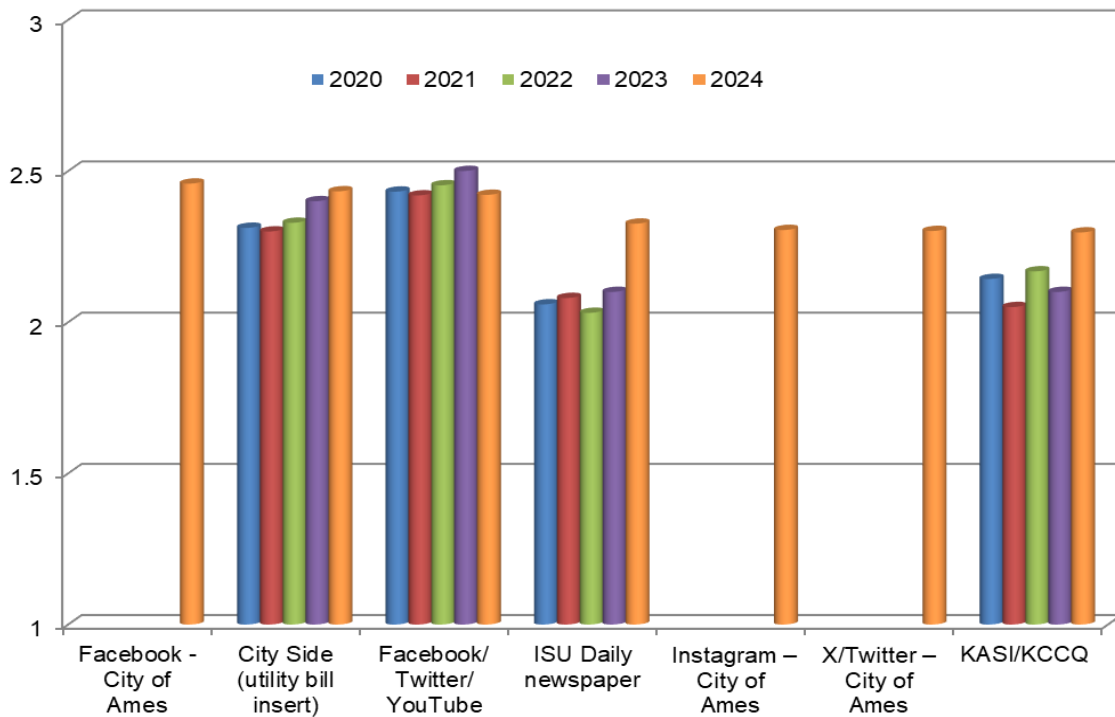


Figure 21b. Usefulness of News Sources Over the Past Five Years (Users only)

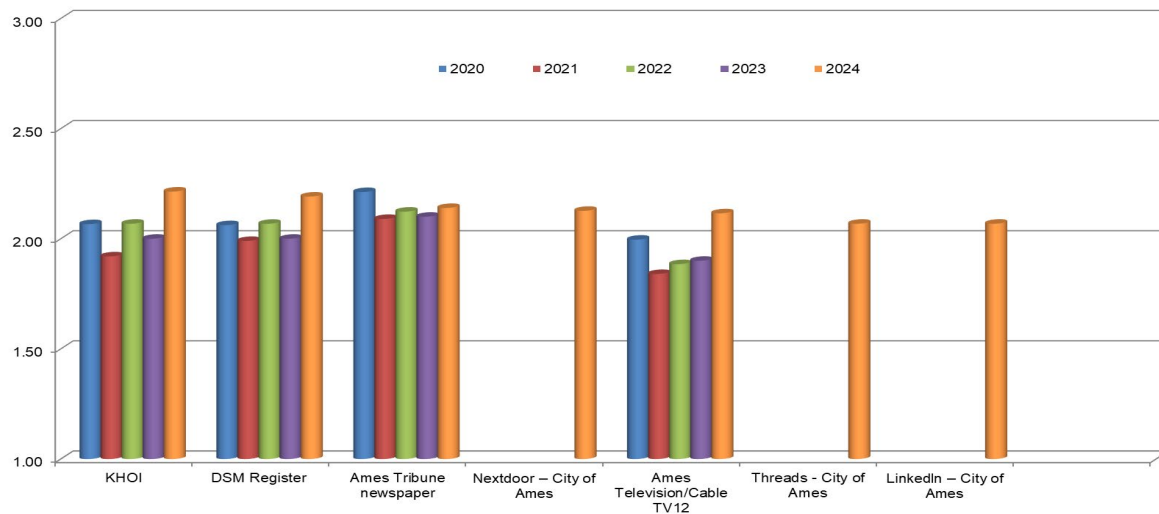


Table 25 indicates the usefulness of various communication tools based on the respondent’s residency status. The only one primary source that was equally useful to ISU students and non-student residents was the City of Ames Web page (www.CityOfAmes.org) (average score of 2.42) For all the other information sources, the average scores between non-student resident and student were different, but they were not statistically significant.

Table 25. Usefulness of News Sources for Non-student and ISU Students

Information Sources*	Non-student Resident*	Student*
Facebook - City of Ames	2.48	2.42
CitySide (utility bill insert)	2.44	2.41
City of Ames website (www.CityOfAmes.org)	2.42	2.42
KASI/KCCQ radio	2.28	2.32
X/Twitter - City of Ames	2.24	2.34
KHOI Community Radio	2.18	2.26
Des Moines Register newspaper	2.13	2.26
Ames Tribune newspaper	2.12	2.17
Instagram - City of Ames	2.12	2.39
ISU Daily newspaper	2.11	2.42
Ames Television/Cable TV 12	2.05	2.16
Nextdoor - City of Ames	2.02	2.27
Threads - City of Ames	1.87	2.17
LinkedIn - City of Ames	1.64	2.27

*No source was found statistically significant at .05 nor .01 levels

Note: Average was computed using these values: 1= “not useful”; 2= “somewhat useful”; 3= “very useful”

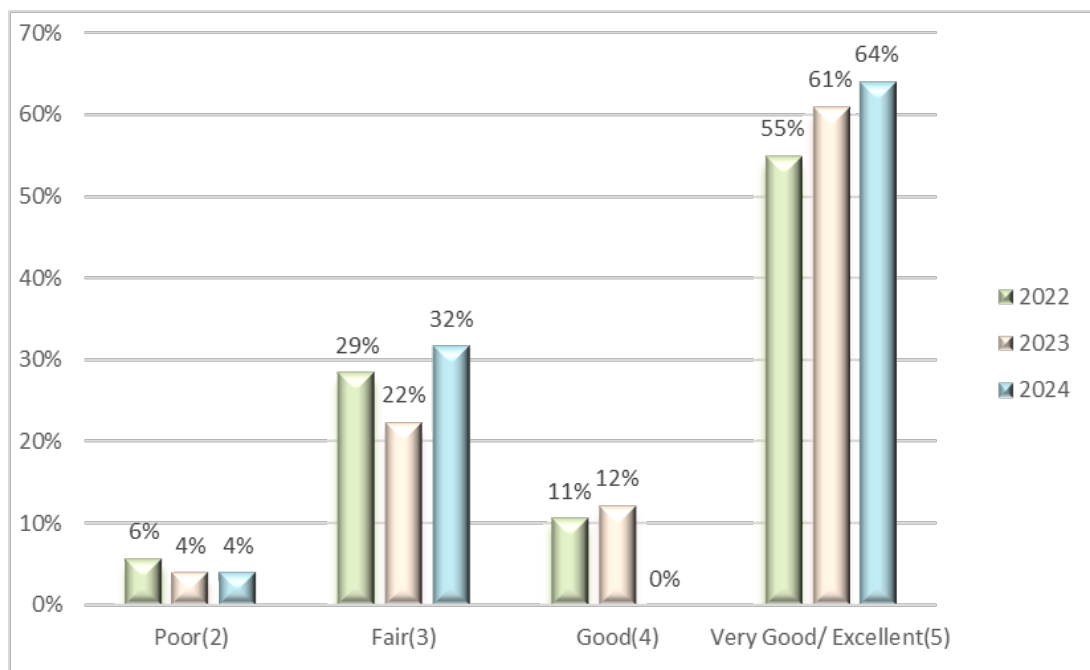
A new question asked this year is the respondent’s willingness to use a City of Ames app that supplied about City news, construction projects, programs and meetings. A little over half (57%) of the total responded ‘Yes.’ Comparing the non-student residents to ISU students, more (60%) of the non-student residents are willing to use the City of Ames app. While only 40% of the ISU students would use it.

Your Mental Health

Respondents were asked to rate their mental health. On a scale of 1 to 5 (1- “poor” and 5- “excellent”), the average mental health rating was a little bit higher compared to last year (3.5 for 2023 and 3.3 for 2022).

Figure 22 shows the overall mental health rating of respondents for two years. There was a 3% increase among the respondents who indicated that their overall mental health was very good/excellent in the past two years (61% for 2023 and 64% for 2024). Furthermore, the poor mental health rating was stable compared to last year (4%). Fair rating for the overall mental health increased by 10% from 2023 to 2024 (22% and 32%, respectively) while good rating was almost the same for both years (11% for 2023 and 12% for 2024).

Figure 22. Overall Mental Health Rating



Access to Professional Mental Health Services

For the third year the Ames Community Survey included a new question, “In the past six months, have you felt you needed to access professional mental health services?” More respondents

indicated that they had not felt the need to access mental health services this year compared with previous years (57% for 2022; 69% for 2023, 75% for 2024). When the demographic information of the respondents was correlated to their mental health rating, several variables had significant relationships.

Those who give a higher overall mental health rating were:

- Non-student resident
- Male
- Homeowner
- Whites
- Living in northeast part of Ames
- Retired
- Longer-term Ames residents (lived in Ames for more than 10 years)
- 75 years and older
- With middle incomes (\$75,000 or \$99,000)

The lowest mental health rating was given by those who had:

- An income level of under \$25,000
- Works part-time
- Those who have lived in Ames for 7 to 9 years
- 18 to 24 years old
- Living in the southwest part of Ames

Education and Gender had no impact on the overall mental health ratings.

Of the 25% of the respondents (n=90 respondents) who accessed the professional mental health services this year, more than half (64%) indicated that they received the help they needed, 24% responded that they were not able to get the help they needed, and 6% of respondents preferred not to answer the question.

Please remember, all residents can access the Statewide Crisis Line, 1-855-581-8111, or Text support, 1-855-895-8398 or visit YourLifelowa.org. The Crisis Line provides information and referral, counseling, crisis service coordination, and linkages to crisis screening and mental health services, including dispatch of the Central Iowa Community Services (CICS) Mobile Response Team, 24-hours a day in Story County. Additional resources are available that incorporate help with alcohol, drugs, gambling, as well as mental health and suicidal thoughts.

“If you noticed your mental health declining, who do you talk to” is a new question asked this year. Table 26 shows that a trusted friend (77%), followed by family members (69%) and primary care physician (34%) are the three groups of people respondents reached out to when their mental health declined.

Table 26. Person/Organization Talked to when Mental Health Declined, 2024

Person/ Organization (n=245)	Percent
A trusted friend (n=188)	77%
Family Member (n=170)	69%
Primary care physician (n=83)	34%
Therapist (n=72)	29%
Co-worker (n=51)	21%
Psychiatric medication provider (n=26)	11%
Pastor/ clergy (n=14)	6%
ISU Mental Health Advocate medication provider (n=11)	5%
Ames Police Department Mental Health Advocate (n=3)	1%
Crisis phone line (n=3)	1%
ARCH (crisis tram) (n=2)	<1%

Sense of Community

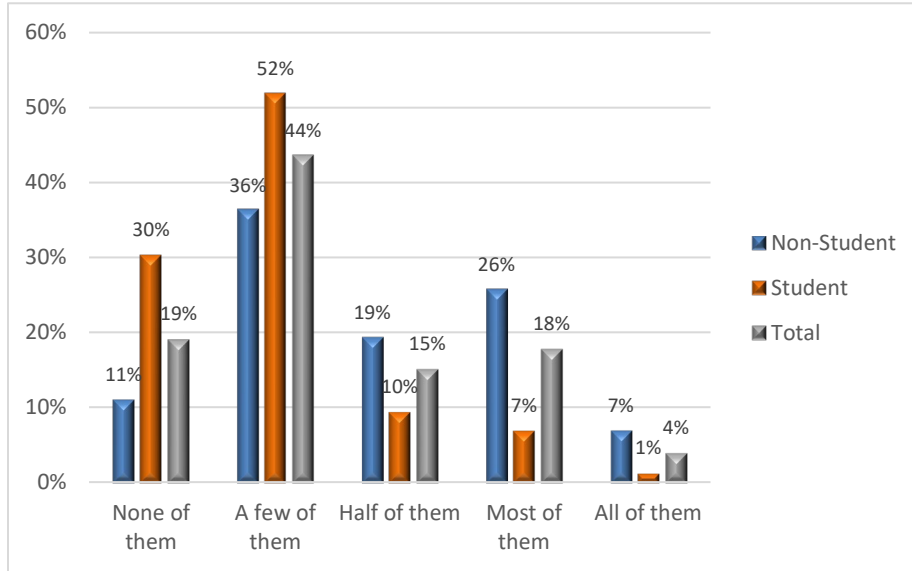
For the sixth year, the survey included a question asking about the respondent’s perception of connection with the community. *Sense of community is a feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members' needs will be met through their commitment to be together* (McMillan, 1976)

<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/e5fb/8ece108aec36714ee413876e61b0510e7c80.pdf>. A clear and empirically validated understanding of sense of community can provide the foundation for lawmakers and planners to develop programs that meet their stated goals by strengthening and preserving community.

Figure 23 shows that in 2024, more than one-third (37%) of the respondents reported to know about half or more of their neighbors. This is a slight decrease from 38% in 2023. When the numbers are examined by student and non-student populations, 54% of the students reported knowing more than half or more of their neighbors, compared to 18% of students.

This year, 11% of non-student respondents reported that they didn’t know any of their neighbors, compared to 30% of the student population. In 2023, 7% of non-students didn’t know any of their neighbors, compared to 23% of ISU students.

Figure 23. Neighbors You Know, 2024

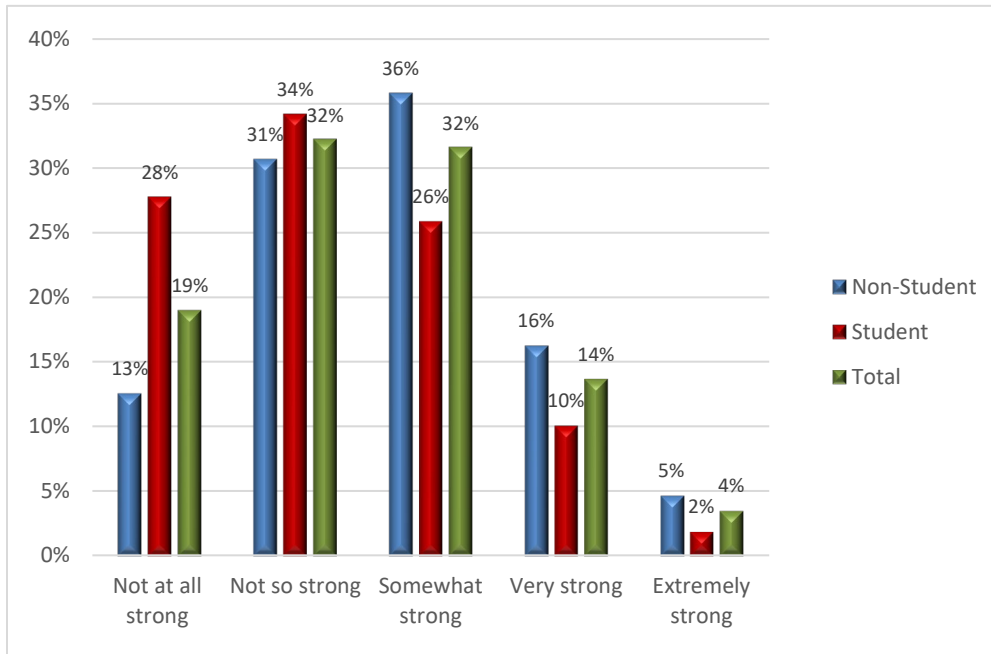


On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 – “not at all strong” to 5 – “extremely strong”), respondents were asked to rate their perceived level of sense of community in their neighborhood. Looking at the average score, the sense of the community by all respondents was 2.5 (2.7 for non- students and 2.2 for students). Combining the “extremely strong” and “very strong” responses, only 17% of all respondents felt that the sense of community in their neighborhood is strong, but when divided by students and non-students there was a noticeable difference (21% non-students residents felt a strong sense of community compared to 11% of students), see Figure 24.

On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 - “not at all strong” to 5 – “extremely strong”), the strength of the sense of community was viewed differently by demographic groups:

- Household income: the higher the household income, the higher is the sense of community
- Employment: full-time homemaker had stronger sense of community compared to other employment statuses
- Length of residence: Long-term residents had stronger sense of community than short-term residents
- Age: 77+ has the strongest sense of community; younger respondents (18 to 24) have the lowest rating
- Residence: no difference
- Gender: no difference
- Race: no difference
- ISU student vs. non-student resident: no difference
- Home ownership: no difference
- Education: no difference

Figure 24. Sense of Community in the Neighborhood, 2024



Respondents responded to a series of statements regarding community involvement. Table 27 summarizes the responses. When asked if “issues facing my community are important to me,” 86% agreed (somewhat agree/strongly agree), which significantly decreased from 96% in 2023. Almost half of the respondents (49%) indicated that they were knowledgeable about issues facing their community, compared to 79% of respondents from the 2023 survey. However, over half of respondents (64%) contributed financially as a sign of support in 2024 (54% in 2023).

More than half (54%) of those surveyed reported that they are engaged in addressing the issues in the community. A little over one-fourth (28%) of the respondents indicated that they currently volunteer for a nonprofit organization serving the city (which was lower than last year (33%). When asked if they serve on the Board of Directors of a non-profit organization, only 12% indicated that they were board members, (10% for 2023). (Table 27)

Table 27. Community Involvement, 2024

Community Involvement Issues	Strongly Disagree/ Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree/ Strongly Agree	Average
Issues facing my community are important to me (n=351)	14	86	4.2
I am knowledgeable about the issues facing my community. (n=340)	51	49	3.4
I currently support nonprofit organization(s) with financial contributions. (n=325)	46	54	3.2
I am engaged in addressing the issues of my community. (n=333)	67	33	2.9
I currently volunteer for a nonprofit organization serving the City of Ames (n=313)	72	28	2.3
I currently serve on a Board of Directors for a nonprofit organization serving the City of Ames (n=302)	88	12	1.7

Table 28 shows the demographic characteristics of the respondents who were likely to be involved in community activities.

- Older residents were more willing to provide financial assistance to nonprofit organizations and currently volunteer for a nonprofit organization serving the community. Likewise, older respondents (65-74 years of age) are more knowledgeable about the issues facing my community.
- Long-term residents are currently more willing to provide financial assistance to nonprofit organizations, currently volunteer for a nonprofit organization serving Ames, and more knowledgeable about the issues facing the community.
- Gender showed no significant difference on any of the six community involvement statements.
- Household income also showed four out of six significant differences on issues regarding community involvement among income levels.
 - Those with \$125,000 - \$199,999 income level indicated that “Issues facing the community care important to them” and they “are knowledgeable about the issues facing my community”
 - Those with income level of \$150,000 - \$199,999 levels are more “engaged in addressing the issues of the community,” and currently support nonprofit organization with financial contributions.
- Homeownership showed four out of six significant differences on issues regarding community involvement between the two groups (owner versus renter)
 - Owners were active in community matters compared to renters. Issues

facing the community are important to owners. They are more engaged in addressing the issues of their community, giving financial support to nonprofit organizations, and volunteering for a nonprofit organization serving Ames compared to renters.

- Residents living in the northwest part of the city reported being knowledgeable about issues facing the community.
- Whites compared to non-Whites viewed issues facing the community to be more important, more knowledgeable about the issues facing my community, and currently volunteer for a nonprofit organization serving Ames.

Table 28. Community Involvement by Demographic

	Age	Length of Residence	Gender	HH Income	Home ownership	Geographic Residence	Race
Issues facing my community are important to me (n=420)				\$125,000 - \$199,999	Owner		Whites
I am knowledgeable about the issues facing my community (n=420)	65-74	Long-term		\$125,000 - \$149,999			Whites
I am engaged in addressing the issues of my community (n=411)				\$150,000 - \$199,999	Owner		
I currently support a nonprofit organization with financial contributions. (n=405)	75+	Long-term		\$150,000 - \$199,999	Owner	NW	
I currently serve on a Board of Directors for a nonprofit organization serving the City of Ames (n=375)							
I currently volunteer for a nonprofit organization serving the City of Ames (n=386)	75+	Long-term			Owner		Whites

Sense of Belonging

The survey asked respondents to indicate their level of agreement with six statements regarding community integration and sense of belonging to the Ames community. Respondents were asked to respond to six statements were on a 5-point scale (1 – “strongly disagree,” 2 – “somewhat disagree,” 3 – “uncertain,” 4 – “somewhat agree,” 5 – “strongly agree”) as well as the option “don’t know.”

Table 29 shows that respondents feel that Ames has the attributes for community integration. Respect and a sense of belonging were felt by many of the respondents. Eighty-six percent of the respondents felt that they were treated with respect in Ames, followed by 80% feeling that they belong in this town. These numbers were much lower than in the previous survey but higher than in 2022 (2023 percentages: 95% respected, 92% belonging compared to 2022 percentages: 80% respected and 71% belong).

Most respondents indicated that they agree (somewhat to strongly) that Ames has the social infrastructure for community integration, such as:

- There are one or more organizations in this town where respondents feel they belong (73%),
- Ames has a strong commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (72%)
- Ames is a place where they could perform up to their full potential (72%)
- I feel valued as an individual in the Ames community (70%)

The percentage of people reporting positive feelings has dropped between 15% to 17% since the last survey. While the community still has high overall ratings, this might be an area for further study to understand if there are groups of citizens that are feeling a lack of community integration and belonging. This drop may be due to the increasingly polarized climate in the nation and state.

The average value shown in Table 29 ranges from 3.7 to 4.2, indicating that a majority of respondents agree that those integration/sense of belonging measures are present and/or being observed in the city.

Table 29. Community Integration and Sense of Belonging, 2024

Community Integration and Sense of Belonging Statements	Strongly disagree/ Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree/ Strongly Agree	Average
I am treated with respect at this town (n=349)	14	86	4.2
I feel I belong at this town (n=352)	20	80	4.0
I feel Ames is a place where I could perform up to my full potential (n=349)	28	72	3.9
Ames has a strong commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (n=330)	28	72	3.9
I have found one or more organizations in this town where I feel I belong (n=331)	27	73	3.9
I feel valued as an individual in the Ames community (n=335)	30	70	3.7

Table 30 shows that there are some differences in the integration/sense of belonging measures by demographic characteristics of the respondents.

Due to the small sample sizes of other races (Black, American Indian, Asian, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and other), these were grouped as non-white. Thus, race was analyzed as white versus non-white. The white respondents felt that they treated more respect at this town compared to non-whites.

Older residents felt Ames was a place where they could perform up to their full potential. In terms of homeownership, owners rated their sense of belonging in the city higher compared to renters in all of the six measures such as feeling of belongingness in this town; Ames having a strong commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion; being treated with respect at this town; feeling Ames as a place where they could perform up to their full potential; belonging at this town, and finding one or more organizations in town where they feel they belong.

Females felt positively on four issues out of six including “I feel valued as an individual,” “I feel I belong in this town,” “I could perform up to my full potential,” and “I found one or more organizations in this town where I feel I belong.”

Long-term residents who have stayed in Ames for more than 10 years, felt they belong in this town, think Ames has a strong commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and felt Ames is a place where they could perform up to their full potential.

Perception was the same regardless of geographic residences, and household income in all six measures.

Table 30. Community Integration and Sense of Belonging Demographic

	Age	Length of Residence	Gender	HH Income	Home ownership	Race	Geographic Residence
I feel valued as an individual in the Ames community (n=358)			Female		Owner		
I feel I belong in this town (n=374)		Long-term	Female		Owner		
Ames has a strong commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (n=361)		Long-term			Owner		
I am treated with respect at this town (n=374)					Owner	Whites	
I feel Ames is a place where I could perform up to my full potential (n=375)	Older	Long-term	Female		Owner		
I have found one or more organizations in this town where I feel I belong (n=360)			Female		Owner		

What could be done to enhance your sense of belonging as an Ames resident?

The survey asked respondents to answer the following open-ended question, “What, if anything, could be done to enhance your sense of belonging as an Ames resident?” Eighty-nine respondents (20%) provided answers to this question. The wording of the question on this year’s survey was personalized, asking about the reader’s sense of belonging rather than in general or universal terms.

There were a variety of responses. Twelve percent of respondents indicated that there is nothing that needs to be done to enhance their sense of belonging. Similarly, someone responded, “I’m old and disabled, not much!” A few people responded that it is not the City’s responsibility. The following quotes express this idea. “It’s up to each individual - you can’t do it for them.” “That is up to me and how much I get involved.”

Another group was “Unsure,” and their answers were less certain than the previous group. They seemed uncertain regarding what a City could offer them. “I do not know. I feel like I will always be an outsider.” “I am not sure.” “Don’t know.”

Additional respondents shared that they have a positive sense of belonging in Ames. “A beautiful perfect place to live.” “City is inclusive – nothing I could change.” “Having lived happily in Ames for over 50 years – I am very content.”

There were two groups of people that specifically called out this question regarding Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). One group would like to have more DEI programming and education, and the other group would prefer to have less DEI.

Five respondents said that they felt there is a need for more DEI programming within the city. Here are two examples: “Ames has a lot of close-minded people, which can sometimes negatively affect how the city is portrayed to outsiders. If the city had more inclusion initiatives, I feel that would be a major benefit.” “Educate people about Diversity, Equity, Inclusivity, and belonging.”

Opposing views were asking that the city get rid of DEI programming. Here are some of those responses. “Do away with all diversity, equity and inclusion references. City should keep out of all personal issues and preferences.” “I feel like the library has gone too far in this area. I feel uncomfortable when I visit.” “Stop DEI policies. Encourage the ‘golden rule.’” “Increase acceptance and commitment to conservative family values.”

There were several social themes that emerged. The strongest theme was around having more community activities and community engagement. Fourteen respondents provided comments that having more community events would enhance their sense of belonging. Here are a few specific comments around this topic.

- “More community engagement opportunities (or better advertisements of current ones).”
- “More community events in West Ames. Most events are focused in the downtown area, but West Ames tends to have little to no opportunities for community involvement (from what I know).”
- “More events towards getting to know your community.”
- “Online activities- due to disability, leaving my house is extremely difficult. I feel very isolated.”
- “Free or low-cost childcare for adult events.”

Several respondents shared their barriers to participation are based on geography (West Ames vs. Downtown Ames) and physical ability (in-person events vs. online events). Following this thread of social connectivity, there was a specific request to help young adults (non-students) and young professionals (aged 25-35) to find connections in Ames.

“I moved for work, and it’s been really hard to find ways and time to connect. Almost everything feels like it happens during work hour. I want to be a part of the Ames community and to belong here, but I really have no clue where to start.”

“I do not really know where to go to meet people post-graduation.”

“Programs to help young adults (not just college kids.) Young men are forgotten about unfortunately. Programs to make friends and relationships.”

“Highlight things non-ISU students/young professionals do/can participate in, in Ames.”

Further continuing the theme of social connection, eight respondents (9%), discussed the need for better integration between the Ames and ISU community integration.

“...having more items...off campus would be nice to include [young adults and students] more and get them more involved in the community and see what all Ames has to offer.”

“It would be nice to have a festival or event that brings the community together and helps residents get involved/create a sense of community pride.”

“More publicized campus events & opportunities that encourage participation by Ames residents.”

“Strengthen native/international relationships.”

Three comments suggested improving relationships with law enforcement. There were also four responses related to improved customer service for City departments and services.

- “City departments and services must be warm/welcoming.”
- “Improve the availability for City /council meeting minutes. Today 5-24, the most recent council minutes available online is April 23 - 1 month ago.”
- “Sincerity, honesty, efficacy, better management specific opportunities thru energizing social capital
- “Need to do some more to let people feel it instead used slogans.”

There were several people that provided specific actions to feel a great sense of belonging in the city. Here are some of the highlights from the diversity of other responses:

- Attract more technical industry. That is the reason I will ultimately have to leave Ames.
- Eliminate parking meters
- I like helping my neighbors, but some I do not know
- Lower meat prices
- Making more local friends
- You have too many shady "cliques" that seem to run the town. Realtors and property developers have too much power
- This is a difficult question to answer as a college student who is looking to move elsewhere post-grad.

To read the full comments, please see the appendix.

Figure 20. Suggestions for How the City of Ames Could Enhance Your Sense of Belonging



City of Ames Overall Service Quality

Every year, survey respondents are asked to give an overall evaluation of the quality of services that they receive from the City of Ames and are to provide any additional comments. This year, 42% of respondents claimed that services received were “Very Good” being a slight decrease from 2023, at 44%. With this slight decrease, the respondents for “Good” stayed the same from 2023 to 2024, staying at 54% for both years. With the “Very Good” and “Good” figures combined, a total of 96% of respondents were satisfied with Ames services (Figure 25).

Figure 25. Trends in Overall Satisfaction with City of Ames Service Quality (good/very good)



Best Thing About Living in Ames

In 2024, 278 survey responses continued to highlight many qualities that make Ames a great place to live, reinforcing its reputation as a welcoming and well-rounded community. Notable among the most frequently mentioned aspects were the sense of community, access to green spaces, safety, the presence of Iowa State University, the balance of small-town charm with big-city amenities, and others. For all responses, please refer to the appendix.

The people of Ames once again topped the list as the best thing about living in the city. Respondents described Ames as a close-knit, welcoming community where people care about one another. Many emphasized the friendly nature of the residents, good values, good City leadership, and safety in the community.

Comments included:

- “The community. As an international student, I feel very welcome, and I do not have to think twice before approaching someone for help.”
- “Our community is great. Good people, caring neighbors, good education, great healthcare.”
- “The quality of people that live here! And there is so much to do! Also, Ames is so clean and shows that residents take pride in the appearance of their homes.”
- “The city takes serving it's people seriously and strives to achieve the common good.”
- “The best thing to me is how much the city of Ames seems to actually care about improving residents' lives rather than being so focused on constant growth/attracting business like suburbs of Des Moines often are.”
- “Safe, nice size, good schools”

Respondents also mentioned the role of community events, recreational accessibility, and the strong local spirit as integral to making Ames feel at home.

Similarly, many commented on the city's size in relation to the amenities it provides. Respondents mention that Ames has the amenities of a large city while feeling like a small town. “It's a nice blend of bigger city services and amenities and small town know your neighbor friendliness.” Another says, “Small town feel with the good thing about a larger city - arts, entertainment, sports.” Many of these comments point to the university as being a perk in how the city can accomplish this duality. “Smaller size coupled with good retail. Probably due to the large student population.”

Green space and parks were frequently praised in the 2024 survey. Residents emphasized the beauty and accessibility of Ames' parks and trails, appreciating both the natural environment and opportunities for outdoor activities. “Ames has lots of green spaces, perfect for hiking or enjoying nature.” Another said, “The parks are wonderful for walks, and we love North River Valley Park.” The overall environment and access to nature were key factors in many people's enjoyment of the city.

Respondents highlighted the ability to access amenities without a car. Comments suggest that walking, biking, and using public transit is important and makes Ames a great place to live. “Living in Ames: ease of getting around.” Another comment said, “I love that I can bike to most places I regularly go. I love that I can drive to most places in 5-10 minutes.”

In addition to biking and walking, one said, “The city is actually rather walkable and has a decent public transportation system for the parts that aren’t.”

The presence of ISU remained a major draw for many. Respondents appreciated the cultural diversity, sports, and academic opportunities the university provides, as well as the vibrancy it adds to the community. “Living in a University town and all the functions that accompany an institution of higher learning” Another said, “ISU sports, activities at CY Stephens.”

Other comments pertaining to the best things about living in Ames include things to do, diversity, affordability, quietness, city atmosphere, the library, and water quality.

For additional and more specific comments, please see the appendix.

Figure 26. Best Things about Living in Ames



Other Issues the City Should Focus On

The survey asked respondents if there were other issues that the City should focus attention on. The question resulted in 119 responses. Figure 24 shows the visual presentation of the responses using a word cloud.

The most popular issue noted in the responses is the lack of recreation amenities, or how existing amenities need updating or refurbishing. Respondents are concerned with Ames having “fun things to do” in both summer and winter months, for all ages including children and adults. Comments included more community events, restaurants, quality of parks, and involving the university in recreation. “More community-based events. I know we have some already, but more is good.”

Another said “Updates and upgrades to city auditorium and theaters. The arts do not get enough. The current library and aquatic center are sufficient - we don't need additional of these.” Another common issue mentioned is street improvements, as expressed in this comment, “The main concern for me is the maintenance of roads and storm drains.” Respondents suggested more street resurfacing and better maintenance. Another respondent commented on the road work that has been done on Duff Ave concerning the addition of a bike lane, “removing the road diet. 24th and Hayes is a mess, 16th and Duff again a mess. I've never seen a bike north of 16th and Duff using the useless bike lane.”

Another issue mentioned in the comments was the lack of affordable housing and how it affects students. Several comments gave specifics about affordable housing for lower income, “I think something needs to be done about rent in town. The increases are starting to squeeze graduate students.” and “Off-campus rentals are high for students and lease agreements are very rigid.” Another respondent focused on entry level housing ownership as opposed to rental properties for students. “More affordable entry level houses.”

Other road-related issues mentioned include the need to improve infrastructure for bicycles and pedestrians. Many of these comments discuss the safety of those who choose not to travel by car, and how the status of the built environment is dangerous for them. “I worry a lot about pedestrian & bicyclist safety it is scary to cross certain intersections. Some intersections are scary for cars to use. I am recovering from a car accident.” Another noted how RAGBRAI altered the perception of walking and cycling, saying, “When RAGBRAI came to town in 2023, it was so easy to get around by bike. Cars were paying attention and deferring to bikers. Let's make this the norm!”

Public transportation is another topic that emerged from the responses. Several respondents are satisfied with the CyRide service, though many wish it was more robust. Improvements that could make it better include adding more routes, more sheltered bus stops, and a greater coverage area. One comment specified, “Regular mass transit commuter (e.g. train, bus) transportation to Ankeny/Des Moines.”

Several respondents raised concerns about traffic congestion and how the city is set up for difficult flow. One respondent said, “Traffic issues, putting commercial/retail south part of Ames was stupid, now everyone has to drive from West and North where you have put all of the apts.” Another commented on the poor timing of road construction saying, “Traffic congestion on busy streets - Duff and Lincoln Way. Save construction for summer when traffic is less.”

Many comments highlighted the need for improved human and social services in Ames. Topics ranged from homelessness to childcare. One said, “There have been more homeless people recently who could use support services.” Another said, “Homelessness and mental health crisis ... community outreach.” Concerning childcare, a respondent said, “More daycare. The waitlists are long and cause people to leave Ames.”

Another issue respondents highlighted was trash, litter, and recycling as an issue that the City needs to focus on. Many say recycling should be easier for residents in Ames. “Can we have pickup for recycled materials at our homes, so we do not have to drop off. Many smaller communities offer this service” and “Ease of recycling.” In addition to this, people noted problems with general trash as well. “Trash build up that happens at a lot of apartment complexes.” Another said, “Please pick up the trash around town.”

Another theme was a greater focus on inclusion for all age groups and residents. Topics highlighted general community inclusion and opportunities for different age groups, making all feel welcome in the community. Commenters mentioned, “inclusiveness of all identities in community improvement, policy making, and city program and events” and “programs for seniors - more in downtown.”

There were several other comments on various topics the City should focus its efforts. These include infrastructure amenities, more shopping, snow removal, attracting residents, better outreach/communication from the City, cutting costs, and beautification.

For additional and specific comments, see the appendix

Figure 27. Other Issues the City Should Focus On



Sustainability

This year the survey included as a section about respondents’ knowledge, views, and priorities regarding the city’s Climate Action Plan (CAP) and the City’s environmental sustainability actions and goals. Over the past five years, the City of Ames has been working to make the community more sustainable for future generations. First there was a data collection phase in which the City hired a firm to conduct a series of assessments on energy use and other baseline data. A CAP team was formed from citizens to represent and gather input from different groups across Ames. Then a CAP was created to develop climate actions steps that would move the community toward reduce carbon emissions and climate neutrality. The CAP was accepted by the Ames City Council in 2023.

To review the adopted plan or learn more visit the following websites: City of Ames Climate Action Plan website - <https://www.cityofames.org/living/sustainability-in-ames/climate-action-plan>

- *City of Ames Sustainability in Ames Website* - <https://www.cityofames.org/living/sustainability-in-ames>
- *Archive of Ames Climate Action Plan meetings and progress (2021-2023)* - <https://confluence.mysocialpinpoint.com/ames-climate-action-plan>

The first question in this section asked respondents if they were familiar with the City’s CAP. Of the 377 responses to this question, only 51 respondents (13.5%) responded that “Yes” they were familiar with the plan and 326 respondents (86.5%) responded “No,” they were not familiar with the CAP.

Next respondents were asked to select their top three climate action steps for Ames from a list of eight choices included an open-ended “Other” category. Most respondents agreed on the importance of two climate action priorities with “Waste-to-energy improvements/reducing waste emissions” receiving 247 responses (69.6%) and “Increase wind and solar generation as part of Ames Electric Services portfolio” receiving 245 responses (69.0%). (Table 31)

Table 31. Top Climate Action Steps for Ames, 2024

(n=355)	Number of Responses	Percent
Increase wind and solar generation as part of Electric Services renewable energy portfolio	245	69.0%
Waste-to-energy improvements/reducing waste emissions	247	69.6%
Net zero and net zero-ready (NZR) new construction	120	33.8%
Retrofitting existing buildings	144	40.6%
Retrofit municipal/City buildings	84	23.7%
Electrify the municipal fleet (non CyRide)	63	17.7%
Create a Mayor’s climate action plan leadership task force	52	14.6%
Other	37	10.4%

The next group of priorities did not receive as much consensus. Most people felt the City should prioritize retrofitting existing buildings (40.6%); followed by net zero and net-zero (NZR) new construction (33.8%); and then, retrofit municipal/City buildings (23.7%). Other climate action steps include electrifying the municipal fleet (non CyRide) (17.7%); and creating a Mayor’s climate action plan leadership task force (14.6%). Additionally, 37 respondents provided other open-ended responses.

The “Other” important climate actions had several themes as well as several individual suggestions. The biggest theme that emerged was around a robust City recycling program, 14 of the 37 (38%) open-ended responses were specifically around this issue. Here are examples of the comments:

- “Better recycling options for residents - homes and apartments, low or no cost”
- “Citywide recycling”
- “Making recycling that is actually useful, publicized & convenient”
- “Benefit from community members experience increase options, particularly utilizing recycled material”
- “We should have a recycle bin provided by the city”

Another group of comments were focused on expressing negative views toward the Climate Action Plan or concerns about the costs of these activities. There were 10 responses. These comments included, “do not use any funds for this,” “this is a wasteful use of money,” “Last thing we need!” “You will do all the above then raise our taxes again,” “none- humans have little to no effect on the climate,” and “none, spend that money on better streets or community events.”

The remainder of the “other” comments were individual suggestions, a complete list of all the comments can be found in the appendix. Several were related to biking infrastructure, community power sources and electric services, planting trees and community gardening, and flood prevention and mitigation.

The last question in this section of the survey asked respondents to identify one thing that was the biggest reason to commit to environmental sustainability. Four answers were provided as well as a fifth “Other” open-ended response. Table 32 summarizes the survey results.

Most people (57%) chose providing a sustainable environment for future generations as their biggest reason for having a commitment for environmental sustainability. Thirty people (8%) indicated that environmental sustainability was not important to them. The “Other” comments were mainly divided mainly between three types of comments: a) responses in which respondents further defined their personal motivation for sustainability; b) remarks that expressed concern or skepticism over the focus on sustainability; and c) general comments.

Table 32. Biggest Reason to Commit to Environmental Sustainability, 2024

(n=3638)	Number of Responses	Percent
To provide a sustainable environment for future generations	210	57%
For a better quality of life	78	21%
To stabilize or reduce the cost of food and utilities, etc.	36	10%
Environmental sustainability isn't important to me	30	8%
Other	14	4%

Among those with additional personal motivations there were two respondents who shared that they would like to see a commitment statement that was broader than just humans including protecting and preserving plants, animals, nature, and natural resources. A third person felt that all three of the provided options were important reasons for committing to sustainability. Another person commented, “It is a balance of everyone doing their part to avoid climate change, and increased reliance on domestic energy sourcing.

There were a group of respondents that shared skepticism about the need (continue status quo) and the cost of sustainability initiatives. “Whenever I hear the word ‘sustainability,’ I think of government overreach into citizen's lives and spending money on things that will only die out in the future. The US cannot be the only country to cut off the use of fossil fuels and remain competitive in the world.” Also, along those lines, “There are plenty of laws, rules, and regulations in place to protect the environment. The use of fossil fuels and natural gas should be increased to lower the cost of living for all Ames residents.” Another felt that “We are doing a good enough job as it is. The culprits are Asia and South America.” Another respondent shared that we should proceed with caution, “We need to be very selective in the sustainability projects we choose to move forward with... the investments need to be justified to ensure we are spending taxpayer (or rate payer, or renter, or building purchaser) money on things that add the most value.”

Additional “Other” comments were pointed towards the City challenging sustainability actions. One respondent shared that, “being specific and to the point! not vague but quantifiable deliverables! Less pretending!” Someone else shared the concern, “You don’t recycle.” Another shared their frustrations with, “Making people living here drive to wherever they need to go is not a commitment to any kind of environmental sustainability. How is the city of Ames going to reduce the cost of food??”

General/Additional Comments

Respondents were asked to provide any additional comments that they wished to share. A total of 83 respondents answered this question. Comments revolved around positive comments, infrastructure issues, suggested improvements, services sought, management and survey comments. (Figure 28)

Lots of comments were positive. Many people commented that Ames is a great city. Examples of the positive comments include:

- Ames is an amazing city.
- We absolutely love Ames, IA.
- Ames has been a great place to grow old.
- I have always felt fortunate that Ames was my hometown, and I still value it as a retiree.
- Ames is a safe place.
- Appreciate the city councils' efforts and everyone who helps makes this a good place to live, work, and play. I do have concerns about the huge property assessment increases.
- Haven't had very many issues with the City of Ames and glad to know that they like to take care of their residents and value their opinions.
- I really like the farmer's market that is every Saturday in the summer. I also really appreciate the little booklet that the city sent out, Ames Insider. There were many things I did not know, and it was nice to learn about all year long events and businesses.
- Thank you for maintaining such a great public park system, water treatment, public transportation network, and other aspects fostering community in Ames. From what I've seen and heard, the Ames police department has made progress in areas that most police departments in the state have not, and I appreciate that.
- We came home because I became disabled. My family in Des Moines, but we chose Ames because we loved it when we lived here before.

In terms of improvements, the following issues were suggested:

- Allow house owners to have input into the maintenance and beautification of nearby common areas, especially areas close to their own house.
- Needs to do a much better job at inspection of new houses, as too many need repairs or replaced far too soon.
- My only negative comment for Ames is the condition of some of the houses on Duff. It is a busy main road that people come into town on, and it gives a negative image on the quality of homes. They should have to at least clean up the outside.
- The government can introduce some policies for companies to settle or invest in Ames to promote population growth and economic development.
- A dog park on the North side of town. Cross walk signs on streets in Somerset.
- Ames needs to expand business and restaurants in the growing Northwest area.
- More restaurants and shops that are close to where I live.
- Shopping in the NW section is lacking, A Ross or Dillard's would keep us shopping in Ames. We currently drive to Des Moines and Jordan Creek due to lack of variety here. Old Navy and Maurices are low quality, and I do not like to waste my money there.... Kohls is never stocked or JC Penny... JC Penny is at least of high quality but no kids' clothes variety. We need another Youngers type of store... tired of relying on online or Des Moines.

- Develop west Ames more, there is enough in the eastern half of Ames.
- Construction road directions in Ames are awful! I am surprised there has not been a serious accident from someone misunderstanding where to go when routes changed for construction.
- CyTown will be an interesting challenge. Continue to carefully monitor developers - especially those from outside Ames who won't have to live with their mistakes. So glad the E 13th mall was stopped. Did not see anything about city forester but appreciate all she does to get more trees planted around town
- Please make Ames more bike and pedestrian friendly. Stop signs (4 way) needed at Stange & Northridge Parkway (very dangerous intersection) for cars & pedestrians. Outdoor water fountains in parks are only "on" for 6 months of year or less. Minneapolis and St Paul has fountains that are year-round, why can't we? Invest in city center, less in city spread. Can't we have one 400-meter walk/run path open to all residents?
- Dog Park in Central Ames. Invest in Central Ames.

The following services were also mentioned by the respondents.

- Mental health outdoor facility is needed in the community center where patients can meet. Have needed staff to help with meds. They did away with these services.
- I do like the addition of mental health help with the police.
- I have only one concern. Your people that remove snow get way to close to curb. I have seen "hunks" of cement that has been broken because of this.
- Would like additional drop off recycling for all plastics. Signage says only milk and water bottles. #1's Aspen Waste Recycling takes all plastics # 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, & 6.
- I think the Schainker Plaza being constructed will be a magnet for homeless people to set up tents and live there, so I think it is a huge mistake and a waste of property tax dollars.
- Our largest employer ISU is losing faculty and staff because of the decline of Ames school system. What was once a "highly rated school district" is now average at best (Ames middle school is rated 4/10 on great schools). You will chase away families if you continue prioritizing activism over learning and safety. Childcare and property taxes are too high for the ROI which continues to lessen. Do not turn the town into only students and singles as families will flock to Gilbert or away from the area.
- We need a new animal shelter. We need to upgrade Resource Recovery to continue to keep as much out of the ground as possible.
- In terms of communication, a respondent commented this: "The city could do better with social media communication after disasters. After both derecho and neighborhood mini derecho, people had questions related to power/cleanup that were not being addressed on social media. Example: After neighborhood mini derecho there were questions to city pickup of branches. The city did not meet the open policy timeline for indicating whether city pickup would occur, very frustrating for people to know what to do. Other times during power outages, information not provided quickly or kept updated."

Several respondents were very appreciative of the yearly survey like this. These are some of the comments: "Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback as a resident, and thank you for considering these responses", and "Thank you for seeking out opinions, I've never heard of any other city I've lived in doing this."

For other details on the additional comments, see appendix.

Figure 28. Additional Comments



APPENDIX 2024

Comments on Priorities for On-Going Services

- Unsure
 - Cannot answer as I have no idea.
 - Do not know enough to complete this section.
 - I do not know, I have only been here a few months.
 - I do not feel like I know enough about each of these line items to give you feedback on how to change the budget.
 - I have no idea.
 - I have no idea how to respond to the list. I need to know more than the amount, particularly how each service uses the amount they receive. Do they think the amount is adequate or does the amount impede them in carrying out new services.
 - I really have no idea??
 - I would need to see a couple decades of data/records to comment on this topic in a meaningful way.
 - Not a fair question.
 - Not sure of current needs or any short falls of each so not responding
 - This is beyond my scope. I have no opinion. If what is there is working, then keep at it.
- Improve City Services/Infrastructure
 - Desperately need a resource officer in Ames High and Ames Middle School!!! I know this is a school board decision though.
 - I feel like more money should be funneled into making infrastructure and places that are human-centered, and that people want to go to without the need for cars. The bike systems in Ames are okay, but there are places where grocery stores, spots to eat out, etc. are still decently far for someone who doesn't have a car. There are also not enough spaces other than bars for young adults to spend time and get to know people and their community.
 - I like the idea of the ice rink downtown. However, I don't think our changing climate will allow enough usage days to justify the installation expense and maintenance costs.
 - I think providing more funding for the animal shelter can help with the influx seen from pets surrendered or abandoned from students moving out of Ames.
 - I would like to see a bike trail that connects SE 16th to Lincoln Way or a sidewalk on Dayton from SE 16th to Lincoln Way.
 - I'm not sure where roads are but I assumed it was part of amenities or land use, but I think plowing/snow management could be better/funded more.
 - More electric buses and better electric charging infrastructure would be ideal, wherever that money comes from. Might be good to invest in energy storage mediums as well. It seems like the animal shelter here is underfunded.
 - Need more tennis courts, badminton courts.
 - Recycling is a very important topic.
 - The upkeep of sidewalks, hire more landscapers, gardeners, etc., more food banks for people in need.
 - Trail systems could be improved and expanded.

- Satisfied
 - Good.
 - I trust the judgement of others in the know.
 - If that's what it takes!
 - The city has a better overall picture of the need and wants of the citizens of Ames.
- Improve Social Services
 - I'd like more funding to go into community outreach and services for those in need. Programs that provide basic job skills, teach people how to use CyRide, etc. Also, more funding should be given to programs who care for people living with disabilities.
 - Is the animal shelter getting a new facility? I heard once they were, and they could use more space.
- Reallocation of Spending
 - Wow I didn't know the police had such a high budget. Maybe if other depts. got their funds, it would reduce the stress on them.
 - You spend more on the library than animal control and safety?
- Allocate Funds Based on Use
 - Ames Public Library budget is the 3rd largest tax funded, next to the fire and police. What % of the population uses it?? More people use the park system! Is the animal shelter getting a new facility? I heard once they were, and they could use more space.
 - I would always support giving more to the library but know budgets have to balance. Do not know enough about what other groups might be missing and need more (or less).

Comments on Funding Allocation to Programs and Services

- Unsure
 - Cannot answer as I have no idea.
 - Do not know enough to complete this section.
 - I do not know. I have only been here a few months.
 - I do not comment on these and have not needed them.
 - I do not feel like I know enough about each of these line items to give you feedback on how to change the budget.
 - I have no idea.
 - I have no idea how to respond to the list. I need to know more than the amount, particularly how each service uses the amount they receive. Do they think the amount is adequate or does the amount impede them in carrying out new services.
 - I have no idea!
 - I really have no idea??
 - Not a fair question. I'd like (it) to get better yet not with this kind of event.
 - Not sure of current needs or any short falls of each so not responding.
 - The city has a better overall picture of the need and wants of the citizens of Ames.
 - This is beyond my scope. I have no opinion. If what is there is working, then keep at it.
- Improve City Services
 - I like the idea of the ice rink downtown. However, I don't think our changing climate will allow enough usage days to justify the installation expense and maintenance costs.
 - Is the animal shelter getting a new facility? I heard once they were, and they could use more space.
 - Need more tennis courts, badminton courts.
 - Recycling is a very important topic.
 - The upkeep of sidewalks, hire more landscapers, gardeners, etc. More food banks for people in need.
- Spend More
 - I would always support giving more to the library but know budgets must balance. Do not know enough about what other groups might be missing and need more (or less).
 - I would like to see a bike trail that connects SE 16th to Lincoln Way or a side sidewalk on Dayton from SE 16th to Lincoln Way.
 - More electric buses and better electric charging infrastructure would be ideal, wherever that money comes from. Might be good to invest in energy storage mediums as well. It seems like the animal shelter here is underfunded.
 - Trail systems could be improved and expanded.
- Reallocation of Spending
 - Charge Iowa State a larger fee to cover the costs of maintaining the city. The City of Ames is dependent on the University so the University should really pitch in to make the city the best it can be.
 - I feel like more money should be funneled into making infrastructure and places that are human-centered, and that people want to go to without the need for cars. The bike systems in Ames are okay, but there are places where grocery stores, spots to eat out, etc. are still decently far for someone who doesn't have a car. There are also not enough spaces other than bars for young adults to spend time and get to know people and their community.
 - I'm not sure where roads are but I assumed it was part of amenities or land use, but I think plowing/snow mgmt. could be better/funded more.

- Wow I didn't know the police had such a high budget. Maybe if other depts. got their funds, it would reduce the stress on them.
- Spending Transparency
 - Ames Public Library budget is the 3rd largest tax funded, next to the fire and police. What % of the population uses it? More people use the parks system!
 - I would need to see a couple decades of data/records to comment on this topic in a meaningful way.
 - You spend more on the library than animal control and safety?
- Satisfied
 - Good.
 - I trust the judgement of others in the know.
 - If that's what it takes!
- Improve Social Services
 - Desperately need resource officers in Ames High and Ames Middle School!!! I know this is a school board decision though.
 - I think providing more funding for the animal shelter can help with the influx seen from pets surrendered or abandoned from students moving out of Ames.
 - I'd like more funding to go into community outreach and services for those in need. Programs that provide basic job skills, teach people how to use CyRide, etc. Also, more funding should be given to programs who care for people living with disabilities.
- Spend Less
 - Do not waste taxpayer funds on street diet.

Comments on City of Ames Services

- Satisfied
 - All is well.
 - I am excited that the City of Ames is hiring a full-time Sustainability Coordinator!
 - I like Ames. I feel like they run the city well. Everything here is well structured and organized.
 - Overall, I think these services make Ames a good place to live and think city employees should be appreciated.
 - Resource Recovery is a hidden gem!
 - See Click Fix appt is great. Ames departments do a fine job.
 - We have great water, and the electric services are great. Ames does a pretty good job providing these to the citizens of Ames.
 - Well done.
- Police
 - Ames police are most friendly in day-to-day interactions (police used to be much more personable over the years).
 - The city should implement PulsePoint to improve medical response times. I think CyRide could look to Chicago as a city that does bussing well.
 - More police to enforce headlights on one hour before sundown and one hour after sunrise. And fire any officer in a city vehicle not abiding the law.
 - More police patrols on 4th of July to keep fireworks from going off.
- Unsatisfied
 - It seems like major projects such as the indoor aquatic center and the line project take longer to complete than necessary.
 - Upkeep at Inis Grove has been poor as far as garbage and trash at the park! Having the bathroom burnt out from fire for a year was a real eyesore! More traffic, you need more policing and clean-up. People are over there way past closing.
 - Very concerned about policy and how it will be enforced and impact on some residents. Feels elitist.
- Nuisance Enforcement
 - I had a problem with someone complaining about my wind chimes. Then she posted signs complaining about us. I was told they couldn't do anything.
 - Suggest stopping "No-mow May." Yards are unkempt, weedy, and it serves no pollination purpose. Also, too many barking dogs in neighborhoods.
 - Train horns are ongoing.
- CyRide
 - Bus services are too concentrated on the University ISU.
 - I'd like to see more CyRide bus stops in west Ames residential areas.
- Beautification
 - City can improve by taking better care of trees, introducing new varieties of vegetation, and increasing number of trees.
 - Street repairs in my neighborhood are underway, thankfully. We appreciate all the repairs around town.

- Trash
 - If anything, look at implementing more sidewalks for the west end of West Ames. Also, picking up trash.
- Water
 - Increasing sewer rates may not be fair because some houses use water only for watering vegetation or garden which do not increase sewer cost.
- Library
 - Ames has an outstanding public library.
- Parks
 - Wish for more bike trails for long distance riding along green belt area. Wish for a steam room like Beyer Hall had.

Comments on Police Department Activities

- Satisfied
 - Ames is a safe place to live in partly due to our police dept.
 - I am a white person - my interactions have been positive. I hope that is true for our black and brown friends and neighbors.
 - I have positive feelings about the Ames PD.
 - I mentioned a bicycle that was down in the woods behind Ames high Stadium bleachers and received good service.
 - I work at Food at First and have several occasions to see the quick and appropriate response to difficult clients on our property.
 - In general, I think they do a fine job.
 - I live south of campus and really appreciate the extra effort to enforce parking regulations. The one time we had a drunk student trying to enter our home, police were prompt and efficient. Always surprised that animal control is part of law enforcement.
 - Not sure. I have had several interactions with the department over the last 15 years I've been in town. Situations have always been fair and professional.
 - Ok - not friendly but do their jobs.
 - Only one contact and he was very polite and helpful.
 - Our police dept. seems to be doing good enforcement. I like their Facebook posts.
 - Overall, my interactions with the Ames Police Dept. have been very positive.
 - Thank you for everything you do.
 - They seem to be doing a fine job.
 - They seem to be doing a good job.
 - Very favorable.
 - Very professional every time I interact with them.
- Enforce Traffic Violation
 - I do see some people get pulled over, but not as frequently as they should. Some of the drivers on Duff can be ridiculous (I almost watched someone get run over since the car turning didn't yield to pedestrians).
 - I mostly commute by bike. I see countless motorists on their cell phones while driving. Makes me feel unsafe. Please enforce texting while driving laws.
 - I see people run red lights every day.
 - We live on Dawes Drive and our road is a racetrack. Lots of speeding on Hwy 69, but Dawes is dangerous with the pedestrian traffic. Hwy 69 by Ada Hayden is especially bad with motorcycles speeding out of town.
 - Speeders and cars with broken mufflers on Lincoln Way between Beedle and Dakota make noise all day and night.
 - Stop spending your valuable time and effort on people going 5 over. It's not hurting anyone.
 - Texting while driving and when stopped at red lights seems to be the #1 problem in Ames. Wish you could enforce that law.
 - They need much more traffic control.
 - Way too many drivers that drive down Lincoln Way and other heavily traveled roads make conditions unsafe for pedestrians. Definitely an area to monitor continuously if resources are available.
 - What does it take to get a speeding ticket? I've been passed by kids going (illegible) in a school zone in front of a cop & the cop just sits there.

- Would love to see more hands-on enforcement of distracted driving in this town which is atrocious. I've even seen CyRide drivers on their phones while the bus is at a red light. Let's crack down on distracted driving before we see major injuries or worse with this dangerous practice which needs shut down.
- More Outreach
 - Building engagement with community to avoid an us vs them culture. Especially with kids and younger adults. I have always considered police officers to be people who are there to help all of us.
 - Didn't even know outreach events were going on.
 - Greater emphasis on serving the community.
 - I think I would like to see the police being part of the community more & taking steps to engage in programs/services that benefit at risk populations before emergency situations arise.
 - It would be nice to know the police force in Ames better. I feel that there is a disconnect between the police and the people of Ames.
 - More contact & the police have been misused. I understand their work is well in place.
- Excellent
 - Excellent department. Very professional. Need to increase budget to be sure officer retention is maintained. Can always use more monies for equipment and training.
 - Good department.
 - I think you are doing great! I think it is a shame the school district discontinued their contract with SROS.
 - Love them!
 - They do a fantastic job.
- More Education
 - Education and partnership with community Police are needing to go the extra mile and learn when/ how to use their authority. Make sure they know the laws.
 - I think the police department needs to focus on intrinsic improvement before they can better serve the community.
 - Implementation of comprehensive de-escalation training programs for law enforcement personnel, emphasizing social awareness and cultural sensitivity to prevent situations from escalating unnecessarily. Prioritization of community policing, strategies aimed at building trust and mutual respect between law enforcement agencies and civilians, particularly in diverse or racially sensitive areas. Establishment of accountability measures and transparent reporting systems to address instances of police misconduct and ensure that all civilians are treated with dignity and respect regardless of their background.
- Little Interaction
 - I have nearly never seen a police person in any neighborhood in which I have lived.
 - I have not had any interactions with Ames police.
 - N/A have not met or been stopped by one.
- More Mental Health Services
 - Investing in mental health/ comm. resources instead of funding the police more.
 - Mental health services and outreach. Wellness checks.
 - More importantly, mental health officers who can help get people out of a bad place.

- Less Public Intoxication
 - If students are walking home and NOT being a nuisance, a public intoxication is not ideal, especially when the alternative could be to driving drunk.
 - Obviously, we are a college town and there will be underage drinkers. However, everyone has done it and I believe they can be more laid back unless actions need to be taken.
 - Too much petty alcohol arrests (does not include drunk driving).
- Unsatisfied
 - ACAB
 - I feel we are a safe city.
- Concerned with Safety
 - I am most concerned about violence prevention and safety for our community.
 - Lots of domestic issues not taken seriously.
- Parking
 - I wish there was less emphasis on if your parking meter ran out 5 mins ago, and more time spent ticketing people who park in no parking side or res. street (narrow) and make driving down the street challenging.
 - Parking regulations-just stop the overthinking and please remove meters downtown! Return to Ames H.S. and M.S. as outreach. Remove parking meters and reassign meter staff to save money.
- Need Police at School
 - As an employee of ACSD, lack of police presence on grounds is a growing issue; as evident in the amount of incidents and calls in the past year.
 - It would be a good thing to have a police presence in the high school.
- Good Outreach
 - Ames Police Facebook page is a great place for community safety updates!
- Drug Control
 - Drug control.

Comments on Fire Department

- No Experience
 - Fortunately, I had no need for fire dept. service. Glad to know they are available though, thanks!
 - Fortunately, we have not needed these services.
 - Fortunately, have not had to use them.
 - Fortunately, I have not needed the fire dept.
 - Glad I do not know.
 - Have never needed fire dept.
 - Have never needed to call the fire dept. (yet).
 - Have not had to use the Fire department and hope that I never do.
 - Have not needed it.
 - I am glad it is there, and I am glad I haven't had to use it.
 - I feel like I mostly see firefighters when they're responding to something, but I don't think that is really a problem since that's their job.
 - I have never needed them for anything yet.
 - I have never needed the fire department, but I know several fire fighters and know that our community is in good hands.
 - I have not had to use them, Thank God.
 - I've never had to use this before.
 - Luckily, we have not needed their services.
 - My very limited experience from past years, facility is great. I hate metered parking. Location is just far enough away it's hard to make it there
 - Never had the chance or need to call them.
 - Never had to deal with them outside of inspections.
 - Never had to use Fire Dept or EMT.
 - Never have used.
 - Seem good- just have not "needed".
 - Thankfully haven't needed their assistance. No complaints. Keep doing what you're doing.
- Satisfied
 - Although I have not had to use this resource, I think they do a good job in our community.
 - I am very satisfied with all aspects of the fire staff, etc.
 - Fortunately, we only experienced one small fire in all these years. The response was quick and handled well- thankfully.
 - I appreciate it when the fire department comes to campus and teaches PASS.
 - Keep doing what you're doing.
 - Keep up the good work.
 - Our fire dept seems good. I see lots of community activities at our neighborhood fire station.
 - Our only interaction with the fire department was positive. Our neighbor improperly called us in for a small campfire. We were complying and had a great conversation with the fire department team.
 - There was a fire at my complex last year and the only damage was the laundry room; they responded/acted quickly to minimize the damage. They've also been quick to the scene with false alarms, but they still go and check everything out, which I appreciate; you can never be too careful even with false alarms.
 - They seem to do their job as Ames has not burnt to the ground yet.

- Very quick and professional when medical help is needed.
- Well run department. Could always use more monies for training and equipment.
- Great
 - Great fire department.
 - Great!
 - I heard they are good.
 - I interacted with the fire dept when I was a county house director, and they were great.
 - I just know how fast the fire department gets to places when the alarm goes off.
 - Love those brave men and women!
 - Proud of them!
 - They are always kind even when they are in a high stress situation.
 - We had a pipe burst and the fire department responded promptly even though it was a late night. I appreciate that.
- No Visibility
 - Don't hear or read anything about this fire department. It does come to our block party.
 - Have not heard anything about the fire department in terms of community outreach.
 - I love Ames Fire Department; but Gilbert could give you more ideas for community outreach.
 - We do prescribe burning and I wish it was easier to inform the fire department. Filing a permit yearly once the fire department has been out once seeming unnecessary. Permitting the process takes too long when burning is so weather dependent.
 - Would love to hear about community outreach.
- North Ames Needs Station
 - Love fire prevention day. Not enough information to judge response times. Would seem like Northridge and West Ames at Sunset Ridge could use stations, Advanced life-support response time to these areas would seem slow, the city should implement PulsePoint to improve medical response time.
 - North Ames needs a fire department. I heard from department that response is too long.
 - This city is greatly expanding west and north. We need another fire station in Sunset Ridge. Northridge could greatly benefit from a station out there. EMS takes forever to get to West Ames. To my residence, it's nearly a 5-mile trip for MGMC EMS and a two-mile trip for station #2 to get here. The EMS ambulances are only dispersed in this community for special events and in those times ALS response to west Ames is reduced by almost half, but again, it is only during Special Olympics, RAGBRAI, etc. Otherwise, the EMS ALS units are centralized downtown which makes sense for hospital transfers, etc. and 911 coverage for central and east Ames/east Story County. Dispatch here needs to be utilizing citizen and professional responders with Pulse Point, as they're doing in WESTCOM. Communities who've implemented Pulse Point have seen a drastic reduction in SCA collapse victims receiving CPR and AED application in a fraction of the time it takes professionals to arrive and begin care. QA/QI from medical direction should be involved in every cardiac arrest call involving AED use from Ames Fire, Ames PD, ISU PD, City of Ames Electrical Services trucks, etc. This is what is done in Rochester, MN and the early defibrillation program has received national awards. Ames is a wonderful and progressive community. Let's improve/overhaul the response model here so we set a leadership/model example for every other community to follow!
- Positive Outreach Experience
 - We appreciate the fire station open houses!
 - We love the yearly open house.
- Fast Response

- Showed up promptly when needed at a car accident I was in.
- They responded quickly to my emergency and very nice guys.
- Need Faster Response
 - Emergency response time could be quicker.
- Unsatisfied
 - One time, a bird got stuck in the perch and we couldn't access it to set it free. We called them, but they didn't come to help.

Comments on City Electric Service

- Satisfactory
 - Does a great job.
 - Excellent.
 - Fine. Communicate through social media well.
 - Good job (2x)
 - Overall outstanding and really appreciate all the LED streetlights installed as well as the use of wind power for at least 10% of our energy. Kudos!
 - Satisfied.
 - The service is amazing
 - They are good.
 - Very good! (2x)
 - We are fortunate to have the electrical services we have in Ames. They are quick to get electricity back online.
 - Well done - no complaints.
- Expensive
 - Expensive.
 - Focus on natural gas, it is cheap and reliable.
 - If the cost is low enough, I can consider solar service. (significantly low)
 - Interested in solar panels but the company who came out wanted \$40,000.
 - My power bill continues to be inordinately high. Not sure why as I am very mindful of my usage.
 - We are too old for it to be affordable.
 - We signed on when it was \$350 a panel.
 - What is the monthly discount? Electric rates - rates are related to market demands so they are what they are.
- Negative SunSmart
 - As a participant, we find the return on investment quite low. We now consider it a donation to support sustainable power for the community.
 - I am 82, I see no advantage in this.
 - I am not aware it's been in this city a short time.
 - SunSmart is more a donation than investment
 - The return on investment is too small.
 - We live in the woods - no sunshine due to the canopy of the trees.
- Positive SunSmart
 - It may not be expensive for many families, but we have 4 kids, so our budget is pretty tight. We do support the solar farm initiative, though.
 - It seems like a cool idea, hope it goes somewhere!
 - Sounds like a good program if you plan on being a permanent resident.
 - Sounds like an awesome Idea!!!
 - The City of Ames Electrical Services should purchase more renewable energy and explore partnerships with other area large organizations. Also, I would like more information shared about its role as a waste management system for multiple area communities.
- Need Shorter Terms
 - If I could participate in the "Power Pack" for a shorter time (5 yrs say) I would definitely do so.

- Offer a shorter term.
- Want More Available Information
 - I do not think I have ever been notified about outages. I always have to look it up. It would be nice to get text updates. But power seems to be restored very quickly.
 - I wish you offered a web portal to monitor usage in real time.
- Poor Reliability
 - 54% reliability? Ridiculous! Quit throwing money at that dinosaur!
- Very Reliable
 - Ames electric is very reliable. Thank you! The \$5 monthly credit for prime time is relatively small but better than nothing.

Comments on Drinking Water Service

- Great Water
 - Amazing.
 - Ames drinking water is excellent.
 - Ames drinking water is noticeably much better than it is in Iowa City, Des Moines, and Cedar Rapids. Thank you for keeping it that way!
 - Ames has excellent water quality and taste.
 - Ames water is the best tasting water and one of the main reasons we hesitate to move away.
 - Ames water is the best!
 - Ames water is the greatest.
 - Ames water is top notch!
 - Best drinking water.
 - Best drinking water in America.
 - Best in the world!!
 - Drinking water is very good
 - Excellent (5x)
 - Good (4x)
 - Great tasting water - keep it up!
 - Great! I love the tours they hold.
 - I am very happy with Ames Water Service.
 - I have never had an issue with our water. We still use a Brita Filter to drink either way, but nothing is covered in iron.
 - I love Ames's water! It tastes so good right from the tap. We are so lucky. Thank you!
 - I recently moved here from Fort Dodge. Ames's water tastes amazing, and I can drink it from the tap. In FD I hated to even brush my teeth with the water.
 - I think Ames has the best drinking water I have had.
 - Love Ames drinking water.
 - Love it!
 - Love the water here! Have noticed it is slightly harder than last year and has more build up.
 - My curly hair loves Ames's water.
 - Our water is excellent.
 - Perfect
 - The quality of the drinking water in Ames is excellent.
 - The water tastes very good.
 - Very good.
 - Very good
 - Very happy with the water in Ames. Appreciate the city "partially" softening the water so a home water softener is not required.
 - Water is clean and fresh.
 - Water tasted very good, and we feel it is safe to drink but we prefer softer water so have a water conditioning system.
 - We have great drinking water.
- Could be Better
 - 1-2 times per month I experience a "belch" and black sediment. I don't know if it is a Green Hills issue or an Ames issue. Maintenance thinks it's an Ames issue.

- Constant problems with scale, but probably an in-home issue.
- I do not drink a lot of Ames water. The water I do drink makes my mouth dry. The water also makes my skin very dry. Better water pressure is needed!
- I have never drunk water in Ames. Gastroenterologist advised I don't - huge levels of some chemicals, farm chemicals, and forever chemicals.
- I've noticed flakes of rust in my water or the water quality tasting "off." I've also seen the pressure isn't the best.
- It tastes like Clorox
- Need to address PFAS contaminates
- Okay as it should be with new plant.
- Sure, wish we could rid of the rust problems.
- Tastes good. Some minerals are left when evaporated so it may be hard.
- The only time our water changes is when the city is working nearby.
- The quality of the drinking water has become noticeably worse over the last year.
- The water is harder than soft. Some taps I have seen have some sort of layer at the mouth. I have a fish tank, and as the water goes down in the tank, you get a solid layer of a hard substance, on the tank's cover/lid and on the glass. Also, after washing the dishes, either by hand or dishwasher I always see white water marks, especially in pots and Tupperware.
- The water pressure is extremely low here.
- This question is better phrased as a matter of frequency than specific times. My water is cloudy sometimes & I used a Brita filter as my water is too hard & I'm not overly fond of the taste.
- Water is not the same as in the past! Not drinkable!
- Water often tastes strongly of chlorine, especially if drinking warm water.
- Use Filtration System
 - I buy bottled water for drinking.
 - I have a Moen Flo smart water monitor, and it constantly reports over pressurization. I have called the water department multiple times, but they refuse to do anything.
 - I rent a water softer to be rid of this. Without it, there was a lot of rust.
 - I use a pitcher with a filter for my water, then it tastes great.
 - I use a filtered head for my shower and filter my water before drinking it or use it for cooking.
 - We have a water softener.
 - We have in house softener.
- More Information
 - Terrible, absence of information
 - We needed to put a whole house filter on due to sediment in the water clogging up our faucets.

Comments on Water and Pollution Control

- Satisfied
 - Good (2x)
 - No noticeable issues here.
 - No problem.
 - Seems to work very well.
 - Water is great (2x)
- High Water Rates
 - All rates are high compared to a household (home) of 3. vs. 1 bed apartment.
 - Because we have a corner lot our bill is quite high.
 - Too expensive water - low quality.
 - Try to keep rates low. Sneaking up.
 - Water rates, quality and sewer rates are part of living in a community. We trust the community to do their best for its citizens.
- Poor Water Quality
 - I am concerned about the quality of water in Ames. Can they put suggested filters on their website? Do we need additional filters to eliminate forever chemicals/ particles?
 - I think we should not only ensure the quality of the water, but also check whether the water pipe materials meet health standards. Such as the content and release of heavy metals.
- Poor Stormwater Drainage
 - It's a low area and it floods during big rain falls so it's just part of living here.
 - My yard has a cuvette & a drainage easement. I wish my yard was not a drainage structure. It is awful.
- Unsatisfactory
 - Several years ago we found our outlet to storm sewer was blocked by tiling and road construction materials from Duff Ave. The City did nothing!!
- Flooding Prep
 - We need to keep working to prepare for increased extreme weather events related to global climate change. I wonder if CyTown will have expensive flooding that will be a burden on the community.

Comments on Neighborhood Nuisance Enforcement

- Unkept Properties
 - Dilapidated house at 1514 Duff. It's been deteriorating for quite a long time, red notice on door, not certain if anything is being done about it. Feel sorry for my neighbors!
 - Hopefully with the changing of the property laws in January, it will make a change this year that something will be done with properties that are not kept up
 - I am dissatisfied with the nuisance ordinance for yard upkeep. Several yards had 12" vegetation following 1 week or rain. Consistent and equal enforcement seems like a waste of time
 - I noticed that some houses did not keep their grass mowed, e.g. 420 Beedle Dr. I also hit a curb when I drove on a road near the road work, due to too narrow pass way and dark light at night
 - Our neighbors were contacted about an upkept lawn and the concern was properly dealt with
 - Our yard is majorly overgrown but at the same time has huge dirt spots. Our parking lot is almost always full of broken glass.
 - Please treat residential properties the same as rental properties
 - There are some things I don't feel neighbors should have to complain about to be enforced. Like can see someone hasn't mowed their lawn all summer.
 - There are some yards with tremendous overgrowth and some places that have huge RVs parked in their driveways and it's such an eyesore.
 - What's with the (illegible) house on the east side of Duff near 15th street or so??? It's gone on far too long
- Noise
 - 4th of July very noisy in our residential area. We contacted police - they did help with the noise. Sad residents still want to shoot noisy fireworks, it's harmful to animals and scares them as well as annoying to neighbors. Hopefully people are being fined for residential fireworks
 - Neighbors than run loud power equipment after 6pm
 - Noise limits - barking dogs are a problem.
 - Noise will be an issue in Campustown. I wish the city could do more
 - Private fireworks use on and around the 4th of July continue to be a major nuisance, and there doesn't seem to be much effort to limit them.
 - The city responds too harshly to noise complaints. It is a college town, let us be kids.
 - There needs to be enforcement about broken mufflers. Ames is louder than the city.
 - We have claimed many times an AC unit in our building that is very noisy and is placed on the other side of our bedroom wall. They have tried to reduce the noise but are still not very successful. We don't know whether is appropriate to claim this with the city of Ames since this matter has been taken care of' by our tenant.
- Ames Regulations
 - City of Ames has become an HOA with its new "regulations"
 - I think the city is overreaching by setting ordinances on parking, storage, and maintenance of personal property.
 - Keep the city out of individual property rights. If safety is a concern, then attention seems warranted. If someone voices a complaint, I am hesitant to over legislate property ordinances.
 - Not a fan of ordinances concerning personal property
 - Overall, while living in Ames is a positive experience for me, I cannot say I like the property maintenance law that went into effect on January 1st, 2024. While I understand the desire to keep

- citizens safe and the city clean, I think that there were better means to achieve these goals than the one the city council implemented.
- People talking and children playing are much louder than your outdoor music ordinance... It makes no sense!
 - Some go too far and seem to be selectively enforced
 - Why do people care so much about lawns being perfectly trimmed? I think there are far more important things to be concerned about than that
- Satisfied
 - I do not mind much
 - I don't see many of these issues in our city
 - I guess I don't see enough of it to really gauge any major ordinances.
 - I live in a well-established neighborhood area that is close knit and very friendly for 50+ years
 - I reported a downed power line, and it was fixed in a few hours
 - Neighbors had contacted the city & issues were addressed.
 - Parking
 - Ames parking is ridiculous
 - Let people park on their front lawn. It's their property
 - We reported a situation at 815 Top o Hollow Ave. Too many vehicles parked in the driveway and other areas on the lot and the situation has not changed
 - You might consider allowing only parking on one side to residential streets!! Very difficult to get through residential streets when are parked on both sides of the street! (west Ames)
 - Unsatisfied
 - Problems persisted
 - Train horns, motorcycles and loud cars on hand, etc. Appear to be speeding or even racing. Don't appear to enforce over occupancy in rental units.
 - Years later the same issues were not resolved.
 - No experience
 - I live in an apartment complex and never had to report to the city
 - None, do not know much about them
 - Landlords
 - Ames city council is absolutely toothless in front of predatory landlords. Haverkamp properties have been running a scam on their tenants and I have tried and failed repeatedly to get any sort of actionable response from the Ames City Council. They exploit international students. They are racists. They are vultures in the truest sense of the word. How Ames City council ever lets Haverkamp properties operate and exploit its most vulnerable population is beyond me. Maybe Iowa was, is and will always be racist. So honestly these surveys are pointless (with all due respect to the survey designers) if the residents do not get to reap any actionable benefits from it. I am sure the results will help some researchers flash some graphs to some granting agency to pour money on more research that will amount to more of nothing.
 - Old neighbors used to blast music & scream into the wee hours of the morning. Police told us to take it up with our property managers.
 - Less Lawn Emphasis
 - The city should be less concerned about lawns. Obsession with lawn upkeep just encourages more noisy mowing and leaf blowers. These machines are nuisances and are detrimental to the health of the users and anyone around. Please ban leaf blowers. Please also enforce loud motorcycles and trucks.

- We called the city about a streetlight out and they fixed it in a few days. Much appreciated. Our neighborhood area is seeing more and more front yards having overgrown vegetation. It affects the home values in the area. If the people want to have overgrown vegetation in backyards, I have no problem with that but when it affects others home values, it is not right
- More Education
 - I am not familiar with these ordinances. Can these be published in a city newsletter? I would be interested in reading these and understanding them
 - I don't even know where/who to report these things to, though I would like to have the knowledge.
- Over Occupancy
 - I live in an HOA and the Ames PD does not have jurisdiction on over-occupancy apparently.
 - Over occupancy is a continual issue in our neighborhood- how much of a nuisance this is often depends on how well behaved the students are. i.e.- our current students hold most of their parties indoors; the previous group held outside parties which made it hard to enjoy our yard.
- Sidewalks
 - Sidewalk clearing in winter is terrible. There are hundreds of sidewalks that are never cleared once during a winter
 - They ("nuisances," many nuisances are safety related) seem to be all citizens complaint driven. I would be calling daily if I reported all sidewalks, vegetation impeding ability to walk on city, damaged sidewalks. These are dangerous to pedestrians and cause visual obstructions (vegetation) for pedestrians and cyclists and auto drivers.

Comments on Traffic Signals

- Better Light Coordination
 - Better coordination on busy days. Like football games; major events (concerts, graduation)
 - Cannot tell they are supposed to be coordinated. Traffic was very backed up at times especially Duff from South 4th on South to out of Ames. Could not even turn south off South 16th one day- all red lights backed up to next light.
 - If you hit a red on Grand, you hit every light red!
 - It is hard to discern coordination between signals.
 - Lights going east on Lincoln Way are not timed very well.
 - Lincoln Way is a stressful and dangerous route due to a lack of traffic signal coordination.
 - Long cycle times lead to pedestrian delays, especially when bog button use is required to get a walk signal
 - Need to look at the traffic signals at Duff & Crystal
 - On major roads such as South Duff, Lincoln, and University, I can count on one hand the number of times that the traffic signals felt coordinated. The overwhelming majority of the time, it is incredibly stop and go. It feels very fuel inefficient for many cars.
 - One of my biggest complaints about living in Ames are the traffic signals... they cause backups even under low-traffic sections.
 - Red light after red light after red light - seemingly no coordination city-wide
 - Something needs to be done on how you manage the ISU FB & BB traffic after a game. Rumor has it there is one person who won't change how he manages it!
 - Sometimes the timing seems off allowing 2-4 cars to go North/South and then 20-30 to go East/West
 - Stop them alternating, it's annoying when the light turns green at the same time the next light turns red.
 - The change in programming of lights at Stange & 13th and Stange & 24th results in longer wait time which intern has caused more people to run the intersection on late yellow and red.
 - The light stops intersections of smaller streets and Lincoln way have very poor traffic time signals where you must wait for a long time especially in the morning.
 - The lights on Duff seem poorly timed.
 - The Lincoln Way/N Elm Ave and Lincoln Way/Grand Ave lights, particularly the pedestrian crossing at N Elm, have very poor coordination.
 - The traffic lights are a constant irritation because I am constantly hitting every red light. Please work on improving this in the future.
 - There have been improvements on 13th St. Duff is a mess. At least a few times a year I will have to stop at each light from downtown to South Duff.
 - The timing on Grand Ave is off. You just stop at each light as you drive north.
- Intersection Light Adjustment
 - 13th and Duff are the worst, often changing to give green to the other direction even though no cars are coming that way, making those approaching where it was green need to wait to (SLOWLY) cycle through the lights to turn green again. All without any cars coming the other way.
 - 13th St. East & West lights need help for turning
 - Can be a little shorter wait time.

- Compared to other cities, the ability for the whole street to be green lights. They need left turn arrows from 13th on to Grand.
- I HATE LINCOLN LIGHTS!!!!!! NEVER COORDINATED
- I travel from N Duff to S Duff a lot & stop very often. Can't you cancel a red light that comes on after someone turns right on red? (from a side street onto Duff)
- The intersection of Grand Ave & E 13th Street should have a green arrow for turning left from 13th street towards Lincoln Way. It is stressful to turn left, esp. if multiple cars are waiting to turn - sometimes must wait through multiple traffic light cycles since not every driver sneak into the intersection on yellow to turn left when cross traffic stops.
- Lights on East/West Bound Grand, no turn signal. Very congested on Lincoln Way.
- Some intersections (especially later at night or early morning... University Blvd. one off Mortensen) there is no traffic and at times you'd have to wait 30 seconds to take a left. Also, some intersections don't allow pedestrians to cross, and they must wait for a whole light cycle to walk or cross. Intersections should be made with pedestrians (and furthermore cyclists, anything that isn't a car) in mind and allow them to move more freely around.
- Some lights are way too long/short. Going from Hyland to Ontario takes an extremely inconvenient amount of time
- Some stoplights take forever to change (Franklin and Lincoln way). Also, the traffic light for people turning S. from Target needs an arrow. There is nearly an accident there every time I am over there. Light turns green and people don't yield to those going straight.
- The light on 13th and Grand Ave heading west and east makes it extremely difficult to make a left turn in high traffic times of the day. It is a high-traffic intersection, so I think it warrants a protected turning arrow. The light on Duff and 11th Street will cycle randomly when no cars or pedestrians are waiting. This slows and accumulates traffic for no apparent reason.
- The light on South 16th heading west- the turn arrow will only allow 6 cars and there can many times be 10-12 waiting. Needs to be LONGER.
- The lights on Lincoln and Sheldon are terrible when going north and south. When someone hits the pedestrian walk light, that somehow counts as a green light because then people get even less time to go through the light. It does not help that there is no left turn area only because that is taking away valuable time and would create less traffic right there. This light goes west, and east is almost too long during heavy traffic hours of 4-6 pm because it causes a backup in the small block between Sheldon and Hyland. Overall, this section needs heavy revamp.
- The one stop light leading up to the police station from Brookside Park on Grand is extremely slow to change if you're not driving on Grand in the evening.
- The pedestrian lights are good. The transition from yellow to red lights seems too fast
- The traffic signal at S. Dakota and US HWY 30 is rarely if ever helpful. I spend a lot of time sitting there while no one is going through.
- The wait at the intersection of Dayton and 30 (when exiting from the west) is way off. You can sit there for minutes without it changing, even though no vehicles are going south through the intersection. Major streets can get congested and backed up during busy times.
- There are a few places where it would be nice to have more turning arrows. Especially during rush hours
- There are certain intersections that should add a green arrow on left turns to improve safety.
- Infrastructure Improvements
 - 13th and Grand east-west traffic needs a protected left turn, sometimes the yellow light is too short

- Grand and 13th seems to be the most problematic intersection for me. The lack of turning lanes/signals and the emphasis on northbound traffic seems to be troublesome. Additionally, 13th and Stange Rd seems odd that the priority for left hand turning is on northbound traffic as well and North/South bound traffic is hardly ever coordinated with the Hawthorn Court Dr since the signal seems only to be a sensor prioritizing lefthand turning westbound traffic. This results in southbound traffic on Stange Rd to get stopped again quite often at this intersection. Finally, there may be reasons for this that I have not considered, but the usage of lanes on University Blvd between Stange Rd and Wallace Rd seems underutilized. There is significant space for a right-hand turn lane for eastbound traffic at the Wallace Rd University Blvd intersection. A right-hand turn lane/middle eastbound lane would prevent the blocking of traffic in the morning when CyRide busses must stop after turning left from Stange Rd on to University Blvd. Additionally, the left-hand turn lane on east bound University just past the Wallace intersection is hardly used and could easily be replaced by the middle east bound lane through the traffic signal.
- I have a landscape architect here who says the medians should have more native pollinator plants (specifically on Lincoln Way near Campustown)
- In general, there are multiple places in the city with 3 lanes of traffic at a light - left turn lane, and two "other" lanes where drivers could be going straight or turning right. Please consider making the right lane a turn only lane as one car going straight can significantly back traffic up. Examples are 13th St east at Dayton light, and 13th St. west at Stange light.
- Maybe go to blinking lights after 11 pm? The length of signal on Grand Ave intersections is truly unnecessary. Also, would eliminate the no turn on red sign at University Ave. and 6th- was added a few years ago. It's not necessary ever.
- More intersections need sensors. Particularly at CyRide and 6th, Lincoln Way and University, Stange and 24th, 13th and Stange- left turn lane onto Stange needs to be longer
- The crosswalk next to Cousin Vinny's I think could use flashers
- The prairie strips on Ash near Mortensen need weeding and replanting
- Traffic signal detection systems don't always work
- We need a traffic signal near University Community Childcare (Bruner Drive and Stange Road) especially with school buses and CyRide frequently utilizing this area!!!
- Why do I have to stop at the stoplight at 11th and Duff by Mary Greeley at 5:30 am because it is no longer on sensor! There is no pedestrian or other vehicle traffic around!
- Satisfied
 - Don't like the constant stop & go but understand it.
 - I would guess it is since I haven't noticed it
 - In general, they are regulated properly
 - Much better than previous
 - No complaints
 - Seems like getting stopped at one light gets you stopped all the way down the street, but turning onto the street and making the first light gets you through the next 2-3 lights consistently.
 - So long as people drive the speed limit and not 2-6 over, they work great
 - They seem fine.
 - With lots of repair work this year I would pay for letting us know where there are detours, etc. It's pretty good
- More Street Cleaning/Snow removal
 - Do not see street sweeping in my area, but the streets are clean. Snow plowing/ removal could be better in area parking lots

- I feel snow removal has opportunities to be faster. Grand and 13th light needs work. Those turning left onto Grand really need a signal/arrow.
- Snow plowing for circles really depends on who is doing it. Contractors are much quicker than city. Several streets need redoing, but am aware city is gradually redoing streets
- Dissatisfied
 - Terrible on Duff
 - Time and gas are wasted daily.
 - Waiting over 20 years for resolution of 13th and Grand
- Better Bike/Ped Infrastructure
 - I find the bike paths very frustrating- they seem random
 - Make it easier for bike commuters to trigger signals. We should not have to trigger from the sidewalk
 - Sheldon & Lincoln Way signal - Additional time for N-S transit during 4-6 PM would be an improvement - pedestrian crossing uses up almost all the time if you have turning cars thus few cars get through during each green light. Additional turn lanes at Stange & Ontario and 13th & Grand would be good.
- Long Wait Times
 - Often waiting for a very long time at lights when no one is coming in either direction.
 - Some places you sit forever when there is no traffic going the other direction
 - They usually work as intended, but lots of major areas have been getting longer and longer of wait times
- Good Timing
 - Good yellow times
 - Grand Ave seems good at timing, often long waits.
- More Enforcement
 - put cameras on them to catch all the speeders, light runners, and cell phone abusers.
- Better Road Construction Timing
 - Road construction could be more isolated. Doing all Grand at once seems like it has caused too much congestion

Comments on CyRide

- Great Service
 - About 6 times a year. When I have needed has been great
 - Amazing
 - Amazing Service!!!
 - Ames has a great and inexpensive bus system
 - CyRide must be one of the top bus services in the state if not the country! The cost is crazy reasonable and fair. Two thumbs up across the board.
 - CyRide is a great service, I would not have been able to attend physical therapy without the Brown line.
 - CyRide is always on time and provides frequent service on the routes I use (Gold, Brown, Cherry). I am thankful that we have it, and I hope it continues to be as great as it is now.
 - CyRide is always timely and helpful. Truly one of the best public services I've gotten to use anywhere.
 - CyRide is amazing. I wish the buses had a permanent clock on them. Also wish they had Wi-Fi but that's revolutionary. Amazing lost and found reliability but that's in part due to the good people of Ames.
 - CyRide is great! (2x)
 - Excellent for those who choose to use it.
 - Excellent service
 - Excellent! What an asset for our city.
 - A fantastic system, nearly always on time and frequent service in my area makes it very useful and convenient to use. Bus stop shelters could use some improvements.
 - Glad it is there when I need it
 - Great
 - Great service and used for years. Now I would have to transfer and much longer ride.
 - I am grateful for the convenience of the CyRide and how accessible it is; there are so many routes that can get me where I need to go, and the app typically works well.
 - I am so glad we have it. I wish more people would use it. The times and locations aren't convenient for me. I would rather ride my bike. Maybe there should be a class/field trip on using CyRide in the middle school?
 - I did take the CyRide to an ISU game one time - it was fine. Love that it is free to ISU students.
 - I feel it is a valuable service for those that need it
 - I have heard from frequent riders that it is a great service
 - I love having CyRide as an option, thank you for providing a great public transportation service!
 - I rode often to work at ISU for 30 years. In general, the service was reliable and efficient. I was surprised how good it was in relation to the size of the community.
 - I use it for getting to school. Thank you to all the bus drivers who made it possible for me to get to my classes.
 - I used to ride every day. Very happy that Ames has & supports public transportation.
 - I used to use it when I worked on campus. Now it's just easier to hop in car for errands. Great to see others using bus
 - It is a very good service. I tried a couple of times and very happy with the service.
 - Nice service that I might use when I no longer can bike or walk as much as I do now.

- The only service in Ames that holds any meaning. The rest of the town I could do with or without. But CyRide is the lifeblood, and every driver/employee deserves a raise. The most consistent well-run city service.
- They are always on time and the application is amazing.
- Used to ride before retirement. Glad they are here.
- Very effective service
- We are happy there is the CyRide option even though we do not use it. Smaller buses in lower use area? Just a question
- We don't use it now but was a great resource while attending ISU and working for ISU.
- Expand Service
 - A direct route on game days from the Somerset/ Northridge area would be fantastic!
 - A stop in areas that provide social services would be helpful (i.e. MICA, Salvation army, Access, AEA)
 - At times I wish CyRide had more frequency (during evenings/during breaks). CyRide also needs to extend its night-time/early-morning bus service as at times I find myself unable to get home since I work at a job that is open really early (5am) and closes later in the evening when service is sparse.
 - Connection could improve. That is why we do not use so often
 - Good service, but I have been curious as to why #5 (Yellow), #9(yellow), and #14 (Peach) have such limited service, especially in the evening and over the weekends. When new students come to Ames, especially international students, they don't know which areas have better bus service as they choose where to live. So, their movement becomes very restricted when they settle in places where 5, 9, and 14 operate. Doing basic things like going grocery shopping becomes very hard. I am basing my experience from 2021 during the COVID lockdown, so if things have changed, you can ignore my comment.
 - I suggest more availability around slightly north area, such as W 19th St.
 - I wish 11 Cherry had more routes since it is the only bus out to west Ames.
 - Needs more routes/drivers
 - No routes in newer housing developments in West Ames. Would be nice to have later routes.
- Could Be Improved
 - Ames Ride is not always accurate, I use it the most in the mornings and if I miss the bus because the app says a different time, I don't always have time to wait for the next
 - I think CyRide could do better to space the available buses. It is almost always an issue that multiple buses come at the same time. If you miss the bus, then you have to wait 10 to 15 minutes for the next one because all three of them came at the same time. When instead you would only have to wait 5 or less minutes if they were spaced out appropriately.
 - I think CyRide is great, but it takes too long to get to campus from Mary Greely (around 40 mins)
 - Make schedule slower and more realistic to slow down
 - Some buses get to their stop early and leave before the app or website says they will.
 - some routes have a lot of seat capacity compared to demand while others do not have enough buses. more optimization is required for the routing
 - The buses often get crowded and sometimes the drivers are not professional. Additionally, the wait time for each bus is about 30 minutes, which is quite long.
 - The routes going to South Ames, by the airport, need to be better.
- Inconvenient
 - During the summer, the 6 route is out around 6:30 PM, which makes it difficult to commute between campus and summerset

- Getting to vet med with CyRide can be a hassle
- I do periodically ride CyRide. Think its availability is important for the community. At 70 it would be multiple buses to get groceries. It took me several rides to know that the bus stop could be lowered - important to know if you have mobility issues.
- I probably still would not use it because I have a car which is more convenient. I would be wasting my time waiting for it and riding it around places I didn't need to go.
- Use of CYRIDE for the most part is time consuming and would add almost an hour a day to use
- We live North of Ames in the Ada Hayden area. It is difficult for college students to reach. They need rides to get here.
- Don't Use
 - Find it a waste watching CyRide go by our house late in the evening EMPTY!!
 - Historically it has been faster to walk or bike to campus from South Ames. I don't know if that situation has improved but I always avoid CyRide. Now I am retired and don't go where CyRide goes.
 - I have to drive to other towns for my job and that primarily limits my use. 1/3 limit my use as related to leisure. Shorter ride times would also increase my usage
 - I like public transportation, but I am not in the habit of using it. As my child grows older, I would like to teach her how to use it to get around
 - I work at ISU & would be very happy to take CyRide but not at the same cost of a parking pass & less flexibility.
 - Never used it
- Prefer Driving
 - I always used it when employed. Now I volunteer and need the use of my car to transport items.
 - I have used it when car was in the shop.
 - If I didn't have a car then it would be quite a way to a stop
 - If I was unable to drive myself and if a bus stop were near me and my drop off was very close, I might use CyRide.
 - We love CyRide, but now that are sharing rides to work it is cheaper to get an ISU parking pass.
- Good Drivers
 - Drivers are great and extremely friendly.
 - I love that 65 and older pay 50 cents. All the bus drivers are kind and courteous
 - I wish the CyRide drivers would encourage people to move and sit in the back of the bus more often and fill seats, especially on morning rides and other busy times when everyone gets crammed onto the lower section when there is totally open space and seats up top.
 - Very nice drivers most of the time. Some of them could do better by not braking so hard that all the kids on the bus lose their balance.
- No Stops Near Me/Destination
 - I live near Daley Park. The nearest stop to me is about a mile walk
 - I would be interested in using this again (used as a student) but there is no stop near me. Is too far to walk to one.
- Student Centric
 - I would consider riding CyRide to events on campus
 - Should not only be concentrated on the University
- More Information
 - Do not know enough about routes or fares
 - Send info via email every 6 mo.

- Don't Expand Service
 - Too many times I see large, full-sized buses with very few people in them. During low usage times use smaller buses
- Should Be Free
 - I think it is a valuable service for the people of Ames. Eliminating the fare would be wonderful for many people in Ames. I've "aged out" of using public transportation

Comments on Community Parks and Recreation Services

- Needs Improvements
 - I have always had a problem with insufficient lights in the washroom and some places do not even offer washrooms. The process of booking a shed however is easy.
 - I wish some of the trails I felt safer on by myself; maybe adding emergency phones would help, but I'm not sure. I don't always feel safe on them by myself.
 - Indoor facilities are very lacking for both adults and children and private resources are too costly for most families
 - Need a bigger splash pad.
 - Need to address the southeast entrance to Ada Hayden by restrooms. Trucks do not stay on the path and create huge ruts and mud all over the trail because concrete is not wide enough.
 - Need to return lights to Brookside. Tennis and pickleball courts - threw away the original ones and then did not pursue free lights from high school. Try harder to restore services to Brookside courts.
 - Too old to use.
- More Upkeep
 - Lots of public space doesn't have good washroom, most of them are locked or unclean
 - Need dog poop bags available or at least trash cans more available.
 - Restrooms could be cleaner and open for a longer season. Sometimes my family and I go to the parks in October/November - February/ March because the weather is good, and restrooms are closed.
 - Restrooms feel poorly maintained. Seem to be closed more often than they're open.
 - Several parks could use more bathrooms
 - The bathrooms should be unlocked more frequently
 - The overgrowth of Inis Grove means that other parks have fewer amenities than they need, and Inis Grove gets overused.
- Don't Use
 - Have not used, maybe advertise more about these!
 - I have lived in Ames since July 1967 and have used the parks twice and never the recreational areas.
 - I just looked at it, but never stopped
 - I'm a college student. I don't go outside.
 - Newer to Ames so haven't had the opportunity to use many of the recreational areas or programs.
 - While I am an ISU student, I do not currently live w/in the city of Ames. I have visited multiple times and plan to live there next year.
- More Nature
 - I wish there were more forests and prairies, especially on the outskirts of town.
 - Invasive species dominate most of the wooded/natural areas
 - Plant more trees, extend forests. Ames currently looks like it's been stomped by a big elephants' foot and there's very little natural beauty.
 - Please do NOT remove any more beavers and/or beaver dams. Educate residents who complain about this to use hardware cloth to cover their trees and prevent damage from beaver activity. They are crucial to our ecosystem and do NOT need to be taken out of Ames area creeks.
 - Too many invasive species
- More Variety
 - I wish there was a badminton field with a set of rackets and birdies.

- Need more tennis/ pickleball courts
- Parks could use more swings that older children can use
- We desperately need indoor pickleball for all community members and gymnasium capacity for all community members. Increase # of tubes for lazy river please.
- More Advertising
 - I was not aware of any available recreational programs. Maybe they can be better publicized.
 - I would use the recreational things more I think if I knew about them, also I'm very excited about the indoor pool and plan to use that.
 - Sometimes it a little hard to find info on the website for sports leagues and how to get involved (e.g. Tuesday night pick up volleyball)
 - Wish programs came in mail for trails, parks, events, etc.
- Longer Hours
 - Need more hours, need to be open sooner and stay open later.... McFarland Park, Carr Park, Peggy's Trails, etc.
 - It would be nice to have water fountains turned on earlier/off later
 - The number of restrooms is acceptable, but they close too late in the spring and too early in the fall.
- Great Programs
 - I love all the parks and rec programs!
 - I think Ames City manages so well
 - My children were involved in Parks and Rec activities and loved swimming.
- More Programs
 - Maybe some programs for us older folks.
 - More swimming lesson options. City hall indoor gym is tight and there is little accessibility to get through building
- Update City Gym
 - An updated city weight room is badly needed. Those who aren't students have very limited (and often expensive) options, and the current city gym/weight room is inadequate.
 - excited for new swim and splash pad facilities. Thankful for trails, wish there were even more paved ones. The city gym is getting old. Would be neat if city had childcare options for parents working out
- Dog Park
 - A dog park or something in North Ames for dogs would be great!
 - I only use Ada Hayden and the dog park
- Great Access
 - Great access!
 - I believe there is adequate access to parks and natural walking areas. I just have not had the opportunity to utilize them as much as I would like to.
- Great Hiking
 - I love hikes off the paved trails so thanks for having dirt path options!
 - I love to walk through the parks! They are well maintained and can be a true adventure!
- Prioritize Parks
 - Continue to prioritize parks. It's a quality-of-life thing

Comments on Ames Public Library

- Great Resource
 - A great resource
 - Ames Library is great. Online offerings could be improved.
 - APL is an exceptional library
 - Consistently impressed. Thankful for so many options for kids
 - Great place very useful!
 - I download most reading materials. Very convenient, thank you. I can usually get what I wish for; except movies on Kanapy and Hoopla are quite limited but that's ok! I watch movies on my very overpriced TV service.
 - I had a charming lady help me out and talk me through what the library offered. It was greatly appreciated.
 - I hear good comments about it!
 - I love the Ames Public Library! It is such an amazing resource for our community, used in so many ways and the librarians are wonderful!
 - I love the library! We could use a greater number of audiobooks for popular titles. There are long wait times for many books.
 - It is an excellent resource!
 - It seems like a great resource I wish I had more availability to explore.
 - Looking forward to getting library access as I enjoy access to a lending library for audiobooks.
 - LOVE our library! It is a fantastic resource for the community
 - Mainly use online, but used PEO room.
 - Pretty good selection.
 - Recently retired. More time to visit the library & discover all of the available resources the public library in Ames is one of the most valuable assets that this community offers. The public library is the jewel of the city's amenities, as far as I am concerned
 - wonderful essential source of information and entertainment
- Excellent
 - Excellent
 - excellent library would like to see more native American movies books
 - I love the public library! I have always had good experiences with the staff and the quality of items I check out.
 - I think we have a wonderful library!
 - It's a nice library, easy to use, I get there when time permits. Read mostly periodicals I don't get at home.
 - Keep up the good work!
 - I love the library- their cooperation with the history museum
 - Superb
 - The Ames Public library is outstanding,
 - The APL is a wonderful part of living in Ames. We are very fortunate!
 - We have a beautiful library. It is bright and welcoming. I use the online service a lot and I like it. It seems like the web pages change frequently though
 - We love visiting the library

- When I have gone, I'm always impressed by the library. I do wish they had more programs for adults (like 25-65 yr olds who can't go to stuff at 2 pm on weekdays)
- Wonderful Facility
- Worth every penny
- Good Services
 - excellent services, immaculately clean
 - I go to the library to vote
 - I love the fact that they have great book sales and welcoming staff who are always friendly.
 - I will probably use it more once I have kids. I know many people who is very happy with children's facilities there.
 - Is a gem! I love it! So, appreciate the services it provides!
 - It is nice to know that they offer services if I ever need them
 - Online resources are good for local history; ISU library, more than meets general library needs
 - really enjoyed Pub Fiction last year, looking forward to similar events.
 - Superficially (I have not been inside the library, although I plan to), based on driving by the downtown library, it appears to be a welcoming facility for a diverse community. I love the fact the downtown library is next to the "Rainbow Crosswalk" and seems to be inviting to the LBGTQ community. We moved to Ames in August of 2023. I am pleased to see these symbols of kindness near public places like the library and other nearby places.
 - The university doesn't have enough quiet and comfortable study areas. Ames Public Library could fill this void.
- Don't Use
 - Actually, I have not been there, but I heard about the library, and it is really nice.
 - Do not use
 - don't really need to use it at all, and I'm not much of a reader, do not have kids
 - I am disabled, cannot drive
 - I have never been to the public library (have lived in Ames 4 years)
 - I like to read on my Kindle, and I don't have lots to want to go to other activities.
 - We moved here during Covid. I just haven't used the library as much as I should.
- Good Atmosphere
 - Going to the library about once a week, it's a very nice atmosphere to focus in and a nice change of environment.
 - I personally enjoy spending time in Ames public library.
 - Nice and quiet place to study
 - One of the best features of Ames. library is top notch. Good bike parking. Wonderful atmosphere.
 - Sigma Alpha sorority used Ames Public Library to host meetings, and it worked out great!
 - Very nice library! Inviting atmosphere, printing services are convenient and affordable. Would go there more often if I didn't have access to the Parks library
- Parking
 - I did not use the library mainly due to parking problem
 - I have learned that there are no free spaces in the north lot for staff nor for library visitors. Why limit accessibility to the library? Take out the parking meters. no reason to punish staff or residents.
 - I would really appreciate a drive-up book drop. It's often difficult to find parking, get kids out of the car, pay meter, etc. to quickly return books (even on the walk up).

- if you are going to check out multiple books, carrying them all the way behind Main St. is cumbersome. Free parking across the street especially during summer daytime would increase out visiting 100%
- Parking a problem - better access at Lincoln Way Center. They should NOT expose children to LGBTQ issues in programming and books!
- Parking accessibility is difficult
- Use University Library
 - As a student, I use the Iowa State University library rather than the Ames public library.
 - As an Iowa State Student that cloisters themselves, I mostly frequent the Parks Library, if necessary. I may be oblivious, but what is the relationship and reach of the public library with Parks library?
 - I am an Iowa State Student, so I mainly use the on-campus library
 - I go to Parks Library instead
 - I use the ISU library
- More Accessible
 - Better marketing (especially towards different demographics)
 - home delivery? It is hard to get around to bus stops where I live
 - maybe could use some more darker spaces as I have trouble with reading in lit areas during the day
 - please get tall toilets in the women's handicap stalls - they are much too low for my knees and hips
 - Seating is not as comfortable as it used to be. Used to visit book mobile when it stopped at Crawford. Inker library loan is a great service. Always look forward to book sales!
- Clean
 - Clean, good facilities, helpful staff
 - The library is well organized and clean. Very nice and knowledgeable books and play areas. The seating is very good, and their staff is very cooperative and helpful.
 - The layout is very neat and quiet. Perfect for a library
- LibbyApp
 - I love listening to audiobooks from the library on Libby! Finally able to get back into reading without worrying about not being able to return a physical book on time. Plus, they allow multi-tasking, esp when driving. Wish I would have started sooner
 - I mostly now use on-line books through hoopla and Libby
 - use online books all the time
- Support Library
 - only use the library for making donations
 - Please support a diverse library, book banning just makes the population less educated. A great library has something to offend everyone and that is the way it should be.
 - Support Libraries not banning books
- More Selection
 - Book and DVD section is a bit thin, but otherwise excellent
 - If you want to add more X-Men comics go crazy.
- More Online Books
 - Have more online books available
 - We use the library a lot & enjoy spending time there. At my age I don't read books online & it seems that trying to find a book I'm interested in results in an "online book" available. Searching has become more difficult on your website.
- Comfortable

- A very comfortable place to browse and find books
- Love the library! Great place for studying/meeting.
- Too Loud
 - I do not think that loud voices should be tolerated like they are being allowed now
 - Sometimes the noise level is too much - patrons should be required to silence their cell phones (maybe put up signage to that effect).
- Fun
 - My grandchildren always ask to go to Ames Library when they stay at my house!
 - My wife and I love taking our toddler there to play. Especially on cold and rainy days
- Political Agenda
 - Please stop hosting DRAG events. They have nothing to do with educating our kids
 - We don't agree with the types of kids' programs offered and find a particular ideological agenda forced through the programs to kids inappropriate.
- Fund Less
 - Waste of taxpayer money. Waste of space

Comments on Sense of Belonging as an Ames Resident

What, if anything, could be done to enhance your sense of belonging as an Ames resident?"

Comments (N=89)

Better Community and ISU integration

- Getting the college activity participating in town things.
- Have more opportunities for students to get to know one another within their place of residency. Would also love to know the statistics on where most college students live.
- I think having some more items for the younger adults/college students off campus would be nice to include them more and try to get them more involved in the community and see what all Ames has to offer.
- It would be nice to have a festival or event that brings the community together and helps residents get involved/create a sense of community pride.
- Many residents have a dislike for college students.
- More publicized campus events & opportunities that encourage participation by Ames residents.
- My employer is really the only way I am involved. Would be nice to have a way to know of ways/ places to get involved
- Strengthen native/international relationships.

Community Events and Community Engagement Activities

- Maybe move fun activities around the year
- More community engagement opportunities (or better advertisements of current ones)
- More community events (x3)
- More community events in West Ames. Most events are focused in the downtown area, but West Ames tends to have little to no opportunities for community involvement (from what I know)
- More events at AMW, more publicity/events for jazz/blues/folk music, and garbage services shouldn't be privatized. I miss sanitation workers with personality, and the corporate guys don't have much.
- More events towards getting to know your community.
- More shared interest groups / block parties / city wide garage sales
- more street/area specific activities. i.e. street picnic
- Online activities - due to disability, leaving my house is extremely difficult. I feel very isolated
- I think events in the summer, going out & meeting people at them help increase belonging
- Maybe more clubs? unsure
- Free or low-cost childcare for adult events

Get Rid of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

- Do away with all diversity, equity and inclusion references. City should keep out of all personal issues and preferences
- I feel like the library has gone too far in this area. I feel uncomfortable when I visit
- Stop DEI policies. Encourage "golden rule"
- Increase acceptance and commitment to conservative family values

Help Young Adults (Non-students) and Young Professionals Find Connections in Ames

- Highlight things non-ISU students/young professionals do/can participate in, in Ames
- I am unsure. I have only lived here for a year and a half. I moved for work, and it's been really hard to find ways & time to connect. Almost everything feels like it happens during work hours when I must be at work. I want to be a part of the Ames community and to belong here, but I really have no clue where to start.
- I do not really know where to go to meet people post-graduation
- More community activities for adults aged 25-35

- More community events maybe. Programs to help young adults (not just college kids) Young men are forgotten about unfortunately. Programs to help make friends and relationships.

Improve Relations with Law Enforcement

- As a college student, not being disregarded by law enforcement
- ISU PD is aggressive towards the students; I wish they weren't
- Positive law enforcement

Improved Customer Service within City Depts and Services

- City departments and services must be warm/welcoming.
- Improve the availability of city council meeting minutes. Today 5-24, the most recent council minutes available online is April 23 - 1 month ago.
- Sincerity, honesty, efficacy, better management specific opportunities thru energizing social capital
- Need to do some more to let people feel it instead use slogans

More Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and Inclusive Spaces

- Ames has a lot of close-minded people, which can sometimes negatively affect how the city is portrayed to outsiders. If the city had more inclusion initiatives, I feel that would be a major benefit
- Educate people about Diversity, Equity, Inclusivity, and belonging.
- Inclusiveness
- more DEI
- more inclusive programs
- Having more spaces where LGBTQ individuals' safe spaces (like a bar for example)

Nothing

- I'm old and disabled, not much!
- N/A (5X)
- Nothing (4X).
- Nothing the city can do
- probably nothing - live on farm

Not City's responsibility

- It's up to everyone- you can't do it for them
- That is up to me and how much I get involved

Other Thoughts, Comments, and Ideas

- Attract more technical industry. That is the reason I will ultimately have to leave Ames
- Be fully retired
- Eliminate parking meters
- Get more involved
- Get rid of everything that is non-university. And remove all sports from ISU
- Hard question. Maybe more rec services! But I'm just so busy. I'll be moving to Des Moines soon as well. I've lived here for 4 years.
- I belong to community organizations and help as best as I can.
- I feel that is more a function of my current circumstances. If I had more responsibility, income stability, and a regular schedule I would probably find it more like when I was living in West Des Moines.
- I like helping my neighbors, but some I do not know
- improve community outreach make sure police cleans the sidewalks improve on cultural varieties offered (zen garden, tea ceremonial places, tax-free opportunity for farmers to sell their green produce); introduce a new chess club, improve recreational areas for people. incentivize business opportunities for you people (graduates of ISU) decrease bureaucratic burden on workers and researchers can introduce community events besides football games

- Lower meat prices
- Making more local friends
- Town is rather backwards. This is caused by Kim Reynolds
- Other people need to be as willing to make eye contact, say "hello", and be courteous as the staff at Starbucks or chick-fil-a but in public places
- owning a home
- see previous comments
- The good friends I have made in my 3 years in Ames are my highlights. Of course, my son and his family are ripped off the list. He asked me to move here, my husband passed away 16 years ago, and my two children thought I was getting old. I did not want to be surrounded 24/7 by old people so I bought a house which I truly enjoy. I will be 93 this fall. I dabble in art, published 5 small books, thoroughly enjoyed several younger friends and love mother nature, and now - Ames is home! Do keep Ames beautiful and safe! For obvious reasons, I have checked very few boxes!
- This is a difficult question to answer as a college student who is looking to move elsewhere post-grad.
- You have too many shady "cliques" that seem to run the town. Realtors and property developers have too much power

Positive View

- A beautiful perfect place to live. I am 63 you widow, and I feel very safe here. Thank you!
- City is inclusive- nothing I could change
- Having lived happily in Ames for our 50 years - I am very content
- Honestly, it is a great town.
- I have lived here most of my life, I don't think I need to be enhanced to get a sense of belonging.
- I've lived here since 1962. Ames is a very nice town I really don't have any intention of moving.

Unsure

- am not sure
- Don't know
- I do not know. I feel like I will always be an outsider.
- not sure

Comments on “What is the best thing about living in Ames?”

- Community
 - 1. The people 2. The university 3. The companies that are here. 4. Local spirit
 - campus community
 - Close knit community that's large enough to offer good amenities. Values science and has a good educational community.
 - Close-knit community, easy to access places
 - Community
 - community & water
 - Community events and recreation accessibility
 - Cornerstone Church University
 - How close knit you can be with friends and family. I also feel safe 95% of the time when walking around, especially at night.
 - I like the people
 - I really like the small community vibes - things like the farmers market & Juneteenth festival
 - My job allows me to know so many people, so I always see someone I know when I'm out. (Barista @ La Tosca on Welch) and Brookside Park!
 - Our community is great. Good people, caring neighbors, good education, great healthcare.
 - Overall community vibe and progress on infrastructure and policies
 - people, city, ISU
 - population is not growing too fast, it is nice in the spring
 - Sense of community
 - the activity community
 - The community
 - the community and ISU
 - the community and options for recreation
 - The community of college students and how almost everything is catered towards college students
 - The community, the safety
 - The community. As an international student, I feel very welcome, and I do not have to think twice before approaching someone for help.
 - The community. It's small enough that you can get to know your neighbors but large enough to have recreational infrastructure
 - the people, more restaurant choices. economic development- recruitment? rental rates??
 - The people, safety, parks!
 - The people! (3x)
 - The residents and neighborhood
 - The tight-knit community, local businesses, and generally safe atmosphere. I don't feel unsafe in the public areas or by any of the individuals at the library, grocery store, etc.
 - Vibrancy
- Parks
 - Ames has a lot of nice parks that are not yet paved, good for hiking or hunting wild mushrooms
 - Beautiful parks
 - great parks!
 - Green Park spaces are really nice

- Green spaces Low crime rate
- Green spaces, CyRide, Library
- Green spaces/parks
- I like all the greenery; I find it refreshing and peaceful.
- I love all the green spaces
- I love how many parks are available and the local culture.
- It's a beautiful city, with lots of parks and nice roads and sidewalks (at least compared to what I'm used to).
- Nature
- Nature, nice people
- Parks
- Parks and walking trails
- PARKS!
- The beautiful parks
- The best thing about living in Ames is the sunsets.
- The environment
- the nature! and people
- The number of parks that we have
- The parks and it has everything you need without being too overpopulated.
- The parks and the trails
- The public parks and how easy it is to get around and go to the places I enjoy!
- the size and green space
- The trees.
- We love North River Valley Park & Reiman Gardens Plenty of restaurants to choose from
- Safe
 - Great safe, peaceful community with tons of wonderful parks!
 - I feel it is a safe town. Ames offers a lot of activities
 - I love the rural feeling and the small-town aspect and how safe I feel in the town.
 - It is a safe city with beautiful parks.
 - It's safer than other places and has less pollution and population. And public transportation is very good.
 - low crime (3x)
 - clean
 - great personal service when needed
 - Low traffic and safety
 - Peace
 - Safe and with ISU provides numerous possibilities
 - safe community (11x)
 - Safe environment most of the time. Home values are reasonable compared to other parts of the USA. Easy commute to work and activities
 - safe, good schools
 - safe, nice size, good schools
 - Safeties & amenities offered through the city & university.
 - safety, variety of Arts and sports entertainment
 - quiet (2x)
- Big City Advantages/Small Town Feel
 - Access to many stores and businesses without feeling like I live in a big city

- After living in many places - Ames is centrally located and has many opportunities you only find in big cities without being a big city! activities, sports, healthcare, recreation!
- Bigger city amenities in a smaller town, the energy of college students and education.
- Bigger cities feel in a small town
- feels small, but has city amenities and conveniences
- Has a small town feel with big city and even international opportunities.
- how small it feels yet as everything in it
- It's a nice blend of bigger city services and amenities and small town know your neighbor friendliness.
- It's the right size.
- nice size and the variety of stores, restaurants, homes
- size - big enough to have access to a lot of things- stores, pool, gyms, parks, other opportunities- but not too big and annoying traffic like Ankeny.
- size, ISU, parks, safety, downtown.
- Size, recreational activities, sports
- Smalltown/ but lots of activities for all
- small cozy feeling with all the fun and amenities of a big city
- Small town feel with lots of amenities
- small town feel with lots of things to do
- small town feel with the good thing about a larger city- arts, entertainment, sports
- Small town with university atmosphere
- Smaller size coupled with good retail. Probably due to the large student population
- The small town feel regardless of how much Ames has grown
- When the students are gone, traffic eases up a lot.
- Proximity to Services
 - Access to many things
 - Access to services
 - As a college student, Ames has an abundance of resources that are easily accessible and readily available
 - Central Iowa is close to restaurants, shopping, 4 golf courses, and the University.
 - Central location with access to great resources such as Iowa State University and many businesses. It is also easy to get around and feels safe.
 - close to most things I need
 - close to work, close to my kids
 - commute to work
 - Convenient access to many things such as Iowa State Center events, medical facilities, I-35 to Des Moines etc.
 - Ease of access to everywhere in the city
 - easy to get around- traffic flow is good except during construction and right around 150
 - Everything is close and the traffic is not bad, which can make a trip to the grocery store less than 5 minutes. The layout of trees throughout the city is also amazing.
 - How accessible and easy it is to utilize city resources and commercial locations.
 - It is easy to get around and find places. It is clean in most areas and generally safe to be out after dark, although I feel less safe than I did 5 years ago
 - It is relatively easy to commute to various areas in Ames
 - Living in Ames: ease of getting around
 - Location

- Proximity to interstate, parks, entertainment, ISU facilities
- Smaller town & reachable locations
- we have the best clinics/hospital, fire/rescue, police force, city streets, and clean city
- Things to Do
 - abundance of restaurants, parks, gyms, shopping, community events without being in a metropolitan area
 - Bike/Running Paths
 - Finding things to do
 - Great plains
 - Liberalness number of choices for activities
 - Local Businesses
 - Local restaurants/ shopping. It is a small community with unique offerings
 - locally owned businesses. we never use box stores (other than Menards and Lowes)
 - parks, library, and history museum
 - parks; diverse opportunities and programs
 - rec activities and parks
 - recreational facilities, CyRide, coziness, homely feel
 - The best things about living in Ames are the community gathering opportunities such as the library activities, Main Street farmer's market, and numerous parks and shelters
 - The different community activities and festivals
 - The events around Ames and places to study.
 - The events. Always something to do in the summer.
 - The fun things and activities to do year round
 - the many entertainment opportunities available
 - There are a lot of activities available, and the city is also always clean and well maintained.
 - Wide choice of activities to choose from, both the city and ISU
- University
 - access to ISU sports and facilities
 - Apart from the advantages of being a university community, Ames feels very well-managed.
 - Being able to attend ISU
 - college, access to Cy Stephens, and programs in town
 - Convenience/proximity to Iowa State University.
 - Iowa state and Ames high education/diversity
 - Iowa State University and the Library is nice
 - ISU
 - ISU and city events, theater, available resources, hospitals, clinics.
 - ISU sports, activities at CY Stephens
 - ISU!!!! Ames also has great restaurants, beautiful parks, and a wonderful downtown area.
 - Living in a University town and all the functions that accompany an institution of higher learning. I find living in a such a conservative state to unpleasant, but the openness of Ames is refreshing
 - University Town
- Affordable
 - Cost of living
 - Cost of living, library, and Wheatfield
 - Great affordable community (2X).
 - How affordable it is and how easy it is to navigate
 - it's easy and not too expensive

- Low cost of living for good city services and location.
- Low taxes as a homeowner - good police and fire dept - very cost effective electric and water
- Lower rent prices
- The cost of living in Ames seems to be affordable compared to other central Iowa communities that are the same size or larger than Ames based on my personal experiences.
- There really are a lot of free or low-cost community events. The library is awesome
- Quality of Life
 - Everything seems to be designed with a purpose and not just hastily because of population growth. Trails running through areas to business placement
 - It's easy
 - Our neighborhood is very walkable - Great library sufficient shopping opportunities. need to make that part of new housing areas
 - Overall quality of life
 - Overall quality of life, including safety
 - people and the ease of living here
 - Perfect size for living quality.
 - Quality of life. I'm satisfied
 - Summertime when there are no college kids, and I can take Lincoln way. Also, they plow the roads well here. Also, there are a lot of trees. Also
 - Trees - friendly people- nice variety of shops. upkeep of lovely old buildings
 - We have a very high quality of life.
- City Admin/Staff
 - Ames is one of the best communities in the state to live in, very capable government staff,
 - Being able to raise concerns and find appropriate personnel to address them
 - Manageability and decency!
 - manageable, no traffic
 - Overall, a well-run city. Like the trails, parks, and golf courses.
 - The best thing to me is how much the city of Ames seems to care about improving residents' lives rather than being so focused on constant growth/attracting business like suburbs of Des Moines often are.
 - The city takes serving its people seriously and strives to achieve the common good.
 - The government provides convenient channels for people to express their opinions and fast services
 - The town is upkept well and while I have heard that crime has been a growing issue I have yet to see it much, so I believe law enforcement is good.
 - The willingness of the city to invest in its community and support an active lifestyle.
- Quiet
 - it is quiet
 - It is quiet and feels very safe and family friendly
 - It is kind of quiet on the west side of town, mostly due to the fact there is basically no development happening out there. I must drive to the other side of town if I want to go to almost any store
 - Peaceful and Quiet
 - Peaceful, organized and serene place.
 - Quiet community with many options
 - Quiet place with no traffic

- The town is quite peaceful, especially during summer break. The number of parks and greenspaces is nice to have.
- very quiet during the summers, and I can bike to the grocery store
- Friendly
 - Friendly People (2X)
 - Friendly people, ease of getting around. Lots of walking availability
 - It is a friendly town with great community services. I love Ames
 - People are generally accepting and nice here.
 - People are nice
 - Overall inclusive and caring community
- CyRide
 - Public transportation
 - Public Transportation and affordable housing make Ames a very livable city.
 - The best thing about living in Ames is the public transportation system. (CyRide)
 - The CyRide (3X)
 - The transportation.
- Clean
 - The city of Ames is clean and quiet. The people are lovely and well informed.
 - Clean and easy to get around
 - I absolutely love this town! It is clean and everyone is courteous, nice, and pleasure
 - I think the city is very clean overall and a very comfortable place to live for college students
 - it is a clean, diverse, and friendly community
 - It's well maintained and very clean here.
 - nice, clean community
- Good Town
 - Ames is overall the best. I will never move
 - good place, small city has most everything needed and good quality
 - I love living here! I came for college but have since graduated and have not left
 - I love living in Ames (2X)
 - It's still a nice town but has changed a lot in the past 20 years. Need more police patrol.
 - The vibe, the size, the flora and fauna.
- Good Amenities
 - Amenities, proximity to everything, university sports, safety, some bicycle trails
 - Ames feels like a small town but with access to more events, shows, restaurants, etc. and more diversity because of the presence of the University. I also love the large city parks with green space and mature trees everywhere.
 - Ames has a little bit of everything.
 - Ames is a wonderful city. I moved here from New York City in 1974. City girl at heart, I am very happy in Ames. I particularly love the Octagon, CY Stephens, U Museums, and ISU amenities. The combination of town & ISU amenities makes this a terrific place to live.
 - Convenience
 - I like the community and amenities offered for the size of Ames
- Biking and Walking
 - I don't always have to drive everywhere, and it doesn't always feel like a college town

- I love that I can bike to most places I regularly go. I love that I can drive to most places in 5-10 minutes. I like the fact that we have many nice amenities and cultural events in a mid-sized town. I like that ISU has a big impact on our mid-sized town.
- The city is actually rather walkable and has a decent public transportation system for the parts that aren't.
- Trail options (2X)
- Quality of Services
 - It does everything better than anywhere else I've lived/visited
 - It has pretty much everything we need, store-wise.
 - It is a town that can supply just about everything one might need and you can still get from one end to the other in 15-20 mins
 - McFarland Clinic
 - The best thing about living in Ames is the high quality of time spent on improving and giving high-quality resources through the park and recreation.
- Atmosphere
 - Beautiful
 - Small town atmosphere (2X)
 - The atmosphere because of the college aged kids. There is always something to do.
 - The college atmosphere and perfect size
- Water
 - The tap water (5X)
 - Use of stop lights and stop signs, good main roads
 - Resources within the city
 - Central location, and access to amenities
- Downtown
 - I like Main Street. Seeing more investment there would be nice.
 - I like the Main Street and the diverse groups we have here. And good public transport.
 - The downtown Ames area and activities, and rec services
 - The small businesses in the area
- Diversity
 - Diversity
 - The diversity of people and the college-town feel.
 - The diversity of people, thoughts, ideas and experiences
- Opportunities
 - All it has to offer
 - Opportunities, quality of life, great tasting water, good neighbors
 - There are lots of resources/ opportunities for families including sustainability efforts for the future
- Library
 - The library (2X)
 - The university. Walkable streets. Oh, yeah-it's home.
 - Wonderful library- great concerts beautiful parks Close enough to DM if you need something and far enough so not so much traffic
- Good Values
 - The culture

- The quality of people that live here! And there is so much to do! Also, Ames is so clean and shows that residents take pride in the appearance of their homes.
- Family
 - It does a lot for kids
 - It has many places & lives here has benefited my family
- Home
 - Ames is a university community that has been our home since 1968- could not be happier it is home.

Comments on Other Issues the City should focus its attention

- Recreation Amenities
 - Attracting more, new, and exciting things to Ames. How Ames and the university can flow better in one town. This felt divided and no in between
 - Bigger indoor place for children to play
 - I would like to see new interesting Parks and Recreation projects
 - Improving and encouraging community-centric activities such as the farmer's market and potential music and festivals
 - Indoor recreation services for all ages. Current facilities are lacking.
 - Lack of relevant community events. Everything that does happen is so niche or not applicable to me.
 - More community-based events. I know we have some already, but more is good.
 - Parks are nice, wish there was more hiking options
 - Splash pad at Daley Park. This was a proposal and I thought approved years ago, and nothing has progressed
 - Recreation, parks (although many improvements over the last couple of years) Continue to focus.
 - Shopping & restaurants. Really poor options. Always going to DSM.
 - The pool needs to open prior to 1 pm. We do not go often because that is the most dangerous time for sun exposure
 - Updates and upgrades to city auditorium and theaters. The arts do not get enough. The current library and aquatic center are sufficient - we don't need additional of these
- Street Improvements
 - Slow road works. Snow removal in public area causes snow accumulation in private areas to block or makes private snow removal more difficult
 - Crosswalk markings in Somerset that land to/ from bus stops
 - Drainage. Sidewalks always flooded after rain.
 - Duff road needs work! Lincoln way looks terrible, maybe a nice park?
 - I think the city should focus on renewing roads
 - Quality of roads on the edges of town
 - Removing the road diet. 24th and Hayes is a mess, 16th and Duff again a mess. I've never seen a bike north of 16th and Duff using the useless bike lane
 - Roads, Roads & Roads, Plus Potholes
 - Roadwork
 - street resurfacing
 - The main concern for me is the maintenance of roads and storm drains.
 - Understanding this can seem like a small issue, but it is irritating and an "easy" change to make the right lane in a 3-lane intersection a right turn only lane. Just requires painting arrows on the street and maybe installing a sign. It's a small change but would go a long way for overall traffic flow and not "back up" the lane going straight.
- Affordable Housing
 - Affordable housing (2X)
 - Affordable housing better disaster/ communication recovery
 - affordable housing - keeping family neighborhoods free of apartment complexes- i.e. zoning
 - housing costs
 - I think something needs to be done about the rent in town. The increases are starting to squeeze graduate students.
 - Low-income housing

- Maintaining low housing and rental prices.
- More affordable entry level houses. Easing traffic congested areas.
- Off-campus rentals are high for students and lease agreements are very rigid.
- rent is out of control with the new super high property values
- Smart Development
 - Accessible grocery shopping for new residential developments
 - Better major street planning to account for future growth.
 - Building a City of Ames that will serve the next generation better than it's served this one. Infrastructure can be improved; apartments need more regulation to student housing (don't want to get ripped off by greedy landlords) and we need more swing sets around Ames.
 - Ensuring stability of businesses and the infrastructure to ensure the town stays alive alongside the university.
 - I believe that the city should focus on providing sustainable housing.
 - I would like to see less consolidation of retail and commercial establishments in town along the Lincoln Way, Duff Ave., and Grand Ave. corridors if possible. I would like to see more commercial and retail areas in other areas of town beyond those three streets/corridors when possible, and when the retail/commercial area is appropriate for that part of town. Please try to ensure that time sensitive information (e.g. progress updates on restoring electric outages, information about snow ordinances, notifications about unexpected road closures, etc.) can be easily accessed directly on the cityofames.org website. I rarely use social media websites, and I am not particularly interested in installing a City of Ames smartphone app. Being able to access that sort of time sensitive information directly from the City's website, without needing to use social media sites or a smartphone app, would be very beneficial. Thank you!
 - No more apt buildings!!!
 - planning on growth finishing projects
 - Planning! The city is already overbuilt in terms of apartments and retail. What when the student pop. falls?
 - the aquatic center is being built - the estimated annual cost for a person is not affordable at my lower to middle income - so I can never use it and voted against it
 - The dirt lot next to Mr. Burrito on Lincoln Way... turn it into a garden?
- Bike/Pedestrian Infrastructure
 - Creating protected bike lanes like the one on Ash Avenue. I enjoy biking to work and around town, but I feel unsafe biking in the road, and I know that it makes some people who are walking uncomfortable when I pass them on the sidewalks. I would 100% bike more if there were more protected biking lanes. (Protected meaning that there are physical barriers such as curbs between bikers and car traffic)
 - Getting people to bike and walk etc. Ridiculous number of cars on the road for a town of this size. People used to bike and walk much more. It's not from a lack roads and paths to bike on either. Clean action bill is a joke and a scam as well.
 - I worry a lot about pedestrian & bicyclist safety. It is scary to cross certain intersections. Some intersections are scary for cars to use. I am recovering from a car accident.
 - More Sustainability, Walkability for students
 - Pedestrianized areas-or ped-prioritized business areas (downtown/Campustown)
 - Pedestrian safety. More lights at crosswalks
 - Sidewalks in the residential area
 - When RAGBRAI came to town in 2023, it was so easy to get around by bike. Cars were paying attention and deferring to bikers. Let's make this the norm!

- Human Services
 - Building businesses on North side Ames. Using frontage roads along Duff to flow traffic towards stop lights. North Ames Fire Department. Increase ambulance units
 - fire and police
 - homelessness and mental health crisis ... community outreach
 - I think our Animal Rescue/Control facilities are an embarrassment to a city of our size. The facilities should be updated and increased in size.
 - Implementing PulsePoint; city gym really is old; more events with childcare provided
 - More daycares. The waitlists are long and cause people to leave Ames.
 - reduce your insane hike in property taxes. Increase affordable childcare
 - There have been more homeless people recently who could use support services, and I would like rental regulations or renters' rights to be considered more, things are very landlord friendly.
- Traffic
 - S Duff is very congested. The city needs to look for ways to help create a better traffic flow
 - Traffic congestion on bust streets- Duff and Lincoln Way. Save construction for summer when traffic is less
 - Traffic flow, especially around Duff, is congested. Bike paths in the major areas are not sufficient or safe. Traveling along Lincoln, we either must take sidewalks, which pedestrians do not like, or being on the road with cars, which is unsafe, and drivers do not like.
 - Traffic issues, putting commercial/retail south part of Ames was stupid, now everyone has to drive from West and North where you have put all of the apts. and new developments
 - Traffic on Duff-encourage more business to west Ames spread out people a bit.
 - When turning onto Grand Ave. from 13th St. it is difficult to see oncoming traffic when making a left turn.
- Public Nuisances
 - banning all fireworks
 - Coyote control (we have them in our yards, on our streets. They do NOT FEAR HUMANS. I contacted the city and was told to make Noise. The coyotes did not respond to yelling or hitting two blocks together.)
 - Get the homeless people out of Hy-Vee parking lot
 - Getting rid of the nuisance ordinances that don't pertain to accessibility or safety for the public at large.
 - I have a problem with raccoons near my property.
 - Noisy vehicle enforcement and reckless driving. Also, marijuana smoking in apartment complexes is a major issue.
- Parking
 - downtown parking
 - downtown parking - 5th street not wide enough for slant parking
 - I think the parking meters are a little excessive
 - Parking / Recreation service in winters
 - Providing more areas to park. There is not enough parking space to accommodate all Ames residents
- Recycling
 - Better recycling options
 - Can we have pickup for recycled materials at our homes, so we do not have to drop off. Many smaller communities offer their service.

- Ease of recycling
- Resource recovery, solid waste disposal
- We need more glass dumpsters around town
- Police
 - Better police patrol at busy intersections such as the one between 16th st. and S Grand
 - Bias training for police officers, body cameras
 - divesting from police & putting this money into community
 - Holding police officers accountable
 - Law Enforcement
- Inclusion
 - DEI
 - Inclusiveness of all identities in community improvement, policy making, and city program and events
 - More public input. Really disappointed in the decision to eliminate the historical markers on corners downtown.
 - Program for seniors - more in downtown
 - Young adult groups for post college adults
- Infrastructure Amenities
 - Accessibility for people with disabilities
 - Age of our power plant, need to upgrade or use the "grid" more ... How to deal with "trash ... landfill?"
 - Energy storage mediums for the electric grid, electric charging infrastructure, and animal shelter facilities
 - Speed up road repairs- they take way too long
- More Shopping
 - Getting a larger diversity of businesses
 - Getting more interesting businesses. There's nothing to do here
 - Restoring the mall - bring in more stores
 - Shopping growth. this is a college town with basically no mall
- Cut Costs
 - Cost of living; Duff - quit trying to push everything in one area; Lincoln; tore down everything- what is the plan?
 - Focus on cutting expenditures
 - It's difficult times for many. The city should tighten its belt.
 - Property valuation is high in Ames which makes Property Taxes higher than other Towns (excluding Polk County). I feel a priority should be on cutting expenses
- Attracting Residents
 - Better restaurants such as olive garden and cracker barrel. Too many sports bars in North Ames
 - Bring more companies to Ames for post grad jobs, build more affordable homes. It is so difficult to buy a home in town.
 - Retaining ISU grads by attracting business. work with developers to get the Linc project moving
- Climate
 - cancelling the climate pledge boondoggle
 - Preparing for climate change. Housing (including cracking down on Airbnb-houses should be lived in!)

- Stop wasting gasoline by city employees who never turn off unattended city vehicles! This also adds to air pollution unnecessarily!
- Safety
 - Public safety and building quality
 - The Ames school district should be improved, it is not very safe and should be made safer.
 - Violence in the high school
- Garbage/Litter
 - Please pick up the trash around town.
 - Trash builds up that happens at a lot of apartment complexes
- Snow Removal
 - Every year the snowplow tears up our yard. 1949 Wyngate Drive. When we call someone just throws grass seed out which never grows
 - snow removal
- Crime
 - Having better security measures. Ex, Security cameras
 - I think recreational marijuana should not be criminalized. However, I do NOT want multiple recreational marijuana dispensary sites in Ames. I do NOT like how some places like downtown Kansas City have so many shops with candy-flavored products that would appeal to kids. I think it is something that should be considered carefully and researched how recreational marijuana is impacting other communities. I am very concerned about how increased marijuana access would impact teens and families in Ames.
- Beautification
 - city should take care of keeping old trees alive, introducing more hardwood trees. Improvement of cultural ingredients; more amenities and activities for wintertime
 - the ugliness of east Lincoln way just west of Duff intersection
- Communication
 -
 - Community outreach
- CyTown
 - CyTown - lots of concerns All the empty storefronts in Campustown
 - Ensure CyTown does not negatively impact other parts of the city
- Leadership
 - Continuing prudent, competent caring leadership
- Satisfied
 - I am really satisfied

Additional Comments

- Positive
 - After being born and raised in Algona, Iowa, graduating in 1965 and leaving the nest to attend Iowa State University. Consider it a true blessing that I have spent my adult life at two Ames residences, 167 E University village while at ISU and (another address?) while raising our family and pursuing our careers. Roger at the ISU MU, while I taught English at Ogden HS 73-78 and worked for Heartland AEA in the shelter care program at Rosedale shelter in Ames. Ames is my home-forever - and I am blessed
 - Amazing city
 - Ames has a lot to offer. Graduated from ISU with some graduate work, I feel at home here. I am very satisfied with the service, but it is a little expensive to live here.
 - Ames has been a great place to grow old
 - Ames is a really great place to live, and I have never had a negative experience with any city service besides the power outage incident. I can see myself staying here after I graduate.
 - Ames is a safe place! There's a lot of stimulation for our intellectual and artistic needs! Discrimination is almost zero. We love Ames
 - Appreciate the city councils' efforts and everyone who helps makes this a good place to live, work, and play. I do have concerns about the huge property assessment increases. Also, anecdotal issues at Ames Schools are concerning.
 - The City of Ames is terrific. The items that I have listed are minor. A few improvements or changes could really take the city to the next level. Things like; what kind of city are we welcoming? Why do you have parking meters then? I've seen a recent gathering their people are attending meetings or dinner downtown and get ticketed at 5:50pm. Maybe only 12-2 if necessary? I've traveled a lot. Ames is doing well but maybe some more public art, keeping historical markers like the ones downtown etc. would be. a nice visual improvement. More trees... also maybe public gardens? Add lights back to brookside Tennis courts... they were there until the courts were resurfaced- can never get any traction with current leadership.
 - Haven't had very many issues with the City of Ames and glad to know that they like to take care of their residents and value their opinions.
 - I can tell the people who work for the city are trying to make it feel more like a community. There are more events, and many new businesses. However, I think the amount of money given to our Law Enforcement is staggering. I'm not stupid. That won't change. I'm also not fully naive. I know many of their services are important, but I don't think that justifies their massive budget. I think it would be beneficial to reallocate some of their money to other services.
 - I have always felt fortunate that Ames was my hometown, and I still value it as a retiree. A bit sad about what's happening at the high school - slipping a little in behavior
 - I just really hope the new indoor pool facility will have a STEAM ROOM
 - I love living in the Ames. I am so excited about the indoor pool coming. I appreciate the opportunity to take this survey. Snow plowing - they tore up my yard. I wish we could report it and the city pays for it to be fixed. That part of my yard looks awful.
 - I really like the farmer's market that is every Saturday in the summer. I also really appreciate the little booklet that the city sent out, Ames Insider, there were many things I did not know, and it was nice it is about all year long events and businesses.

- I really love living in the Ames. It has a small-town feeling, especially around Main St. People are welcoming, and my workplace is wonderful. The city is clean and beautiful. The parks are lovely. I wish parking meters were not as common but there are so many things to do! I do struggle to make friends post-grad, but I think that is a common issue for young people across the board, not just in Ames.
- I'm satisfied with Ames.
- I've appreciated all my interactions with city staff. Keep it up. Ames has become an expensive town. That's most unfortunate.
- None of what I wrote here's personal. I'm from the coast, where people are blunter than in the Midwest. Aside from the nuisance ordinances, this is a pretty good town, despite having a distinct college town vibe of apathy and weird traffic.
- Thank you
- Thank you for all you do.
- Thank you for consistently seeking citizen input.
- Thank you for maintaining such a great public park system, water treatment, public transportation network, and other aspects fostering community in Ames. From what I've seen and heard, the Ames police department has made progress in areas that most police departments in the state have not, and I appreciate that. Please continue pushing to improve the police department so that our community can feel safe and comfortable around our officers. I've spent the last decade or so of my life here, I love this city and this community, and I will be sad to be leaving soon. Someday I may return, but until then please continue investing in this community and growing it so the good people here can live and thrive. Thank you for everything you do.
- We absolutely love Ames, IA
- We came home because I became disabled. Family in DM, but we chose Ames because we loved it when we lived here before
- Suggested Improvement
 - 1) allow house owners to have input into the maintenance and beautification of nearby common areas, especially areas close to their own house. 2) the government can introduce some policies for companies to settle or invest in Ames to promote population growth and economic development
 - A dog park on the North side of town Cross walk signs on street in somerset
 - Ames needs to expand business and restaurants in the growing Northwest area. Needs to do a much better job at inspection of new houses as too much must be repaired or replaced far too soon
 - Develop west Ames more, there is enough in the eastern half of Ames, I just want more restaurants and shops that are close to where I live
 - I wish the drop-off payments box at city hall would be easier to access! Maybe move it back to location on west side of city hall. It is very inconvenient to have to drive up, then reverse back on to the street. Once the Schainker Plaza is finished, where the heck will people use it, park?? Seems very inconvenient!
 - If there were a way to enforce people to clean up after their dog on public trails that would be excellent. There is always dog poop on the sidewalk near the middle school and grassy areas on the path in that area.
 - It would be great to have a senior citizen high rise living build in downtown Ames
 - More facilities for alternative transport. Distributed rather than centralized amenities - stores, businesses, etc. I strongly dislike driving - Ames makes it possible though not particularly easy to avoid doing so.
 - More retail and doing something with the sucky mall

- Please look into PulsePoint! Please investigate childcare for adult events! Look at how to decrease CyRide ride times. Disagree with yard nuisance ordinance. Thank you, Ames! Love the library. Love the number of parks. Love the number of family programs. Like the number of kid and adult recreation/ fitness offerings.
- Shopping in the NW section is lacking, A Ross or Dillard's would keep us shopping in Ames. We currently drive to Des Moines and Jordan Creek due to lack of variety here. Old Navy and Maurices are low quality, and I do not like to waste my money there ... Kohls is never stocked or JC Penny ... JC Penny is at least of high quality but no kids' clothes variety. We need another Younkers type of store ... tired of relying on online or DSM.
- Back in March I tried to report a sidewalk/pavement hazard, the app to do this would not let me complete my report - could you investigate this - the sidewalk that is in question and that I fell on and injured my knee was in front of residence 3311 Cullen Dr. (unevenness caused by a tree's root system pushing up the sidewalk)
- Construction road directions in Ames are awful! I am surprised there has not been a serious accident from someone misunderstanding where to go when routes changed for construction! 3 examples of places I have seen multiple people confused and go wrong way! 1) heading west on Lincoln Way in front of west Hy-Vee (current) 2) getting off I-35 at 13th St. turning left onto 13th (earlier this spring). 3) Duff and 13th St. last year at the light - horrible signage please do better/ be clearer before someone dies
- CyTown will be an interesting challenge. Continue to carefully monitor developers - especially those from outside Ames who won't have to live with their mistakes. So glad E 13th mall was stopped. Did not see anything about city forester but appreciate all she does to get more trees planted around town
- I would like the roads fixed. & more fun things to do and be environmentally friendly
- invest in the mall!
- My only negative comment for Ames is the condition of some of the houses on Duff. It is a busy main road that people come into the Ames on, and it gives a negative image of the quality of homes. They should have to at least clean up the outside.
- Please, please, please consider putting a Street light (s) on Oakwood Road past the church by the farmland that is by the entrance to the apartment/ townhomes. There is currently no lighting and would be very helpful to see where to turn, others walking etc. And to feel safer in that area as a younger professional woman.
- some street projects seem like there is very little progress- example- traveled on 24th street twice- about 1-2 weeks apart- 2:30 pm on dry sunny days and no one is out working?? this shows a lack of urgency to me from the construction company that was granted the contract
- The intersection of Duff and S 16th St frequently backs up on Duff heading north. A longer light to turn left or longer turning lane would be nice. Same for the Duff and Lincoln Way intersection.
- There is one short gravel section of road in my neighborhood off Dawes Dr. The city tries to keep it swept up but it's a hill and rocks are always falling and covering the bike path. I've seen kids fall off bikes here and it's dangerous in the middle of a neighborhood. Would love to see this fixed instead of another bike path to nowhere.
- We badly need a public bathroom on Main Street. I'd shop there more often and longer if we had one. Pothole is still a big problem. Parks need open bathrooms all year long
- Services
 - Do feel more out-pt mental health needed in community center where patients can meet, have needed staff, help with meds- they did away with these services.
 - I do like the addition of mental health help with the police

- I have only one concern. Your people that remove snow - they get way to close to curb - I have seen "hunks" of cement that has been broke because of this
- I think the Schainker plaza being constructed will be a magnet for homeless people to set up tents and live there, so I think it is a huge mistake and a waste of property tax dollars.
- Our largest employer ISU is losing faculty and staff because of the decline of Ames school system. What was once a "highly rated school district" is now average at best (Ames middle school is rated 4/10 on great schools) You will chase away families if you continue prioritizing activism over learning and safety. Childcare and property taxes are too high for the ROI which continues to lessen. Do not turn the town into only students and singles as families will flock to Gilbert or away from the area.
- We need a new animal shelter. We need to upgrade resource recovery to continue to keep as much out of the ground as possible
- Would like additional drop off recycling for all plastics Signage says only milk and water bottles # 1. Aspen waste recycling takes all plastics # 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, &6
- Survey Comments
 - I do not have any additional comments. I hope this survey was helpful to you
 - Thank you for seeking out opinions, I've never heard of any other city I've lived in doing this. For the snow removal I think you do a good job but sometimes it's slow to get started or the slush is not dealt with often enough. Thank you for all the hard work you all do for the city. Please fix the timing of the traffic lights for real. Also, for a future survey I think a short stay in Ames should be defined. Like I plan to stay for a while but not 20 years and it seems like that's different from going here for school.
 - Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback as a resident and thank you for considering these responses!
 - Thank you for the pool ticket - I bought a summer pass but have guests coming that will be nice to offer
 - too many questions.
- Better Management
 - better management overall. Increase quality and efficacy focus on substance, not just "checking boxes." Ensure rotation not just promotion. Be world class (at least strive for it). Expand horizon through specific best practices and in-house research - utilize social capital fully.
 - The city feels very unwelcoming. Especially the Chamber of Commerce. That whole group acts like a high school clique.
 - The lack of actual "affordable housing" in Ames is problematic. There needs to be more collaboration between the city of Ames, construction, realtors, and non-profits. It also would be nice to have a more centralized location for social services, or at least be more accessible by public transportation. There are a lot of empty properties around Ames. It would be nice to see a "teen center" concept in one of those spaces besides the only choice being the Boys and Girls Club which is for younger people.
- Expensive
 - I do not mind high property taxes when I feel our schools are succeeding and when the city provides services like ash tree removal and tree debris pickup after a big storm
 - The new "plaza" by City Hall is a waste of taxpayer \$\$. New HOA type rules (length of grass, time to remove sticks, etc.) are completely unacceptable and you're asking neighbors to "build community." We planned on staying upon retirement and are now looking at other options.
 - Well, as I am a low-income earner, it's kind of hard-to-find nicer affordable rentals.

- Traffic Flow
 - Grand Ave from Lincoln way to 24th is an embarrassment. It is long overdue for fresh start that much of 13th has (and still needs finished). It will not be long before Duff Ave from Lincoln way to the Walmart light achieves the same sad state.
 - I live in the Northwest Part of the city. The growth out towards Gilbert on George Washington Carver is continuing to increase. At some point the traffic on GWC is going to be at a point that it can't handle. It is already unsafe for pedestrians/walkers/bikers. Please be proactive in a solution for at some point is going to be a problem.
- CyTown
 - The city should not be giving up a portion of its tax dollars to fund CyTown. CyTown should stand on its own. It will already take away things from the rest of the town. if they want it, it should be self-taxing.
 - We hope the CyTown Project is pursued with common sense for the benefit of university folks, the town citizens, and sports fans - not just for rich donors. We support public education.... not what the current state government is doing to education. We support vibrant libraries that are not censored. Thank you.
- Other
 - How are you as a City Council dealing with the local restrictions the Republican legislature and governor have put us on. I would like to thank you for the many, many hours you put in to help make Ames as great as it is.
 - I do not like the Inis Groce has been turned into Disneyland. It is now so busy it cannot be used at peak times by children with disabilities. It is far too crowded.
- Bike/Pedestrian
 - Please make Ames more bike and pedestrian friendly. - Stop signs (4 way) needed at Stange & Northridge Parkway (very dangerous intersection) for cars & pedestrians - Outdoor water fountains in parks. Only "on" for 6 months of year or less. Minneapolis St Paul has fountains that are year-round, why can't we? - Invest in city center, less in city spread -Can't we have one 400-meter walk/run path open to all residents? - Dog Park in Central Ames - Not requiring a car to get to! Invest in Central Ames
- Communication
 - The city could do better with social media communication after disasters. After both derecho and neighborhood mini derecho people had questions related to power/ cleanup that were not being addressed on social media. Example: After neighborhood mini derecho there were questions to city pickup of branches. The city did not meet policy timeline for indicating whether city pickup would occur, very frustrating for people to know what to do. Other times during power outages, information not provided quickly or kept updated.

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