

ITEM #: 15  
DATE: 01-28-25  
DEPT: ADMIN

**COUNCIL ACTION FORM**

**SUBJECT:** GREEN IOWA AMERICORPS HOSTING

**BACKGROUND:**

Green Iowa AmeriCorps is a state-wide community service program founded in 2009. The program partners with over 20 city and county governments, school districts, non-profits, and conservation organizations in Iowa to support community-specific environmental sustainability efforts. Program partners that choose to participate are known as host sites. Services host sites may receive through the program can include, but are not limited to:

- Energy efficiency audits and weatherization for homes and businesses.
- Conservation work, including tree planting, prairie maintenance, water quality monitoring, and prescribed burns.
- Reduction in waste through waste auditing.
- Promotion of recycling and composting within the community.
- Greenhouse gas inventorying for climate action planning, and more.

Green Iowa AmeriCorps provides these types of services to host sites by employing interested community members to serve as Green Iowa AmeriCorps members. The program matches an interested host site with interested Green Iowa AmeriCorps members through a standard hiring process.

The Green Iowa AmeriCorps members commit to serving in a three-quarter time position, roughly 26-28 hours per week, for a set term from September to the following August. Host sites specify what type of services they are seeking and members are recruited specifically for those host site positions. Part of the programs goal is to provide the members opportunities to participate in community outreach projects and environmental education activities.

**Staff is requesting Council's authorization to apply to become a Green Iowa AmeriCorps host site for two Green Iowa AmeriCorps members for the period between September 2025 - August 2026.** The program requires a minimum of two members per host site.

If accepted into the program, the two Green Iowa AmeriCorps members will advance the work that can be done to achieve the goals of the Climate Action Plan. Specifically, their scope of work will involve administering energy efficiency services to interested Ames residents, complimenting and coordinating with the other energy audit and weatherization programs. Their primary duties will involve conducting energy audits and directly installing energy-efficient measures such as weather stripping, caulking, pipe insulation, LED lights, and low-flow sink aerators. Members will be trained to do this work by Green Iowa AmeriCorps and the Building Performance Institute (BPI).

The materials needed for conducting energy audits and weatherization will be covered by the Electric Department Demand Side Management Program, which is the same fund used for electric rebates and other demand-side management strategies. Staff estimates material cost would be around \$40-\$60 on average for a housing unit and the goal would be to complete 70 home energy audits and weatherization. The host site fee to participate in Green Iowa AmeriCorp of \$10,000 will also be funded

by the Demand Side Management Program fund.

When the members not conducting energy audits or weatherization activities, they will participate in sustainability-related outreach events, promote sustainable actions through public education, and conduct research as needed to support the City's sustainability efforts.

The City Manager's Office will provide a workspace, computers, access to transportation for work, and other supplies as needed.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

1. Authorize an application to be a host site for the Green Iowa AmeriCorps program for two Green Iowa AmeriCorps members.
2. Do not authorize the City of Ames applying as a host site at this time.

**CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

**The Green Iowa AmeriCorps program aligns with the City's sustainability goals and a partnership would result in making progress towards Climate Action Plan implementation. The energy efficiency services provided by the program will lower utility bills for residents and reduce residential community greenhouse gas emissions. The program fee is also a cost-effective investment for the Electric Department in peak demand reduction.** Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative No. 1, as noted above.