



MEMO

To: Mayor and City Council
From: Jeramy Neefus, Principal Clerk, City Manager's Office
Date: March 7, 2025
Subject: Council Packet Summary

Listed below are the communications to the City Council known to staff as of March 7, 2025:

1. Jeremey Vortherms, Iowa Department of Transportation Assistant District 1 Engineer – February 26, 2025
RE: Notice of Upcoming Construction on I35 from IA 5 Interchange to Co. Rd C-47
2. David Cornelison, Des Bike Pedicab – February 27, 2025
RE: Request for Safety Regulations for Bicycle Taxi Services
3. Jake Hanson, Ames Home Builders Association President – March 6, 2025
RE: Request for Reevaluation of Front Yard Parking Regulations
4. Sara Van Meeteren, Building Official – March 7, 2025
RE: Carbon Monoxide Alarms in Rental Properties

February 26, 2025

County: Polk

Project Number: MPIN-035-1(718)87—0N-77

Location: I35 from IA 5 Interchange to Co. Rd C-47 near Dows

Type of Work: Pavement repairs

Proposed Project Letting: 04-15-2025

Scott Schainker
City Manager
515 Clark St
Ames, IA 50010

Dear Steve:

This is official notification to the City Council that the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) proposes to let a project as referenced above. The project, or a portion thereof, is located near your city. The project consists of pavement repairs to I35 from the IA 5 interchange to County Road C-47 near Dows in Franklin County and is proposed for construction during 2025. The project will not require the road to be detoured. The Resident Construction Engineer Frank Leong of Grimes, IA 515-986-2863 will oversee this project.

The work will be done in accordance with the current Form 810034 "Agreement for Primary Road Extension Maintenance and Operation". Project costs will be paid from the Primary Road Fund and no charges will be made against the city.

We would appreciate this project notification being included on your next City Council meeting agenda as a matter of information for the council members. Please consider including in any newsletters or mailings to the public, as well. If you have any questions concerning the work involved, please contact Donna Breitbach 515-239-1007 as soon as possible to expedite any possible changes.

Sincerely,



Jeremey Vortherms, P.E.
Assistant District 1 Engineer

JV/jmr
Enclosure

cc: Doug Heeren, Local Systems Bureau
Frank Leong, Grimes RCE
Donna Breitbach, North Area Engineer

Project Location:



Hall, Renee

From: Des Bike <desbike@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 27, 2025 10:33 AM
To: City Council and Mayor
Cc: Dave Lippold
Subject: Pedicab ordinance request

[External Email]

Good day,

My name is David Cornelison. I have owned and operated Des Bike Pedicab (bicycle taxi service) in Ames for football games and concerts since 2011. In these 14 years, my business partner, Dave Lippold and I have operated without accident, injury, or dissatisfied customer.

We would like to appear before the council to request that Ames enact a simple ordinance to ensure that bike taxis that operate in Ames for events are insured and operate with basic safety equipment such as lights.

In 2023 and 2024 we have noticed an influx of out-of-state pedicabs (bike taxis) that flock to Ames to take advantage of Ames' no regulation pedicab environment for concerts and football games.

A majority of these operators do not operate in Des Moines or Iowa City because both of these cities have ordinances that require proof of insurance, background checks, lights, and licensure.

Can we be added to an upcoming council meeting agenda to discuss a simple common sense ordinance that protects the public and ensures that bicycle taxis are a safe option for Ames?

David Cornelison
Des Bike
515-491-4782

Hall, Renee

From: Stacy Woodward <ameshomebuilders@msn.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 6, 2025 3:32 PM
To: City Council and Mayor
Cc: Jake Hanson
Subject: Front Yard Parking Regulations

[External Email]



Ames City Council
515 Clark Ave
Ames, IA 50010

Dear Members of the Ames City Council,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Ames Home Builders Association to request an evaluation of the Front Yard Parking Regulations adopted in 2022. While we understand the intent behind these regulations is to ensure orderly and aesthetically pleasing neighborhoods, we have identified several concerns that we believe warrant a review of their effectiveness.

Our primary concern is that the current regulations adopt a one-size-fits-all approach, but does not adequately address the diverse needs of both older existing lots in town and newer lots in modern subdivisions. Specifically, setting a maximum width for driveways at the property line without considering the design of the house can lead to configurations that are less aesthetically pleasing and impractical. One example being a 2-stall garage with two separate overhead garage doors, homeowners can find themselves having a short angle to extend the width of their driveway to access both doors because the 20' allowed at the property line is not sufficient.

The current standards, as outlined in Chapter 29 of the Zoning Ordinance and the Statewide Urban Design & Specifications (SUDAS), limit on-site driveway width based on the size of the garage or parking spaces. For example, a 1-car garage driveway is limited to a maximum width of 12 feet, 2-car to 20 feet, and 3-car to 24 feet. While these standards aim to maintain uniformity, they do not account for the unique characteristics of different lots and modern home designs. Additionally, the prohibition of looped driveways limits the creativity and potential character of homes, especially when the lot width can accommodate such configurations. Restricting driveway width based on the number of car stalls is also too limiting and does not allow for variations that might be necessary due to unique circumstances.

We believe that the ordinance was developed with the ease of enforcement in mind rather than the interests of the residents of Ames. As such, we propose that the City Council consider revising the regulations

to allow for more flexibility and creativity in driveway design, and set standards that reach the intended goals of the ordinance without a blanket maximum width of driveway based on stalls in the garage.

The Ames Home Builders Association and its members are eager to engage in a constructive dialogue with the City Council to find a solution that meets the needs of both the city and the home building community. We believe that by working together, we can develop regulations that are both practical and beneficial for all stakeholders.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to the opportunity to discuss this further.

Sincerely,

Jake Hanson
President
Ames Home Builders Association

Stacy Woodward, Executive Officer, Ames Home Builders Association PO Box 864 Ames, IA 50010 (515) 460-5550 www.ameshomebuilders.com *Membership in the AHBA pays for itself, see our Member Savings Program at www.nahb.org/savings*

To: Ames City Council

From: Sara Van Meeteren, Building Official

Date: March 7, 2025

Subject: Carbon Monoxide Alarms in Rental Properties

During the Fire Department's Budget Presentation on February 5th, Council inquired about the requirements for carbon monoxide alarms in rental properties. Staff explained the requirements currently reside in the State Code and are unenforceable at the local level. Council then made a motion to “ask staff to prepare a memo that considers best practices for the use of carbon monoxide detectors with enforcement options.”

CURRENT CODE:

The Rental Code does not require carbon monoxide alarms in rental dwellings unless the property has more than one unit and the units share a common furnace. If the property has more than one unit and the units share a common furnace, a carbon monoxide alarm is required within the vicinity of the furnace.

The Building and Fire Codes began requiring carbon monoxide alarms in new construction in 2012. These are verified through the building inspection process. **However, since these are construction codes and not maintenance codes, they do not apply to existing buildings unless triggered by an addition or alteration.**

In 2016, the State Legislature amended the smoke detector statute to require carbon monoxide alarms in all residential buildings that contain fuel-burning appliances or an attached garage. These amendments went into effect on July 1, 2018. Buildings affected by the amendments include both rental and owner-occupied dwellings. Every residential dwelling is required to be in compliance with these standards even though the City has not adopted an ordinance. Violations of the statute and regulations would be subject to the penalties set out by the State of Iowa, but unenforceable at the local level by staff without an ordinance. Currently, Housing Inspectors educate on the importance of carbon monoxide alarms and make owners aware of the State Code requirements during inspections.

A review of neighboring jurisdictions showed that most have adopted, by reference, the State Code or language from the International Building and Fire Codes. The ordinances contain the same requirements, but the State Code offers a few exceptions and alternatives on locations. The exceptions offered by the State do not provide the best level of protection for rental units where tenants are transient and perhaps less educated on the dangers of carbon monoxide and the responsibilities for maintenance of alarms. **If staff is directed to draft an ordinance, it is recommended that the State's exceptions be omitted from the requirements for rental properties.**

The Rental Code has required dual sensor smoke alarms since 2009 so many properties may already be in compliance with carbon monoxide alarm requirements. However, not all dual sensor alarms detect carbon monoxide; some detect different types of heat/smoke so it is possible new detectors would need to be purchased. The proposed location of the alarms will also be the same as currently required for smoke detectors. **Alarms can be hard-wired, battery operated or plug into an outlet with battery back-up.** Many alarms now are good for 10 years and do not require the battery to be changed. The purchase price ranges from \$20-\$50 per alarm.

STAFF COMMENTS:

Staff is prepared to draft an ordinance that would require carbon monoxide alarms in rental units if Council should choose to do so. Additionally, staff could draft an ordinance that would make the requirement for carbon monoxide alarms enforceable on owner-occupied properties, as well as rental properties. However, as you can imagine, the enforcement of this type of ordinance for owner-occupied properties would be extremely difficult for City staff.