



# MEMO

**To:** Mayor and City Council  
**From:** Jeramy Neefus, Principal Clerk, City Manager's Office  
**Date:** August 8, 2025  
**Subject:** Packet of Communications to Council

Listed below are the communications to the City Council known to staff as of August 8, 2025:

1. Michele Farnham, ISU Research Park Facilities Manager – July 21, 2025  
**RE:** Request for Zoning Text Amendment Related to Landscaping
2. Jamie Beyer, Pollinator-Friendly Community Task Force Member – July 31, 2025  
**RE:** Emerald Ash Borer Treatment Methods and Native Pollinators
3. Vanessa Baker-Latimer, Housing Coordinator – August 7, 2025  
**RE:** Status on the Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) CDBG-CV Grant Fund Award to the City of Ames on Behalf of The Bridge Home
4. Kelly Diekmann, Planning and Housing Director – August 12, 2025  
**RE:** Request for a Zoning Text Amendment to the Improvement of Off-Street Parking Areas and Driveways Standards for Ag Equipment

**Hall, Renee**

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**From:** Farnham, Michele M [ISRP] <mfarnham@iastate.edu>  
**Sent:** Monday, July 21, 2025 4:18 PM  
**To:** Hall, Renee  
**Cc:** Diekmann, Kelly; Anderson, Ray; Sanders, Rick [ISRP]; Chuck Winkleblack (chuck@hunziker.com); Farnham, Michele M [ISRP]; Bray, Heather [ISRP]  
**Subject:** Zone Text Amendment

[External Email]

Renee,

The ISU Research Park would like to make a request to the City Council for a Zoning Ordinance text amendment to allow rock mulch in the primary planter between the parking lot and the street of the building and any other planters within the parking lot located at 3800 University Blvd. This will help the drainage in those areas and prevent any further erosion.

Let me know if you need any additional information about this request.

**Please note:** Beginning July 1, 2025, I will be on phased retirement. My work days will typically be M/T/W or T/W/Th. In my absence, please contact Heather Bray at [hbray@iastate.edu](mailto:hbray@iastate.edu) or Marty Noe at 515-520-9708. I will return emails and phone calls when I am in the office.

Thank you,

**Michele Farnham**

***Manager of Facilities Services***

1805 Collaboration Place, Suite 1250

Ames, IA 50010

○ 515-296-6723

● 515-460-3892

[mfarnham@iastate.edu](mailto:mfarnham@iastate.edu)



IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY  
**ResearchPARK**

## Hall, Renee

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**From:** Jamie Beyer <beyersbog@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 31, 2025 11:21 AM  
**To:** City Council and Mayor; Edwards, Gabriele  
**Cc:** Tim Stewart; Gina McAndrews; Lisa Kuehl  
**Subject:** Treating Ash Trees for Emerald Ash Borer with Neonicotinoids  
**Attachments:** Jamie Beyer 07 30 15min.mp3

[External Email]

This is a request of the Ames City Council to stop treating ash trees for Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) with insecticides on city property. We have attached a recording of this issue that will be aired on KHOI FM radio tomorrow morning (Aug 1) between 7 and 7:30.

Ames has been a state and national leader as a bird and pollinator friendly community, providing funds towards several projects and in supporting best practices to enhance these causes. One practice, however, may be counterproductive. The last few years, EAB has been killing the majority of ash trees in central Iowa. Many ash trees in Ames have died already except for the trees that have been treated with systemic insecticides which kill the EAB insects before the tree dies from the Borer damage. While the borers may die, the treated trees will continue to require periodic chemical application and will likely die in time.

The main four systemic insecticides that are currently used, **emamectin benzoate, imidacloprid, dinotefuran and azadiractin**, which are in the class of chemicals called neonicotinoids (neonics). The insecticide is applied as a ground drench or is injectable into the trunk of a tree, the chemical is then transported to all parts of the tree to paralyze and kill insects. All the above chemicals are lethal to not only EAB but also to most native pollinators. Most applications are a treatment every other year.

While the chemicals can prolong the death of a tree, the neonics are also killing a lot of our native pollinators. Some examples are bees, cecropia moths, tiger swallowtails, morning cloak butterflies, all of which prefer ash trees. Up to 20,000 insects can visit or inhabit a mature ash tree. In addition, since most of our untreated ash trees are dead the remaining ones are even **more attractive** to these important pollinators. The neonics also negatively affect birds since they eat either the larvae or the adult insects that are either laced with the poison or simply the insects are not there anymore. Consequently, we labeled these trees **"Poison Popsicles"**!

Another aspect that is not thought of by the public is the chemical is in the leaves for up to 7 years. So, using the leaves as a compost on a landscape can spread the chemical to other plants as they uptake the nutrients (and neonics) from the decomposing leaves. This can make other plants lethal to our native pollinators. Leaves used on a vegetable garden can impart the chemicals to the foods we eat. These leaves need to be landfilled and not composted which is **NOT** done since most people do not associate these leaves as being toxic.

According to Gabbi Edwards, the Ames City Forester, in the spring of 2023, the city treated 154 trees for EAB at a cost of over \$27,314. It has been two years since that treatment and, according to normal treatment scheduling, they are due to be treated again!!!! Gabbi also mentioned that at the time, the

reason the city treated the trees was to spread out the cost of tree removal over a longer period of time. What has changed since then?

The loss of almost every species of pollinators is becoming more evident, not just bumblebees, monarchs and honey bees but ALL insect species. Science has shown that neonics are a huge factor in these losses. The evidence is piling up. We are willing to bet that MOST citizens do not know that ash tree treatments for EAB creates a poison popsicle for not only insects/birds but even humans.

Our request of the Ames City Council is for the Ames Community to support what we've been building, a Bird and Pollinator Friendly Community, and to quit treating ash trees for EAB. The city can divert those dollars to be used on tree removal. Admittedly there may be an initial higher cost, but we will no longer be spending dollars on something that will happen anyway!!

Thank you for your consideration on this important matter and for caring about human/nature/pollinator health. Knowing the above information we are confident that the citizens of Ames will support this.

We would be glad to appear before the Council to address any questions/comments you may have. All of our emails are on this so you can respond to all of us. All four of us serve on the City of Ames Pollinator-Friendly Community Task Force.

Sincerely, Ames residents and/or property owners  
Jamie Beyer, Gina McAndrews, Lisa Kuehl, and Tim Stewart.

Jamie Beyer  
269 U Ave.  
Boone, Ia 50036  
Home 515/433-0194  
Work/Cell 515/231-0215  
beyersbog@aol.com  
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# Memo

Department of Planning & Housing

**To:** Mayor and City Council Members

**From:** Vanessa Baker-Latimer, Housing Coordinator

**Date:** August 7, 2025

**Subject:** Status on the Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) CDBG-CV grant fund award to the City of Ames on behalf of The Bridge Home (TBH).

On April 14, 2025, the Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) notified City staff that due to the return of funds from previously allocated awards, IEDA has \$2,000,000 of unobligated CDBG-CV funds that must be expended within the next year. IEDA informed staff that it was pursuing an idea to support homeless shelters around the state that experienced increased operating costs as they work to prevent, prepare for, and/or respond to the effects of the pandemic. IEDA asked if the City of Ames would have an interest in being a recipient of CDBG-CV funds for this purpose, which would then pass down to IEDA/IFA-identified shelter(s) in the Ames jurisdiction via a subrecipient agreement.

IEDA outlined that the City of Ames can apply for \$75,000 for Shelter Housing Corporation (D/B/A The Bridge Home). IEDA would also be able to award the City an additional \$1,500 for activity delivery/admin purposes. The award would be to the City for the benefit of The Bridge Home. The City would have to administer the grant and verify the eligible expenses of The Bridge Home for reimbursement through the grant program. The City of Ames would be responsible for the proper expenditure of funds in accordance with State requirements.

At the June 24, 2025, City Council meeting, the City Council authorized staff to submit an application to IEDA for this funding on behalf of TBH subject to verification of operational elements of the TBH. The grant funding would cover expenses for, but are not limited to: utility assistance, insurance costs, maintenance, shelter, furniture upgrades, appliances, technology, transportation, etc., in order to provide and prepare safer environments for socially distancing services for families, individuals, and the elderly to have access to shelter and other services as needed.

On July 9, 2025, the City was informed that IEDA had awarded the City of Ames CDBG-CV funds in an amount not to exceed \$76,500 (\$75,000 for shelter needs and \$1,500 for administrative costs). **The contract from IEDA outlined the terms and conditions for receiving the grant funds and stipulated that both agreements needed to be signed and returned by August 15, 2025, or the funds would be deobligated.**

Staff have been working with The Bridge Home Board and The Bridge Home Interim administrative staff, Central Iowa Shelter & Services (CISS) out of Des Moines, to finalize the terms and conditions for the City to administer this grant on their behalf, which includes providing to the City:

- A copy of a signed new management agreement between TBH and CISS.
- The latest financial statements for TBH.
- A statement of intent for the use of the two properties (225 S Kellogg and 227 S Kellogg) over the next two years.
- Disclosures on any liens and mortgages on 225 S Kellogg and 227 S Kellogg and documentation on the status of these properties.
- Proof of insurance on 225 S Kellogg and 227 S Kellogg and a letter from the insurance provider on intent to continue providing coverage through at least May 2026.

Furthermore, the City would require that grant funds be paid directly from the City to the vendors, and a healthy and safety (radon, lead paint, asbestos, etc.) inspections of the properties be completed. The City would hire a professional company to conduct those inspections and will need TBH to agree to remediate the findings within a mutually agreeable timeline.

The subrecipient agreement would also include language that obligates TBH to continue operation of their services for a minimum of five years after the grant closeout. Failure to comply will require the agency to repay the City of Ames all grant funds provided.

At the July TBH Board meeting, staff shared the need to have updated financials as a condition to commit to administering the grant. On July 30, staff followed up with an email requesting the above information. With no response, staff sent another email on August 4, 2025, stating that in order to meet the state's submittal deadline of August 15, 2025, the information would need to be submitted by noon on Thursday, August 7, 2025.

**No response or information was received. Without the necessary assurances and a sub-recipient agreement with TBH, the City cannot proceed with the IEDA grant agreement that is required to be returned to IEDA by August 15, 2025. Therefore, the grant agreement item was removed from the August 12, 2025 City Council agenda.**

# MEMO



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**To:** Mayor and City Council

**From:** Kelly Diekmann, Planning & Housing Director

**Date:** August 12, 2025

**Subject:** Request for a Zoning Text Amendment to the Improvements of Off-Street Parking Areas and Driveways Standards For Ag Equipment

On July 8<sup>th</sup>, City Council received a request letter from the Iowa State University Research Park (ISURP) to review paving requirements for agricultural equipment in the Research Park Innovation District (RI) Zone (see attached request letter). **ISURP seeks an amendment to zoning to exempt maneuvering areas that serve agricultural equipment from paving requirements. Due to a large amount of maneuvering area on a development site, it would be substantial cost savings.**

ISURP anticipates a new development south of its current boundaries that will entail large agricultural equipment storage and testing with a combined vehicle maneuvering area for other aspects of the site. The subject property is in the process of annexation, and once annexed, will be rezoned (see attached location map).

Equipment will be parked on site, both in buildings and outdoor areas, and maneuvered to a test track area and adjoining fields for testing. All parking and maneuvering areas are required to be paved per the City's Improvement Standards for Off-Street Parking Areas and Driveways. **The test track area and other testing areas where gravel or dirt are functionally required are not required to be paved.** By practice, equipment storage areas that are beyond the regular maneuvering areas of a site have not been required to be paved. In this case, the areas will likely be intermingled, which leads to the request.

Paving of vehicle maneuvering areas has been a long-standing requirement of the Zoning Ordinance. The requirement is intended to promote high-quality site development, reduce dust and noise, and ensure safe, defined travel areas. This is particularly important for high-traffic sites, where unpaved surfaces degrade quickly.

Council has considered two recent amendments to this standard:

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1. **Basic Utilities Exception:** An exception for basic utilities and other similar uses, which are anticipated to have a low traffic volume, warranting the exception. The exception is subject to approval by the Planning Director.
2. **Long Driveway Exception** (pending approval): An exception for driveways over 300 feet in length for single-family homes on agricultural, rural, or wooded lots, approved by the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

These exceptions still require paved approaches, paved vehicle parking areas, and landscaping as otherwise required.

## **Options:**

The issue of paving comes up from time to time for industrial properties. Rock or gravel maneuvering areas are a lower-cost option compared to our paving requirements. The City has required paving for all types of areas since 2000 to ensure sites are developed consistently and in a compatible manner. To date, only equipment storage areas have been exempted from paving.

The ISURP request is focused on ag equipment, but other industrial uses relying on heavy trucks or other equipment would also likely desire to have an option for reduced paving, such as batch plants, contractor storage, seed company, truck hauling, etc.

Option 1: Exclude agricultural equipment in the Research Park Innovation District (RI) from paving requirements subject to approval by the Planning Director.

*The initial letter did not identify an approval process or limitation on the amendments; the default approval process is staff review if ag equipment is excluded.*

*The letter also indicated an amendment was requested only for the RI Zone, which is unique zoning to the Research Park.*

Option 2: Exception process to paving requirements for agricultural equipment with approval by the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

*As manufacturing and processing is approved by staff through a Minor Site Development Plan in, ZBA approval offers greater discretion, particularly regarding potential nuisances from unpaved surfaces.*



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Option 3: Take no action and maintain current requirements.

*All vehicle parking and maneuvering areas would be required to be paved under the current standards. Storage areas and test areas would still be exempt.*

## **Staff Comments:**

The issue is primarily related to cost of site improvements rather than functionality or allowing for a use. The amendment is not functionally necessary for the equipment testing use. Other equipment testing tracks in Ames, such as at Danfoss, have a paved maneuvering area that leads to the dirt and gravel testing area or test fields. Option 3, to take no action, would require this type of design.

Previous amendments to the paving standard were for uses with low traffic volumes. Site access and parking would still be required to be paved, but staff believes equipment testing would be a daily occurrence and has concerns about the appropriateness of unpaved surfaces for frequent heavy-duty use.

If Council desires to consider the requested amendment, Option 2 would require ZBA approval. This would better guard against approvals that could cause nuisance factors allowing for neighbor input. This is an important consideration given the broad range of uses allowed in the RI zone and that are located in the ISURP.

**With any exception option, a paved approach in the right-of-way and for a certain distance on-site and paved passenger vehicle parking and circulation areas would still be required.**

If Council desires to review this request and provide direction, it should be placed on a future agenda. At that time, Council would need to determine the scope of such an applicant-initiated amendment and whether outreach is needed for an amendment before it could be approved.

## Hall, Renee

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**From:** Sanders, Rick [ISRP] <rsanders@iastate.edu>  
**Sent:** Friday, June 27, 2025 2:09 PM  
**To:** Hall, Renee  
**Cc:** Diekmann, Kelly  
**Subject:** FW: Zone Text Amendment

[External Email]

Hi Renee,

The Iowa State University Research Park would like to request that Council refer study of a potential zone text amendment to RI to allow for gravel in large ag machinery uses adjoining ag (testing) ground here at the Research Park.

As we continue to grow our partnerships with ISU and ag equipment manufacturers, we have a large project in development that requires more clarity on this as the project scope is refined.

Let me know if you need any additional information for this request.

Thank you.

R

*Rick Sanders*

President

Iowa State University Research Park

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**From:** Diekmann, Kelly <kelly.diekmann@cityofames.org>  
**Sent:** Friday, June 27, 2025 1:58 PM  
**To:** Sanders, Rick [ISRP] <rsanders@iastate.edu>  
**Subject:** RE: Zone Text Amendment

Hi Rick, it would be a standard referral request. At this point just has to cover what you need it to do. Send it to the City Clerk by next Wednesday the 2<sup>nd</sup> if you want it with the non-agenda packet for July 8<sup>th</sup>.

Once it is referred staff will recommend to Council if it should be narrow or broad in its application.

Kelly Diekmann  
Planning and Housing Director

515.239.5400- main | 515.239.5181 direct | 515.239.5404 -fax  
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[www.CityofAmes.org](http://www.CityofAmes.org) | ~ Caring People ~ Quality Programs ~ Exceptional Service ~



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**From:** Sanders, Rick [ISRP] <[rsanders@iastate.edu](mailto:rsanders@iastate.edu)>  
**Sent:** Friday, June 27, 2025 12:22 PM  
**To:** Diekmann, Kelly <[kelly.diekmann@cityofames.org](mailto:kelly.diekmann@cityofames.org)>  
**Subject:** RE: Zone Text Amendment

[External Email]

Hi Kelly,

Just digging into this (FYI - Kyle left the RP for a great opportunity at Casey's).

We would like to proceed with this request. We can make it as narrow as you would like to simply cover the proposed new facility as well as the way that the Deere Spray Lab and ISU Digital Ag have evolved to operate in practice.

Let me know what you need from me or if you would like to discuss further. As an FYI, I have Steve and Brian today at 4pm if you want to stop up. I will mention this to them as well.

Best,

R

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**From:** Martin, Kyle [ISRP] <[kmartin5@IASTATE.EDU](mailto:kmartin5@IASTATE.EDU)>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 23, 2025 11:01 AM  
**To:** Sanders, Rick [ISRP] <[rsanders@iastate.edu](mailto:rsanders@iastate.edu)>; Doyle, Alison M [ISRP] <[adoyle@iastate.edu](mailto:adoyle@iastate.edu)>  
**Subject:** FW: Zone Text Amendment

My communication with Kelly regarding edit to RI zone. A email to council and mayor with Kelly cc'd is all that is needed to initiate process.

The text amendment just needs to add gravel for large ag machinery.

Kyle

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**From:** Diekmann, Kelly <[kelly.diekmann@cityofames.org](mailto:kelly.diekmann@cityofames.org)>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 9, 2025 8:37 AM  
**To:** Martin, Kyle [ISRP] <[kmartin5@IASTATE.EDU](mailto:kmartin5@IASTATE.EDU)>  
**Subject:** RE: Zone Text Amendment

Is there confirmation by John Deere of proceeding with the project? I think you indicated ISURP would know more the first week of June?

Kelly Diekmann  
Planning and Housing Director

515.239.5400- main | 515.239.5181 direct | 515.239.5404 -fax  
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**From:** Martin, Kyle [ISRP] <[kmartin5@IASTATE.EDU](mailto:kmartin5@IASTATE.EDU)>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 9, 2025 8:29 AM  
**To:** Diekmann, Kelly <[kelly.diekmann@cityofames.org](mailto:kelly.diekmann@cityofames.org)>  
**Subject:** RE: Zone Text Amendment

[External Email]

Hi Kelly-

I'll talk to Rick about when he wants to submit this. Thanks for the reminder.

Kyle

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**From:** Diekmann, Kelly <[kelly.diekmann@cityofames.org](mailto:kelly.diekmann@cityofames.org)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 5, 2025 7:44 AM  
**To:** Martin, Kyle [ISRP] <[kmartin5@IASTATE.EDU](mailto:kmartin5@IASTATE.EDU)>  
**Subject:** RE: Zone Text Amendment

Hi Kyle, I don't think this ever was submitted to Council. I would recommend getting it in this week if you can.

Kelly Diekmann  
Planning and Housing Director

515.239.5400- main | 515.239.5181 direct | 515.239.5404 -fax  
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**From:** Diekmann, Kelly  
**Sent:** Friday, April 11, 2025 9:35 AM  
**To:** Martin, Kyle [ISRP] <[kmartin5@IASTATE.EDU](mailto:kmartin5@IASTATE.EDU)>  
**Subject:** RE: Zone Text Amendment

It is a letter/email to the Mayor and City Council. CC the city clerk and me when you send it.

Kelly Diekmann  
Planning and Housing Director

515.239.5400- main | 515.239.5181 direct | 515.239.5404 -fax  
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**From:** Martin, Kyle [ISRP] <[kmartin5@IASTATE.EDU](mailto:kmartin5@IASTATE.EDU)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 10, 2025 3:31 PM  
**To:** Diekmann, Kelly <[kelly.diekmann@cityofames.org](mailto:kelly.diekmann@cityofames.org)>  
**Subject:** Zone Text Amendment

[External Email]

Kelly-

I'd like to being the process to submit a zone text amendment to RI to allow for gravel in large ag machinery uses. What do you need from me to submit?

I didn't see a formal document online. Let me know next steps.

Kyle

**Kyle Martin**  
**Operations Manager**  
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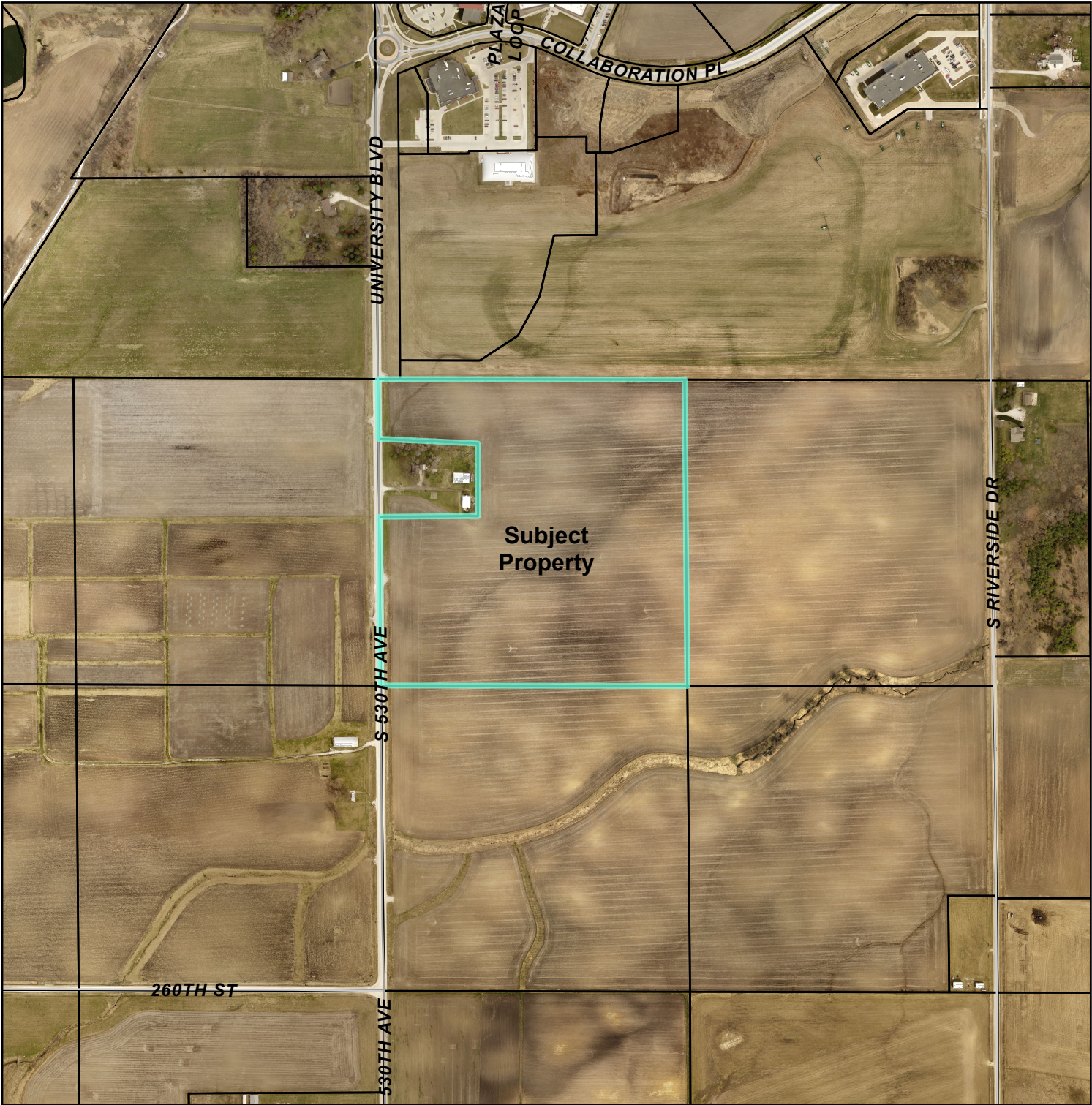
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# Location Map



## Legend

 PARCELS

