



Item No. 12

MEMO

To: Mayor & City Council

From: Brian Phillips, Assistant City Manager

Date: January 13, 2026

Subject: Ames Main Street Requests for 2026 Special Events (Tabled from December 16, 2025 Meeting)

At its meeting on December 16, 2025, the City Council tabled the approval of agenda Items #8 and #10-15. These items are the requests from Ames Main Street for special events occurring in 2026, with the exception of 4th of July. The City Council requested clarification regarding the parking requests and related waivers, including in comparison with the Ames Main Street funding application for FY 2026/27.

In February 2020, the City Council adopted the following policy regarding metered parking waivers:

Metered parking fees will not be waived for special events. Any event organizers intending to provide free parking or to close metered parking spaces must reimburse the City's Parking Fund for the lost revenue. The City Council may consider waivers to this policy on a case-by-case basis for parking spaces that are obstructed by the event area (not for area-wide free parking).

The seven events in question contain a combination of requests for area-wide free parking and for closure of metered parking in some small areas. The table below indicates the events, the nature of each request, and the lost Parking Fund revenue:

Event	FY	Closure Type		Lost Revenue	Proposed Action
		Area-wide	Specific meters (#)		
Art Walk	2025/26		23	\$ 17.25	Waive Lost Revenue
Summer Sidewalk Sales	2026/27	X		\$ 1,370.25	X-fer from Hotel/Motel

Music Walk	2026/27		23	\$ 17.25	Waive Lost Revenue
Witches Walk	2026/27		14	\$ 10.50	Waive Lost Revenue
Holiday Open House	2026/27	X		\$ 1,370.25	X-fer from Hotel/Motel
Small Business Saturday	2026/27	5X		\$ 12,341.25	X-fer from Hotel/Motel
Snow Magic	2026/27		4	\$ 0	None

OUTSIDE FUNDING APPLICATION

Ames Main Street submitted an application for FY 2026/27 funding through the Outside Funding Request process on November 14, 2025. This application contained a description of requests for “free parking” events and other retail events for which free parking would not be sought. The free parking events listed in the application were:

1. Winter Sidewalk Sales January 2027 (one day)
2. Summer Sidewalk Sales 2026 (one day)
3. Holiday Open House 2026 (one day)
4. Small Business Saturday 2026 (one day)

Subsequent to the application being filed, Small Business Saturday 2025 was held. Due to inclement weather, Ames Main Street requested a second iteration of Small Business Saturday to be held on December 6, 2025. The City Council approved the request at a special meeting on December 3, 2025. Unfortunately, this second iteration was also struck with inclement weather. Therefore, Ames Main Street requested, and City Council approved on December 9, 2025, **free parking on each of the remaining Saturdays in December 2025**.

Ames Main Street’s event application for Small Business Saturday 2026 was initially filed in October 2025 (before the Outside Funding Request application was submitted). **The application letter was amended on December 10 (after the Outside Funding Request application was submitted) to expand the request for 2026 from one day of free parking to five days (adding each Saturday in December). This modification results in the following anticipated Parking Fund reimbursements in FY 2026/27:**

Event	Date(s)	Location	Lost Revenue
Summer Sidewalk Sales	July 2026	Downtown	\$ 1,370.25
Holiday Open House	November 2026	Downtown	\$ 1,370.25
Small Business Saturday	5 days – Nov. & Dec. 2026	Downtown & Campustown	\$ 12,341.25

Winter Sidewalk Sales	January 2027	Downtown	\$ 1,370.25
TOTAL			\$ 16,452.00

City staff will therefore revise the amount included in the Hotel/Motel Tax Fund of the recommended FY 2026/27 City budget to cover the lost revenue to the Parking Fund. The Special Event requests tabled on December 16, 2025 are attached for the City Council's review and consideration of approval.

ATTACHMENT(S):

[Art Walk CAF 12.16.25.pdf](#)
[Summer Sidewalk Sales CAF 12.16.25.pdf](#)
[Music Walk CAF 12.16.25.pdf](#)
[Witches Walk CAF 12.16.25.pdf](#)
[Holiday Open House CAF 12.16.25.pdf](#)
[Small Business Saturday CAF 12.16.25.pdf](#)
[Snow Magic CAF 12.16.25.pdf](#)