



MEMO

To: Mayor and City Council
From: Jeramy Neefus, Principal Clerk, City Manager's Office
Date: January 9, 2026
Subject: Packet of Communications to Council

Listed below are the communications to the City Council known to staff as of January 9, 2026:

1. Caleb Roelfs, Ames Resident – December 24, 2025
RE: Welch Avenue Improvements
2. Erik Charter, Tripp Street Apartments Property Manager – December 28, 2025
RE: Tripp Street Apartments Garbage Issues
3. Bonnie Alley, Ames Resident – January 1, 2026
RE: Mortensen Road Corridor Safety Concerns
4. Grant Olsen, Ames Resident – January 7, 2026
RE: Proposal for the Intersection of Lincoln Way and North Dakota Avenue
5. Grant Olsen, Ames Resident – January 7, 2026
RE: Thackeray Trail Crossing Safety Proposal
6. Ryan Park, Ames Resident – January 7, 2026
RE: Request for Stop Sign at West Towne Apartments Exit
7. Julie Tigges, Ames Resident – January 7, 2026
RE: Animal Control Concern
8. Kelly Diekmann, Planning & Housing Director – January 9, 2026
RE: Property Owner Request for Zoning Text Amendment for Encroachment Setbacks

9. Kelly Diekmann, Planning & Housing Director – January 9, 2026

RE: Request for Plan 2040 Amendment to Land Use Classification for Property within Boone County

10. Steve Schainker, City Manager – January 9, 2026

RE: Staff Report on Workforce Housing Division – Ontario

Hall, Renee

From: Hall, Renee
Sent: Monday, January 5, 2026 7:22 AM
To: Hall, Renee
Subject: FW: Welch avenue, Reimagined

Renee Hall
City Clerk/Records Manager
City Clerk's Office
City of Ames
Phone: 515-239-5105

-----Original Message-----

From: Caleb Roelfs <croelfs10@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, December 24, 2025 2:59 PM
To: City Council and Mayor <mayor council@amescitycouncil.org>
Subject: Welch avenue, Reimagined

[External Email]

Here are my thoughts on the current status of Welch ave, student nightlife, and wellbeing situation: please give this a read:)

Ever since I first stepped foot onto Iowa state's campus a mere 17 years ago I fell in love with one place in particular, Welch ave and the the rest of the Campustown area, I've taken bike rides with my family around the campus and Welch ave area for my whole life and it was only recently when I came to Ames to actually start my freshman yr in 2021, I noticed the area felt different and not particularly in a good way, since my freshman year I've been obsessed about figuring out why ISU and campustown feels different and less homey and exciting than when I came here growing up on my bike. And what I've discovered is the antique looking street lamps with amber lighting, paired with the beautiful mature trees lining Welch are the culprits to this feeling. Welch no longer feels like a friendly pedestrian neighborhood anymore, it just feels more like "a part" of town, and looks more like a Chicago freeway than a walkable community, most of this change in aesthetic happened during the Welch reconstruction project of 2020 which mostly replaced framework and underground upgrades to Welch (which were needed) but ultimately led to the slow demise of the street look of Welch, removing the antique vintage light poles, warm night lighting, trees, and side parking made the area feel way to open and unpopular without all the activity that was once present on the street

At this time, The city of Ames should be doing everything in its power to make sure Iowa city is not doing anything "better" than Ames when it comes to student liveability and satisfaction, unfortunately the nightlife atmosphere here is severely lacking, even in terms of p5 schools, and because of this students have basically nothing outside of sporting events to look forward to on weekends, all while Iowa city and DSM are profiting off YOUR students. And I for one hate the hawks with every inch of my body, and knowing they have more fun than us on weekends is unbelievably irritating, the demographic of Iowans that don't like the hawks, but still go there because they have good weekend nightlife is huge, and Ames is in such a good spot to profit from that, What the city has done with Downtown Ames has actually been great comparatively to Welch, Downtown Main Street Ames has done a great job with the antique low hanging street lights with amber lighting, as well as plenty of trees and cultural expression on signage's and buildings. If half the effort was put into Welch as downtown Ames, Welch would instantly see a massive ROI and a destination that people want to come to. and overall it really would not take much to get Ames and Welch back in the running, first things first: bring back the

vintage streetlights, the new ones are WAYYYY too bright with a harsh white hospital like light that I actively have to squint at leaving bars, also bringing back the amber lighting, match the street view of Lincoln and that lighting and follow it up into a the up Welch. Also adding mature trees to create a canopy over Welch, and potential of even adding some dimly lit string lights above Welch can create a vibe that us students actually want to be around. Basically, just Make Campustown fun again, add neon lights everywhere, add cool murals, let businesses express themselves with cool signage, and plant more trees. because if we don't do anything to the area, people are going to keep taking their money and weekends elsewhere and with Cytown imminent, the heart of the area that all ISU students and alumni grew up loving and making memories at will no longer exist.

Thank you for considering,
Sincerely, Caleb Roelfs
(Reference pics below) first is current look

From: Caleb Roelfs <croelfs10@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, December 24, 2025 3:18 PM
To: City Council and Mayor
Subject: Welch Avenue Reimagined pt.2 Proposal to the city

[External Email]

To: [Ames City Council](#)

From: [Caleb Roelfs]

Date: [12/24/2025]

Subject: Pilot Study to Evaluate the Impact of Warm-Tone Lighting and Streetscape Enhancements on Pedestrian Activity in Campustown (Welch Avenue)

Background

Welch Avenue in the Campustown district serves as one of Ames' most visible pedestrian corridors, particularly during evening and nighttime hours when Iowa State University is in session. As the City undertakes infrastructure reconstruction and considers longer-term Campustown revitalization strategies, questions have been raised regarding how lighting color and streetscape atmosphere influence pedestrian activity, dwell time, and overall vibrancy.

Research from other college-oriented districts suggests that warmer, amber-toned lighting may encourage increased pedestrian presence and longer stays compared to standard white LED lighting. However, Ames currently lacks local, corridor-specific data to evaluate whether such effects occur in Campustown.

Purpose

The purpose of this agenda item is to propose a temporary, data-driven pilot study to test the hypothesis that warm-tone (amber) lighting combined with modest streetscape enhancements increases nighttime pedestrian activity and perceived vibrancy on Welch Avenue, compared to existing white LED lighting conditions.

Proposed Pilot Project

Staff proposes a controlled pilot project along a one- to two-block segment of Welch Avenue during a single academic semester.

Pilot (Treatment) Area:

- Temporarily adjust streetlight output to warm/amber color temperatures (approximately 2200K–2700K) using programmable fixtures or temporary luminaires.
- Install non-permanent streetscape elements, such as:
 - Overhead string lighting or pedestrian-scale accent lighting
 - Temporary planters or movable street furniture where feasible.

Control Area:

- Maintain current white LED lighting and existing streetscape conditions on a nearby, comparable block of Welch Avenue.

This approach creates a real-world comparison within the same neighborhood, minimizing external variables such as weather, academic calendar, and special events.

Data Collection & Evaluation

To evaluate the pilot, staff would collect and compare data from both areas, including:

- Pedestrian counts using temporary automated counters, with emphasis on evening and late-night hours (7:00 PM–2:00 AM).
- Dwell time and behavior observations, measuring lingering, social interaction, and sidewalk usage.

- Business activity indicators, collected voluntarily and anonymously from participating Campustown businesses (e.g., transaction volume or peak-hour duration).
- Perception surveys assessing sense of safety, atmosphere, and likelihood of staying longer in the area.

Baseline data would be collected prior to installation, followed by monitoring during the pilot period.

Timeline

- Month 1: Baseline data collection
- Months 2–4: Pilot installation and active monitoring
- Month 5: Analysis and presentation of findings to City Council

Fiscal Impact

The pilot would rely on temporary and adjustable infrastructure, limiting capital costs and allowing full reversibility. Funding could be accommodated within existing public works, planning, or pilot-program allocations, with no long-term financial commitment implied.

Recommendation

Staff recommends City Council authorize the development and implementation of this temporary Welch Avenue pilot study. Results would inform future Campustown streetscape standards, lighting policies, and capital investments using local, evidence-based outcomes rather than assumptions.

Hall, Renee

From: Erik Charter <erik.charter@jensengroup.net>
Sent: Thursday, January 1, 2026 3:06 PM
To: City Council and Mayor
Subject: Re: Tripp Street Apartments Garbage
Attachments: processed-6B64A2C0-76DE-44AB-86B7-F2E229AA39E4.jpeg; processed-F7F7F3EF-17BD-4C07-B310-7C8888DA4749.jpeg; processed-2054DBD7-0920-4FBB-A6A2-322C084F2F62.jpeg; processed-B9B2E8BB-91CB-4483-ADDC-C34901534063.jpeg

[External Email]

Order can be maintained in the Ames rental community. I just need a little help from my friends in city government.

Erik

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: Erik Charter
Sent: Sunday, December 28, 2025 7:56:31 AM
To: MayorCouncil@cityofames.org <mayor council@cityofames.org>
Cc: Dickson Jensen (ddjensen2010@gmail.com) <ddjensen2010@gmail.com>
Subject: Tripp Street Apartments Garbage

To the Ames City Council,

I recently have become the property manager for the Tripp Street Apartments at 3726, 3732, 3812, 3824, & 3910 Tripp Street. Tripp Street is one of the most challenging areas of town for rental property and I am energized and fully committed to running this property in a responsible manner. One challenge I face is the fact that there are 3 dumpsters at the property and all of them sit on the alley that backs up to Marigold Drive. On Marigold there are 21 rental units (in duplexes or triplexes) owned by essentially 9 different owners (some world famous,) many of whom reside outside of Iowa. I don't mean to impugn all of these owners, but it has been reported to me by my predecessor that many of these Marigold residents are using our dumpsters for their trash. Normally with a single family rental the landlord puts the burden of trash service on the tenant and it is a temptation for that tenant to make that expense \$0 a month by just using someone else's dumpster, if they can get away with it.

The attached photos are from AFTER our trash was just picked up. Clearly the dumpster was overflowing and this was a period of time in which our mostly student renters were gone from the property. Here is what I am asking from the City:

1. Require the landlords on Marigold to provide proof of garbage service, either paid for by them or paid for by their tenant, prior to renewing their rental permits
2. Require trash for those Marigold addresses to be picked up on Marigold, not in the alley. At that point there should not be anyone from the Marigold units anywhere near our dumpsters with trash

3. Encourage the Ames Police Department to investigate any reports of trespassing by Marigold tenants that we turn into them.

Thank you for your consideration,

Erik Charter
JPM, Inc.
Jensen Five L.C.
4611 Mortensen, Suite 106
Ames, IA 50014
(515)291-1239
erik.charter@jensengroup.net

cc: Marigold unit owners via USPS









GARBAGE GUYS

Locally Owned and Operated
518-707-3866

Hall, Renee

From: Hall, Renee
Sent: Monday, January 5, 2026 10:27 AM
To: Hall, Renee
Subject: FW: Mortensen Road Corridor Safety Considerations

From: Bonnie Alley <bonnie.alley@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 1, 2026 3:16 PM
To: Haila, John <john.haila@cityofames.org>; Beatty-Hansen, Bronwyn <bronwyn.beattyhansen@amescitycouncil.org>; Gartin, Tim <tim.gartin@amescitycouncil.org>; Betcher, Gloria <gloria.betcher@amescitycouncil.org>; Junck, Rachel <rachel.junck@amescitycouncil.org>; Rollins, Anita <anita.rollins@amescitycouncil.org>; Corrieri, Amber <amber.corrieri@amescitycouncil.org>; Boland, Emily <emily.boland@amescitycouncil.org>; Schainker, Steve <steve.schainker@cityofames.org>
Subject: Mortensen Road Corridor Safety Considerations

[External Email]

 [Mortensen Road Corridor Safety Considerations.pdf](#)

Dear Mayor and City Council Members,

I am writing to share a brief overview and attached presentation regarding ongoing safety concerns along the Mortensen Road corridor west of South Dakota Avenue and the surrounding West Ames neighborhood.

Over time, residents have observed increasing speed inconsistency, challenging turning movements, and confusion related to stop control and parking conditions. This area includes higher residential density, schools, transit activity, and significant visitor traffic, all of which make clear and consistent traffic control especially important for safety and predictability.

The attached presentation is intended to provide visual context and highlight several targeted, actionable opportunities to improve safety, visibility, and traffic flow. It also includes considerations for speed alignment, stop sign consistency, parking management on Wilder Boulevard, and winter operations coordination.

My goal in sharing this information is to support a thoughtful review and conversation around how the current roadway conditions align with how this corridor is being used today, and to explore potential improvements that enhance safety for residents, visitors, and the broader community. I would welcome the opportunity to address the City Council and discuss these observations and considerations at a future City Council meeting, if helpful.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I appreciate your continued service to our community and your attention to neighborhood safety concerns.

Bonnie Alley

"There is a powerful driving force inside every human being that, once unleashed, can make any vision, dream, or desire a reality"

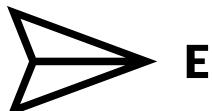
**Creating a Safer Mortensen Road Corridor
and
Surrounding West Ames Community**

Speed Consistency on Mortensen Road

Existing

East of South Dakota Ave:

- 30 MPH
- Apartments with visitor traffic
- Middle school

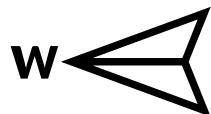
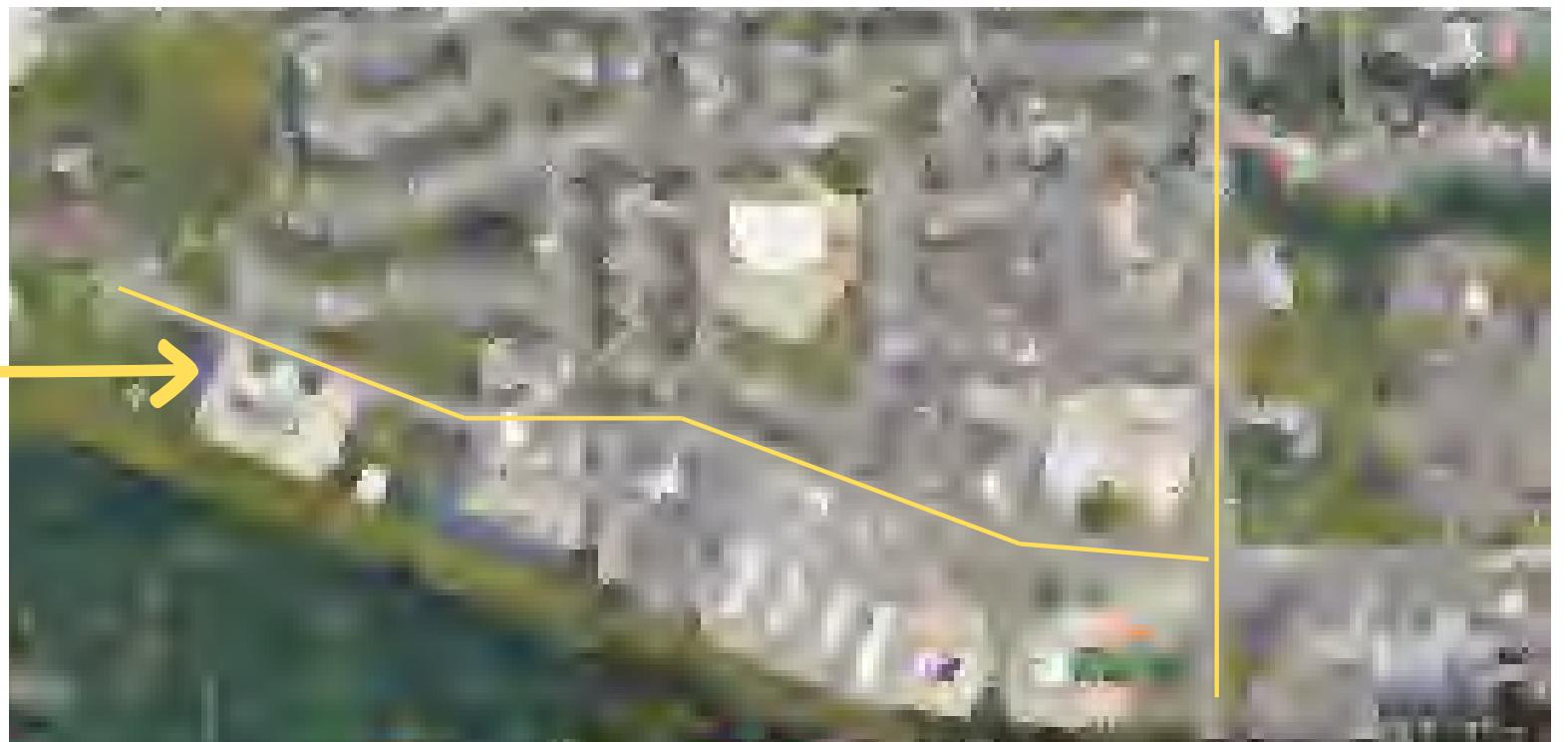


Existing

West of South Dakota Ave:

- 40 MPH
- Higher residential density with visitor traffic
- 6 city blocks uninterrupted speed
- Elementary school
- Businesses Area

Mortenson Rd



South Dakota Ave



The Issue

- Speed limits are misaligned with surrounding land use and activity
- Excessive speeding by apartment residents and visitors
- Dangerous driving behaviors observed, including:
 - Multi-lane, side-by-side driving at high speeds
 - Passing vehicles using the center turn lane
 - Passing CyRide buses while the bus is in motion
 - Motorcycle racing activity
- Documented firsthand safety concerns, including:
 - accidents
 - A motorcycle crash involving loss of control, with the rider sliding approximately half a block
- Lack of police presence at this side of town to help reduce the speeding and racing

Immediate Request

- Lower the speed limit to 30 MPH on Mortensen Road west of South Dakota Avenue to align with land use, density, and safety expectations

If unable to see the immediate need for speed reduction I would request a formal traffic and speed study for the Mortensen Road corridor west of South Dakota Avenue

Include:

- Speed data
- Crash history
- Pedestrian and transit activity
- School proximity

Stop Sign & Traffic Control Consistency

Why This Matters

- Clear, consistent traffic control is essential for predictable driver behavior
- In areas with high residential density, schools, and transit activity, missing or inconsistent stop control increases risk

What These Maps Show

- Locations along Mortensen Road and adjacent intersections where:
 - Stop signs are missing or unclear
 - Traffic control is inconsistent from one intersection to the next
 - Observed gaps between intended traffic flow and what drivers experience on the roadway

Purpose of Sharing This Information

- To provide visual context for the safety concerns discussed earlier
- To support a data-informed review of stop sign placement and traffic control
- To identify opportunities for improvement

The following locations demonstrate a pattern of inconsistent traffic control along the Mortensen corridor.

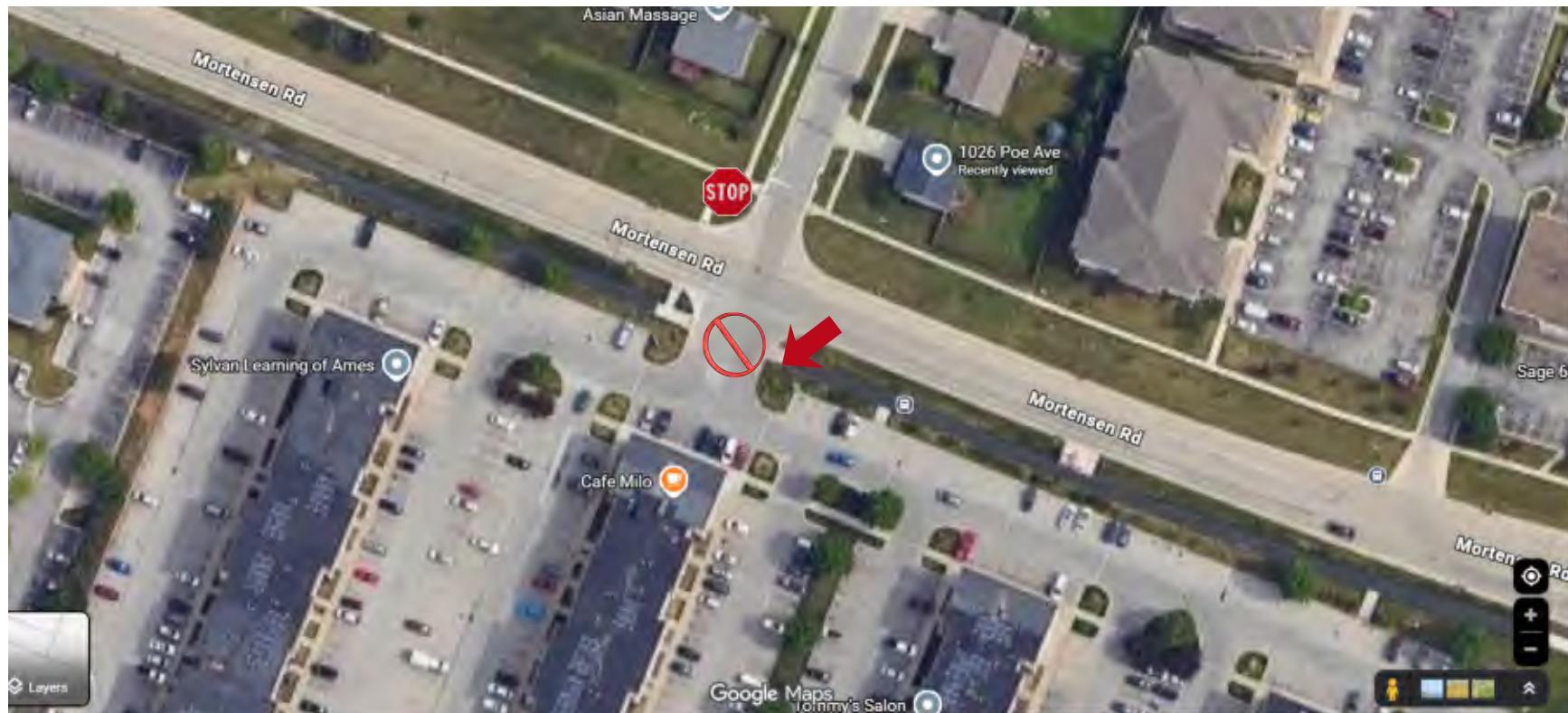


Location: Mortensen Rd and Poe Ave

Currently: Poe Ave has a stop sign

Issue: There is no stop sign present at the exit or enter across from Poe Ave. at the Westtown entrance. Businesses and residence vehicles are able to enter Mortensen Road without stop control at higher-speed through traffic





Requested Improvement:

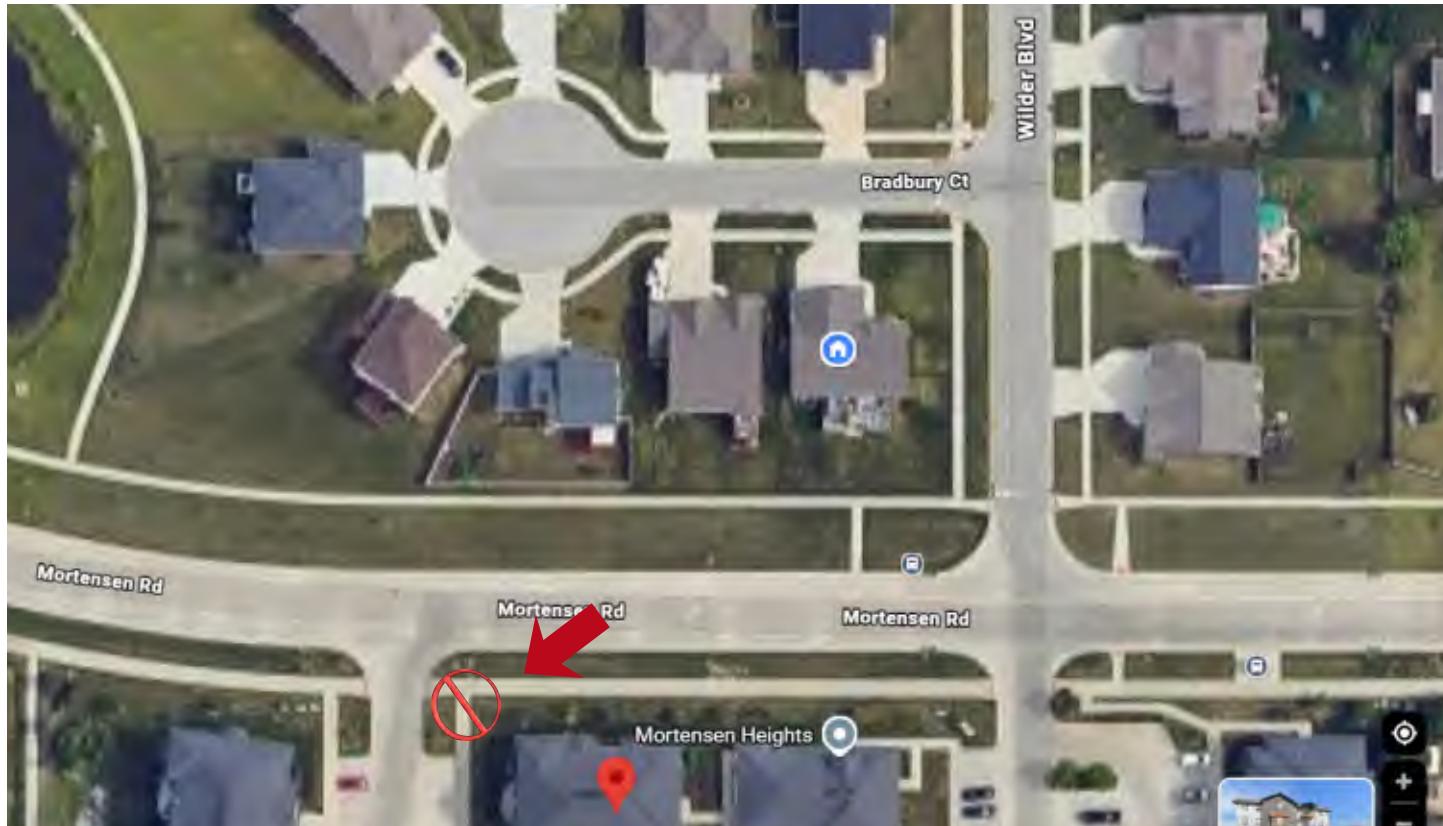
Stop sign added to the south side of Mortensen Rd on the Westtown Entrance/Exit



Location: Mortensen & second entrance / exit to Mortensen Heights Apartment Complex

Issue: There is no stop sign present at the exit or enter from these apartments. Residence vehicles are able to enter Mortensen Road without stop control at higher-speed through traffic





Requested Improvement: Stop sign added to the south side of Mortensen (the second Mortensen Heights apartment complex entrance/exit)

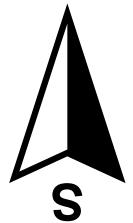




Location: Mortensen Rd and Wilder Blvd.

Currently: Wilder has a stop sign entering Mortensen Rd

Issue: There is no stop sign present at the exit or enter across from Wilder Blvd. Residence vehicles are able to enter Mortensen Road without stop control at higher-speed through traffic





Requested Improvement: Stop sign added to the south side of Mortensen Rd on the second Mortensen Heights apartment complex.





Location: Mortensen Rd and Lawrence Ave

Currently: Lawrence Ave has a stop sign entering Mortensen Rd

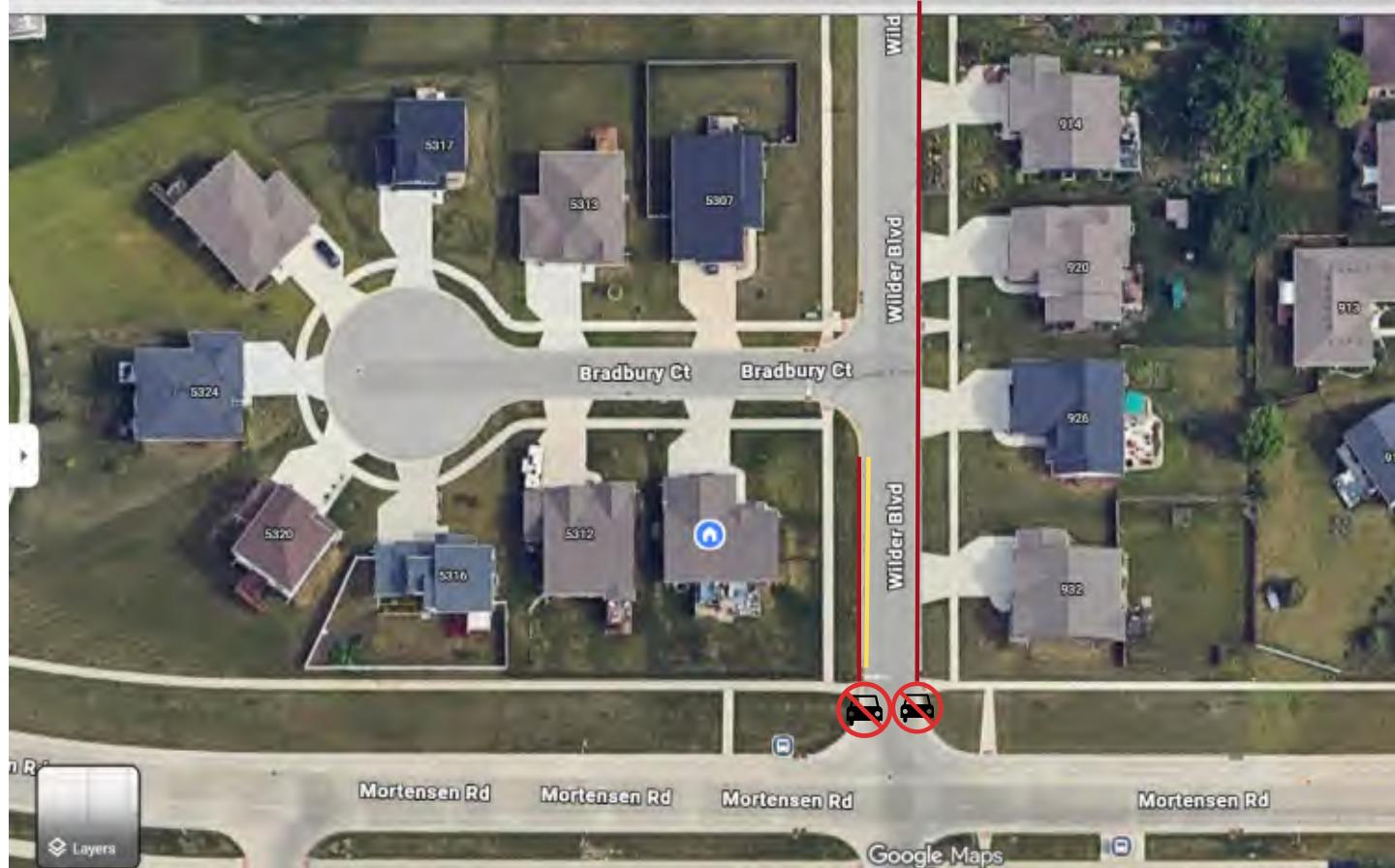
Issue: There is no stop sign present at the exit or enter across from Lawrence Ave., Rsdience vehicles are able to enter Mortensen Road without stop control at higher-speed through traffic





Requested Improvement: Stop sign added to the south side of Mortensen Rd across from Lawrence Ave - the third Mortensen Heights apartment complex.

Additional Requests & Considerations for Wilder Blvd.



Wilder Blvd is no parking on east side. And no parking on west side on block entering Mortensen Rd

Current Conditions

- Parking is not permitted on the east side of Wilder Boulevard nor the west side within the block turning out south on Mortensen Rd.
- There is one - No Parking sign - but it too far North on Wilder
- Apartment residents and visitors are parking on the east side due to lack of visible restriction

Observed Impacts

- Parked vehicles reduce visibility and maneuverability
- Turning from Mortensen Drive onto Wilder Boulevard is significantly more difficult
- Increased risk for:
 - Conflicts between turning vehicles and parked cars
 - Delays and hesitation that affect overall traffic flow

Considerations & Requests

- Install an additional No Parking signage on the east side of Wilder Boulevard

Evaluate whether additional:

- Pavement markings
- Curb markings
 - The west side of Wilder (Bradbury side) was painted yellow which has made a significant improvement to parking issues.

Winter Parking Coordination – Mortensen Heights

- During winter months, Mortensen Heights currently directs tenants to park along Wilder Boulevard to accommodate internal snow removal
- This practice:
 - Contributes to congestion and reduced visibility
 - Creates challenges for City snow plowing operations
- As a result, a temporary operational solution for one property is creating broader public right-of-way impacts

Consideration

- Request that Mortensen Heights explore alternative winter parking solutions that do not rely on on-street parking along Wilder Boulevard

Requested Actions & Follow-Up Considerations

Speed & Corridor Review

- Reduce the speed limit on Mortensen Road west of South Dakota Avenue to 30 MPH to align with surrounding land use, density, schools, and transit activity
OR
- Conduct a formal traffic and speed study for the Mortensen Road corridor west of South Dakota Avenue, including:
 - Speed data
 - Crash history
 - Pedestrian and transit activity
 - School proximity

Stop Sign & Traffic Control Improvements

- Install stop signs on the south side of Mortensen Road at the following locations to create consistent and predictable traffic control:
 - Westtown entrance/exit at Mortensen Rd and Poe Ave
 - Second entrance/exit to the Mortensen Heights apartment complex
 - Mortensen Rd and Wilder Blvd (south side, across from existing stop)
 - Mortensen Rd and Lawrence Ave (south side, across from existing stop)

Wilder Boulevard Parking & Visibility

- Install additional No Parking signage on the east side of Wilder Boulevard closer to Mortensen Road
- Evaluate the need for:
 - Pavement markings
 - Curb markings
 - Maintain and consider extending yellow curb treatments where they have proven effective

Winter Parking Coordination

- Request that Mortensen Heights explore alternative winter parking solutions that do not rely on on-street parking along Wilder Boulevard
- Align private snow removal practices with:
 - City plowing needs
 - Public right-of-way safety
 - Visibility and turning movement requirements

Hall, Renee

From: Grant Olsen <radioemergency@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 7, 2026 10:19 AM
To: City Council and Mayor
Subject: Lincoln Way and Dakota safety proposal
Attachments: lincoln dakota turn only lane.pdf

[External Email]

Dear Council Members,

Attached is a proposal regarding the intersection of Lincoln Way and Dakota Avenue.

Grant Olsen
Ames resident

This is a proposal to improve the performance of a turn-only lane at the intersection of Lincoln Way and South Dakota Avenue.

I have observed multiple instances of northbound drivers going straight from a turn-only lane because it can be done without consequence.

Drivers who wait at a red light to go straight from the turn-only lane hold back drivers who could turn right on red.



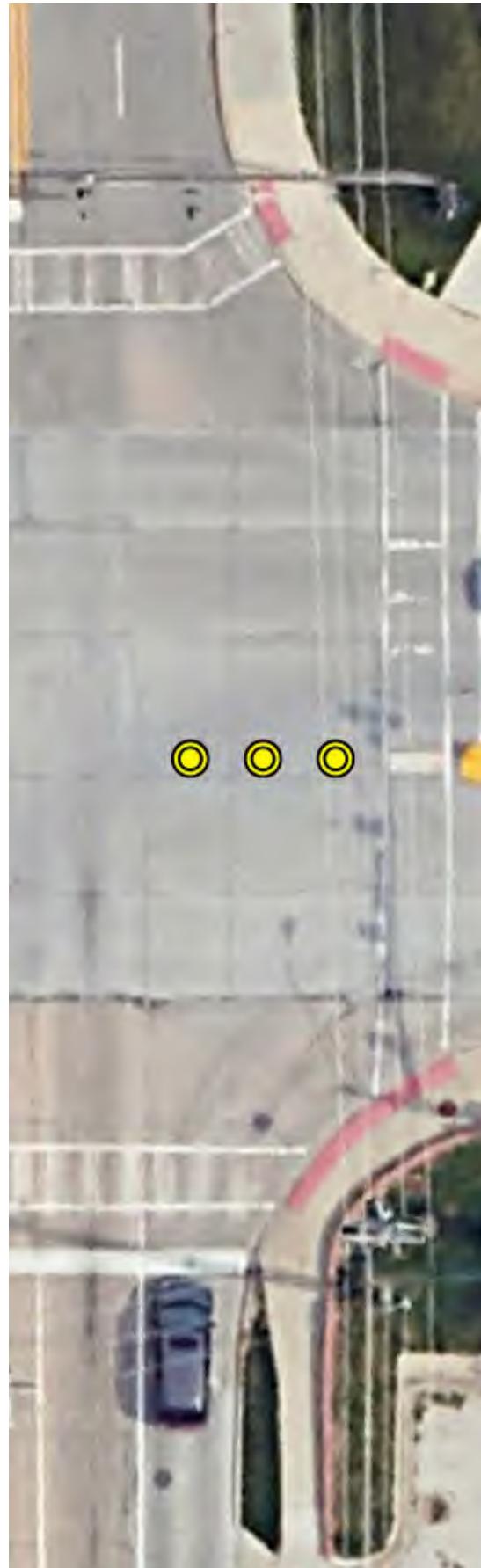
Proposed Treatment

- Install 3-4 yellow flex posts in line with the median of the east leg of the intersection

Bonus Benefit

The position of these flex posts offers greater protection for pedestrians because of the new angle for south-to-east drivers (down-to-right).

The posts also direct a west-to-south (left-to-down) driver further into the intersection, increasing the chances that the driver will travel on the correct side of the median in the south leg of the intersection.



Hall, Renee

From: Grant Olsen <radioemergency@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 7, 2026 10:17 AM
To: City Council and Mayor
Subject: Thackeray Ave crossing safety
Attachments: thackeray trail crossing safety proposal.pdf

[External Email]

Dear Council Members,

Attached is a proposal for improving the safety of a crossing on Thackeray Avenue.

Grant Olsen
Ames resident

This is a proposal to increase the safety of a mid-block pedestrian / bicycle crossing on Thackeray Avenue using a method sometimes referred to as “Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper”. LQC implements safety improvements with flexibility. Low-cost wagers minimize costly mistakes that can occur with large-cost designs that are untested.

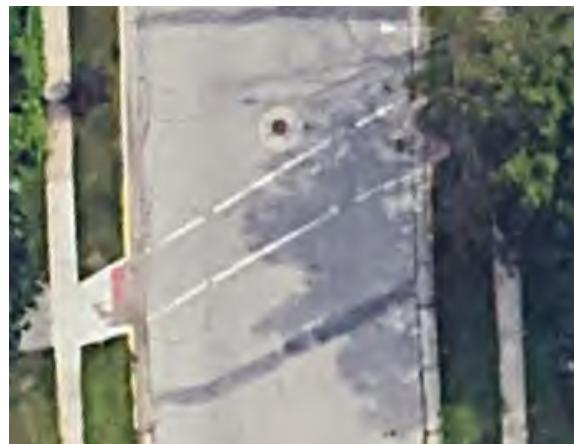
Issues #1-3

- The wide field of view communicates to drivers that high speeds are OK.
- The ‘bike crossing’ sign and crosswalk paint for the College Creek trail crossing are visually insufficient for making drivers aware of the presence of the crosswalk used by kids and adults.
- Parking is allowed as close as one car length next to the crosswalk, which creates visibility issues for both drivers and people walking / rolling.



Issue #4

- The angle between street and crosswalk is too high - approximately 120 degrees. This means a moving car cannot be seen by the typical peripheral vision of a person walking who forgets to look. (principle: design for user mistakes)



Proposed Treatments

- Install 8 flex posts (4 white and 4 yellow) to guide drivers to approach the crosswalk at a safer angle - an angle closer to 90 degrees (path indicated by blue arrows).
- Paint a center line for 30 feet each side of the crosswalk.
- Prohibit parking within 75 feet of the crosswalk, which will increase visibility.

Materials

- yellow paint for 300 feet of curb and 60 feet of dotted line
- white paint for approximately 120 feet of white striping
- 4 white flex posts
- 4 yellow flex posts
- 2 “No Parking Here to Crosswalk (right arrow)” signs
- 2 “No Parking Here to Crosswalk (left arrow)” signs
- 2 “Keep Right” signs
- 6 posts for signs
- 6 break-away brackets for posts
- 2 flower planter boxes



Illustrations depicting approximate orientation

(not to scale)



Conclusion

This quick-build, low-wager safety installation would commence after May 1, 2026. The proposed treatments would increase the visibility of the crossing.

submitted by
Ames resident Grant Olsen
radioemergency@gmail.com



Hall, Renee

From: Betcher, Gloria
Sent: Wednesday, January 7, 2026 8:45 AM
To: Ryan Park
Cc: Schainker, Steve; Hall, Renee
Subject: Re: Stop Sign at West Towne Apts

Thanks for your message, Ryan. One of your neighbors has already contacted us about a variety of traffic issues on Mortensen, so the City Manager is aware of concerns in the area.

Council meets January 13 and your email, along with the other one, will be considered by Council at that time to determine if we want to study the entire area for upgrades or if this is something that can be handled easily by staff. I'm cc:ing the City Manager and City Clerk on your message to be sure it gets into our Council communication packet and considered alongside the previous message.

All best,

Gloria
Gloria J Betcher
Ward 3 Representative
Ames City Council
531 Hayward Avenue
Ames, IA 50014
(515) 292-5177

> On Jan 7, 2026, at 8:30 AM, Ryan Park <parklrya@gmail.com> wrote:
>
> [External Email]
>
>
> Good Morning Gloria,
>
> With the addition of a cross walk and turning lane made along Mortensen Road west of South Dakota Ave, what would it take to get a stop sign at the exit for the West Towne Apts at the end of Poe Avenue? This is a very busy exit for the apartments and with traffic having to stop to exit off Poe Avenue this causes problems as typically the apartment vehicles do not yield to someone already waiting at the stop. I've been living on Poe for over 6 years and the problem has only gotten worse.
>
> Thank You,
>
> Ryan Park
> Ames Resident
> Sent from my iPhone

Hall, Renee

From: Julie Tigges <julietigges1@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 7, 2026 12:05 PM
To: City Council and Mayor
Subject: Request for Council Oversight Regarding Prolonged Animal Control Confinement

[External Email]

Dear Mayor and Members of the Ames City Council,

My name is Julie Tigges. I am a resident of Ames, and I am writing to you calmly, respectfully, and in good faith to request your awareness and oversight regarding a situation involving my dog, Tyson, who has been held in confinement by Ames Animal Control since August 19, 2025.

Tyson is a Mastiff/Bully mix, lawfully owned by myself and my partner, Todd Lauridsen, as co-owners. He is registered with the City of Ames, neutered, vaccinated, microchipped, insured, and clearly identified as both a service dog and an emotional support animal for Todd. Since Tyson's prolonged confinement, Todd's physical and emotional health has declined measurably, including an approximate 40-pound weight loss. Tyson's own condition has also deteriorated as a result of extended isolation.

I want to be clear about my intent in writing. I am not accusing the City Council, and I am not asking you to litigate this matter. I am asking for transparency, proportionality, and oversight where discretion appears to have been replaced by delay.

The relevant facts are as follows:

- Tyson was seized on August 19, 2025, and has now been confined for over five months.
- There have been a cpl bite/nap and a scratch incident; however, no severe or life-threatening injuries have ever been attributed to Tyson.
- Tyson is approximately 20 months old and is still a young dog whose behavior is capable of being shaped through structured training and appropriate handling.
- From the outset, we have cooperated fully with every requirement imposed by the City.
- We obtained dangerous dog registration, required signage, fencing, insurance, muzzling equipment, and provided all requested compliance documentation.
- We proactively sought and presented multiple humane alternatives to euthanasia, including board-and-train programs, immersive rehabilitation, relocation options, and continued behavioral management.
- Qualified trainers have indicated that Tyson is trainable and not hopeless; however, they have also explained that fair and effective behavioral evaluation cannot occur while a dog is subjected to prolonged shelter confinement.
- During this extended confinement, Tyson has been medicated for stress and anxiety—medication he did not require prior to being seized.
- At no point have we been informed of any clear pathway or conditions under which Tyson could be released or returned to our care. Instead, we were told that “the decision has been made” and that “exceptions cannot be made.”
- As a result, euthanasia has been presented not as a last resort contingent upon failed alternatives, but as a fixed outcome, despite full compliance and the availability of reasonable, humane options.

I understand that Animal Control has a difficult role and that public safety is important. I also recognize that the City of Ames has publicly acknowledged the value of comfort and emotional-support animals

within the community. What I respectfully ask the Council to consider is whether prolonged confinement without a defined path forward — particularly where no severe injury history exists and where owners have demonstrated consistent good-faith compliance — reflects the proportional and humane approach the City intends to uphold.

Euthanasia is permanent and irreversible. For that reason, we are respectfully requesting a defined path forward that fully considers reasonable alternatives and allows for fair evaluation, rather than an outcome that cannot be undone.

I will be present at the regular City Council meeting on Tuesday, January 13, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers at City Hall (515 Clark Avenue), and I would appreciate the opportunity to speak briefly if permitted. My hope is not confrontation, but clarity — and a resolution that does not end in irreversible harm where reasonable solutions exist.

Thank you for your time, your service, and your consideration.

Respectfully,

Julie Tigges

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MEMO

To: Mayor and City Council

From: Kelly Diekmann, Planning & Housing Director

Date: January 9, 2025

Subject: Property Owner Request for Zoning Text Amendment for Setbacks
Encroachments

Background:

On October 28, 2025, the City Council referred to staff a zoning text amendment request from Tim and Tess Ashley, owners and residents of 1420 Coolidge. The Ashleys' property contains a duplex with the entrance to a second unit, on the lower level of the split-level home. This entrance is accessible via a short staircase that leads to a door partially below ground level.

The owners recently built an accessory structure that abuts the house to enclose the stairway without permits and the benefit of staff review. **Although below grade stairs are permitted to encroach into a setback, the structure covers and encloses the stairs above grade and must meet setbacks, which it does not. (See Attachment A-pictures)**

The property is within the Residential Low Density (RL) Zoning District. RL requires a minimum side setback of 6 feet for a single-story structure and a minimum side setback of 8 feet for a two- or three-story structure. The Ashleys' home is two-story.

The covering over the stairway encroaches into the minimum 8-foot side setback by approximately 3.5 feet. The structure itself is 5 feet, 4.5 inches wide, but the house does not sit at the minimum setback line, and a portion of the structure is within the setback.

The Zoning Ordinance does allow for certain encroachments by right, such as for eaves. Accessory structures, however, that are independent of the home are not allowed to encroach. Staff reviewed all options for an exception or other means of approving the encroachment, including attaching it to the home, and determined none allow for the structure as it was built. Subsequently, on September 10, 2025, the

Zoning Board of Adjustment denied a variance request from the Ashleys to allow the existing structure to remain as it is and encroach into the side setback. After the denial, the owners chose to petition Council to amend the Zoning Code to allow the structure to remain.

Request:

In their communication to Council, the Ashleys requested that the City “amend the 8-foot setback code in such a manner that would allow [us] to construct and place a full covering/enclosure directly above and around the existing stairway and landing area that addresses the safety concerns”.

There are no rental code or building code requirements for the stairs to be covered. It is the owners’ desire to address their concerns about slipping and falling that have led to the request for a change of standards.

Options:

There are several ways that the Zoning Code could be amended to allow for a structure, such as the one at the Ashley property, to be built.

Option 1 – Extend the depth of allowed encroachments for attached structures

Amend Sec. 29.402 (Setbacks Encroachments) to allow, by right, for full or partial projections into setbacks of the type at the Ashley’s home as an attached addition to the home. This is essentially an allowance through approval of a building permit for one-story addition to homes for below grade stairs where at least 3 feet of setback is maintained.

Option 2 – Amend existing exception to allow greater encroachments for attached structures

Amend Sec. 29.1506 (Exceptions) to modify the existing Minor Area Modification that is currently limited to no more than 2 feet and a minimum setback of 3 feet. The current 2-foot exception applies to all types of additions to homes, but the covering as is would require 3.5 feet of encroachment. The change would have to increase the encroachment allowed for all types of additions attached to a home and be subject to ZBA approval.

Option 3 – Create new stairs enclosure-only encroachment exception for attached structures

Amend Sec. 29.1506 (Exceptions) to create a new Minor Area Modification for the type of structure at the Ashleys’ home, presumably limited to stairs that are below grade, to allow ZBA to consider the specifics of the request and

design. This type of change would only apply to enclosure of stairs, whereas Option 2 above would apply more broadly.

City Council could respond to the request with a variety of options.

Option 4 – Create new minor area modification exception process for free standing accessory structures.

The stair enclosure is currently free standing as its own structure. No encroachments are permitted for any type of accessory building when it is not in the rear yard. Council could create a new ZBA minor area modification to consider allowances for accessory structures similar to the standards that exist for additions to houses.

Option 5 – Take No Action

If the request to initiate a change to the encroachment standards does not proceed, the owner will be required to remove the structure. The basement duplex unit and the stairs that access the unit are already permitted by Code and would be unaffected by the removal of the stair covering.

Staff Comments

Side setbacks are standard features of zoning ordinances. The setbacks ensure uniformity of development and allow for the penetration of light and air. To a certain extent, however, they are discretionary. The City allows for certain encroachments for many types of small features of single-family homes, but they are applied uniformly across the City.

The options presented above have various implications in terms of staff review versus a hearing or whether they are broadly available in many situations or narrowly to stair covering. **Based upon the attached photos, the structure is substantial and would not seem to merit being allowed by right as described in Option 1. Options 2, 3, and 4 are all means to permit an encroachment subject to a noticed hearing with the ZBA to consider compatibility of such a larger structure.**

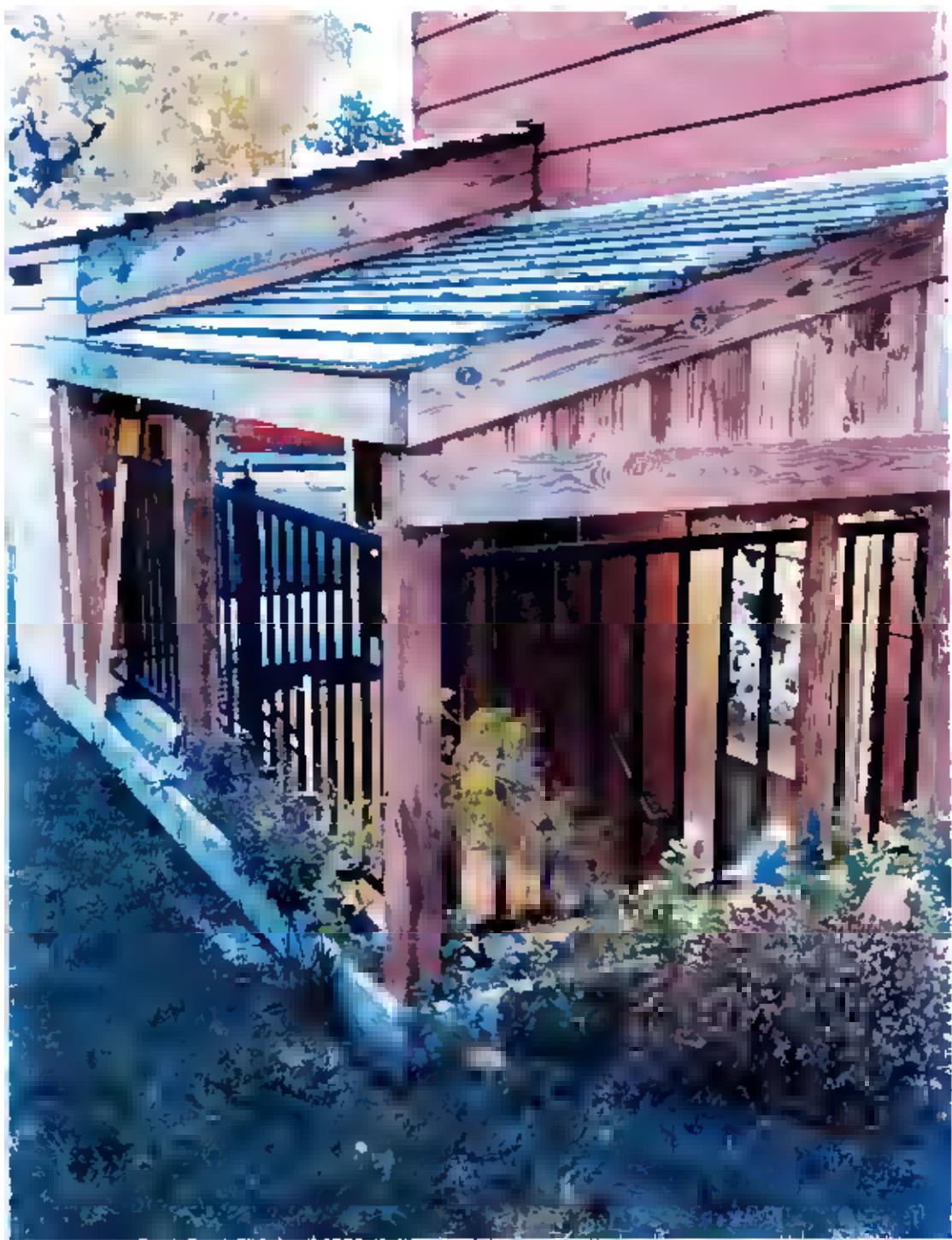
To proceed with the request, Council would need to put the request on a future agenda for discussion before ultimately allowing for the owner to apply for a specific change to the zoning ordinance.

If Council does not have an interest in committing time to the proposed change at this time, then no further action is needed. The owner would then need to demolish the structure, but the duplex use and stairs could otherwise continue as is.

Attachment A



Structure over the Stairs – Looking South (Towards the Rear of the Property)



Structure over the Stairs – Looking North (Towards the Front of the Property)



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MEMO

To: Mayor and City Council

From: Kelly Diekmann, Planning & Housing Director

Date: January 9, 2025

Subject: Request for Plan 2040 Amendment to Change RN-3 to Employment within Boone County

Background:

City Council received an email, see attached, from Leon Wuebka who is the owner of two parcels of land in Boone County south of Lincoln Way and west of County Line Road totaling approximately 58 acres (see attached map)

Ames Plan 2040 includes this area within the West Growth Area as a residential land use classification of RN-3 and RN-5.

The property owner has an interest in development of "commercial" uses that zoning would classify as industrial uses for approximately 25 acres of his total land. He would desire to annex to the City for its development. His remaining land would also be annexed and maintained for residential development. The owner has developed similar uses 1 mile to the west of this area in Boone County.

At the time Plan 2040 was created the emphasis was on creating residential land development options. Some areas for general commercial or light industrial development was shown in this area as a transition from existing uses. Actual retail commercial types of development are planned on the north side of Lincoln Way.

Development of the area could occur in 2026, subject to a sanitary sewer extension from County Line Road through Mr. Wuebka's land and approval of final water supply agreement with Xenia that would enable service of the area to urban standards.

The key question is not the ability to serve the area with urban services, but the desired land use mix for the area. Mr. Wuebka believes that there

is demand for continuation of industrial and service land uses that exist to the west for part of his property. He prefers to support this type of development over 100% residential development.

Staff Comments

Generally, commercial and industrial uses are considered a positive land use option for a City. Staff has two overarching concerns for the proposal to amend the future land use map.

The first is if market demand exists for commercial/industrial uses. If not, Staff does not believe creating a speculative area for commercial/industrial development is desirable compared to maintaining plans for residential development. If there is a market demand and certainty that the owner will subdivide the site to create lots, that could be justification for the change as a near term economic development opportunity.

The second issue is the compatibility of the proposed commercial/industrial use with the remaining planned residential area. The proposed use is more of an industrial use as described by the owner, which is typically not adjacent to residential development. The current planned transition of use is for a more General Commercial type of development than light industrial. This transition is to occur to the west of Mr. Wuebka's land.

To address this concern, Council could consider General Commercial designation compared to Employment (aka Industrial). Additionally, any change of use would likely require conditional zoning to ensure compatibility with the remaining planned residential areas, since standard General Industrial zoning would not be appropriate.

Staff also notes that the development of the area will need more discussion of the size of an annexation area, future road alignments, drainage district tile facilities, extension of sanitary sewer, timing of Xenia water service, timing of road paving of County Line Road, Lincoln Way/County Line Road roundabout improvements, and DOT access permits along Lincoln Way for subdivision access.

If Council believes the concept has merit to be evaluated further, this issue should be placed on a future agenda for discussion. If Council prefers to maintain the maximum amount of residential land at this time, then no further action is needed.

To: Honorable Mayor and Ames City Council

From: Leon Wuebker

Date: December 12, 2025

RE: Land use comp plan amendment

Mayor and Council,

My family owns land just across the Story County line in Boone County just South of Lincoln Way. Our request is to amend the current 2040 comprehensive plan to allow for the Eastern portion of our land to be developed for residential uses and the Western portion of the land for commercial/light industrial use. The attached map represents the land that we own.

This past year the City of Ames ran a main sewer line to the Eastern edge of our property. The comp plan amendment will allow development to occur in this area (along with the potential pending agreement between the City of Ames and Xenia rural water).

There are significant sanitary sewer/septic issues in this area of Western Story County and Eastern Boone County. Moving the development forward will rectify these issues.

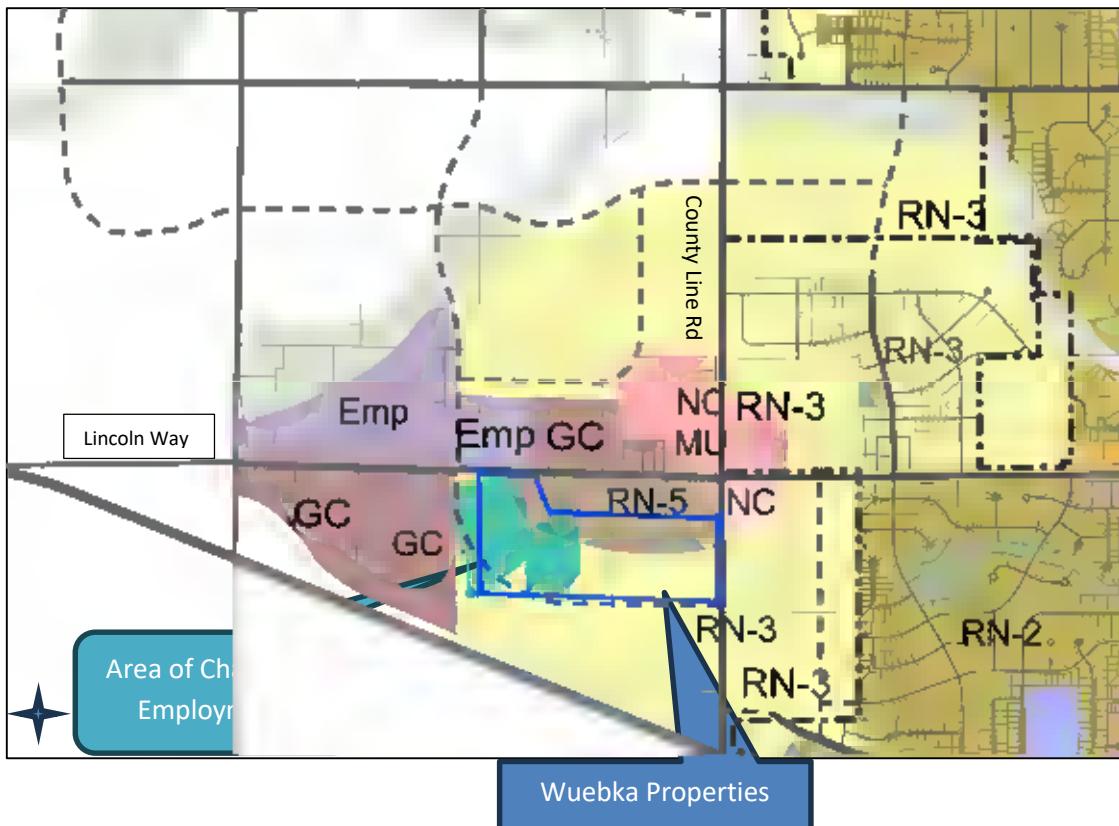
Upon approval of the comp plan amendment, we will begin the annexation process for the area. The goal is to have annexation and zoning done by the beginning of the fourth quarter of 2026.

We request that you refer this matter back to city staff to bring back to you at the first available time.

Respectfully submitted,


Leon Wuebker

Ames Plan 2040 Future Land Use Map



Staff Report

Workforce Housing Subdivision – Ontario

January 9, 2026

BACKGROUND:

On December 16, 2025 the City Council referred a letter from Brenda Dryer, Senior Vice President of the Ames Regional Economic Alliance, requesting the City's support for a potential workforce housing project.

Brenda has informed the City Council that local developers are in the process of acquiring 17 acres of land currently owned by Iowa State University at the intersection of Ontario Street and Scholl Road. This was the site previously suggested for the Healthy Life Center.

What currently is envisioned are approximately 84 attached housing units which will include rental and owner-occupied units on the west side of Scholl Road and 25 lots for detached owner-occupied houses on the east side.

In order to meet the requirements for this new subdivision, Scholl Road, which will bisect the new subdivision, must be reconstructed to City standards for it to be dedicated to the City. The developers are proposing to assume responsibility for reconstructing at their cost the section of Scholl Road from Ontario Street north to the Railroad right-of-way in accordance with City standards.

In return for the developers assuming responsibility to reconstruct the Scholl road segment at their cost:

- They want the City to provide a TIF Rebate incentive to be paid to them annually until the cost of the road reconstruction is paid back to them, or up to 10 years, whichever comes first.

Although the developers are requesting up to 10 years of a TIF incentive, Brenda has noted that it is the goal of all involved to construct and sell homes as quickly as possible. Therefore, their goal is to have enough construction and sale activity to drive a TIF Rebate payoff in 5 years.

- They will agree to a sales price cap at \$425,000 for homes within this subdivision (assuming no additional negative or major impacts to market conditions).

They are emphasizing that focus of this subdivision will be the creation of more affordable and attainable workforce housing in the City of Ames.

The Ames Regional Economic Alliance, through Brenda Dryer, is agreeing to:

- Assist the City in submitting a request and justifying to the Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) Director the need to approve a reduction of the LMI set-aside requirement for this Residential TIF project from 50.07% to 20%.

If approved by the IEDA Director, this percentage reduction will result in the developer being paid back quicker for their cost to reconstruct Scholl Road.

- Assist the developers in preparing and submitting an application to the IEDA for Workforce Housing Tax Credits.

NEXT STEPS:

Should the City Council agree to support this proposed development, the following steps will be required:

1. Developer initiated Comprehensive Plan amendment from Government to either RN-2 or RN-3
2. Developer led Neighborhood Meeting to describe the intended project
3. Rezoning of Site with a PUD Overlay and Major Site Development Plan
4. Preliminary Plat approval
5. Final Plat approval
6. Urban Renewal Area and adoption of a TIF Rebate ordinance
7. Development Agreement for Residential TIF Rebate with the developers for the cost of reconstructing a section of Scholl Road and for LMI Set-aside.

(It should be noted that the annual rebate to the developers will be subject to a non-appropriations clause in order to not count as a City debt.)

STAFF COMMENTS:

In recent months the Mayor and City Manager have been discussing with former ISU President, Wendy Wintersteen, the possibility of the University selling off some of their “unused” land for an infill, workforce housing project. President Wintersteen agreed with the City Council’s desire to facilitate additional residential opportunities that would benefit the faculty, staff, and students at ISU as well as the total community.

In order to accomplish this task, the 17 acres of land on the north side of Ontario Street bisected by Scholl Road recently were offered for sale by the University. A group of local developers submitted the successful bid for this land and are in the final stages of acquiring the property from the University.

Therefore, Staff believes the request for a partnership in this endeavor to create an infill, workforce housing subdivision is in harmony with the City Council’s goal for increasing residential opportunities.

The developers are also willing to cap the sale price of the residential units built in this new subdivision, which is something the Council has expressed interest in obtaining from developers seeking city incentives.

Assuming the proposed capped sale price for a residential unit and the length of the TIF repayment schedule that is being requested by the developers are acceptable to the City Council, the Staff would support moving ahead with the steps outlined above to support the proposed development.