



# MEMO

**To:** Mayor and City Council  
**From:** Jeramy Neefus, Principal Clerk  
**Date:** January 26, 2026  
**Subject:** Packet of Communications to Council

Listed below are the communications to the City Council known to staff as of January 26, 2026:

1. Steve and Anne Burgason, Ames Residents – January 9, 2026  
**RE:** Ansley Development Request for Incentives
2. Brad McCartney, Story County Property Owner – January 12, 2026  
**RE:** Request for Waiver of Subdivision Requirements
3. Todd Wilson, EzipNzoom Licensed Iowa Dealer – January 14, 2026  
**RE:** Information about Differentiating Golf Carts and Low-Speed Vehicles
4. BOBJ, Ames Resident – January 19, 2026  
**RE:** Request for Right-of-Way Maintenance on North Grand Avenue
5. Bhargava Malya, Ames Resident – January 19, 2026  
**RE:** Concern Regarding Flock Cameras in Ames
6. Sara Van Meeteren, Building Official – January 21, 2026  
**RE:** Rental Trash Receptacle Requirements
7. Geoff Huff, Chief of Police – January 23, 2026  
**RE:** Device Delivery Seller Permit
8. Kelly Diekmann, Director of Planning and Housing – January 23, 2026  
**RE:** Request for Text Amendments to Chapter 31 from the Historic Preservation Commission

9. Jerry Goldsmith, Ames Resident – January 21, 2026  
**RE:** Ironwood Woodlot Renovation

## Hall, Renee

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**From:** Steve Burgason <sburgason@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, January 23, 2026 11:30 AM  
**To:** Hall, Renee; Diekmann, Kelly; Campbell, Benjamin  
**Subject:** Ansley "Developer Incentives" City Proposal

[External Email]

Renee,  
Please include the following in the City Council Agenda for this coming Tuesday, January 27th.  
Thank you,  
Steve and Anne Burgason

The Developers of Ansley Land LLC would like to thank the City Council for considering the Developer Incentives for Development. We would ask to be included in the considerations and we are submitting the following proposal. We would like to make note that the Council's vote two years ago to pay for 1/2 of Cedar Lane along non-development land was very much appreciated. As the developers, at that time we communicated that in hindsight, we should have requested this initially in our Preliminary Plat because: 1) it is all non-development frontage and 2) we had incurred the significant costs already with storm water management coming off of the Iowa State Farms on the west side of Cedar Lane. We would ask that this agreement not be a reason to be left out of the current considerations. The City contributing to the Cedar Lane completion is 3 or more years in the future and was not agreed to as a development incentive. As it relates to the developer incentive request, we would be able to add 38-42 buildable lots to the Ames market with a similar incentive to what is being offered Domani. Allowing Ansley Land to participate is also imparitive in order for us to remain competitive with other residential lot development in Ames and especially south Ames.

The recommended incentive to the Domani development is \$371,000 to complete Cottonwood and open up 25 lots, with the city completing the Cottonwood connection and releasing Domani from that obligation as well as the obligation that Cottonwood be completed before Green Hills Drive is put in.

Our request to the City Council would be comparable to the Domani request. We would ask that the City complete Aurora through the divided median section which is about 700 feet. We would commit to providing all of the engineered plans for Aurora. We would complete Ansley Avenue through the T intersection with Aurora and to the end of Townhome Lot 98 (on Ansley Ave.). As well, we would complete Aurora from the T intersection with Ansley east to the point just before the divided section. Ansley Land would also do the roadside improvements and water and storm sewer along Aurora and Ansley Ave. (sanitary is already installed except on Swan Lane and Ansley south of the T intersection). These improvements would complete another connection from Cedar Lane to University Blvd. As well, we would complete Swan Lane which already has City approved construction plans.

This would open up 38-42 Townhome and Residential Lots as well as the Commercial Lot 118

Lot 123: 8 Townhome Lots; 4 Single Residential Home Lots  
Lot 117: 12-14 Townhome Lots  
Lot 116: 4 Single Residential Home Lots  
Lot 98: 4 Single Residential Home Lots or 6 Townhome Lots  
Lots 99-104 (Cottage Court): 6 Single Residential Home Lots  
Lot 118: Commercial Lot for Small Event Center

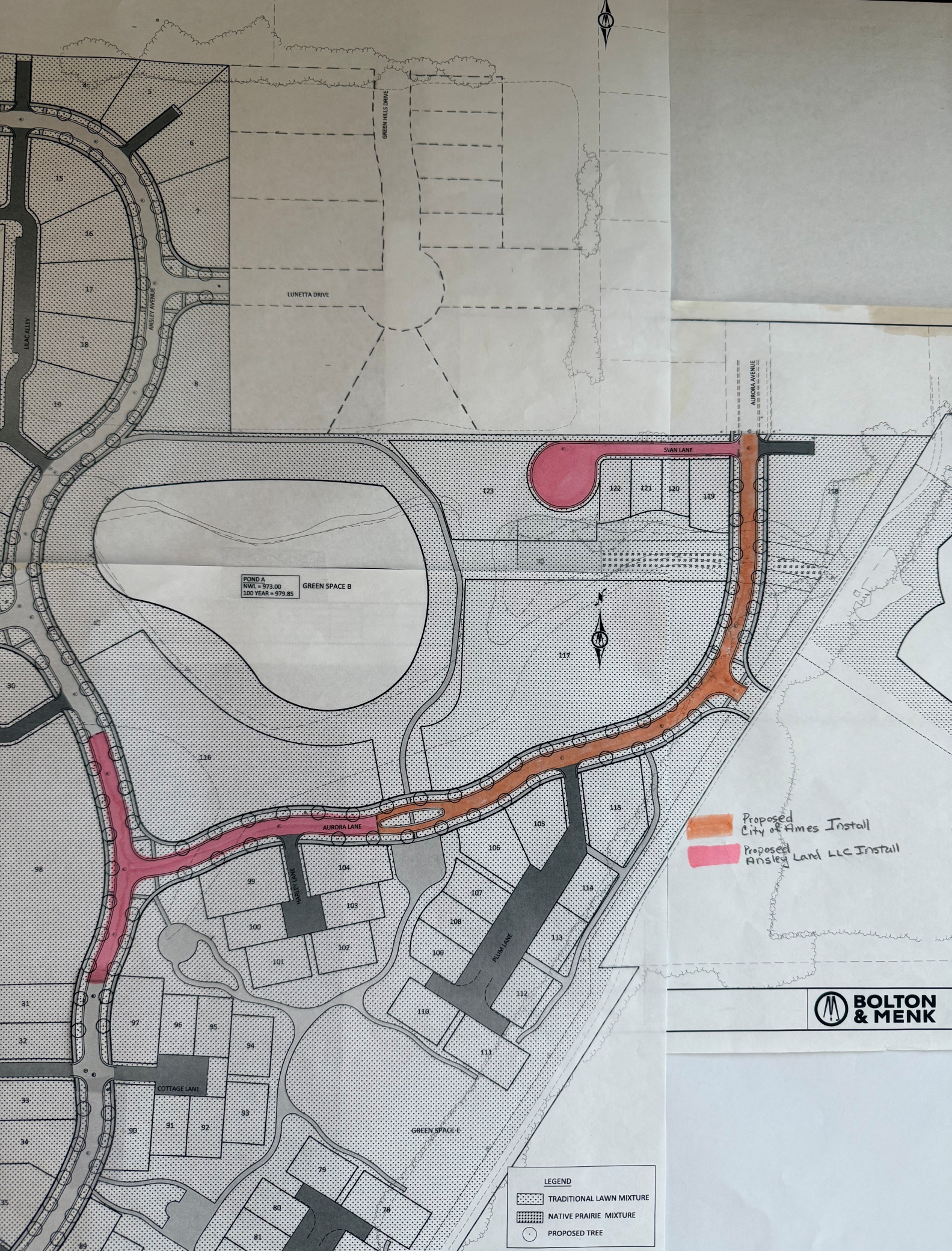
If approved, we would request that this road work would begin within 18 months (summer of 2027). This would allow us to: 1) proceed in our timetable to Final Plat the Swan Lane section for construction 2) open up Ansley lots in a similar timeline to Domani opening up their 25 lots 3) this would keep developer financial incentives on a parity with Domani.

We have currently sold all of our Ansley Pond side lots that are available and feel that the demand for these new lots would be strong.

We thank you for your consideration of this request.

Steve and Anne Burgason





POND A  
NWL = 973.00  
100 YEAR = 979.85

GREEN SPACE B

Proposed  
City of Ames Install

Proposed  
Ansley Land LLC Install



**LEGEND**

- TRADITIONAL LAWN MIXTURE
- NATIVE PRAIRIE MIXTURE
- PROPOSED TREE



**Hall, Renee**

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**From:** Brad McCartney <2bmccartney@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 12, 2026 1:06 PM  
**To:** Moore, Justin; Hall, Renee  
**Subject:** Request for waiver letter  
**Attachments:** 50184 180th St Request for Waiver.docx

[External Email]

Good morning, I have attached our letter requesting a waiver for our sketch plan/division of our property on 180th St. Please let me know if you have any questions or need anything else. Thank you very much for your time, we look forward to hearing from you.

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*Brad McCartney*  
515-689-1123

## Request for waiver of sub-division requirements

Property Address: 50184 18<sup>th</sup> Street, Ames IA

Parcel ID: 05-18-100-140

Date Written: 1/12/26

Dear Ames City Council Members,

I am writing this letter as a request for waiver of the subdivision requirements and fringe area policies for a parcel division on the property listed above. My family greatly appreciates your time in looking into this matter, and hope you will take our request into consideration. We acquired this property several years ago prior to the urban fringe expansion to this area, in hopes of someday building our family home. The area in the property we are looking to build is zoned as A-1, but is not usable as high value farmland, and is mostly a flat unused area of the property. As of recently we have had our 4<sup>th</sup> child and decided to start the process of potentially designing and building a home nestled in these trees to better suite the needs of our family. With your permission in this matter, we would like to pursue this opportunity. Again, we greatly appreciate your time and look forward to hearing from you.

Brad McCartney and Family



**Hall, Renee**

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**From:** DSM E Zip-N-Zoom <dsmezip@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 14, 2026 6:06 PM  
**To:** City Council and Mayor  
**Subject:** LSV Golf Carts vs DNR Golf Carts  
**Attachments:** Ames - LSV Golf Carts vs DNR Golf Carts.pdf

[External Email]

Please see our public brief to help inform members of the Ames city council on the the legal status and benefits of LSV's in Iowa. We appreciate any feedback or questions.

EzipNzoom  
5454 NE 14th Street  
Des Moines, IA 50313



## **MODERNIZING MUNICIPAL CODE: DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN GOLF CARTS AND REGISTERED MOTOR VEHICLES (LSVs)**

**To:** Honorable Mayor and City Council of Ames, Iowa

**Date:** Wednesday, January 14, 2026

**RE: Modernizing Municipal Code for Sustainable and Safe Neighborhood Transportation**

To the City Council and City Administration,

I am writing to you as the owner of EzipNzoom, a legal, DOT-approved motor vehicle dealer (#D-6180). Our mission is to provide efficient, low-impact transportation solutions to Central Iowa residents. As your community considers or reviews its local ordinances regarding golf carts and recreational vehicles, I would like to offer professional insight into a superior, state-approved alternative: the **Low-Speed Vehicle (LSV)**.

### **1. The Legal Status of LSVs in Iowa**

Unlike standard golf carts, LSVs are federally recognized motor vehicles that must comply with **Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (49 C.F.R. § 571.500)**. Under **Iowa Code § 321.381A**, these vehicles are permitted on any public roadway with a posted speed limit of 35 mph or less.

Because the Iowa DOT titles and issues license plates for LSVs, they are legally distinct from unregistered "recreational" vehicles. This distinction allows LSVs to be operated without the restrictive "sunrise to sunset" or "no primary road" limitations often applied to traditional golf carts.

### **2. A Safer Solution for Your Community**

Standard golf carts were never engineered for public road use. However, the LSVs we provide offer a "Golf Cart-style" experience while satisfying the highest safety and legal requirements:

- **Standard Safety Equipment:** Every LSV is equipped with seat belts, headlamps, turn signals, mirrors, a DOT windshield, and a 17-digit VIN.
- **Registration & Accountability:** LSVs are registered and insured exactly like standard automobiles, ensuring operator accountability.
- **Economic Benefit:** LSVs allow residents to travel locally for errands, reducing traffic congestion and parking strain without the legal ambiguity of traditional golf carts.

### **3. State Preemption and Municipal Safety**





It is important to note that while **Iowa Code § 321.247** grants municipalities the discretion to "permit or prohibit" unregistered golf carts, the Iowa Code provides no such discretionary authority for **Low-Speed Vehicles (LSVs)**. Because LSVs are DOT-registered motor vehicles, they are permitted by state law on all roadways with a speed limit of 35 mph or less.

We find that many communities struggle with the safety and liability concerns of traditional golf carts. We recommend that your community's code clearly distinguish between these two classes of vehicles. By acknowledging the legal status of LSVs, the City can:

- **Maintain Strict Safety Standards:** Ensure that "neighborhood vehicles" on your streets meet federal crash-safety standards (seat belts, lights, VINs) rather than unregulated golf carts.
- **Ensure Legal Compliance:** Avoid potential "Home Rule" conflicts by ensuring local ordinances do not inadvertently attempt to prohibit state-titled motor vehicles.
- **Satisfy Resident Demand:** Provide a clear, legal path for residents to use efficient, eco-friendly transportation that is already fully compliant with the Iowa DOT.

We would be honored to provide a demonstration of these vehicles for your Public Safety committee or City Council to show how they can be a seamless and safe addition to your city's streets.

Sincerely,

*Todd Wilson*

Todd Wilson – Owner, EzipNzoom Licensed Iowa Dealer #D-6180

Phone: 515-567-1930 | Email: [dsmezip@gmail.com](mailto:dsmezip@gmail.com)

**Hall, Renee**

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**From:** rjbuilders@abbnebraska.com  
**Sent:** Monday, January 19, 2026 8:01 AM  
**To:** City Council and Mayor  
**Subject:** No man's land along North Grand Ave

[External Email]

During the recent warm weather, my wife and I restarted our afternoon walks around town. Along North Grand Ave. both sides of the right of way (east and west) between the UP railroad bridge and Northwestern Ave., it is a total eyesore. Overgrown scrub trees/shrubs and litter cover the hillsides. This area needs a complete cleanup.  
Thanks, BOBJ



## Hall, Renee

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**From:** Malya, Bhargava R <bmalya@iastate.edu>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 19, 2026 7:18 PM  
**To:** Haila, John; Beatty-Hansen, Bronwyn; Gartin, Tim; Betcher, Gloria; Junck, Rachel; Rollins, Anita; Corrieri, Amber; Boland, Emily  
**Cc:** City Council and Mayor  
**Subject:** concerns of government overreach

[External Email]

Dear Mayor John Haila, Ames City Council, and City Clerk Renee Hall,

I am writing about the concerning rise of AI-enabled surveillance cameras in Ames. When I first began studying at Iowa State, these cameras appeared benign. However, after seeing headlines such as the [Columbine Valley Police Department using Flock data to aggressively pursue the wrong suspect](#), the [use of Flock data to enforce laws outside of its jurisdiction](#), and the relative ease with which a person's digital life can be linked to their physical presence through AI-powered facial and retinal biometric software, I feel creeped out.

As a young person, I feel unsafe thinking about how this data could be used in the future. Under an authoritarian regime, Flock data could be used to track travel patterns and restrict personal freedoms, or to indiscriminately profile people. **It's like we are living in China or Russia of all places, and not the United States.**

With this technology, Flock is capable of surveilling people and build advertising profiles based on how they dress, how they behave, which shops they enter, how much merchandise they purchase, what car they drive, and even what they talk about (Flock cameras reportedly have microphones as well). [By default, Flock cameras are exposed to the internet, meaning that anyone could access the camera feeds and engage in people-watching.](#)

When this is combined with the vast amount of data already collected online, I feel deeply unsettled whenever I go out in public. I do not trust Flock or companies like it. Could you consider regulating surveillance companies like Flock?

Thank you for your consideration and I hope to hear back from you soon,

Bhargava Malya  
Iowa State Electrical Engineering

To: Steve Schainker

From: Sara Van Meeteren, Building Official

Date: January 21, 2026

Subject: Rental Trash Receptacle Requirements

At the City Council meeting on January 13, 2026, Council referred a letter from Erik Charter, Property Manager at Jensen Property Management, regarding trash service requirements for rental properties (Attachment A). Jensen Property Management believes that tenants from the rental properties along Marigold, which they share an alley with, are placing their garbage in dumpsters located on Jensen's property instead of purchasing their own trash service. For this reason, they are asking if the code could be amended to "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."

## Current Code:

The Rental Code currently requires occupants to dispose of garbage in a sanitary manner, by placing it in disposal facilities or storage containers. It does not specify whether the occupant or owner are required to furnish such containers. It also does not prohibit an occupant or owner from disposing of garbage off-site. There are no standards in the code that would require proof of trash service prior to obtaining a Letter of Compliance (LOC).

Chapter 10 of the Ames Municipal Code requires the occupant or owner to provide a proper receptacle for the receiving and holding of garbage. It does not prohibit the owner or occupant from disposing of the trash off-site. Therefore, a trash hauling service is not required.

Additionally, Chapter 10 prohibits the placement of garbage onto the private property of another for the purpose of being hauled away, which seems to be the primary concern of Jensen Property Management. The penalty for this violation is punishable by a fine of \$500 for a first offense.

## Other Jurisdictions:

Most of the neighboring communities that staff surveyed have similar standards that require waste to be kept in a sanitary manner. Staff was unable to find other communities that require proof of trash service prior to the issuance of an LOC.



## Staff Comments:

Staff inspected the Marigold properties and reached out to the property owners/managers to gauge the scope of the concern. Upon inspection, staff confirmed the presence of 14 containers among the 21 properties within the area of concern. It is possible the remaining properties have receptacles but keep them inside their garage and were not visible. The 21 properties are under three different management services. Representatives from those companies stated that they have reached out to their tenants and reminded them that trash service is their responsibility and that disposing of their trash on neighboring property is not acceptable.

Mr. Charter did state to staff that the situation has been better since reaching out to Council and the property managers. One property manager requested Jensen Property Management have lids placed on their dumpsters to help with litter, which they have complied with.

Staff observed that the dumpster enclosures on Jensen's property no longer have gates on the South side. The gate is a requirement so staff will work with them to ensure the enclosures are compliant. This should also deter those from placing garbage in the dumpster as they will not be so easily accessible.

It is staff's conclusion that the problem has primarily resolved itself and will continue to monitor the issue. Staff does not believe a text amendment is needed at this time due to the small scope of concern. However, if the Council is interested in an amendment, they should place the item on a future agenda.

**City of Ames**  
**COUNCIL ACTION SUMMARY**  
**January 13, 2026**

**AGENDA ITEM:** Dispositions

**SUBJECT:** Request regarding garbage issues at apartments on Tripp Street from Erik Charter

**ACTION TAKEN:** Moved to refer to staff for a memo regarding No. 1 of the included suggestions, which relates to a letter of compliance for rental properties

**MOTION BY:** Betcher

**SECOND BY:** Corrieri

**VOTING AYE:** Beatty-Hansen, Betcher, Corrieri, Gartin, Junck, Rollins

**VOTING NAY:** None

**ABSENT:** None

**SENT FROM:** Taylor Swanson, Deputy City Clerk

**SENT TO:** Rich Higgins, Fire Chief  
Sara VanMeeteren, Building Official

## Hall, Renee

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**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](#)

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**From:** Erik Charter  
**Sent:** Sunday, December 28, 2025 7:56:31 AM  
**To:** MayorCouncil@cityofames.org <mayorcouncil@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](mailto:erik.charter@jensengroup.net)

cc: Marigold unit owners via USPS













**GARBAGE GUYS**  
Locally Owned and Operated  
518-707-9866





**GARBAGE GUYS**  
Locally Owned and Operated  
**515-707-3866**

REGORY  
CONTAINER INC.  
800-727-1800

**WARNING**  
FALLING HAZARD  
CAUTION  
DO NOT RE-ENTER



To: Mayor and City Council  
Date: January 23, 2026  
From: Geoff Huff, Chief of Police  
Subject: **Device Delivery Seller Permits**

This memo provides an overview of Iowa's newly established "Device Delivery Seller Permit", effective January 1, 2025, and requests City Council direction regarding whether the City should adopt a local policy regarding approval or denial of these permits.

During the 2024 legislative session, the State of Iowa enacted Senate File 345, which regulates and taxes certain glass- or metal-based smoking devices. These devices are defined as equipment or products made wholly or partly of glass or metal that are designed for inhaling—through combustion—tobacco, hemp, other plant materials, or controlled substances. Vapor products and certain traditional smoking products (e.g., briar or corn-cob pipes) are excluded from this definition.

**As of January 2025, any retailer who intends to sell these devices to Iowa consumers via delivery must obtain a Device Delivery Seller Permit from the Iowa Department of Revenue.** To obtain a Device Delivery Seller Permit, a retailer must already hold the following permits or licenses:

- Sales Tax Permit
- Tobacco Retailer License
- Device Retailer Permit (allows for the sale of devices in-store)
- Delivery Seller Permit (allows for the delivery of nicotine or vapor products, but not the devices themselves)

The application must include business information, permit type, business location, and identification of principal officers or partners, as outlined in Iowa Administrative Code 701—235.3.

Retailers selling these devices are also subject to a 40% excise tax on the sales price, in addition to standard sales and use tax.

While the Device Delivery Seller Permit is issued by the Iowa Department of Revenue, cities may choose to:

- Adopt a local review or approval process,
- Establish zoning or land-use restrictions,
- Decline to take action, allowing state permitting to proceed without local involvement.

The municipality has the authority to deny each application for a permit.

**However, once a Device Delivery Seller Permit is applied for, the permit fee is not refundable should the permit be denied or revoked or cancelled at a later time. The permit fee is currently \$1,500.** To date, the City has not received any applications for the delivery permit. However, there are seven permitted device retailers in Ames who could potentially apply.

Some jurisdictions are choosing to deny all applications for this delivery permit.

**If it is the City Council's intention to deny Device Delivery Seller Permits altogether, staff would prefer to communicate this to current device retailers so they do not apply for the new permit only to be denied by the City Council and forfeit the \$1,500 non-refundable application fee.**

**In order to receive the necessary feedback we are requesting, the staff would recommend that this issue be placed on a future agenda.**





*Caring People ♦ Quality Programs ♦ Exceptional Service*

# MEMO

**To:** Mayor and City Council

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

**Date:** January 23, 2026

**Subject:** The Historic Preservation Commission Requests Text  
Amendments to Chapter 31 of the Ames Municipal Code

## **Background:**

On December 16, 2025, the City Council referred to staff zoning text amendment requests from the Ames Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) (see Attachment). **The first requested change includes explicitly stating that double pane windows are allowed as an acceptable window type to increase energy efficiency on historic structures as well as including definitions for *Double Pane Windows, Multi-Pane Windows, and Muntin Bar*.** Currently, Chapter 31 does not explicitly allow or disallow double pane windows, nor are there added definitions for clarity when referencing window details. The current regulations applied by staff focus on use of historic materials for windows and do not address multi-pane window types.

The second request is to amend Chapter 31 to provide clear guidance related to when or if to allow for the infill of window openings. An example of this issue would be someone wanting to fill in a window as part of remodeling project of a room.

The request follows the Commission's review of a Certificate of Appropriateness where the Commission found that Chapter 31 does not provide standards or guidance on window removal or infill to make an adequate decision and then approved the infill. There was a mixed history of whether to approve or deny such requests as precedence for the decision.

Before making this request, the HPC considered language from other cities, and believes that addressing the issue directly would be appropriate to assist homeowners with understanding what alterations would be permissible. **The Commission is also requesting to add specific window infill language**

**stating when window removal or infill is appropriate, as well as specifying that any window infill must be architecturally consistent with the historical structure.**

Staff researched the requested changes and provided the initial findings to the HPC in October before the Commission formulated their recommendations. The communities that staff reached out to, Iowa City and Dubuque, did not have historic preservation guideline language regarding double pane windows; instead, they prioritized the retention and repair of original windows, as well as non-invasive weatherization techniques to increase energy efficiency versus replacement.

It is staff's understanding that the HPC requests are not intended to alter the existing historic requirements, but to allow increased energy efficiency when they otherwise meet the historic material and profile requirements of an appropriate window. The structure, form, and materials should be sensitively treated to preserve the building's character. Depending on how the double pane window language is written, the priority of historic character vs. modern window design will be defined.

### **Options:**

City Council could respond to the request by selecting to pursue a text amendment for one or both of the requests.

1. *Text Amendment to Chapter 31, Historic Preservation Districts, to allow double pane windows in historic districts, add and revise definitions to add clarity on Double Pane Windows, Multi Pane Windows, and Muntin Bar.*

**Council could amend Chapter 31 to explicitly allow double pane windows, and improve or add definitions.** During the review process final language and guidance on how to apply it would be developed.

2. *Text Amendment to Chapter 31, Historic Preservation Districts to add code language regarding the removal and infill of windows.*

**This option would provide clear guidelines to Chapter 31 regarding the removal or infill of windows.** The HPC has reviewed several applications for window infill over the years and has a mixed history of approving or denying applications. The request looks to provide language that would provide a consistent approach and determination.

The intent is to apply it to side and rear facades, but not front facades. Infill could be approved on an historic side or rear façade if it met the guidelines.

### 3. *No Changes at This Time*

If the Council is generally satisfied with City standards within Chapter 31, *Historic Preservation Districts*, or finds the requests to allow alterations that would negatively impact the historic district, no change is required.

The Historic Preservation Commission will continue to review applications on a case-by-case basis and only allow changes that will not be harmful to the historic character of the district. Window changeouts would be subject to the current standards and if they are met could still allow for new double pane windows. Infill of opening is less clear on if it is permitted, but based on past practice it could be considered by the HPC without well defined standards.

#### **Staff Comments:**

Enhanced energy efficiency and reviewing Chapter 31 are designated Historic Preservation commission goals from their 2025 Work Plan. Through Commission research and applying the existing guidelines when reviewing Certificate of Appropriateness applications, the HPC has identified areas of desired improvement. The existing guidelines do not explicitly disallow or allow double pane windows, nor do they provide the Commission, or staff, with clear direction regarding window removal and infill. If double pane windows were allowed, the added definitions would provide increased clarity on the differing window features to ensure there is no confusion by the new term within the code.

While increasing energy efficiency and identifying areas of improvement within the Code are important goals of the Commission, however, traditionally all historic structure alterations have maintained the existing historic character whenever possible. Staff has not found in their initial research that allowing double-pane windows is a recommended alteration to a historic structure as it modifies the original character, and this issue will be subject to more review of language if the text amendment is initiated.

The removal or infill of windows was allowed by other communities when specific criteria had been met relating to the location of the window. The HPC informed staff that their intent is not to provide guidelines or language that would

directly conflict with their goal to preserve, but to allow alterations that may help improve a structure when it is appropriate to do so.

Staff believes the issues should be placed on a future Council agenda for discussion. A representative of the HPC would be available to review the requests and answer questions from the Council. Tentatively, staff believes this could occur on February 24<sup>th</sup> at the same meeting when the City Council is scheduled to review the proposed HPC workplan for the upcoming year.

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Ames City Council

FROM: Historic Preservation Commission

SUBJECT: Chapter 31 Revision Support

DATE: December 4, 2025

The Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) respectfully requests the City Council to authorize the Planning and Housing Department staff to draft proposed revisions to Chapter 31 of the Municipal Code relating to energy efficiency and window infill.

### Energy Efficiency

As part of HPC's 2025 Work Plan, we sought to review Chapter 31 and consider changes to "allow exterior materials on historic structures that would meet the standards and be energy efficient," in accordance with Goal #3 of the Ames Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan (ACHPP). We created a subcommittee and identified potential revisions pertaining to energy efficiency, outlined below.

Our proposed changes concern the explicit allowance of double-layer insulated glass (also known as double-pane glass) for windows. While the code doesn't explicitly prohibit these items, we believe the code should explicitly allow these items to eliminate any ambiguity. We propose the following additions be made to Section 31.13(13):

- That double-layer insulated glazing is explicitly permitted in windows. An item (k) can be added that reads as follows (or similar):
  - (k) Windows containing double-layer insulated glazing (also known as double-pane glass) shall be permitted.

We note that the inclusion of "double-pane glass" in the suggestion above may create confusion with the meaning of the word "pane," which is used throughout Section 31.14 to refer to the glass in a window sash (see Section 31.14(1)(c)(vii) for a description of Colonial Revival windows having a "multi-pane sash"). Because "multi-pane" and "double-pane" mean different things, we want to provide clarity and consistency between the Design Guidelines and the Design Criteria. We therefore propose the following changes:

- Revise the definition of "muntin bar" in Section 31.2(22) to be as follows (or similar):
  - Muntin Bar: a strip dividing a single window sash or casement into a grid system of smaller panes of glass, called "lights" or "lites."
- Add items (33) and (34) to Section 31.2 to provide definitions for "double-pane" and "multi-pane" windows as follows (or similar):
  - (33) Double-Pane Windows: Windows containing two layers of glass, separated by a space to reduce heat transfer and provide insulation (also known as double-layer insulated glazing)



- (34) Multi-Pane Windows: Windows wherein a sash or casement is divided by muntin bars into multiple panes or “lights,” creating a grid system of smaller panes of glass
- Revise the description for windows under the Queen Anne Design Criteria in Section 31.14(1)(b)(vii) to be as follows (revision italicized):
  - (vii) Windows Vertical emphasis. Double hung. Window sash with single *undivided* pane. Trim 4" to 6".

### Window Infill

One of the duties of the HPC is to review Certificates of Appropriateness (COAs) for new construction, alteration, demolition, or relocation of contributing structures in the Old Town Historic Preservation District. In the past year, we encountered a COA application for which Chapter 31 provided inadequate direction. This COA concerned the removal and infill of a window on a contributing structure, and we found that the code lacked any provisions to help guide our decision.

It is for this reason that we are seeking Planning staff support to draft language pertaining to window removal and infill. In our research, we found that the Iowa City Historic Preservation Handbook provides guidelines for when a window is to be relocated or removed/infilled, and we wish to establish similar language in the Ames Municipal Code.

It is possible that the revision could be a single line provision under “windows” in Section 31.13(13), but it is paramount that the infill of a removed window be consistent with the architectural style, and we want to ensure that the language that is added is done thoughtfully and thoroughly. The assistance we are requesting from staff may warrant a review of other cities’ Historic Preservation code sections or discussions with their planning staff and HPCs to understand how they handle such alterations.

With this in mind, we request that the City Council authorize adding the following to the Planning and Housing Department’s work plan for 2026:

- Research Assistance: Review other cities’ historic preservation ordinances and information available from the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions (or other preservation organizations) that pertain to window removal and infill.
- Draft Sample Provision(s): Research and propose sample language from these resources to use in drafting revisions to Section 31.13(13)

In summary, we believe that revising provisions in Chapter 31 to include energy efficient materials and to address window removal and infill will improve the regulatory efficiency of the historic preservation ordinance and provide residents with more clarity with respect to alterations to their historic structures. With the help of City Planning staff, we hope to complete this project by the end of calendar year 2026.

Thank you for your consideration and support.

## Hall, Renee

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**From:** jjmmk@netins.net  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 21, 2026 4:50 PM  
**To:** Smyth, Allison; Imhoff, Mark  
**Cc:** City Council and Mayor; Cory Bertelsen; Vbohlen; Luke Gran  
**Subject:** Ironwood Woodlot Renovation

[External Email]

Mark and Allison:

I appreciate the time that both of you have taken to visit with me about the removal of the woodlot between Ironwood Lane and highway 30. The Ironwood Homeowners Association has met several times and has appointed me chairman of the committee to work with the city and DOT to make the best of the opportunity we have been given to restore this woodlot.

Before we waste any more time on this I would like to promote a meeting with each of you, along with leadership from the Ironwood HOA, Luke Gran a local forester and Jo Herring our district forester to explore ideas.

Of course, reaching the culmination of this project does not come easily. It requires cooperation from everyone involved. It appears there are limits as to what the DOT can do. Yet, this is the DOT woodlot and the DOT plants a lot of trees on their right of way. It has been represented to us as an unmanaged woodlot so any damage to that woodlot is excusable because it's unmanaged. Let's work together to begin to manage this woodlot for everyone's benefit.

Wendy and I have lived at our 2113 Ironwood Lane property since 2012. In 2018 the Association recognized the wood lot was deteriorating and was becoming unsightly. A contact was made to the DOT resulting in a visit by then District Engineer Scott Dockstader. The request at that time was for the DOT to plant some conifers on the south side of this woodlot. The premise was that in time these conifers would grow and provide to the neighboring homeowners both visual and audible protection from Highway 30. Then the continual decline of the woodlot would be inconsequential. It was reported at that time that Scott had authorized funding for the project. The project was put in the hands of a DOT staff member however, nothing happened. Hence, we are here with the problem still continuing.

The city in the process of replacing their power line has presented us both a disaster and an opportunity. The disaster being that they cleared a path 20 or more feet wide right near the DOT/homeowner property line of all vegetation. This has completely removed most of the barrier that this woodlot has provided from the noise and visibility of highway 30.

The opportunity is that now we have a cleared path which will enable the establishment of beneficial trees and shrubs.

The Ironwood Homeowners Association has met and are totally behind anything that can be done to fix it. We are an elderly bunch and we have several folks ready to go out and plant trees. But let's be realistic at an average age of 79 we aren't going to get it done.

Who has responsibility. Clearly to fix this it should not be on the back of 79 year old homeowners. It is time for the city of Ames to partner with the DOT to restore this woodlot and not let it deteriorate into junk.

What's the best solution? The HOA has engaged the services of Luke Gran a Forester from Nevada that specializes in the restoration of forest land. He has been on the site and has identified the presence of numerous invasive tree and shrub species that if nothing is done will take over the woodlot and render it undesirable for the city and the homeowners alike. He has outlined a strategy that would remove invasive plants, and plant desirable trees and shrubs that would provide protection to the homeowners and would not grow so tall as to interfere with the power line. This turns out to be good use of government funds because it eliminate long term pruning of the interfering vegetation.

Finally, I plead with you to take this seriously. We need to fix this woodlot problem once and for all. The city has given us a once in an eternity opportunity to fix a problem that will only get worse since the woodlot has now been opened up. If we don't do anything it will be taken over by invasive species.

For the DOT and City, it is easy for you to walk away from this problem. Maybe a little discomfort as you say no to this plea but for the most part out of site out of mind. For the Ironwood folks this mess will be there forever. The Association is willing to do anything within their power to make this happen. I hope you will do the same. Please don't let this opportunity slip away. Reminder. Let's get together and work this out.

A final PLEA, we will never have another opportunity to fix this problem. Let's work together and make it happen.

Thank You,

Jerry Goldsmith

563-357-1800