



MEMO

To: Mayor and City Council
From: Renee Hall, City Clerk
Date: April 24, 2026
Subject: Packet of Communications to Council

Listed below are the communications to the City Council known to staff as of April 24, 2026:

1. Claire E. Hosch, Ames Resident – April 12, 2026
RE: Gray Ave & Sunset Drive Intersection
2. Jacquie Frick, Ames Resident – April 13, 2026
RE: Food Pantry Options in Ames
3. Damion Pregitzer, P.E., PTOE Traffic Engineer – April 24, 2026
RE: Pedestrian Crossing Evaluation – Lincoln Way @ South Russell Ave
4. Rhonda Frerichs – Ames Resident – April 18, 2026
RE: Ontario Scholl Rd Workforce Housing Proposed Development
5. Paul and Cindy Larson – Ames Resident – April 23, 2026
RE: Iron Way Annexation
6. Kelly Diekmann – Director of Planning & Housing – April 24, 2026
RE: 608 Burnett – Jensen Request
7. Kelly Diekmann – Director of Planning & Housing – April 24, 2026
RE: Response to Ames Silversmithing Request for Site Plan changes

Hall, Renee

From: Betcher, Gloria
Sent: Sunday, April 12, 2026 1:41 PM
To: Claire E Hosch
Cc: City Council and Mayor; Hall, Renee; Schainker, Steve; Phillips, Brian; Goldbeck, Pa
Subject: Re: Support for a 4-way Stop at the Intersection Sunset Drive and Gray Ave
Attachments: Screenshot 2026-04-09 at 1.25.06 PM.png; Gray Ave and Sunset Drive Intersection Survey Results.pdf

Dear Claire,

Thank you for your message about this complex intersection. Obviously, the position of the intersection near the Greek houses means it's in a well-traveled pedestrian area, and the safety of walkers should be a concern for Council.

Your effort to poll others to determine a need for this improvement is commendable, and it certainly helps us to understand the scope of concern. I'm forwarding this email to the other City Council members, as well as the City Clerk and Manager's Office, so that it can get into our Communications to Council packet for future discussion. If Council believes this issue deserves further study, we will send it on to staff for a memo on the situation.

Your concern is noted and most appreciated,

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

On Apr 9, 2026, at 1:48 PM, Hosch, Claire E <claireeh@iastate.edu> wrote:

[External Email]

Good afternoon, Councilwoman Betcher.

My name is Claire Hosch, I am an Iowa State University student living in your district. I live in the Kappa Delta Sorority house, which is located right next to the intersection of Gray Avenue and Sunset Drive. I have lived here for the last two years, and I have come to recognize this intersection creates a bit of a safety issue for both pedestrians and drivers. I've attached an image of the intersection, and I circled the current stop signs in red.

There are stop signs on both sides of Gray Avenue, but none on Sunset Drive. I have observed that vehicles traveling on Sunset Drive, whether continuing straight or turning right onto Gray Avenue, are often driving too fast. On the south side of the intersection, this creates an issue for pedestrians crossing the road, especially when there are cars parked along Sunset Drive. It's difficult to see around the parked cars until you're in the middle of the road, but the speed at which the cars come through (and the fact that they don't have to stop) makes it dangerous to walk into the road to peer around the parked cars to see if the road is clear.

Because both Gray Ave and Sunset Drive curve and because cars park along the road, as a driver stopped at the stop sign on the east side of Gray, it is difficult to see if there are cars coming on Sunset. Again, the speed at which these cars come through creates an issue. For example, I often check my shoulder to see if cars are coming, and Sunset is clear, but by the time I begin to accelerate, a car comes speeding through Sunset that has the right of way because Gray has a stop sign, but Sunset does not.

A similar problem arises when Gray and Gable meet on the left side of Sigma Chi Fraternity. When stopped at the stop sign, it is nearly impossible to see cars coming from Sunset because Gray curves around the Fraternity house. When the cars coming from Sunset are driving the speed limit, this isn't a big deal because they come by slowly. However, so many of these car's speed by because they aren't required to stop. These are just a few of the problems I have observed while living next to, crossing, and driving through this intersection for the last two years.

The cars coming from Gray Avenue, regardless of whether they are coming from the East or the West, never seem to be speeding, which is presumably because the stop signs prevent them from doing so. If this intersection weren't curved and didn't have so many cars parked along the road, the current one-way stop probably wouldn't be an issue. I was worried I was the only one who felt this way, and so I created a google form and sent it to some of the neighboring Sorority and Fraternity houses. I had **74 survey responses**, and the results surprised me. I have attached a PDF Slideshow with the survey responses, which supports my conclusion, in case you would like to check it out.

As you can see, I am very passionate about this issue. I am a friend of Emily Boland, so I know that the City Council gets many frivolous complaints and I wanted to be sure I provided evidence that this was an issue that affected many people, not just myself. I would love to hear back if you get the chance.

Thank you,

Claire Hosch

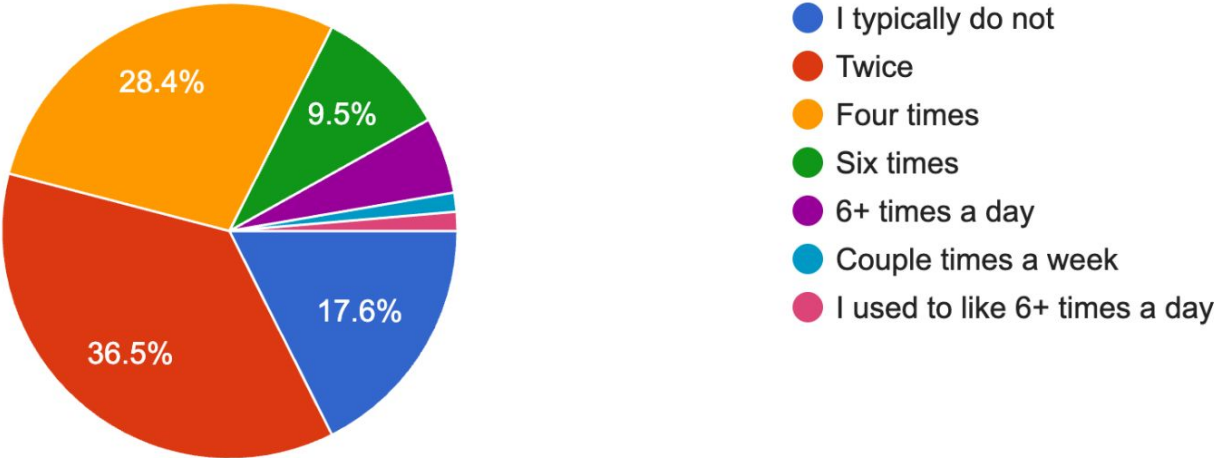
Iowa State University | Political Science | Ethics
P.L.E.A. Lab | Research Assistant
(515) 480-6646



**Gray Ave and Sunset Drive
Intersection Survey Results**

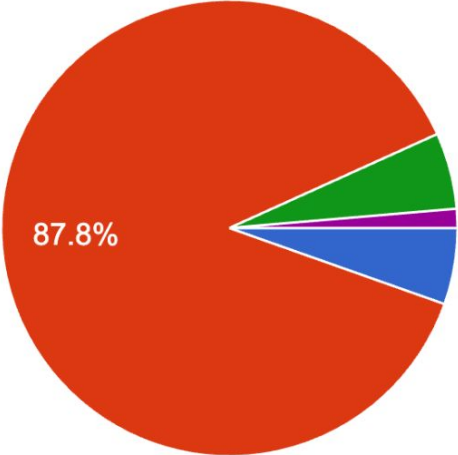
How many times a day do you typically cross this intersection by foot?

74 responses



In your experience, cars passing through this intersection are typically driving...

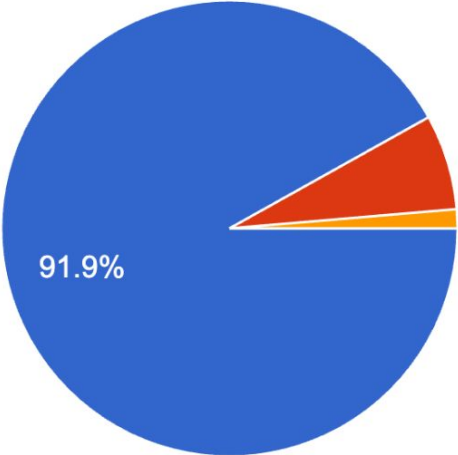
74 responses



- At an appropriate pace
- Too quickly
- Too slowly
- The speed at which vehicles pass through this intersection is not something I have noticed
- Typically appropriate pace but sometimes too quickly

Do you think that the addition of stop signs on Sunset Drive would make this intersection more safe for pedestrians?

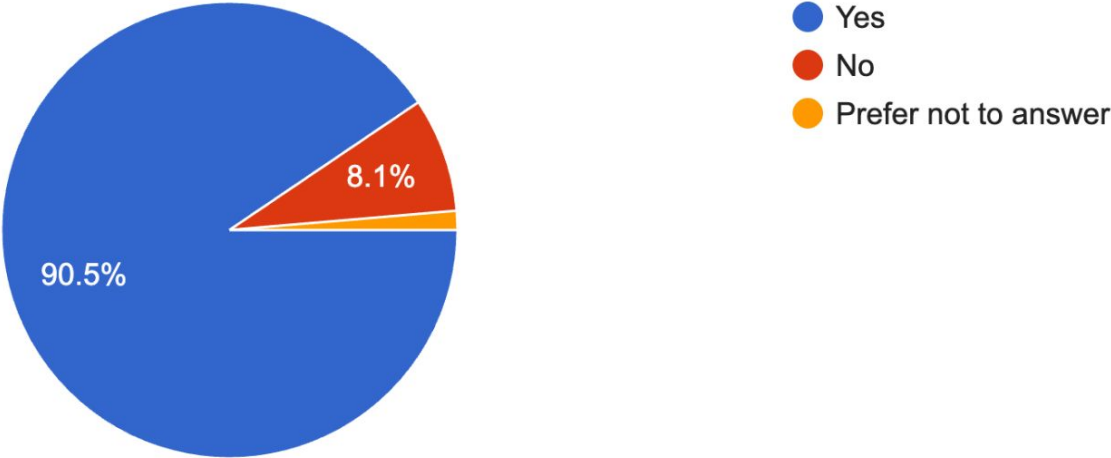
74 responses

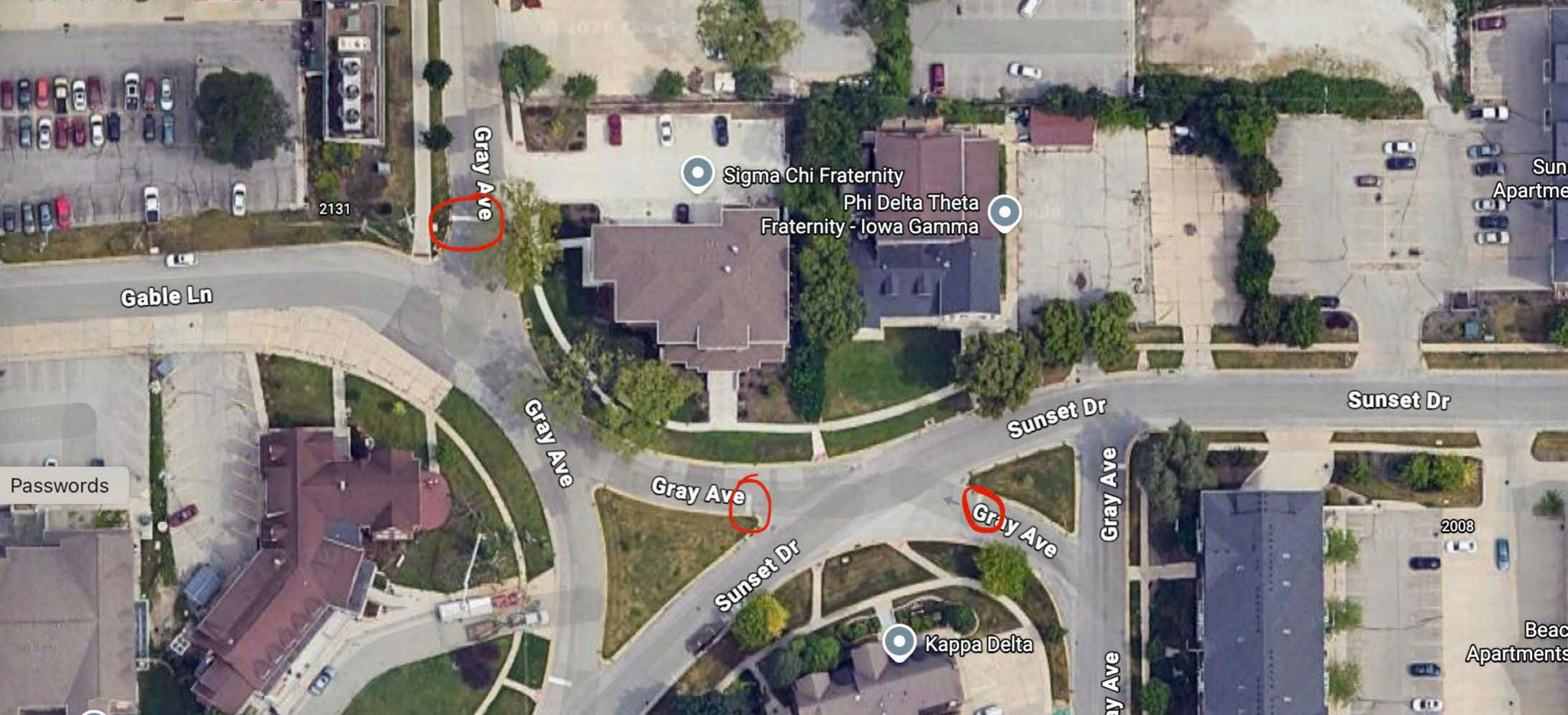


- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to answer

Would you be in favor of turning the intersection of Gray Ave and Sunset Drive into a four-way stop?

74 responses





Gray Ave

Sigma Chi Fraternity
Phi Delta Theta
Fraternity - Iowa Gamma

Gable Ln

2131

Sunset Dr

Sunset Dr

Gray Ave

Gray Ave

Gray Ave

Sunset Dr

Kappa Delta

Gray Ave

2008

Beach
Apartments

Sun
Apartments

Passwords

Hall, Renee

From: Jacquie FRICK <frickdbq@msn.com>
Sent: Monday, April 13, 2026 1:41 PM
To: Hall, Renee
Cc: City Council and Mayor
Subject: Hello Mayor John and City council. I'm Jacquie from Feeding The 5,000...

[External Email]

Hello Mayor John and City council. I'm Jacquie from Feeding The 5,000 helping to fight hunger and support the poor, oppressed and vulnerable in Story and Boone Counties. I am so blessed to be able to have the opportunity to present to you God's Food Pantry, built in September 2025 in Boone, which is very vital to the communities. It is another source of food, essentials and hope for many. It's a place they can go 24/7 for items such as paper products, fresh vegetables, a can of soup, granola bars, loaf of bread, soap, and even cold and frozen items depending on the season/temps. I have many connections including businesses in Ames and many other resources to stock a regular basis. At times in may be bare but God has always replenished it! In the summer farmers and neighbors drop off their garden and field vegetables! Whether it's 6 am or 10 o'clock at night, by foot or by bicycle, it's a rescue in times of need. It has proven to bring a change to Boone community where people are digging into their cupboards & sharing with others which again increases unity in the community keeping it growing strong and thriving. It's a way for other businesses/gas stations to share discontinued items or shortly expired food. Although we have several food banks in town, not one of them are open 24 hours a day where people have an outlet for emergency situations. And we have many poor that do not take advantage of food pantries due to pride or shame they may feel which limits their access. The pantry itself It has solar lights inside and out, always able to be seen and it is handicap accessible making it safe for all people. Feeding the 5000 is always watching out for the safety of the people as well as their health and physical needs. I have already received two grants to help pay for this including \$500 from Walmart in Ames and \$500 each from 4 Maverick stores in town who also believe in this project and want to be a part of it! It is about 4 ft x 8 ft tall made of wood, has a roof, door, very strong sits on pillars. Elite construction of Boone designed and built it by hand from the visions I had. I would like to propose a few spots next to Bandshell Park. We need it clearly seen by others and easy access for donations and people visiting it with places to park. The one in Boone currently sits on a church's land and we built a sidewalk as you can see from the sidewalk up to the pantry for tracking of people. My insurance was able to add First Presbyterian church to the policy as liability free. We can add Ames City as well. I clean Gods food pantry regularly, picking up any trash and empty cartons or boxes inside and sweeping inside keeping it free from fire hazards. I live in Ames and can monitor it daily if needed. The church where it sits agreed to mow/weed around it otherwise they have no other connection with it other than providing the land. They love it there and help stock it! In the winter I and the community keep it salted on the sidewalk going up to the door. I keep a bucket of salt inside. It is never locked. It is open all the time. If it's needed to be moved in the future, then that would be something we would need to discuss. Elite Construction kindly takes care of anything that breaks or any updates needed. Currently they are planting beautiful hydrangeas around the perimeter. If something breaks or needs repaired they have been wonderful to fix what's needed. Any funds needed to pay for repairs, FEEDING THE 5,000 has been able to pay for this through fundraising and private donations. If you prefer a construction company in Ames of your choice, we can certainly reach out to one and I'm sure they would love to help. I can be very flexible and we can work together to

make this happen. The entire community of Boone has joined together to help stock it and take care of it! I'm certain Ames people will too once they see it and find out it's there! The poor count on this and some go there every day to see what's there. I also collaborate with Food at First and many other pantries across the county including Bethesda, Loaves and Fishes, Iowa State University family services, Salvation Army, IMPACT and more! Also, the city of Boone shovels snow in the parking lot next to it as this is the city's parking lot.

I hope you see the vision in the spots that I propose across from Bandshell park. There is a perfect parking lot with recycling bins next to it in front of an Ames City foundry I believe. It has a sidewalk running through it, easy access for the public, very easy to be seen which also decreases vandalism and would frankly brighten up this barren spot of land! I just knew when I saw it that this would be a perfect place should you and your team agree!

I feel grateful to you Mayor for your time and willingness to look at this matter with me! Please see pictures below! I can send other documents as needed such as insurance information. Greg of Elite construction who is in charge of this project would be happy to discuss any other questions such as about the building/design itself at (515) 298-0960 personal or (515) 230-3872 office.

Yours in Christ ,

Jacquie Frick

Feeding The 5,000, Inc.

From: [Jacquie FRICK](#)
To: [Hall, Renee](#)
Cc: [City Council and Mayor](#)
Subject: Feeding the 5,000 pictures/documents, proposed City land
Sent: 4/13/2026 1:46:54 PM

[External Email]

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY
INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE
CINCINNATI OH 45999-0023

Date of this notice: 01-14-2025
Employer Identification Number:
33-2848284
Form: SS-4
Number of this notice: CP 575 E
For assistance you may call us at:
1-800-829-4933
IF YOU WRITE, ATTACH THE
STUB AT THE END OF THIS NOTICE.

FEEDING THE 5000 INC
4510 THAIN CIR UNIT 102
AMES, IA 50014

WE ASSIGNED YOU AN EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER

Thank you for applying for an Employer Identification Number (EIN). We assigned you EIN 33-2848284. This EIN will identify your entity, accounts, tax returns, tax returns, and documents, even if you have no employees. Please keep this notice in your permanent records.

Taxpayers request an EIN for business and tax purposes. Some taxpayers receive CP575 notices when another person has stolen their identity and are operating using their information. If you did not apply for this EIN, please contact us at the phone number or address listed on the top of this notice.

When filing tax documents, making payments, or replying to any related correspondence, it is very important that you use your EIN and complete name and address exactly as shown above. Any variation may cause a delay in processing, result in incorrect information in your account, or even cause you to be assigned more than one EIN. If the information is not correct as shown above, please make the correction using the attached tear-off stub and return it to us.

When you submitted your application for an EIN, you checked the box indicating you are a non-profit organization. Assigning an EIN does not grant tax-exempt status to non-profit organizations. Publication 557, Tax-Exempt Status for Your Organization, has details on the application process, as well as information on returns you may need to file. To apply for recognition of tax-exempt status, organizations must complete an application on one of the following forms: Form 1023, Application for Recognition of Exemption Under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code; Form 1023-EZ, Streamlined Application for Recognition of Exemption Under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code; Form 1024, Application for Recognition Under Section 501(a); or Form 1024-A, Application for Recognition of Exemption Under Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Nearly all organizations claiming tax-exempt status must file a Form 990-series annual information return (Form 990, 990-EZ, or 990-PF) or notice (Form 990-N) beginning with the year they legally form, even if they have not yet applied for or received recognition of tax-exempt status.

If you become tax-exempt, you will lose tax-exempt status if you fail to file a required return or notice for three consecutive years, unless a filing exception applies to you (search www.irs.gov for Annual Exempt Organization Return: Who Must File). We start calculating this three-year period from the tax year we assigned the EIN to you. If that first tax year isn't a full twelve months, you're still responsible for submitting a return for that year. If you didn't legally form in the same tax year in which you obtained your EIN, contact us at the phone number or address listed at the top of this letter. For the most current information on your filing requirements and other important

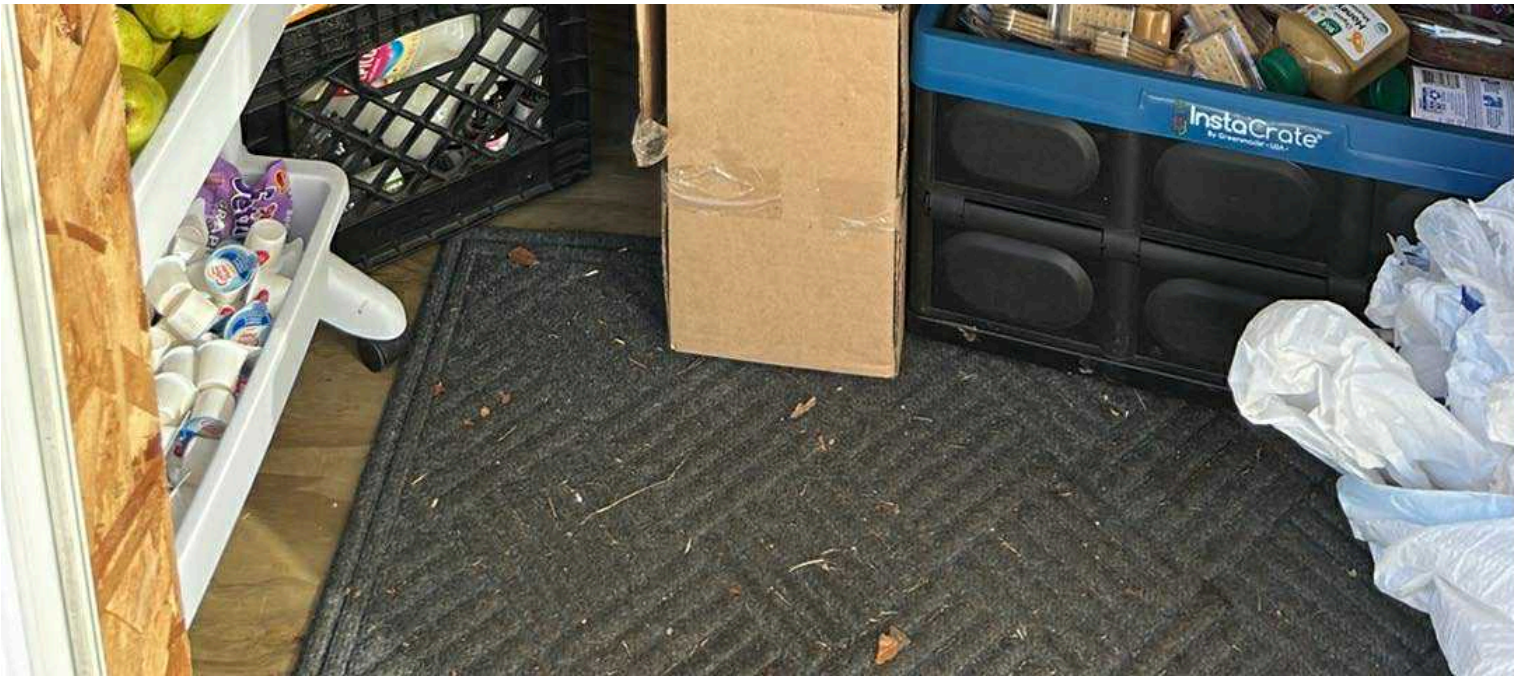


Respect
2 Sacks per family
ONLY! Let's share
like God is sharing
with you!
There will be more
when you come
back! Please BRING
SACKS WITH YOU!



No Smoking 











Yours in Christ ,

Jacque Frick

Feeding The 5,000, Inc.



MEMO

To: Mayor and City Council
From: Damion Pregitzer, P.E. PTOE, Traffic Engineering Manager
Date: 4/28/2026
Subject: Pedestrian Crossing Evaluation – Lincoln Way at South Russell Avenue

BACKGROUND:

On February 28, 2026, the City Council referred to staff a request to evaluate potential pedestrian crossing improvements at the intersection of Lincoln Way and South Russell Avenue following a fatal pedestrian crash that occurred on February 18, 2026. Additional referral requests included outreach to an Iowa State student group to coordinate potential improvements as identified by that group.

Following the Council referral, staff reached out to the identified Iowa State student group on multiple occasions to better understand the proposal. As of the date of this memo, staff has not received a response.

The crash occurred during evening hours (8:01 PM) under dark conditions and involved a westbound motorcycle and a pedestrian crossing north–south across Lincoln Way at Russell Avenue. The location is a two-way stop-controlled intersection along an arterial street with nearby CyRide stops. The intersection is unsignalized and does not include enhanced pedestrian crossing treatments.

Staff delayed formal evaluation until the crash details were available through the Iowa DOT to ensure that all available information could be considered. At this time, it is the consensus of law enforcement that the dark lighting conditions were the primary contributing factor. Speeding and impairment do not appear to be factors in this crash.

WALK BIKE ROLL AMES PLAN CONTEXT:

Plan Priorities

The Walk Bike Roll Plan identifies Lincoln Way as part of a broader network of arterial corridors that present high-stress pedestrian crossing conditions due to traffic volumes, speeds, and roadway width. While this corridor is recognized as challenging for pedestrian crossings, the Plan prioritizes improvements based on a citywide evaluation of factors such as traffic stress, proximity to destinations, and network connectivity (see Prioritized Crossing Projects map).

Within the segment of Lincoln Way between Grand Avenue and University Boulevard, no pedestrian crossing improvements were identified in the High or Med-High priority tiers. As such, this location was not included among the implementation priorities established

in the Plan. This is due, in part, to the presence of signalized intersections within this segment, which provide controlled crossing opportunities.

The Walk Bike Roll Plan identifies 108 crossing improvement locations citywide, with an estimated total cost of approximately \$22.5 million. As part of the Plan's completion, it was acknowledged that available funding would only allow implementation of High priority and a portion of Med-High priority projects over a 15- to 20-year period. It should be noted that the \$22.5 million is part of the \$101.9 million in overall identified needs (see Funding Plan). The current City policy is to average at least \$1.2 million per year for non-motorized improvements.

Enhanced pedestrian crossings along multilane arterial corridors such as Lincoln Way represent significant infrastructure investments, often on the order of \$250,000 per location, depending on the treatment applied. Constructing enhanced crossings at every such location may not be feasible given funding and operational constraints of the roadway. Given these funding limitations, the Plan establishes a framework for prioritizing improvements over time.

Citywide Systematic Transportation Approach

The Walk Bike Roll Plan is intended to guide a phased and equitable approach to pedestrian and bicycle improvements across the community. The prioritization process was developed using a consistent set of criteria and informed by extensive community engagement, including public input, stakeholder outreach, and participation from a steering committee. This process was used to identify and rank locations with the greatest demonstrated need.

While the recent crash raises important concerns at this location, reconsideration of priorities or treatment levels should be evaluated within the context of the broader transportation system. Implementing isolated improvements outside of this framework may create inconsistencies in project selection and may not reflect the priorities established through the community-driven planning process.

The Plan is intended to be updated periodically, and future updates provide an opportunity to incorporate new safety information, including crash trends and observed conditions, and to reevaluate priorities through a comprehensive and consistent process.

OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION:

Based upon the background and prior planning efforts noted above, the City Council has several options to consider:

Option 1 – Continue Implementation of the Walk Bike Roll Plan

Under this option, the City would continue to implement pedestrian crossing improvements based on the existing prioritization framework established in the Walk Bike

Roll Plan. This includes advancing projects identified in the High and Med-High priority tiers as funding allows, while addressing other locations through the Plan's established phasing approach.

The Plan also contemplates periodic updates, which provide an opportunity to incorporate new information, including changes in traffic conditions, pedestrian activity, and safety data, and to adjust priorities through a comprehensive and consistent process.

This approach maintains consistency with the City's adopted policy framework and supports the equitable allocation of limited resources across the community by focusing investment on locations identified as the highest priority through the planning process. However, this approach would not result in near-term changes at this specific location.

Option 2 – Evaluate Increased Lighting Standards

Under this option, the City would evaluate whether enhanced roadway lighting or pedestrian-scale lighting standards should be developed for arterial street crossings. This would include defining what an enhanced lighting treatment would consist of, evaluating associated costs, and identifying how such a standard could be applied across similar crossing locations citywide.

This approach could improve visibility for both drivers and pedestrians, particularly during nighttime conditions like those present at the time of the accident. Compared to more substantial crossing improvements, lighting enhancements may represent a lower-cost, faster implementation strategy and could be repeated more broadly across corridors with similar characteristics. The estimated cost per location is in the magnitude of \$10,000 - \$20,000.

Establishing and applying enhanced lighting standards would require additional analysis and funding to implement the necessary improvements. While improved lighting may increase visibility, it may not fully address other factors influencing pedestrian safety at arterial crossings, such as driver yielding behavior, traffic speeds, or the availability of controlled crossing opportunities.

In addition, significantly increasing lighting levels at select crossings may create conflicts with the City's dark sky ordinance and could result in concerns from adjacent residential properties where such treatments are implemented.

Option 3 – Evaluate Increased Crossing Treatment Standards

Under this option, the City would evaluate whether pedestrian crossing treatments along arterial corridors such as Lincoln Way should be enhanced beyond what is currently assumed in the Walk Bike Roll Plan. This could include consideration of treatments such as pedestrian hybrid beacons (PHBs), signals, or other measures at locations that may not have been previously identified for higher-level improvements. Estimated costs for PHB's are in the \$250,000 - \$300,000 magnitude.

This approach could provide more direct safety benefits at specific crossing locations by increasing driver awareness and improving opportunities for pedestrians to cross higher-volume roadways. It is also generally consistent with the range of treatment options identified in the Plan, though it may involve applying those treatments more broadly or at lower thresholds than originally contemplated in the Walk Bike Roll plan.

Enhanced crossing treatments at arterial locations represent a significant investment and may require reevaluation of priorities across multiple locations to maintain consistency with available funding. In addition, certain treatments, particularly signalized or beacon-controlled crossings, may have impacts on traffic operations and the environment, and would require further analysis to determine appropriateness at specific locations.

It should be noted that enhanced crossing treatments would not include the use of Rapid Rectangular Flashing Beacons (RRFBs). The use of these treatments has been suggested in several communications regarding this accident. Current guidance would not recommend their use on a multi-lane arterial street without additional considerations for pedestrian refuge.

STAFF COMMENTS:

This accident at Lincoln Way and South Russell Avenue highlights the challenges associated with pedestrian crossings along high-volume arterial corridors, particularly in locations where crossing demand exists, and enhanced crossing infrastructure may not be readily available at every intersection.

The Walk Bike Roll Plan identifies these conditions at a citywide transportation system level and establishes a prioritized, phased approach to addressing them within available funding constraints. The Lincoln Way and Russell intersection was not identified as a priority location under the Plan's current framework.

If the City Council chooses to continue implementation of the existing Plan, staff would proceed with advancing identified priority projects as funding allows through the City's annual Capital Improvement Plan process. The Plan reflects prior safety and operational analysis, as well as extensive public input, and is intended to guide investment decisions across the transportation system. Under this approach, no additional action specific to this location would be taken at this time.

Staff recommends that any changes to crossing treatment levels or project prioritization be considered systematically to maintain consistency across the City with the adopted Plan and ensure a balanced allocation of resources. Options 2 and 3 would represent potential changes to the assumptions, priorities, or implementation approach established in the Plan. Should the City Council wish to pursue any of these options, placing this item on a future agenda would allow staff to return with a staff report and facilitate additional discussion with Council to define the scope of work necessary to evaluate the impacts of those potential changes.

Future updates to the Walk Bike Roll Plan provide an opportunity to incorporate new safety information and reevaluate priorities. As part of that process, additional emphasis could be placed on pedestrian crossings along arterial corridors.

Hall, Renee

From: Rhonda Frerichs <randrfrerichs@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, April 18, 2026 10:08 AM
To: City Council and Mayor
Subject: Ontario Scholl Rd Workforce Housing Proposed Development

[External Email]

Hello,

Per your request from the council meeting April 14, 2026, I am sending you my questions and concerns.

1. Where does this development fit into the CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) and the HOME program?
2. Are any of the funds from the above programs going toward this development?
3. Provide details on the Development Incentive Agreements and URAs.
4. I'm challenging the market-rate for this development - \$350K - \$450K townhouses/duplexes do not appear to be moderate-income homeowners.
5. Provide details on NRSA (Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area), does this neighborhood fall into this category?

Thank you for your attention to my questions and concerns. Please provide contacts or directly provide the answers to my questions.

Rhonda Frerichs
3309 Kingman Rd, Ames, IA 50014

April 23, 2026

Hand Delivered

Dear Mayor and Ames City Council Members:

We are writing to urge you to halt any further annexation efforts with respect to properties identified as "Irons Way, Ames, Iowa".

The issue of annexation impacts not only our home, but all members of Irons Way. It is our understanding that the majority, if not all, of Irons Way property owners object to any annexation plans as well as the two proposed sewer extension options. Furthermore, it is our understanding that none of the Irons Way homeowners were informed by the builder/seller that the properties were potentially to be annexed to the City of Ames. To be given such notice of potential annexation was received as a surprise and personal dilemma.

Not receiving this significant information was a major error and/or omission that is causing emotional harm and future financial loss. Whether intentional or nonintentional, the act of leaving out important information or not disclosing such, may have influenced our purchasing decision. The proposed annexation effects property values, our livability and resale options.

Upon recently being made aware of and subsequent review of our abstract and title document, (dated May 13, 2014, page 10, entry #2) we learned the city "may" annex the property. A legal term like "may" does not indicate a requirement to move forward, and is in contrast to the terms, "will" and "must". As such, there is no requirement for the Ames City Council to move forward with annexation. Even though it appears the city staff has recommended annexation, the Ames City Council has discretion in its decision making.

At a later date we will address the issue of Ames Golf and Country Club being exempt from any financial obligation in regard to sewer extension costs on their property. If this is the case, an ethical and moral dilemma presents itself. Why hasn't this information been disclosed and shared with homeowners?

The law expects reasonable diligence from all parties involved in any city annexation action. Please consider our voice prior to making any further annexation decisions and halt these efforts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Cindy Larson Paul Larson". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Paul and Cindy Larson

5600 Irons Way, Ames IA 50010



Memo

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Kelly Diekmann, Planning & Housing Director

DATE: April 24, 2026

SUBJECT: Request to Initiate Zoning Ordinance Changes and Incentives for Apartment Development at 608 Burnett

On April 12th, City Council identified consideration of the request from Luke Jensen for changes to development standards and for incentives regarding a project at 608 Burnett as a priority for the Planning Division. The developer seeks a number of related changes to facilitate redevelopment of a parking lot into a 4-story 38-unit +/- apartment building.

608 Burnett is a Neighborhood Commercial (NC) zoned property located midblock between 6th and 7th Street. All of the blocks between 6th and 7th Street from Clark to Duff are also zoned Neighborhood Commercial. See map below. The developer notes the site was identified as a potential housing location within the Ames Main Street Downtown Guiding Vision.

This area has the highest concentration of NC zoning in the City and is a hybrid transitional zoning district for commercial and residential uses. The NC contrasts greatly in its mix of uses and design requirements compared to the Downtown Service Center (DSC) that applies to the traditional Downtown Area south of 6th Street. Both areas have a “Core” land use designation within Ames Plan 2040 (see page 62) reflecting the existing Downtown and commercial types of land uses as well as the general planning for intensification of commercial mixed use in this area.

Zoning Changes

In order to construct the apartment building as envisioned, the developer requests that the Council initiate changes related to zoning and to property tax abatement incentives. Although NC zoning allows for apartments, several standards differ from the concept of the developer. Staff believes the issues would include building height, roof type, floor area ratio, setbacks, certain design guidelines, and the parking rate. The developers sees the project as “Downtown Housing” and desires standards more akin to DSC zoning for parking and setbacks, but without other requirements for mixed use.

The priority policy issues for zoning changes are likely the requested parking reductions, along with building height and design requirements. The developer seeks approval of a parking rate of approximately 1 space per unit, for up to 2-bedroom units. If this were to be the standard, parking would be 38 spaces where otherwise 60 spaces would be required based upon the conceptual mix of units as described to staff.

The height and design issues are a question of intent for the area as a transition from traditional Downtown to Old Town to the north and what a compatible type of structure would be, if it did not meet the current requirements. There are examples of other taller buildings in this area and based upon final design elements the idea of a 4-story structure could be found to meet the goals of the City for this area. A project of this size in NC would require a public hearing and approval of Special Use Permit by the Zoning Board of Adjustment, which addresses overall building size and design compatibility along with function of a site.

Incentives

Staff has not reviewed any specific developer justification or pro forma for the project. This issue of incentives with a proposed 10-year 75% tax abatement must be explored in greater detail for its ramifications to all of Downtown and other URAs based upon current law.

The request states city requirements have additional costs and incentives are needed. At this point staff does not know what these costs are that are different compared to anywhere else in the community.

If City Council were to extend the Downtown URA boundary to include this site, it has options for a 3-year 100% tax abatement or a maximum 10 year partial sliding scale tax abatement, which is consistent with other URAs in the City. Additionally, the qualifying criteria assume a mixed-use building and conformance to Downtown Design Guidelines that may or may not fit the project as proposed. Creating a new URA would require at least two properties to be included in accordance with state law, the 608 Burnett site may meet this prerequisite as the site appears to be two lots, but shown as one property.

The level of requested abatement exceeds any other incentive option that exists in the DSC or CSC zoning districts, which are similar in allowing for larger redevelopment projects. While the requested incentive is approvable, it may impact incentives for other URAs based upon language in state law about custom tax abatement schedules.

The developer also plans to seek Workforce Housing Tax Credits (WHTC). Note that per the state WHTC program requirements, some form of local match per unit is required to support the application. For a 38 unit project, a value of at least \$38,000 is needed. It would appear one year of tax abatement would be worth at least \$38,000 under current state taxation and abatement policies for a project that exceeds a value of \$5 million.

Options

Option 1-Explore changes to zoning standards for all NC properties between 6th and 7th

The site is one of many similarly situated NC zoned properties between Duff and Clark. If City Council does not believe the current NC zoning is adequate to address current uses, transitions, and planned limited levels of redevelopment, changes as requested by the

developer would be appropriate. This option would explore potential changes on a district basis and may result in a wholly new special purpose zoning district to an updated concept of Downtown transition.

This option would need outreach and consultation with owners in the area and the Old Town neighborhood to the north. Prioritization in the work plan would be required.

Option 2- Explore changes to zoning standards intended to address the Burnett site only at this time

The same types of issues would be considered, but the result would likely be more generic in its applicability to NC zoned properties and rely upon the current Special Use Permit process to assess future projects. This process likely includes less consultation because of the assumption of the Special Use Permit process allowing for public comment at a public hearing for the specific type of project.

This option likely takes less time than Option 1 because it is focused on this particular request and not other potential interests for this area, but is still needing to be prioritized with the work plan.

Option 3- Financial Incentives

Separate from zoning issues, is the question of financial incentive amount, type, and qualifying standards. As mentioned above, the rationale and process that would best fit the project is not fully fleshed out at this time. If tax abatement is offered, a site specific URA that conforms to standard abatement schedules would be consistent with other projects and the least likely to have ramifications to other URAs. Staff also has some concerns that pending legislation could also impact staff's final recommendations on this issue.

Option 4-Current Zoning No Changes

The Developer could construct an apartment building within the standards of the current zoning of NC with no changes by City Council. The overall building size would be smaller primarily due to limitations related to height and accommodation of parking on site to serve the use. Current design standards would apply, and the project would require ZBA approval as a Special Use Permit.

Staff Comments

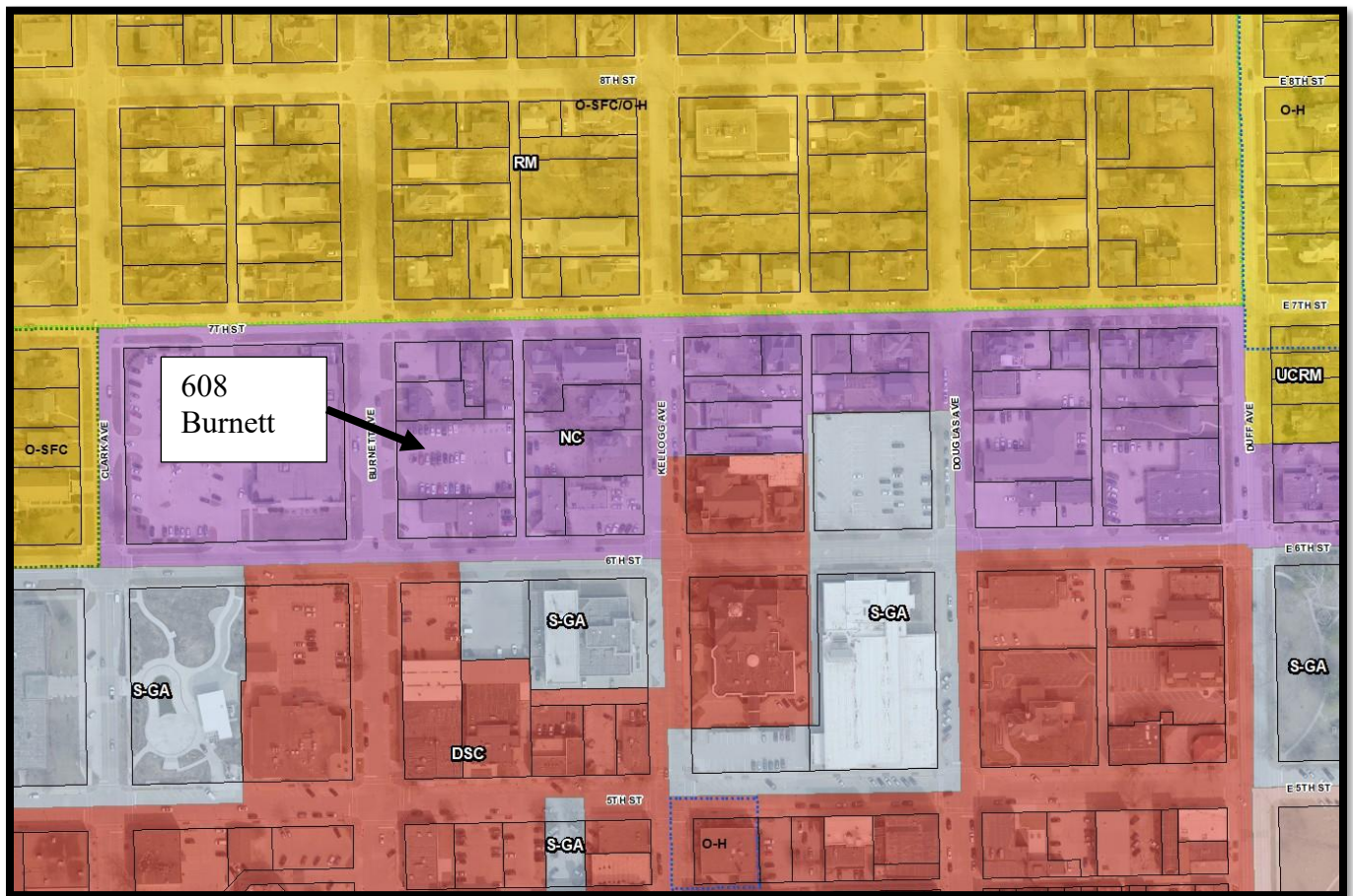
Although the request is intended facilitate this project, staff believes the questions brought up by the developer have a broader application for discussion for all of the area adjacent to Downtown.

The requested changes do not currently fit well within any specific type of zoning that already exists. Staff has not presented a specific approach on what to do at this point and would await City Council's direction on scope to define exactly what type of zoning amendment would be best. With any option, work plan prioritization is needed, for which the developer is requesting to be an immediate priority.

Staff does believe that the issue(s) should be put on the May 12th agenda for discussion because it does relate to interests expressed in Ames Plan 2040 for the Core designation and in general support of context sensitive infill. The May 12th timeframe also meets the developers interest of looking for direction on the request prior to June. If Council has no interest in the requests, then no further action is needed.

Regardless of the selected option(s), final approval of zoning changes and a project are unlikely to occur in the next 60 days.

Zoning Map Excerpt





To: Mayor and City Council

From: Kelly Diekmann, Planning & Housing Director

Date: April 24, 2026

Subject: Ames Silversmithing Request for Site Plan Changes for Parking to Rear of the Building

Background:

On April 14, 2026, the Council referred to staff a request from Kirk Youngberg of Ames Silversmithing regarding parking behind a new addition. The letter describes the conditions of their planned expansion and permitting process. He requests Council involvement in the process of allowing parking.

The proposed parking at question is to the rear of their planned expansion to the east. As is the case with many buildings along Main Street, property owners park behind their buildings even though the informal access is not from an alley, but from the City-owned parking lot.

Staff has been in discussion with the applicant about their interest in parking and the site plan conditions. The referral from Council requires consultation by Planning with the City Attorney's Office to coordinate responses. Planning staff will work with the Legal Department to better understand Mr. Youngberg's request and to understand where and how Council may act. The requested relief, as stated in the letter, may or may not be allowable or even require City Council consideration.

At this time, the City Council could either 1) direct staff to put the request on the May 12th Agenda to review staff's findings and provide direction, or 2) City Council can direct staff to provide an updated non-agenda memo before the May 12th meeting and then decide how to proceed.