

ITEM #:	<u>39</u>
DATE:	<u>04-28-26</u>
DEPT:	<u>P&H</u>

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: PRELIMINARY PLAT FOR THE AUBURN TRAIL SUBDIVISION

BACKGROUND:

Hunziker Development Group is requesting approval of a Preliminary Plat for the Auburn Trail Subdivision, a 178-lot residential subdivision. The plat includes the properties at 4605 Hyde Avenue and 4514 Hyde Avenue and two adjacent parcels to the north (see attached Location Map and Preliminary Plat).

The subdivision is subject to the City's Low Impact and Conservation Subdivision standards that apply to projects within the Ada Hayden watershed. The focus of these standards is to manage stormwater with a treatment train approach where a variety of stormwater practices are used in a series. More information about stormwater management can be found in the Addendum. As part of these standards, additional requirements apply for erosion and sediment control during construction and native landscaping. Receipt of the erosion and sediment control plans prior to grading and landscaping and conservation management plans with final platting are recommended as conditions.

The subject properties are concurrently being rezoned to Floating Suburban Residential Low-Density "FS-RL" with a Master Plan (see attached Master Plan). The third reading of the rezoning is also on City Council's April 28 agenda. The Preliminary Plat is consistent with the proposed Master Plan, which establishes types of uses allowed for the site as single family detached and attached housing, access points, and general open space set-asides.

A density of approximately 4.4 units per net acre is proposed. This meets the Master Plan's prescribed density range and FS-RL zoning allowed density range of 3.75–10 units per net acre. All lots meet minimum size requirements, and frontage requirements for the FS-RL zoning district.

A flag lot (Lot 178) is proposed on the east side of Hyde. The flag lot has a shared driveway with the existing lot to the north. In lieu of extending a public sanitary sewer main from the existing trunk line located within Ada Hayden to serve the one lot, the developer proposes to construct a sanitary sewer service line. A service line is the maintenance responsibility of the owner rather than the City. The service line will require an easement and/or an agreement with the City because it will cross City land to connect to the sewer line. A condition is included to address this requirement prior to final plat.

All open space areas shown on the Master Plan are proposed to be outlots for stormwater management or recreation. There are ten outlots, totaling approximately 19 acres. Three, totaling approximately 8 acres, are accessible to residents through paths or as a private recreation space to meet the usable open space requirement (10% of the gross area) of the FS-RL zoning.

A recreation space near Crestmoor on the west side of the site is proposed to be a private "pocket park." Staff believes that the park space, which has approximately half an acre of useable area, should serve as a small-scale gathering and recreation space in order to meet the intent of park space, even with its small area compared to a public park. The pocket park is proposed by the developer in response to the policy to provide proportional park land with new development when neighborhood park facilities are beyond a 1/2 mile from a development. The addendum describes this in greater detail. The final improvements required for the park will be determined during final platting.

The main access to the subdivision is from Hyde via Tilden Parkway, a proposed residential collector street, which is a 31-foot wide paved street section with parking on one side. Tilden will include a shared use path on its south side. Typically, a high density of lots are not planned along collector streets due to concerns of traffic management and parking for future residents. However, due to projected low to moderate vehicle volumes on Tilden, with planned speed controls including two mini roundabouts, the proposal is supported by staff. The developer plans for a three-lane section for turning movements at Hyde Avenue.

The internal streets include block lengths that exceed the zoning standards of 660 feet. Pedestrian connections are required to mitigate block lengths over 660 feet. Mid-block walkways are proposed between several streets to address this issue. Two blocks are proposed to be approximately 780 feet in length without a mid-block walkway. A 20% street length alternative design approval is requested by the applicant to allow block lengths to exceed 660 feet without a pedestrian connection. This is due to the dimensional constraints of the site with limited options for street layouts to be coordinated with open space areas in relation to the type of lots proposed with the project.

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION:

The Planning and Zoning Commission reviewed the Preliminary Plat at their April 15th meeting. Commissioners asked about the management of the private pocket park and stormwater practices. The Homeowners Association will manage the pocket park, as is typical for private parks in subdivisions. City staff is responsible for long-term sediment removal from wet ponds and other stormwater practices. They Commission also asked about connectivity to the open spaces within the subdivision. Staff indicated that some areas where it appeared a sidewalk connection could be made were for stormwater conveyance or practices. Staff and the applicant tried to balance the intent of connectivity and the design of stormwater treatment measures. Construction of a sidewalk in these areas is not feasible due to slope and treatment measures.

One of the main topics of the Commission's discussion was traffic. A traffic letter was previously submitted for the development that identified the need for a northbound left turn lane to enter the development from Hyde. This is shown on the plat as a project improvement.

In addition, the City's northern growth area, inclusive of this property, is shown within Ames Plan 2040 and its projected growth was incorporated into a traffic model with the recently approved AAMPO transportation plan. The general analysis of the area concludes traffic will increase along Hyde, but within acceptable operational capacities. However, Ames Plan 2040 and the transportation plan indicate that traffic calming will be a benefit in the future for speed control as growth occurs. A traffic signal at Bloomington and Hyde is also anticipated as result of north growth development.

One member of the public spoke in opposition to the plat. Concerns included the management of the wet pond and native vegetation on the east side of Hyde, north of the Bloomington Court Townhomes. Staff noted that a low grow native grass mix for the area was planned and maintenance practices would be detailed in the Conservation Management Plans with final platting. Pond maintenance expectations would be similar to other subdivisions in the City.

The speaker's other main concern was the lack of a direct trail connection to Ada Hayden from the subdivision and the additional pedestrian traffic along Eisenhower Lane and Eisenhower Court (private streets serving the Bloomington Court townhomes) that would result from it being the closer access point without a trail connection.

Previously, a connection was proposed with earlier versions of the project. Parks and Public Works staff were concerned about two aspects of the trail, one was the crossing of Hyde and needing flashing beacons for safety and two, the maintenance of the trail itself within the park. With recent decisions of the City to construct the shared use path along Hyde, north to 190th, as a City project, it was determined that the existing connection to the uplands trail area and crossing approximately one quarter mile north of Auburn Trail would be more appropriate than at this location. Pedestrians can walk south to Harrison and then over to the park.

Ultimately, the Commission voted 6-0 to recommend approval of the Preliminary Plat.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Approve the Preliminary Plat for the Auburn Trail Subdivision located at 4605 Hyde Avenue and 4514 Hyde Avenue and adjacent properties to the north with the alternative design request for block lengths and the following conditions:
 - a. Erosion and sediment control plans for construction phasing shall be submitted for approval by the Municipal Engineer prior to any grading work on the site.
 - b. Private park improvements and required elements shall be proposed for City approval as part of final platting of the 2nd Addition.
 - c. Additional native landscaping such as perennial beds shall be added at entrance points to open space areas or mid-block crossings as part of the landscape plans proposed with final platting of each phase.
 - d. The final street tree, streetlight, landscaping, and conservation management plan approvals shall be deferred until final plat approval for each phase.
 - e. An easement and or agreement with the City of Ames to allow for a sanitary sewer service line to be located on City property extending from Lot 178 and Outlot G to connect to the existing sanitary sewer main located with Ada Hayden park shall be submitted by the applicant for approval by the City of Ames prior to approval the final plat that includes Lot 178.
2. Approve the Preliminary Plat with modifications.
3. Deny the Preliminary Plat if it finds the Preliminary Plat does not meet the requirements

of Section 23.302(3)(b) of the Ames Municipal Code and by setting forth the reasons to disapprove or modify the proposed preliminary plat as required by Section 23.302(4) of the Ames Municipal Code.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

The general layout of the development, open space, and circulation system is consistent with the Master Plan. The plat implements the low-impact development policies and techniques required by the Conservation Design ordinance for enhanced stormwater management and dispersion of open spaces throughout the development. The project includes a private recreation space proposal in lieu of a public park dedication to conform to policies of Ames Plan 2040.

Staff has found that the plat, including the grading, lot layouts, and street and trail plans, meet the requirements of Chapter 23 Subdivisions, with the proposed 20% alternative design for block lengths and proposed conditions.

Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative No. 1, as described above.

ATTACHMENT(S):

[ADDENDUM.pdf](#)

[Preliminary Plat](#)

[Master Plan](#)

[Location Map.pdf](#)

[Plan 2040 Excerpts.pdf](#)