



MEMO

To: Mayor and City Council
From: Renee Hall, City Clerk
Date: May 22, 2026
Subject: Packet of Communications to Council

Listed below are the communications to the City Council known to staff as of May 22, 2026:

1. Lisa Kuehl, Ames Resident – February 24, 2026
RE: Request for formal adoption of the City’s Pollinator Plan
2. John Burnett, Ames Resident – May 11, 2026
RE: Residential Development on Ontario Street
3. Mark Lambert, City Attorney – May 12, 2026
RE: Annual Appropriations Clauses – TIF Agreements
4. Kathy Kiesling, Ames Resident – May 19, 2026
RE: Proposed speed bumps on Northwestern Avenue
5. Ericka Eregbu, Ames NAACP Branch President – May 21, 2026
RE: 2026 Ames/Story County Juneteenth Celebration
6. Kathy Ridnour, Ames Resident – May 21, 2026
RE: Ada Hayden Rules
7. ACAT – Ames Climate Action Team – May 22, 2026
RE: Solar Farm

Hall, Renee

From: Lisa Kuehl <lkuehl@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 24, 2026 3:32 PM
To: City Council and Mayor
Subject: Request formal adoption of the City's Pollinator Plan

[External Email]

Hello!

I volunteer on the City of Ames' Pollinator Friendly Plan Education Committee. I recently learned through others involved with the plan that the City Council has not yet formally "adopted" this plan and I wish to request that you do. The Pollinator Friendly Ames Plan was started in 2023, with ambitious goals of creating more pollinator habitat within the City of Ames over the next 7 years, as we are now starting Year 3 of the proposed 10 year effort.

Please let me know the next steps to a formal adoption of this wonderful plan by the City Council.

Have a great week!

Sincerely,

Lisa K. Kuehl

Lisa K. Kuehl

5225 Cervantes Drive

Ames, IA 50014-6919

(515) 451-1039 cell & text / (515) 450-5551 landline

"FaceTime" me with your Apple device at lkuehl@gmail.com

"You can find excuses...or, you can find a way."

Hall, Renee

From: Burnett, John M [NREM] <jburnett@iastate.edu>
Sent: Monday, May 11, 2026 12:19 PM
To: City Council and Mayor
Subject: Residential Development on Ontario Street

[External Email]

As a local homeowner, I would like to express my concern with the planned development of a parcel of land on Ontario Street adjacent to Scholl Road. This property, recently purchased from Iowa State University, has been used for agricultural and research purposes over the past several years before being sold to a residential developer. I understand that they have brought forth a plan that if approved would add over 100 residential units to this property. This seems extremely concentrated for such a small area. I am sure it will have several impacts - to traffic, noise, waterflow into nearby natural drainage and to the local wildlife. I urge you to reject this proposal and seek a smaller plan with significantly less potential impact to the property and surrounding areas.

While reviewing this proposal, I noticed that the developer requested TIF funding to address improvements to Scholl Road north from Ontario to the railroad tracks. Based on the recent legislation from the State of Iowa regarding property tax limits and TIF funds, I encourage the Council to use caution before committing funds that might not be available in the near term for TIF projects.

Respectfully submitted,

John Burnett

MEMO

Legal Department

To: Members of the Ames City Council & Mayor Haila

From: Mark O. Lambert, City Attorney

Date: May 12, 2026

Subject: Annual Appropriations Clauses – TIF Agreements [From 4/12/22]

Motion: Moved by Gartin, seconded by Rollins (passed 6-0), to request a memo from the City Attorney “on the propriety and legality of appropriation clauses that require annual approval.” At the time of the referral, Council asked that our office bring its analysis of the issue prior to the time that tax increment financing (“TIF”) agreements for the LINC project were under consideration.

This motion resulted from a complaint lodged by the Developer of the North Dayton Avenue Industrial Park. As the Council may recall, this Developer requested TIF rebates associated with the development of the North Dayton Avenue Industrial Park. Under the terms of its agreement with the City, the Developer paid up front to install public infrastructure in this industrial subdivision, which included the following: water main, sanitary sewer, storm sewer, street paving, sidewalks, and shared use paths. The form of TIF utilized by the City Council allowed the Developer to receive back the incremental TIF revenues generated from developing the project to repay the developer for its upfront public infrastructure costs.

At the time, Developer objected to making the annual TIF payments subject to annual appropriation by the Ames City Council. Developer expressed concern about being reliant upon the decision of a future Council and initially refused to enter into the desired TIF agreement with the City, which contained an annual appropriations clause. *See March 22, 2022, agenda, item 27.* At a subsequent

meeting, City Staff provided support for the removal of the annual appropriations clause and justified approving Developer's request to enter into a TIF agreement without an annual appropriations clause. See *April 12, 2022, agenda, Council Action Form, item 30* (“*In this particular situation, the elimination of an annual non-appropriation clause may be supported.*”). Ultimately, the annual appropriations clause was included in the agreement when the Developer waived his request that the City eliminate the annual appropriations clause. See *October 11, 2022, agenda, item 26(b)* (“*The developer is now in support of the annual appropriation clause which benefits the city in that the rebate amount will not count against the City's debt limit.*”).

Cities include annual appropriations clauses in TIF agreements for one particularly important reason: TIF rebate agreements that guarantee rebate payments to a Developer are counted against and reduce the City's constitutional debt limit. In a case from 1975, the Iowa Supreme Court held that tax increment debt must be counted against a city's (or county's) constitutional debt limit. *Richards v. City of Muscatine*, 237 N.W.2d 48 (1975).

As the Council may recall, the constitutional debt limit imposed on cities is set by the Iowa Constitution, Article XI, sect. 3 (setting debt limit at no more than five percent of the aggregate taxable value of property within the city). With respect to the North Dayton Industrial TIF Agreement approved by the City Council, the document set the aggregate of all TIF rebate payments at roughly \$3.0 million total over a 13-year valuation period. Because of the annual appropriations clause which subjected rebate payments to approval annually by the City Council, the whole amount was not counted against the City's debt limit to reduce our ability to borrow. Attached to this memo is the relevant annual appropriations clause included in the TIF Agreement approved by City Council on October 11, 2022.

Cities throughout Iowa utilize annual appropriations clauses so that the needs of one developer do not reduce and compromise the ability of an entire community to borrow. Bond counsel has recommended their use for these reasons, and communities throughout the state use them. Also attached to this memo is a slide addressing this topic from a presentation made a few years ago at the Iowa Municipal Attorneys Association annual meeting by the City's former bond counsel, the late Robert Josten.

Each year, typically in November, staff brings forward resolutions for the City Council to authorize the annual appropriation amount. After approval, staff certifies the amount authorized by the Council with the County Auditor.

For the reasons set forth above, my conclusion is that annual appropriations clauses in TIF agreements involving developer rebates are proper, legal, and recommended.

Sample Annual Appropriations Clause
North Dayton Avenue Industrial Park

TIF REBATE PAYMENTS. TIF Rebate Payments will be made on December 1 and June 1 of each fiscal year, beginning in the first fiscal year for which the City receives incremental property tax revenues with respect to an increase in the taxable valuation of the Property over the valuation shown on the tax rolls as of January 1, 2023, and continuing until December 1, 2035, or until such earlier date upon which total payments equal to \$2,968,264.00¹ have been made (the “**Developer Rebate Schedule**”). The payments shall not constitute general obligation debt of the City but shall be made solely and only from incremental property tax revenues paid that are attributable to the Property and other real properties within the North Dayton URA that are received by the City from the Story County Treasurer. For example, if an increase in taxable valuation of the Property is placed on the Story County tax rolls as of January 1, 2024, the first payment will be made on December 1, 2025.

¹ The City Council was asked at its June 25, 2024, meeting to increase the maximum rebate amount to the Developer to \$3,119,951.05. The request was approved. *See June 25, 2024, agenda, item 45.*

Does debt payable from incremental taxes count against a city's or county's constitutional debt limit?

- **Yes, it does. While Section 403.9 of the Code of Iowa contains language which states that such debt does not count against a constitutional debt limit, the Iowa Supreme Court ruled in 1975 that tax increment debt must be counted against a city's or county's constitutional debt limitation. However, if an "annual appropriation" clause is included in a bond issuance resolution or a rebate agreement, only annual payment amounts must be counted against a constitutional debt limit.**

Hall, Renee

From: kathy Kiesling <kathyc25@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 19, 2026 10:43 AM
To: City Council and Mayor
Subject: Proposal of speed bumps on Northwestern Ave.

Some people who received this message don't often get email from kathyc25@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

[External Email]

Hi,

I propose adding speed bumps to Northwestern Ave. Particularly the section from 13th Street to 6th Street. I know a speed sign has been added on the section between 9th street and 6th street, but too many people speed down that section at high speeds. With the traffic, children and parked cars, it is very dangerous.

Thanks for your consideration.

Kathy Kiesling



Ames Branch

Unit #4120 – P.O. Box 529
Ames, Iowa 50010



2026 Ames/Story County Juneteenth Celebration
Saturday, June 13th

May 21, 2026

Ames Mayor and City Council
c/o: Renee Hall, City Clerk
PO Box 811
Ames, IA 50010

Greetings Mayor Haila,

First and foremost, we want to thank the **City of Ames** for sponsoring the 4th Ames/Story County Juneteenth Celebration Event. Because of your support, we were able to provide free food, games, and entertainment to approximately 260 attendees and complimentary tables and chairs to 25 vendors to showcase their products and/or programs.

We are finalizing the planning our **5th Annual Ames/Story County Juneteenth Celebration**. Below are some of the highlights:

- **Saturday, June 13th**, will be our **Juneteenth Celebration at Bandshell Park**, from **12:30 p.m. until 5:00 p.m.** We are planning again to provide free food, games, and entertainment, and we are soliciting more organizations and vendors to showcase their products and programs.
- We plan to expand our educational outreach, and again where we are excited to partner with downtown businesses again this year and the Ames Public Library to continue the **“Story Walk”** activity that will highlight the history of Juneteenth and the contributions of local citizens of color to our community. Posters and game cards will be in shop windows (available at the Ames Public Library [APL] and some shops). When completed, the cards can be traded for a prize at APL.
- **This year’s there will be a Financial Literacy Component in partnership with the Riser Brothers who wrote a book to promote financial literacy called “Eden’s Money Magic Learning About Finances. They will participate in a Storytime and a parent lecture that will take place on Saturday, June 27th.**
- **Also, we are excited to add a “Mural Project” in partnership with Jordan Brooks (local artist) and the Octagon, where children will participate in creating a mural art project that we hope to display in libraries across story county and possible other locations.**

Most importantly, one of the major benefits for having our **5th Ames/Story County Juneteenth event** is the opportunity to provide “free” food to families and individuals, for which this could be there only meal for the day . Again, we are excited to have the opportunity to have this type of impact on the needs of citizens in our community, in addition to other fun activities being planned. We know that the **City of Ames** embraces helping to address food insecurities by promoting events that foster that philosophy. Below are the 2026 Sponsorship Levels with Benefits. **We hope that we can again count on your sponsorship of a minimum of \$1,000 for this year’s event so that we can continue to foster community participation and engagement in this nationally celebrated holiday.**

We want to thank the **City of Ames** in advance for your consideration of this partnership and sponsorship opportunity. Checks can be made payable to the Ames Branch of the NAACP, Unit #4120, and sent to PO Box 529, Ames, IA 50010. We look forward to hearing from you soon. For event updates, visit our website at www.amesianaacp.org or our Facebook page [@naacpames4120](https://www.facebook.com/naacpames4120).

If you have questions, need additional information, or an invoice, and would like a table at the event, please contact Vanessa Baker-Latimer at juneteenth4amesstory@gmail.com.

In partnership,

Ericka Eregbu, President
Ames Branch of the NAACP



2026 Sponsorship Levels and Benefits

Freedom Sponsor: \$1,000

- Logo on Banner displayed at the event.
- Logo on Website and all social media platforms
- 3-minute greeting at the beginning of the event
- 2 verbal recognitions during the event

Liberty Sponsor: \$550

- Logo on Banner displayed at the event.
- Logo on Website and all social media platforms
- One verbal recognition during the event

Unity Sponsor: \$300

- Logo on Banner displayed at the event.

From: [Kathy Ridnour](#)
To: [City Council and Mayor](#)
Subject: Ada Hayden "Rules"
Date: Thursday, May 21, 2026 9:08:07 PM

Some people who received this message don't often get email from kathy.ridnour@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

[External Email]

I am writing to you to express my concerns regarding the new guidelines posted at Ada Hayden Heritage Park. I speak from experience after a 39-year career at the Iowa DOT as a Transportation Planner in the area of trail and shared-use path planning and also as a walker and bicyclist on this path. These new guidelines are counterintuitive, unnatural and just plain wrong. It appears their creators did not consult standard shared-use path protocols that are effectively used across the U.S. I would like to know which national standards were used to determine that this method is actually safer (as stated in your Facebook post) than the previous typical guidance.

I would also like to know WHY these changes were made. Were there hundreds of crashes and an extremely high number of problems among users? Widening the path to the standard 12 feet is a big improvement that should safely accommodate all users without the need for a whole new set of user guidelines. To me, it would make better sense to wait and see how the wider trail functions before jumping into major traffic-flow changes. As a user, I just don't see any problems with how things were operating before.

With this being a two-way path, the guidance is highly ineffective, very impractical, creates many more points of conflict, and causes users to change which sides of the path to travel on throughout their visit, and then crossing the bridge and its approaches has another level of chaos and confusion.

As you should have seen, your Facebook post has at least 150 comments and 99.9% of them are opposed to the new guidance. This should serve as a heads up.

If you take a look at the City of Ames' Shared Use Bike Path Map, the new guidelines are completely contrary to the sections describing Path Etiquette and Safety Tips. https://www.cityofames.org/files/content/city/v/29/my-government/departments/public-works/traffic-engineering/shared_use_bike_path_map_2021_web.pdf

All other trails and shared-use paths, in the city of Ames, throughout the state and across the nation follow the previous guidance with great success. (see attached) It's natural and intuitive to walk on the right (think of all the sidewalks in Ames and throughout the entire United States), and bike on the right (even RAGBRAI has a slogan--Ride Right!) and then pass on the left. It's actually very easy. Even the road systems use this method of driving on the right and passing on the left.

I'm very surprised these guidelines were approved by the Parks and Recreation Commission and/or the City Council. Implementation is not going so well. I walked there today and not a single user was following the new guidance. I think people prefer to use common sense and walk/ride on the right as they were taught as children.

I look forward to your response.

Kathy Ridnour
3929 Aldrin Avenue
Ames, IA 50014
515-460-3290

Core Shared Path Etiquette

- **Keep Right, Pass Left:** Stay on the right side of the path except when passing. Always pass on the left side of slower users.
- **Announce Before Passing:** Give a clear, audible warning—such as ringing a bike bell or calling out, *"Passing on your left!"*—well in advance.
- **Yield Appropriately:** Faster-moving users (bicycles, e-scooters) must yield to slower, more vulnerable

May 22nd, 2026

RE: Ames Airport Solar Array Planning

Mayor and Council,

The Ames Climate Action Team is pleased that the mayor and council voted to pursue the revocable lease to consider a solar array on municipal airport property. The expansion of solar for our community continues to be a top priority for our group and many Ames residents. Our community needs to expand and diversify its energy portfolio and this solar array project is an opportunity that we cannot pass up.

However it has come to our attention that the May 12th motion approved by council
[it was requested to communicate to the developer that the city council has a strong preference that no solar be installed in the areas that were earmarked for future development on the Airport Master Plan]

Is being interpreted by the developer and staff as 'remove any airport areas designated as future development areas'. This interpretation leaves the solar project dead in the water. It becomes unrealistic and unaffordable. We might be able to squeeze in 14-18 MW in smaller and scattered spaces, but the fragmented dispersion makes the whole project too costly.

It is the position of the Ames Climate Action Team that city master planning is highly valuable, but it must also be a living document. The city and the developer have committed a great amount of time to this project and it would be an absolute shame if 20+ year out future plans for private businesses on city-owned land won out over the benefits of affordable and reliable solar energy for the community.

ACAT is convinced that there is a high level of public interest in supporting this solar initiative; that the developer has acted in good faith and shouldered an enormous amount of risk to try to make this project viable; and that we must take significant action toward our city goals for GHG reduction. Further, solar installations are relatively easy to install – and uninstall if future economic conditions and priorities for our land use shift in favor of other uses. In the meantime we would still have the advantage of city-owned, diversified power in our portfolio.

Please add the airport solar array and land use discussion and reconsideration to the city agenda on May 26th. Let's take the opportunity to discuss these implications and clarify what we are really willing to support. To do less is disrespectful to both the community and the developer. Ames has the opportunity to make this solar array development a reality but time continues to be of the essence.

Thank you,

Lee Anne Willson, Caitlyn Lien, and Jeri Neal
on behalf of the Ames Climate Action Team