

ITEM #:	29
DATE:	08-11-26
DEPT:	FLEET

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: AMES ANIMAL SERVICES FACILITY

BACKGROUND:

The City's Animal Shelter, located at 325 Billy Sunday Road, is in need of replacement. The existing facility is undersized and experiences challenges related to weatherization, mechanical equipment, and other aging systems. City staff has been working through the planning stages to develop a new animal shelter facility for the past several years.

The City obtained a purchase option on the property at 2715 Dayton Ave, which previously housed Eagle's Loft daycare and retained INVISION Architecture LTD (INVISION), Des Moines, Iowa, to complete initial evaluation of the existing facility and identify future requirements to convert the 2715 Dayton Avenue property into a modern animal shelter facility. INVISION provided the City with a conceptual design and a preliminary cost estimate. After receiving the conceptual design report, on February 18, 2025, City Council approved the purchase of 2715 Dayton Avenue in the amount of \$1.1 million. At that same meeting, staff notified City Council that an anonymous lead donation of \$3 million had been obtained.

On September 2, 2025, City Council approved a change order to the INVISION design contract for the completion of schematic design, design development, and construction documents, bidding phase, and construction administration. The contract incorporates references to best practices outlined by the American Society of Veterinarians (ASV) Guidelines for Sheltering, and the need to meet the requirements for Animal Welfare of the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS). In addition, the contract outlines the City's interest in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

SERVICES AND FACILITY DESCRIPTION:

Through discussions with the design team and animal care experts during the design process, staff learned that the terms "control" and "shelter" were outdated and being less frequently used to describe facilities like the one being pursued. Based on the new building and the variety of animal services provided, "Ames Animal Control" will be changing to "Ames Animal Services." The new facility will also reflect this change.

CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENTS:

INVISION and its sub-consultants have worked with City staff and fundraisers to complete a design of the facility, which is broken into three spaces: 1) cat spaces, 2) dog spaces, and 3) human spaces. This design features an approximately 1,700 square-foot addition that will be utilized as dog space and will have a flat roof to accommodate mechanical equipment.

An addition was determined to be the best financial option for dog spaces due to the needed

sound attenuation, plumbing, and durability required in dog holding areas. This addition will also connect to the outside dog run areas. The attached presentation shows the schematic design and outside and inside renderings based on the design development phase.

SUSTAINABILITY:

As part of the design contract, INVISION was to identify options to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Due to costs, it was determined that air-source heat pumps and heat recovery are the best sustainable options within the current funding available. The roof is planned for replacement, but the supports of the building will not allow for solar on the roof. A conduit is being placed to allow for future ground-mounted solar, and the electrical equipment will also be designed for the addition of future solar. The site contains ample open space to locate future ground-mounted solar.

BID ADD-ALTERNATES:

During Construction Document preparation, 11 separate add-alternates were originally identified. After further review, three have been incorporated back into the base bid scope (staining the exterior brick, adding sinks to cat spaces, and four bay windows on north elevation).

Therefore, the following eight add-alternates will be prepared for bidding and may be awarded if favorable bids are received:

1. Dog run shade structures
2. Replace resilient corridor flooring with epoxy
3. Catio screens
4. Parking lot addition
5. Exterior building signage
6. Building automation
7. Wood-look metal entry trellis
8. Catio on south elevation

FINANCIAL ESTIMATES AND PROJECT BUDGET:

The City Council received a Design Development project estimate and budget on May 12, 2026, and authorized the inclusion of the additional costs and designated donation revenues for the addition of individual dog holding area exterior access doors.

Since that time, staff has identified the need to relocate a sanitary sewer manhole in order to accommodate the shared use path extension along the property frontage. Funds have been identified from the Sanitary Sewer Fund and the Shared Use Path Maintenance Program to accomplish the relocation of the manhole and the shared use path extension, which are incorporated into the project budget.

Staff has been working with INVISION and its cost-estimate subconsultant, Stecker-Harmsen, to prepare the final cost estimate for the project prior to issuing bids, which is \$5,367,243.

The estimate received prior to this writing appears to be within the project budget, but

staff needs more time to review the information before requesting Council approval to proceed with bidding. The table below reflects the information known to staff as of this time:

EXPENSES		FUNDING SOURCES	
Previous Site Investigation	\$ 4,075		
2715 Dayton Purchase Option	5,000		
Site Acquisition	1,100,000		
Conceptual Design	66,360		
Change Order No. 1 (Detailed Design/Construction Specs)	588,000		
Change Order No. 2 (additional scope for Dog Run access)	24,440		
Construction/Renovation	5,367,243		
FF&E/Permits	450,000		
3rd Party Testing/Geotechnical	40,000		
		Stormwater Quality CIP Funding	\$ 30,000
		Sanitary Sewer Utility Fund	29,000
		Shared Use Path Maintenance Program available balance (LOST)	16,500
		FY 2023/24 General Fund Savings	100,000
		Council Priorities Capital Fund	2,855,000

		Donations	4,534,040
		Supplemental Donation for Dog Area Doors	154,416
TOTALS	\$ 7,718,956		\$ 7,718,956

In order to provide additional time to verify these figures, staff is requesting that the City Council consider approving the preliminary plans and specifications and the bidding and award dates at the August 18 workshop, rather than proceeding with these steps on August 11.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Accept the report and direct staff to place a resolution on the August 18, 2026 City Council workshop agenda to approve preliminary plans and specifications for the construction of the Ames Animal Services Facility, setting September 16, 2026, as the bid due date and September 22, 2026, as the date of Public Hearing.
2. Refer this item to City staff for further information.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

The Ames Animal Services Facility project will provide a significant expansion and update to the facilities used to care for and rehome animals in the community. The project would not be possible without the contributions of many donors and volunteers. The design of the facility has been completed, and a final cost estimate has been issued.

Because the cost estimate was only recently received, City staff would like an opportunity to further review it and ensure it is acceptable prior to the City Council formally taking action to approve the preliminary plans and set the bidding timetable. Staff believes only an additional week is necessary to complete this process.

Preliminarily, it appears that the probable construction cost estimate relies on utilizing all of the available funding to construct the project, leaving no balance available for construction contingency in the event of unforeseen issues that may arise during construction. Depending on the bids received, staff anticipates the need to meet with the apparent low bidder to discuss potential alterations that will bring the project under budget and provide a reasonable construction contingency.

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

ATTACHMENT(S):

[Ames Animal Services - North Elevation.jpg](#)

[Ames Animal Services -Cats.jpg](#)