



MEMO

To: Mayor and City Council
From: Renee Hall, City Clerk
Date: August 21, 2026
Subject: Packet of Communications to Council

Listed below are the communications to the City Council known to staff as of August 21, 2026:

1. Justin Moore, Planner – August 11, 2026
RE: Request to waive city subdivision standards & land use designations at 3500 560th Avenue
2. Tanner Hoegh, Ames Resident – August 19, 2026
RE: Data Center Ratepayer Protections
3. Chuck Winkleblack, Hunziker Companies – August 21, 2026
RE: Request for rezoning of land and sanitary sewer
4. Mark Lambert, City Attorney – August 21, 2026
RE: Unilateral Bidding Error
5. Justin Clausen, PE, Director of Public Works – August 25, 2026
RE: Memo on Accessible Parking Regulations
6. Justin Clausen, PE, Director of Public Works – August 25, 2026
RE: Memo on Cul De Sac parking
7. Justin Clausen, PE, Director of Public Works – August 25, 2026
RE: Memo on Grand Avenue Shared Use Path at Allan Drive
8. Justin Clausen, PE, Director of Public Works – August 25, 2026
RE: Memo on Lincoln Way Corridor Study Expansion

9. Justin Clausen, PE, Director of Public Works – August 25, 2026
RE: Memo on Steve Bock Campus Ave Sewer Claim
10. Justin Clausen, PE, Director of Public Works – August 25, 2026
RE: Memo on Street Parking Concern on Stonehaven Drive
11. Justin Clausen, PE, Director of Public Works – August 25, 2026
RE: Memo on Food at First Parking Meter Enforcement Hours
12. Justin Clausen, PE, Director of Public Works – August 25, 2026
RE: Memo on Pedestrian Safety at Grave Ave & Sunset Drive
13. Justin Clausen, PE, Director of Public Works – August 25, 2026
RE: Memo on North-South Railroad Quiet Zone
14. Kelly Diekmann, Director of Planning & Housing – August 25, 2026
RE: Manatt's Annexation Request Memo



Department of Planning & Housing

Memo

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Justin Moore, Planner

DATE: August 11, 2026

SUBJECT: Request to Waive City Subdivision Standards and Land Use Designation at 3500 560th Avenue

On July 28, City Council forwarded a request from CDA on behalf of land owners Des Moines Heavy Industrial LLC and Ag Land Specialist, LLC, requesting that the City's subdivision requirements and Urban Fringe Land Use Designation restrictions as a Natural Area be waived to allow the properties just southeast of Ames at 3500 560th Avenue in Story County be final platted (See Attached Letter).

The specific request is to allow for five new lots to be created out of two existing parcels at 3500 560th Avenue. Under City subdivision standards this requires a Preliminary and Final Plat. Specifically, four of the five new lots will be designated as Outlots for future development and one lot would be initially developed.

The City has control over subdivisions within two miles of its corporate limits. The Urban Reserve designation applies to this property. This requires that any proposed subdivision must comply with City subdivision standards and also must annex into the City. If the adjoining properties between the City and these properties do not consent to be annexed and the property cannot be served by City infrastructure, then annexation is usually not possible.

The property is also located entirely in the Natural Area Conservation land use designation. This designation has been in place since Ames Plan 2040's approval five years ago. Generally, subdivisions of land in these areas are not supported by Plan 2040 as the intent of this land use designation is to conserve and maintain existing conditions as well as maintaining natural undeveloped land.

The landowners have obtained prior approval to construct a Concrete Mixing Batch Plant operation by way of a Conditional Use Permit from Story County late last fall which is to be operated by CTI Ready-mix. The batch plant would be constructed on a portion of the existing property being proposed for subdivision in this request along 560th Avenue at the far north edge. **This is an approved permit that can proceed without a subdivision.** A Sketch Plan meeting with the City's Development Review Committee was held in June.

The owners desire to subdivide is not directly related to the Batch Plant proposal as outlined in the letter (See Attached Letter). It is otherwise unclear to staff why the owners would like to subdivide the land in such a manner at this time, although the representative with CDA has indicated that the owners may choose to pursue mineral extraction on this site in the future. The landowner does own land adjacent to this site and has mineral extraction rights on this land at 3500 560th as well as adjacent land to the north where extraction activities currently take place.

New mineral extraction would require a separate conditional use permit from the Story County Board of Supervisors. **The Supervisors have placed a condition on their permit issuance that any new future mineral extraction operation in this area requires concurrent review and approval of the City of Ames Water & Pollution Control Department given the proximity to City Well fields.**

Rural Subdivision Policies

Ames Plan 2040 states that the minimum lot size within the Urban Fringe is 35 acres (UF3-1 and UF4-3). Restricting the size of parcels serves to facilitate future growth by ensuring that property lines and ownership do not become so fractured that development and annexation are inhibited. It is easier to develop a large acreage than to develop, in a piecemeal fashion, many small parcels. Council has also approved boundary line adjustments and divisions that result in continued agricultural use as limitation with the division.

UF3-2: Natural Area Conservation.

Natural areas include sensitive areas of natural habitat, steep slopes, and waterways. Natural area designations are informational based upon the Environment Element and the 2006 AUPF. **Creation of new parcels within these areas for new development is prohibited. Property divisions only for land conservation purposes is permissible with city approval.** Land conservation is typically for larger areas to be preserved within outlots under common or private ownership or to transfer ownership to a governmental or non-governmental organization for its management. Creation of private open space may not be appropriate under this designation. Natural Areas adjacent to the city may still require annexation to further city goals for orderly development patterns and resource conservation.

Options

Option 1-

Take no action on the landowners request. This would mean that the City would not approve or entertain a proposal for subdividing land or changing the land use designation at this location.

Option 2-

Direct staff to proceed with discussing with the owner of the land regarding what the specific purpose for the subdivision is and what projects are planned in order to better understand the possible future uses and return to City Council with a report.

Option 3-

Allow for a waiver of Preliminary Plat with Public Improvements as well as a waiver of the Natural Area Land Use designation rules and allow for a Final Plat to be submitted for 3500 560th Avenue.

Staff Comments

The Ames Development Review Committee (DRC) has had one initial meeting with representatives with CDA and consultations with Story County Planning staff by way of a Sketch Plan meeting. **Staff does not have a full understanding of the timeline of the landowners future plans nor how the proposed Subdivision relates to the already approved Batch Plant permit or the desire to extract minerals in the future.**

Staff recommends Option #2 that would first give the staff and Council the opportunity for better clarity of the possible impacts to future extraction operations, other development plans by the landowners, and the impact of the City's water supply.

It should be noted that regardless of the decision made regarding the subdivision issue, it is unlikely that the staff can support the approval for a sand and gravel extraction operation because of its close proximity to future City drinking water wells.

Council Request Letter



CIVIL ENGINEERS
SURVEYORS
PLANNERS
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

July 24, 2026

Honorable Mayor & City Council
City of Ames
c/o Justin Moore, Planner
515 Clark Avenue
Ames, Iowa 50010

RE: 3500 360th Street – Story County
Parcels 1019100105 & 1019100210
Waiver – City Subdivision Requirements

Honorable Mayor & City Council;

On behalf of Des Moines Heavy Industrial LLC and Ag Land Specialist, LLC, we respectively request that the Ames City Council grant a waiver from the City's subdivision requirements and Urban Fringe Land Use designation of Natural Area to allow the properties listed above to be final platted. We understand that the City's policies generally discourage land divisions resulting in parcels smaller than 35 acres and the city has subdivision jurisdiction over properties with a two-mile radius of city limits on parcels less than 35 acres. Our request to waive these requirements is based on the unique circumstances of this property and the development that has occurred between this property and the city of Ames corporate boundaries.

Properties along the eastern side of the 560th Avenue corridor have been developed into mineral extraction operations that are used in conjunction with concrete and HMA paving companies. In October of 2025, CTI Ready Mix had a site plan approved by Story County to allow for the construction of a concrete batch facility located on property owned by Des Moines Heavy Industrial LLC. For CTI Ready Mix to purchase the property for construction a final plat is needed to split off 3.6 acres of property. CTI Ready Mix is owned by the same individual that owns the property to the east which is under the ownership of Ag Land Specialist, LLC. In lieu of purchasing the property the property owners have agreed to a land swap which necessitates the creation of a second final plat to create the second parcel which is the same size for the land swap. Future plans for the property owned by Ag Land Specialist, LLC would include mineral extraction similar to the two adjacent properties to the north. There is currently an agreement in place between Des Moines Heavy Industrial LLC and Ag Land Specialist, LLC to allow CTI Ready Mix to utilize materials out of the current extraction occurring to the north. These uses would be complimentary businesses to what is already in place along the corridor.

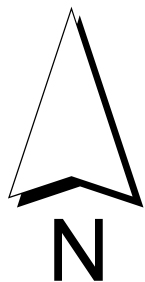
Before the site plan was approved, city staff indicated that the properties along this roadway are not expected to be annexed into the City of Ames in the foreseeable future, if ever, and that city utilities are not expected to be available for connection. Based on that guidance, CTI Ready Mix proceeded through Story County to obtain approval of a site plan with private utility improvements.

For the reasons outlined above we would like to request that the Ames City Council grant a waiver from the City's subdivision requirements to allow the proposed final plats to proceed without requiring compliance with the City's full subdivision improvement standards. We appreciate your consideration of this request and would be available for any questions you might have. Thank you.

Sincerely,

CIVIL DESIGN ADVANTAGE, LLC

Erin K. Ollendike, P.E.



Proposed Subdivision
&
Future City/County Property

Hall, Renee

From: Tanner Hoegh <tjhoegh@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 19, 2026 10:58 AM
To: City Council and Mayor
Subject: Request for August 25 Council Consideration – Data Center Ratepayer Protections

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

[External Email]

Mayor Haila and Members of the Ames City Council,

I am an Ames resident writing regarding the proposed Lightedge data center and the City's ongoing development of data center policy.

I respectfully request that this correspondence be considered under Disposition of Communications at the August 25 City Council meeting and that Council direct staff to place consideration of data center electric-ratepayer protections on a future Council agenda.

My primary concern is the phased nature of the proposal. Lightedge would begin at approximately 3 MW but could ultimately grow to 25 MW. I do not want approval of a relatively small initial phase to create infrastructure investment, financial commitments, or political pressure that makes subsequent expansion increasingly difficult for Ames to evaluate or refuse independently.

I appreciate that City staff has discussed mechanisms intended to ensure the data center pays the costs attributable to its electric demand. I believe those protections should be established as binding policy before any initial phase is approved. At minimum, I ask Council to consider:

- Separate City approval for substantial increases in electrical demand.
- Full recovery from the data center of infrastructure, transmission, capacity, and other incremental electric-system costs attributable to its load.
- Protections preventing Ames ratepayers from bearing stranded costs if the facility closes, downsizes, delays expansion, or does not reach its anticipated demand.
- A publicly available cost-of-service analysis demonstrating that existing residential and commercial customers will not subsidize the development.

I also ask that the City evaluate the proposal based on its potential 25-MW buildout rather than treating the initial 3-MW phase as an isolated decision. Decisions made at the first phase could have significant consequences for the City's municipally owned electric system and for future Councils.

I support the current pause on data center development and believe Ames should establish these protections before allowing Lightedge or another large-load data center to proceed.

Please consider referring these issues to staff for a report and future Council agenda item.

Thank you for your consideration,

Tanner Hoegh, MS, LMHC

Ames Homeowner and Electric Customer

To: Honorable Mayor and council

From: Chuck Winkleblack, General Manager, Hunziker Companies

Date: August 21, 2026

RE: GI zoning

I ask the council to consider two separate requests:

First, Rezone the land owned by LDY LLC on both the North and South sides of Turing Street in East Ames to GI (General Industrial). There is approximately 90 acres of land as part of the request.

The DOT has now completed the new interchange at 580th/Teller Ave between Ames and Nevada including all the connecting frontage roads.

IRUA (Iowa Regional Utilities Association) will be constructing a new water tower to serve this area. The new tower will be located along Teller Ave. They have already met with city staff regarding the process for approving the site plan for the new water tower. This will improve IRUA's water service to its existing customer base and provide potable water and fire protection for this region. Their tentative plan is to start construction in 2027 and complete the project in late 2027 or early 2028.

Alliant Energy has natural gas and electricity available to serve this area.

My second request is for the City of Ames to begin the process of determining how to serve this area with sanitary sewer.

Thanks in advance for your consideration

Respectfully


Chuck Winkleblack

MEMO

Legal Department

To: Ames City Council, Mayor Haila

From: Mark O. Lambert, City Attorney

Date: August 21, 2026

Subject: Unilateral Bidding Error

Motion: Moved by Rollins, seconded by Junck (passed 6-0), to request that the City Attorney examine “contract verbiage” for situations in which there is a “signed contract” and it is subsequently discovered that there is an error. [From 1/14/25]

This motion arose because of a unilateral bidding error by Van Meter, Inc., involving the Electric Department’s purchase of six thousand feet of 750 copper, 15kV cable (“Cable”). The underlying facts were as follows: In November 2024, the City issued Bid Invitation 2025-086 for the Cable. The City received six bids in response, and Van Meter, Inc., was the lowest bidder at a price of \$96,780 (\$16.13 per foot). All other acceptable bids¹ were substantially higher ranging from \$167,700 (\$27.95 per foot) to \$185,045.40 (\$30.84 per foot). On December 10, 2024, City Council selected Van Meter, the low bidder, for the purchase of the Cable by Resolution No. 24-654. The City’s Purchasing Department subsequently issued a standard Purchase Order to Van Meter to request the Cable materials according to standard City policy for materials. Subsequently, Van Meter contacted the City requesting a cancellation of the contract (the Purchase Order) due to a unilateral error made by Van Meter in pricing the cable. City staff in both the Electric and Purchasing Departments researched prior-year purchases of the same Cable and determined that the Van Meter bid was truly an outlier and prior purchases had been nearly double the Van Meter bid. This matter was then brought before City Council and the City elected to cancel the Purchase Order

¹ Two of the six bids were not approved manufacturers and are not addressed in this memo.

with Van Meter and awarded it to the next acceptable low bidder at a price of \$167,700, which was roughly \$76,000 more than the Van Meter erroneous bid.

Under current City policy, materials purchases of this type do not require a bid bond and there was none required by the City's invitation to bid. The contract created by the Purchase Order is governed by Iowa's uniform commercial code (Chapter 554), which incorporates legal principles of law and equity, including the legal defense of *mistake*. Iowa Code §554.1103.

The facts were undisputed that Van Meter made a substantial mathematical error in its bid. Any remedy that the City may have had would have required that the City pursue a legal claim against Van Meter. Iowa law on the issue of unilateral mistake in contracts requires that the Court analyze whether Van Meter's legal defense showed that (1) the effect of the mistake was such that enforcement of the contract would be *legally unconscionable*; **or** (2) whether *the City had reason to know of the mistake or caused the mistake*. See Restatement Second of Contracts §153 (accepted as valid law in Iowa under *Homeland Energy Solutions, LLC. V. Retterath*, 938 N.W.2d 664 (Iowa 2020)). In this situation, the City received six bids and five of them were roughly the same amount while the Van Meter bid was some 43% less than the next lowest acceptable bidder. Additionally, Van Meter's bid was lower than the unit cost of the purchase of similar Cable in prior years by the City. In my opinion, Van Meter would have been able to provide evidence that the City had reason to know of the error at the time of the contract. Furthermore, the City had limited time to purchase the Cable in time to make the summer construction season and pursuing this claim would surely have exceeded the time available. It is my opinion that the City Council made a wise decision in allowing Van Meter to cancel the contract. In terms of policy, the City typically will follow up with outlier low bidders to inquire whether a mistake was made prior to City Council acceptance of a contract, but circumstances here did not result in identifying the error prior to acceptance.

For the reasons set forth above, my conclusion is that this error by Van Meter was an honest and extremely rare mistake that no contractual language could have prevented. No further action is recommended.

To: Mayor and City Council
From: Justin Clausen, PE, Director of Public Works
Date: August 25, 2026
Subject: Accessible Parking Regulations

BACKGROUND:

At the February 24, 2026 City Council meeting, the Council referred to staff a request from Mimi Wagner regarding Accessible Parking Regulations, particularly near the Ames Public Library.

The requester had parked in a standard metered stall when they found the accessible stalls occupied. The resident displayed a valid accessible parking placard but did not pay for the meter use. She subsequently received a parking citation, which prompted the request that the City Council consider allowing vehicles displaying accessible parking placards to park in metered stalls without payment when designated accessible stalls are unavailable.

CURRENT MUNICIPAL CODE:

Parking regulations in metered stalls are regulated by Municipal Code section 18.28 which states:

During the hours when a parking space is controlled by a parking meter:

- (1) No Person shall park a vehicle in any parking space for which a parking meter or a parking station is installed, unless such person immediately deposits or causes to be deposited in said meter such payment as shall be necessary to pay the rates stated on the meter for the time said vehicle is to occupy said parking space.**
- (2) No operator of a vehicle shall permit a vehicle to remain in a metered space or a space controlled by a parking station after the time for which payment has been deposited, unless such person deposits additional payment at the rates stated on the meter for additional time provided such additional time when added to the original time does not extend beyond the maximum time the vehicle can remain at the meter.*

Violation of each subsection of this section shall constitute a separate offense of "overtime parking".

(Ord. No. 2466, Sec. 2, 1-22-74; Ord. 2774, Sec. 1, 6-16-81; Ord. No. 4113, 5-22-12)

The Municipal Code does not contain any provisions that allow for the use of an accessible parking placard to supersede the requirement to pay for metered parking.

METERED PARKING IN OTHER COMMUNITIES/UNIVERSITY:

Staff reviewed parking regulations of peer communities in central Iowa to ascertain if other cities had policies that allow for the use of an accessible parking placard to be used in lieu of payment at a metered stall. **While not every community has metered parking that is directly comparable to Ames, staff did not identify any peer communities in Iowa that allow a valid accessible parking placard, by itself, to exempt a vehicle from payment at a metered parking space.**

Ms. Wagner indicated that Rochester, Minnesota allows this type of parking. Staff confirmed that Minnesota Statute §169.345 provides this privilege statewide without payment when an accessible placard or plate is displayed.

Iowa State University (ISU) is the one exception that appears to differ from a policy standpoint. ISU allows for parking in metered spaces when displaying BOTH a valid accessible placard AND an ISU Medical Permit for up to two (2) hours without payment. The requirement for both the accessible placard and ISU Medical Permit is a notable distinction that doesn't allow for unpaid meter parking simply with the display of an accessible placard. Both must be displayed.

Of note, the University of Iowa, University of Northern Iowa, and their respective cities of Iowa City and Cedar Falls do not allow for this privilege.

STAFF COMMENTS:

Currently, it does not appear that the City of Ames differs from other peer communities within the State of Iowa regarding the need for payment at a metered stall regardless of an accessible placard being displayed. Iowa State University is the one noted exception that allows for up to 2 hours of parking without pay when a placard AND an ISU Medical Permit is displayed.

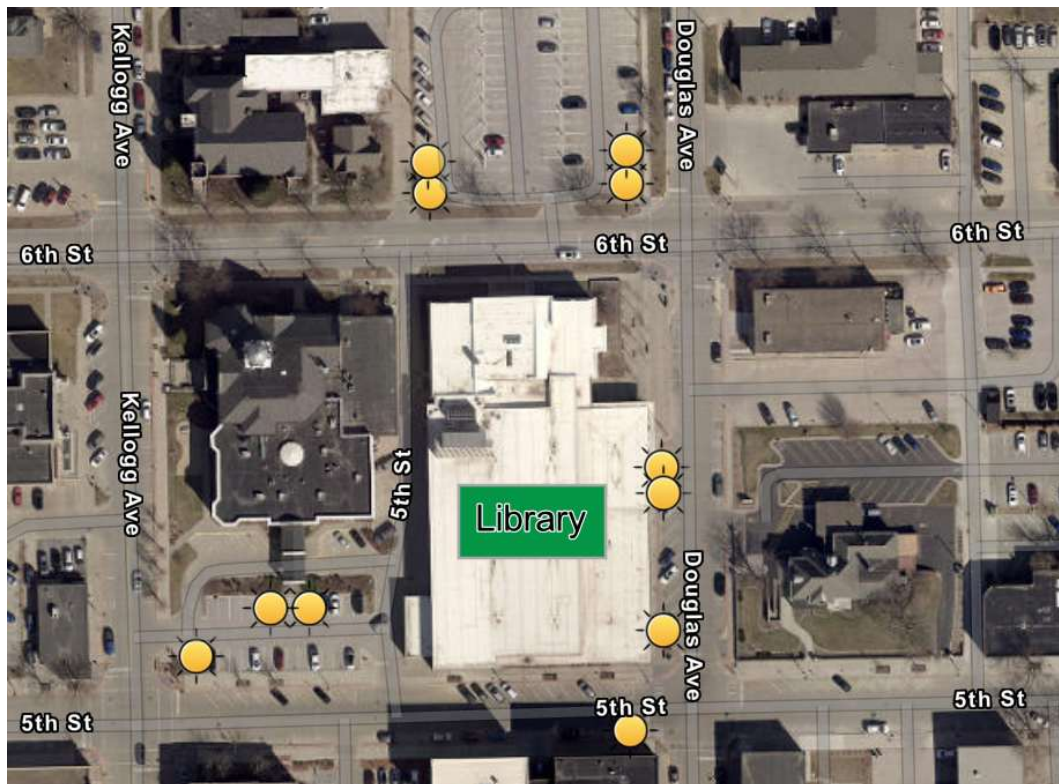
If desired, the City Council could direct staff to prepare an ordinance for the City Council consideration that would allow a vehicle displaying an accessible placard to park in a metered stall for predetermined amount of time.

Such a change would result in some reduction in parking meter revenue, although staff is unable to quantify the potential impact without additional information regarding usage. The Parking Fund is historically challenged to generate enough revenue to support the on-going and future maintenance needs of the parking system. The current metered

parking stalls are intended to generate parking turnover in areas of high demand. This turnover then allows for additional customers to utilize those parking spaces as patrons of adjacent businesses or services.

Alternatively, the City Council could request additional research to find examples from other communities regarding this topic. The City Council could also decide to take no action and rely on current policies regarding payment for use of meter spaces.

For additional context, there are currently 11 designated accessible parking spaces in the immediate vicinity of the Ames Public Library, including both on-street spaces and spaces within public parking lots. While not all are located immediately adjacent to the Library entrance, the map below illustrates the distribution of accessible parking available in the surrounding area.





MEMO

To: Mayor and City Council
From: Justin Clausen, PE, Director of Public Works
Date: August 25, 2026
Subject: Request to Prohibit Parking in Cul-de-Sacs

BACKGROUND:

At the May 27, 2026 City Council meeting, the Council referred to staff a request from Aaron Rodriguez to prohibit on-street parking within the circular turnaround portions of cul-de-sacs.

Currently, there are no blanket restrictions regarding on-street parking in the nearly 250 different cul-de-sacs across Ames. There is considerable variation among these cul-de-sacs in terms of size, shape, roadway width, and the availability of on-street parking. Some cul-de-sacs have an interior raised island area while others do not. Some of those islands contain spaces that allow neighborhood parking.

The request also cited concerns related to the maneuverability of large vehicles, including snowplows, sanitation, and emergency response vehicles, when on-street parking occurs within a cul-de-sac. Additional concerns included potential damage to curbs and pavement infrastructure caused by larger vehicles hitting curbs when navigating cul-de-sacs that have been narrowed due to on-street parking.

STAFF COMMENTS:

Staff has observed similar operational challenges as noted in the request. Snow plowing in cul-de-sacs often requires smaller equipment, and effectively removing snow and ice can be more difficult and time-consuming. Some of these challenges result from the geometry of individual cul-de-sacs and can be compounded when on-street parking is present.

Staff has also made repairs to cul-de-sacs with interior islands due to larger delivery, sanitary, and emergency response vehicles that need to operate within the cul-de-sac and cannot properly navigate within the curb lines.

The presence of on-street parking only narrows the available roadway width and can lead to vehicles contacting the curb, which at times causes damage that needs to be repaired by City maintenance staff. While on-street parking can create challenges with larger emergency response vehicles, staff has not heard those concerns from any emergency response personnel.

Staff believes that parking regulations should be applied in a consistent and understandable manner so residents have common expectations and restrictions can be efficiently enforced. However, given the significant differences in cul-de-sac geometry, roadway width, neighborhood parking needs, and existing configurations, developing a single citywide restriction applicable to all cul-de-sacs may be challenging.

While some operational challenges do currently exist, any consideration of parking restrictions within cul-de-sac areas would require a broader evaluation of operational impacts, individual neighborhood considerations, and enforcement implications.

If the City Council wishes to explore this issue further, staff recommends placing this item on a future agenda for discussion. That discussion would allow the Council to provide direction regarding the desired scope of the effort, policy objectives, and intended outcomes prior to initiating additional analysis or public engagement activities.

It should be noted, however, that addressing this issue comprehensively would require considerable effort by staff and substantial public engagement, including surveying each of the nearly 250 cul-de-sacs. A consensus of opinions may prove challenging to achieve a policy goal.

To: Mayor and Ames City Council

From: Justin Clausen, PE, Public Works Director

Date: August 25, 2026

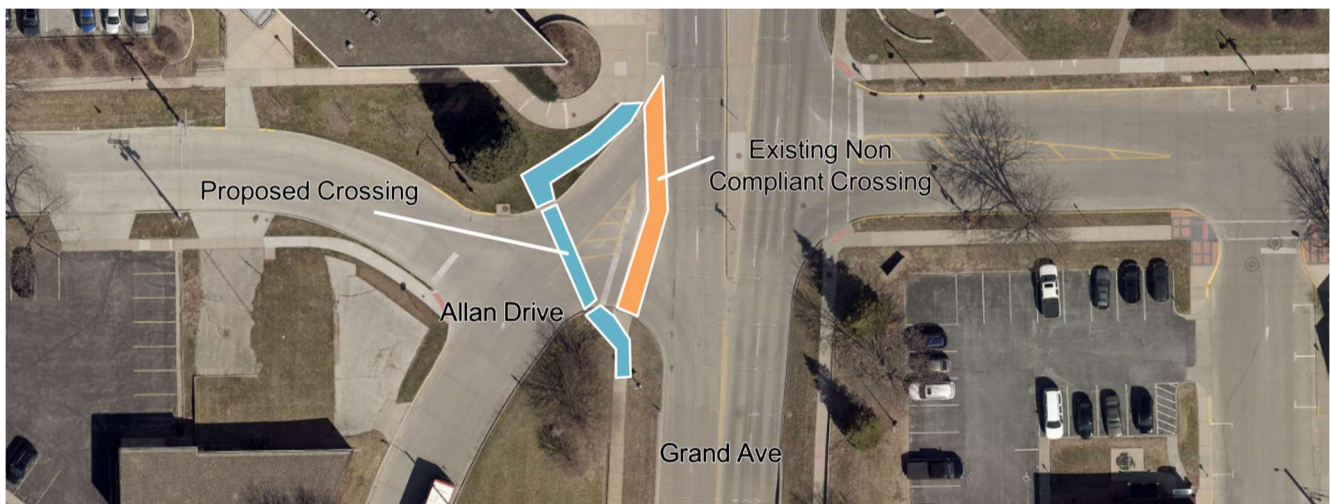
Subject: Grand Avenue Shared Use Path at Allan Drive

BACKGROUND:

At the June 9, 2026 City Council Meeting, the Council referred to staff a request from Victoria Blumen regarding the Grand Avenue path at 5th Street (Allan Drive) and concerns about changes that may make biking in the area more uncomfortable. City staff had responded to a similar request in February 2026 and is including that response below.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED CHANGES AT GRAND AVENUE AT ALLAN DRIVE:

The crossing for multimodal traffic (pedestrians and bicycles) at Grand Avenue and Allan Drive is proposed to be reconfigured to better align the crossing to meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements for accessibility within the right of way. The crossing is being moved further to the west and will be aligned closer to 90 degrees. This is necessary to shorten the crossing and meet the required design slopes for an accessible pedestrian crossing. In the image below, the existing, non-complaint crossing is illustrated in orange. The proposed crossing is illustrated in blue.



FEBRUARY 2026 CORRESPONDENCE:

City staff was contacted in January 2026 by Carol Williams and Grant Olsen asking to review proposed plans for the Grand Avenue path, specifically in the area of 5th Street/Allan Drive.

Staff provided a copy of the proposed cross section, with the caveat that the project is still under design and review and could be subject to change.

Mr. Olsen requested to implement a demonstration project that would restrict vehicular movements at Allan Drive/5th Street connection from Grand Avenue in subsequent communication. Staff reviewed the request and declined to include the demonstration project as part of the project.

City Council members were provided with a copy of the email correspondence and a brief summary prepared by the Public Works Director. The text of that email correspondence is attached.

ATTACHMENT

Good morning Bronwyn!

The email correspondence between Mr. Olsen and others and Mark Gansen from our Traffic Engineering staff is below in italics. Here is a brief summary:

The City was contacted about the shared use path expansion project along Grand Avenue, and in particular the crossing at Allan Drive. Staff provided working drawings which had been designed and engineered to meet requirements for ADA accessibility in the public right of way. In particular, to the point in Mr. Olsen's email below, the proposed crossing at Allan Drive has been moved farther back from Grand Avenue and is a 90 degree crossing for a number of reasons. It removes the required change in direction in the middle of the current crossing, it shortens the crossing length which makes for a much safer crossing, and allows the required design slopes to be achieved, which were non-complaint in the existing configuration.

From a technical and engineering standpoint, the crossing is in the most appropriate location to meet the competing needs for bus turning movements, emergency vehicle access, and pedestrian/bicycle safety. I would disagree with the assertion that the design goes against the spirit of the Walk Bike Roll Ames plan. This design is fully in alignment with making safer crossings at high stress locations, which aligns with the first stated goal of "Safe and Comfortable" in the Walk Bike Roll Ames plan. While I can certainly understand the 90-degree turn as not being as convenient for a user, it is necessary for safety and to meet the required slopes for ADA. Safety should always be the priority over convenience.

Lastly, regarding the proposed demonstration project, staff did review the option and did not believe it was a viable alternative to the project design of extending the shared use path along the corridor. To the contrary, it suggested closing down street access, which in turn limited vehicular, and emergency response vehicle movements off of a major arterial street and mixed vehicular traffic with pedestrian and bicycle traffic. The mixing of the modes of transportation with the continued bus traffic in staff's technical view would not create a safer corridor.

For demonstration projects in general, they have a place where it makes sense to utilize them. Typically, those are in areas or at times where proven engineering solutions either do not meet the goals we are trying to achieve, or the current standard don't really exist to solve the problem. When these demonstration projects propose solutions that are novel, staff needs to ensure that the treatments don't create a false sense of safety for users of the project and that all potential liability issues are vetted. This is one of the reasons we look to proven engineering standards and methods to solve

problems. When solutions don't exist within those standards, demonstration projects are a way to find an answer that may exist outside of conventional methods.

I hope this information is helpful. Please let me know if you have any further questions!

Justin

From: Gansen, Mark

Sent: Thursday, January 29, 2026 9:33 AM

To: 'Grant Olsen' <radioemergency@gmail.com>

Cc: Carol Williams <carolbwilliams@gmail.com>; Pregitzer, Damion <Damion.Pregitzer@cityofames.org>; Bernard Lidicky <bernard@alderan.cz>; Victoria Blumen <veblumen@gmail.com>; Jeri Neal <leopold.ecology@gmail.com>; Jeremy Withers <jeremyrwithers@gmail.com>; Steven Libbey <slibbey@netins.net>

Subject: RE: Grand Shared Use Path

Hi Grant,

Thank you for sharing the additional thoughts and the proposed demonstration concept.

At this point, City departments have already provided input supporting maintaining the Grand connection in both directions. Due to the space required for CyRide buses to maneuver at Grand, southbound right-turn movements would still be expected regardless of signage or a temporary one-way treatment. In addition, driver expectancy is a concern, particularly given the proximity to a DOT highway, where inconsistent or non-standard operations can introduce safety issues.

With the current design, we are able to preserve the important Allan Drive / 5th Street connection to Main Street while addressing safety through geometric modifications that reduce conflict points and improve visibility. Given these considerations, a one-way or pilot configuration is not something we are planning to pursue.

We appreciate the input and interest in improving safety at this location as the design continues to advance.

Thanks,

Mark Gansen, P.E.

Civil Engineer II

Public Works

City Hall, 515 Clark Ave. | Ames, IA 50010



515.239.5291 direct

515.239.5160 main

515.239.5404 fax

mark.gansen@cityofames.org

Mailing: 515 Clark Ave. | Ames, IA 50010

www.CityofAmes.org

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From: Grant Olsen <radioemergency@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, January 26, 2026 10:34 PM

To: Gansen, Mark <Mark.Gansen@cityofames.org>

Cc: Carol Williams <carolbwilliams@gmail.com>; Pregitzer, Damion <Damion.Pregitzer@cityofames.org>; Bernard Lidicky <bernard@alderan.cz>; Victoria Blumen <veblumen@gmail.com>; Jeri Neal <leopold.ecology@gmail.com>; Jeremy Withers <jeremyrwithers@gmail.com>; Steven Libbey <slibbey@netins.net>

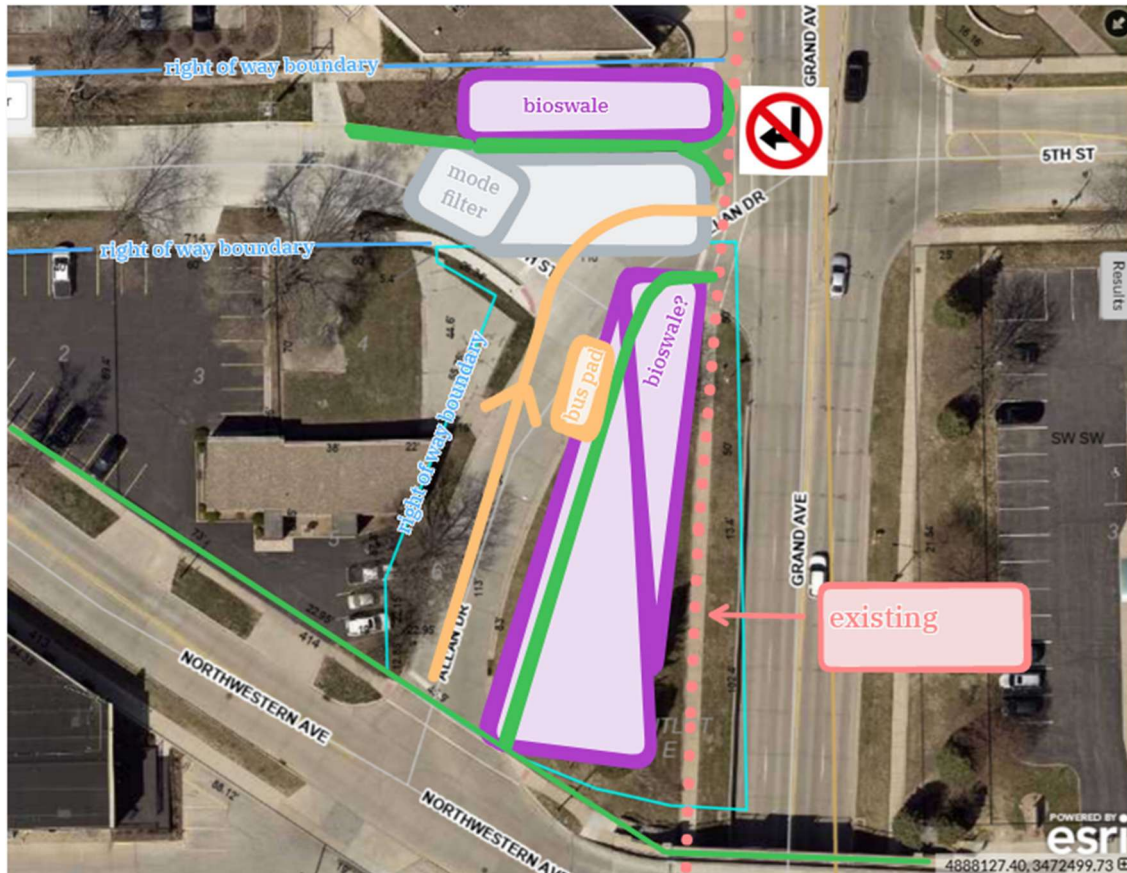
Subject: Re: Grand Shared Use Path

[External Email]

A full closure is not necessary to reduce conflict points and blind spots.

I propose a month-long test during May 2026 of this one-way concept (minus the bioswales) to allow all of us to observe actual outcomes in alignment with the city value "Data Driven".

This demonstration project could be completed in-house with flex posts, a few concrete barriers for the mode filter, and standard street signs.



On Tue, Jan 13, 2026 at 12:52 PM Gansen, Mark <Mark.Gansen@cityofames.org> wrote:

Hi Carol,

The closure was considered by the various City Departments and there were enough concerns to prevent the closure from moving forward. I do know that Police and CyRide had the biggest concerns due to their current operations.

Thanks!

Mark Gansen, P.E.

Civil Engineer II

Public Works

City Hall, 515 Clark Ave. | Ames, IA 50010



515.239.5291 direct

515.239.5160 main

515.239.5404 fax

mark.gansen@cityofames.org

Mailing: 515 Clark Ave. | Ames, IA 50010

www.CityofAmes.org

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From: Carol Williams <carolbwilliams@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, January 13, 2026 12:31 PM

To: Gansen, Mark <Mark.Gansen@cityofames.org>

Cc: Pregitzer, Damion <Damion.Pregitzer@cityofames.org>; Bernard Lidicky <bernard@alderan.cz>; Victoria Blumen <veblumen@gmail.com>; Jeri Neal <leopold.ecology@gmail.com>; Jeremy Withers <jeremyrwithers@gmail.com>; Steven Libbey <slibbey@netins.net>; Grant Olsen <radioemergency@gmail.com>

Subject: Re: Grand Shared Use Path

[External Email]

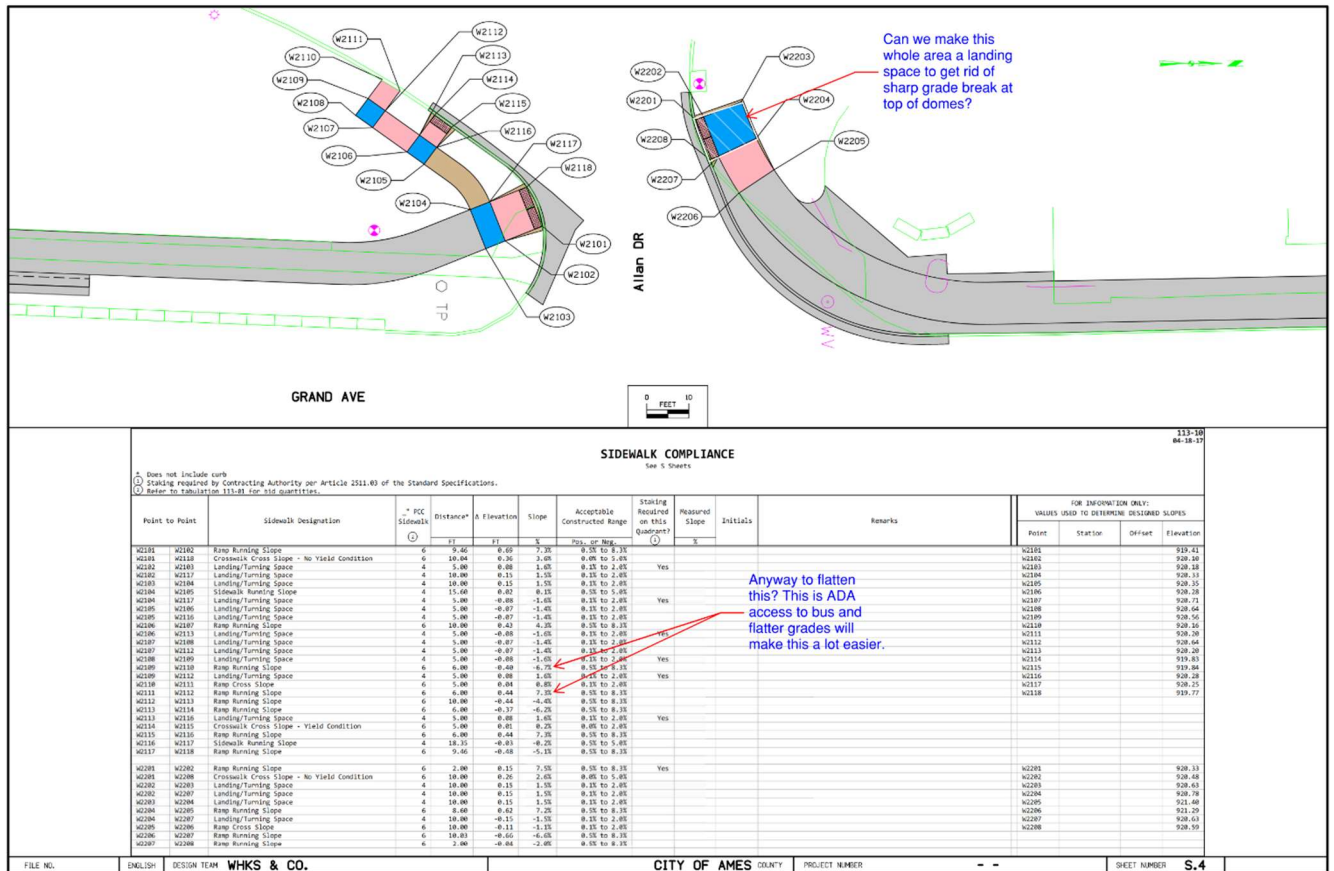
Mark, a couple questions.

When you write "was determined that the road connection is too significant and routing everyone to 6th Street would be too impactful" I am wondering;

1. Who determined that? (city staff or consultant)
2. What was used to determine the impact? (Were cars counted? Businesses surveyed?)

On Tue, Jan 13, 2026, 10:17 AM Gansen, Mark <Mark.Gansen@cityofames.org> wrote:
Hi Carol,

Here is the current design sheet that has some comments I made for our design consultant:



515.239.5160 main
515.239.5404 fax
mark.gansen@cityofames.org
Mailing: 515 Clark Ave. | Ames, IA 50010

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From: Carol Williams <carolbwilliams@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 13, 2026 9:11 AM
To: Gansen, Mark <Mark.Gansen@cityofames.org>; Pregitzer, Damion <Damion.Pregitzer@cityofames.org>
Cc: bernard@alderan.cz; veblumen@gmail.com; leopold.ecology@gmail.com; jeremyrwithers@gmail.com; Steven Libbey <slibbey@netins.net>; Grant Olsen <radioemergency@gmail.com>
Subject: Grand Shared Use Path

[External Email]

Good Morning and Happy New Year,

I am wondering if there are plans drawn for the Grand Avenue shared use path from Lincolnway to 6th? Specifically, the area at Grand, Allen, and Fifth Street?

If so, would it be possible to share?

Thanks,

Carol Williams
[628 8th Street, Ames](#)
515-520-7197
Carol Williams
628 8th Street, Ames, Iowa 50010
515-520-7197

Justin A. Clausen, PE, CPWP-M
Director of Public Works
515 Clark Ave | Ames, IA 50010



515.239.5165 office

justin.clausen@cityofames.org

www.CityofAmes.org

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MEMO

To: Mayor and City Council
From: Justin Clausen, PE, Public Works Director
Date: August 25, 2026
Subject: Lincoln Way Corridor Study Expansion

BACKGROUND:

At the June 23, 2026, City Council meeting, a request was made by Mayor Haila to explore the possibility of expanding the Lincoln Way Corridor study to include the area between Grand Avenue and University Boulevard. This request was in response to a staff presentation following a fatal pedestrian crash at Lincoln Way and South Russell.

EXISTING STUDY:

The existing study includes the Lincoln Way corridor from Grand Avenue to Duff Avenue. This study was approved by the City Council on June 23, 2026 in the amount of \$125,000. The funding included a combination of Ames Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (AAMPO) federal planning funds and a local match of Road-Use Tax funding. Because this project included those federal planning funds, a rigid federal procurement process was utilized to select a consultant for the work.

ADDITIONAL STUDY AREA:

A quote to add the corridor from Grand Avenue to University Boulevard is expected to cost \$116,500. Because of the federal procurement processes, staff does not believe the additional area can be added to the existing study and instead a separate agreement would be necessary. Staff would support utilizing the same consultant so that coordination of the work would be simpler and provide more consistent analysis and results. This study would also include a review of lighting standards as requested by the City Council. Funding for the study is identified in the available balance of the Accessibility Enhancements Program in the CIP.

STAFF COMMENTS:

If the City Council desires to move forward with the additional study area, staff recommends placing this item on a future agenda to consider a professional service agreement for the additional study of Lincoln Way from Grand Avenue to University Boulevard.



Caring People ♦ Quality Programs ♦ Exceptional Service

MEMO

To: Mayor and Council Members
From: Justin Clausen, Public Works Director
Date: August 25, 2026
Subject: Request from Steve Bock - 203 Campus Avenue Sewer Claim

At the August 11, 2026 City Council meeting, the City Council referred a request from Steve Bock to staff for a memo (Attachment 1). The request relates to a property owned by Mr. Bock at 203 Campus Avenue, which experienced a sanitary sewer backup in 2024. Mr. Bock is requesting reimbursement for his expenses relating to the backup, which total \$9,422.12.

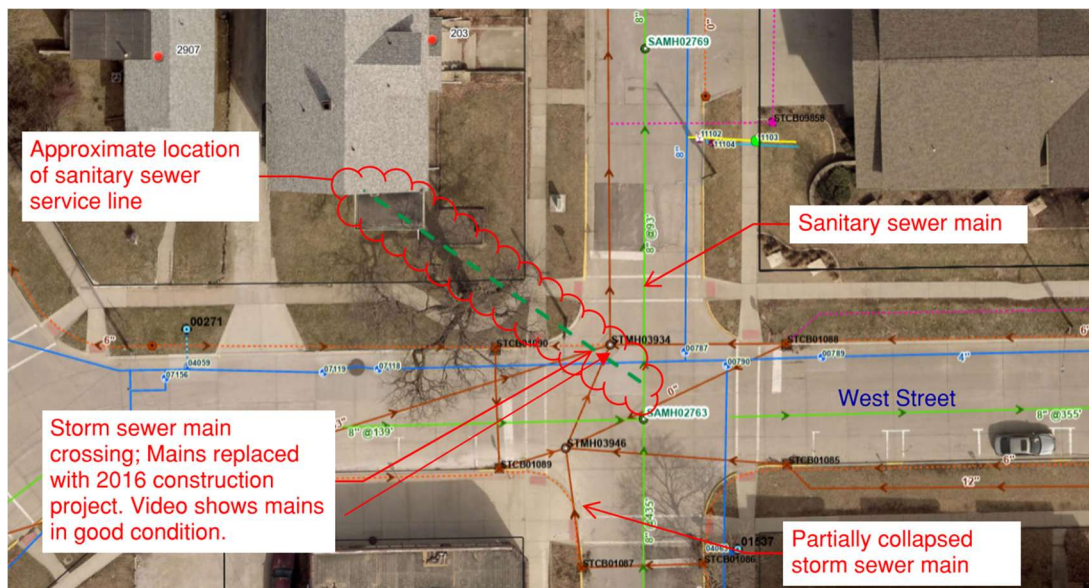
BACKGROUND:

The property at 203 Campus Avenue has a sanitary sewer service line that extends from the south side of the property to the southeast, where it connects to a north/south sanitary sewer main in the intersection of West Street and Campus Avenue. Approximately 10-15 feet before the service lateral empties into the sanitary sewer main, it crosses above two storm sewer mains (see site sketch on following page).

City records indicate the service line is made of clay tile and is original to the 1920 construction of the building. In 1980, a broken portion of the service line was replaced with cast iron and connected with neoprene couplers. Throughout the City, service laterals are the property of the customer rather than the utility's responsibility to own and maintain.

In 2016, the City contracted with Con-Struct to complete a project on West Street to replace utility lines and street pavement, including replacing the storm sewer mains that cross under 203 Campus Avenue's sanitary service line. City staff does not have any record that describes the repair by Con-Struct to the 203 Campus Avenue service lateral during that project. No record of a replaced service lateral exists in the as-built drawings for the 2016 project.

Site sketch.



Solid green lines – Sanitary sewer mains

Dashed green line – 203 Campus Ave. sanitary sewer service lateral

Brown lines – Storm sewer mains

In 2024, a sanitary sewer backup occurred at 203 Campus Ave. Mr. Bock hired Drintech to investigate the issue. Dye testing was also performed, which resulted in dye entering the storm sewer system and appearing in a nearby creek. Drintech televised a nearby storm sewer main and determined the storm sewer had collapsed, and that this collapse was related to the damaged sanitary lateral.

Drintech contacted Public Works Operations staff about the concern of a collapsed storm sewer. **Operations staff televised the same lines to determine the cause of the issue and found no damaged storm sewer pipe in the vicinity of the sanitary lateral.** Staff presented this information to Drintech, who excavated the sanitary lateral and made repairs.

The original contractor hired to patch the street was unable to complete the patching until a later time, which would have affected traffic during an ISU home football game weekend. This delay was not known until the excavation had already begun. To expedite the repair, Public Works staff participated in the replacement of the street pavement at no cost to Mr. Bock instead.

Mr. Bock ultimately filed a claim with the City for the backup, which was turned over to ICAP to investigate. In January 2026, ICAP denied the claim under the rationale that Iowa law provides immunity for claims against cities on the basis of alleged negligent design, specification, or construction of a public improvement.

STAFF INVESTIGATION:

Following the denial by ICAP, Mr. Bock requested that the City staff reconsider the decision and pay the claim. In June, the City Attorney reviewed ICAP's decision and agreed with the conclusion that under Iowa law, the City is not liable for the claim. Staff further investigated the situation to determine whether there was evidence of a failure of City infrastructure that would have caused the damage, regardless of the City's legal exemption from liability.

Shortly after the failure of the sanitary service line and Drintech's televising of the storm sewer main in 2024, City staff televised three storm sewer mains: the two storm sewer mains that cross the sanitary sewer service and the storm sewer main heading the opposite direction from the sanitary sewer service line (intersecting at manhole STMH03946 on the site sketch above).

Mr. Bock contacted Public Works prior to initiating a claim with the City in June 2025 alleging that the collapsed storm sewer had caused the damage. City staff again televised the storm sewer segments to ensure that decisions were made based on the most accurate information. **The storm sewer pipe was found to still be in good condition consistent with the 2024 televising information.**

Although Drintech's televising concluded that one of the storm sewer mains that cross the sanitary service lateral had collapsed, City staff's televising showed: 1) those two storm sewer mains to be in good condition, and 2) the storm sewer main heading the opposite direction of the sanitary sewer service line had collapsed instead and was at least 50 feet away in a different storm sewer pipe. Staff's conclusion from this result is that Drintech's video of a collapsed storm sewer main must have been of an older line that travels in a different direction and does not cross the 203 Campus Avenue sanitary sewer lateral.

Images from the storm sewer line televising performed by City staff showing the pipe in good condition where they cross under the sanitary lateral are below:



August 2024 storm sewer condition



June 2025 storm sewer condition

Based on this information, staff did not believe there was a failure of City infrastructure that would allow staff to authorize payment of Mr. Bock's claim. Staff provided this explanation to Mr. Bock on June 17, along with an invitation to contact the City Council if he wished to appeal further (Attachment 2).

Mr. Bock responded and contended that the dye testing indicated a connection between the storm sewer main and the failed sanitary sewer service (Attachment 3). Mr. Bock also maintained that the service lateral had worked properly for decades and had failed as a result of the City's contractor's work in 2016.

Staff reviewed these claims and provided a response to those two issues (Attachment 4). First, regarding the dye testing, staff responded that the sanitary service line is above the two storm sewer mains. The storm sewer piping is not sealed but is instead designed with joints and openings that are intended to allow for infiltration of groundwater adjacent to the pipe. These include holes directly on the top of the pipe segments (pick holes) that allow each segment to be lifted into place. These openings would easily allow dye from a broken sanitary sewer service line to infiltrate the storm sewer system and appear in the creek.

Regarding the allegation that the 2016 work caused damage, City staff explained that in its experience, an improper connection or repair to a sanitary service line that took place in 2016 would become apparent immediately, rather

than functioning properly for a decade before failing. Based on these facts, staff again explained that the claim could not be approved at the staff level, and that the decision to deny could be appealed to the City Council.

NEXT STEPS:

The City Council may choose to place this item on a future agenda for discussion. The City Council may then consider whether to approve payment of Mr. Bock's claim. Any payment would need to be accompanied by a waiver releasing the City from liability for any future claims that may arise relating to this matter.

ATTACHMENT 1

Phillips, Brian

From: Steve Bock <steve@bockrealestate.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 5, 2026 2:51 PM
To: City Council and Mayor; Walton, Bill; Clausen, Justin; Phillips, Brian
Subject: Brian Phillips-Bill Walton & Justin Clausen

[External Email]

Dear Ames City Council,

I have been advised to appeal to the City Council regarding an ongoing payment request from the city concerning a sewer break in the middle of the street. This occurred after previous construction work was completed, and the city-hired contractor incorrectly redid my sewer line causing backups in my building requiring me to open the street to fix their work. I would like to appeal at the city council meeting before taking legal action. Below is the attached email states they cannot approve my request and outlines the next step. I will need to make sure I can get my contractor there as well to present our situation to you. Please let me know a couple of times that would work for the city council to hear the situation.

Phillips, Brian

to me, Justin, Bill



Mr. Bock,

City staff is not able to approve the payment you are requesting. If you would like to appeal to the City Council, you are welcome to do so. They would have the final say as to whether a payment would be made. You can email the City Council as a group at mayorcouncil@cityofames.org.

Brian

Brian Phillips

Assistant City Manager

City of Ames, Iowa

brian.phillips@cityofames.org | www.CityOfAmes.org

515.239.5203 | City Hall, 515 Clark Ave. | Ames, IA 50010

Thank you in advance for your time to hear this situation and determine how to make me whole as your city staff have been unable to resolve this.

Sincerely,
Steve Bock
Owner of 203 Campus Ave. apartments
Ames Campus Rentals

ATTACHMENT 2

Phillips, Brian

From: Phillips, Brian
Sent: Wednesday, June 17, 2026 5:27 PM
To: Steve Bock
Cc: Clausen, Justin; Walton, Bill
Subject: RE: 203 Campus

Mr. Bock,

Let me first express my regret that this situation has carried on so long. I am sure that has been challenging and frustrating for you, and by no means has it been our intent to prolong this matter.

I have had some time to review this situation with the City's engineering and legal staff. Normally we turn a matter such as this over to ICAP, as was the case here. I understand ICAP has denied the claim based on immunity for cities for construction liability and negligent design. We have asked the City Attorney to review that decision, and there is no legal basis to disagree with ICAP's determination.

That answer, though, does not get at the root cause of the sewer backup and whether these issues truly were caused by the City's infrastructure, regardless of what the law says about liability. So, I have consulted with the Public Works staff about the sanitary and storm sewer systems near the property and the contention that they would be the cause of the service line failure.

I understand that there are two storm sewer lines that were installed around 2016 that cross the sanitary sewer service line for the property. I understand that when your service line began to fail, a contractor televised a storm sewer main and concluded that it had collapsed, impacting the sewer service line. However, our staff reports that they televised the two storm sewer lines that cross your service lateral shortly thereafter and found them in good condition. The staff believes your contractor televised the incorrect storm sewer line, which is an old line that travels in a different direction and does not cross your sewer service.

Based on this information, the staff is not in a position to authorize a payment of your claim. However, the final decisionmaker is the City Council. If you would like, you are welcome to contact the Council and ask them to reverse course and authorize payment of your claim. You can email the entire Council as a group at mayorcouncil@cityofames.org.

If you have any questions about the process to have City Council consider this issue, please don't hesitate to let me know.

Brian

Brian Phillips

Assistant City Manager

City of Ames, Iowa

brian.phillips@cityofames.org | www.CityOfAmes.org

515.239.5203 | City Hall, 515 Clark Ave. | Ames, IA 50010

ATTACHMENT 3

Phillips, Brian

From: Steve Bock <steve@bockrealestate.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 18, 2026 11:21 AM
To: Phillips, Brian
Cc: Clausen, Justin; Walton, Bill
Subject: Re: 203 Campus

You don't often get email from steve@bockrealestate.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

[External Email]

All,

Please stop dodging the issue and trying to pass this off to someone else, thinking I will go away. I am not going away because you scoped the line. You say the wrong line was televised, really. Can you explain why the dye added to my sanitary sewer by your city employees appeared in your storm sewer? The DNR was called the next day by a concerned citizen because the creek was bright green from your perfectly good storm sewer. Can you explain why your perfect storm sewer was taking in all my raw sewage at the construction site where you replaced my sewer line? The collapsed line next to it was taking all my building's raw sewage to the creek below, right at the site where my sewer line was replaced. Yes, did the exact location where your construction replaced my line—which had worked correctly for decades—now have sewage running into your storm sewer exactly where the line replacement took place? Can you explain why the contractor replaced my sewer line when we opened the street and the issue was with that line? Also, explain how my sewer line, which had no issues for decades, now has a failure after you replaced it. This had no connection to the issue because you scoped it. Stop with the run around.

This is the last time I am asking you to settle this with payment.

I am not threatening you but I really feel I've gone way beyond the painstaking, mentally draining and distressing months of back and forth and am ready to turn to legal counsel for all the above. I know that if I don't pay my taxes or city bills, I incur service fees, which should be added to the cost I have had dealing with this. I am having a hard time facing people who did the work; they were friends, but now they won't communicate or do business because the city won't pay for the cost of the issue they caused. I am no longer able to carry the weight this big brother leaning on me and telling me to go away. Hate when my tax dollars goes to beating me up!

Sincerely,

Steve



ATTACHMENT 4

Phillips, Brian

From: Phillips, Brian
Sent: Friday, June 19, 2026 12:11 PM
To: 'Steve Bock'
Cc: Clausen, Justin; Walton, Bill
Subject: RE: 203 Campus

Mr. Bock,

I appreciate your frustration with the situation and hope I can provide an explanation that clarifies things. I have discussed your most recent email with the engineering staff in Public Works.

Regarding the dye in the storm sewer system – The sanitary service line sits above the two storm sewer mains that it crosses. The storm sewer piping is designed with joints and openings, including directly on the top of each pipe segment to allow them to be lifted into place. This would allow the dye from a broken sanitary service line to infiltrate into the storm sewer, and subsequently into the creek, very easily.

The video of the two storm sewer mains that cross the sanitary service line shows them to be not collapsed or damaged in a way that would have any impact on your sanitary sewer service line at that location. The video of the storm sewer main going the opposite direction from your service line shows that storm sewer main to be partially collapsed, which we believe is the main televised by your contractor. The partially collapsed main does not cross your service line and is on the opposite side of West Street from your property, which indicates to City staff that it is unrelated to the issue at hand. Repairs on that main are planned for a later date. A diagram has been provided below that indicates the relationship of these mains to your service line.

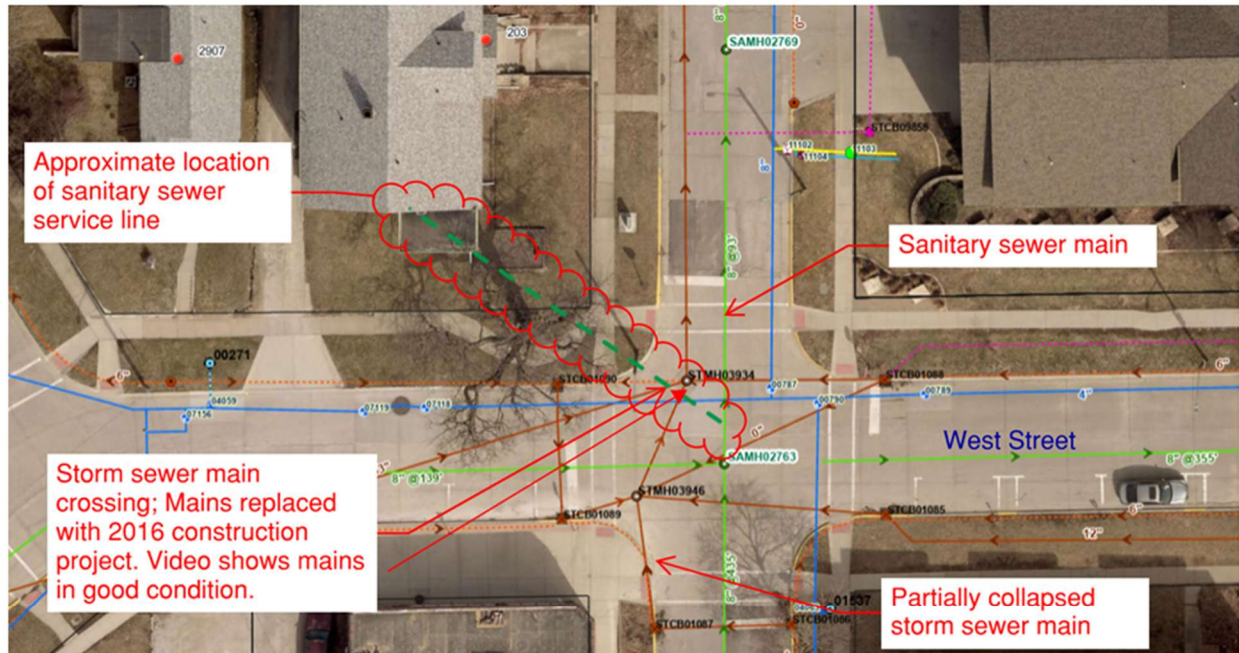
Regarding your sanitary sewer service line, in 2016, when the project occurred on West Street to replace the storm sewer and the street, we do not have documentation about any replacement of the sanitary sewer service. It is not indicated as modified on the as-built drawings completed by the contractor at that time.

Nonetheless, assuming a segment of it was replaced, I understand it did not have performance issues until nearly a decade later. In our staff's experience, some kind of an improper connection to the main or improper repair to a line would present issues that would be apparent immediately rather than functioning properly for several years before failing. Therefore, we do not believe the failure of the service line is related to the 2016 project.

Our records indicate that the sanitary service line was a clay tile line original to the 1920 construction of the building, and that a broken portion of it was replaced with cast iron and connected back together with neoprene couplers in 1980. City staff believes the age and condition of this line may have been contributing factors to its failure.

For these reasons, we as City staff are not able to authorize a payment for your costs. If you would like to contact the Mayor and City Council to request that they overturn that decision and approve a payment, I would invite you to email mayorcouncil@cityofames.org to do so.

Brian



Brian Phillips

Assistant City Manager

City of Ames, Iowa

brian.phillips@cityofames.org | www.CityOfAmes.org

515.239.5203 | City Hall, 515 Clark Ave. | Ames, IA 50010



MEMO

To: Mayor and City Council
From: Justin Clausen, PE, Public Works Director
Date: August 25, 2026
Subject: Street Parking Concerns along Stonehaven Drive

BACKGROUND:

At the July 28, 2026, City Council meeting, the Council referred to staff a request from Craig Sackett regarding street parking concerns along Stonehaven Drive.

The request described concerns regarding safely navigating the curve along Stonehaven Drive and a request to further restrict on-street parking along the outside curbline of the curve.

CURRENT ON-STREET PARKING REGULATIONS:

Parking restrictions currently exist along the north and west sides of Stonehaven Drive as noted in Municipal Code section 18.31. With these restrictions, parking is prohibited along the inside radius of the curve, which is consistent with standard practice for restricting parking along curved streets. "No parking" signs are clearly visible on the inside part of the curve.

Additionally, staff is authorized to install yellow paint on the curb up to five additional feet from any driveway to assist users of those driveways with ingress and egress. The outside portion of the curve also contains driveways on either end of the curve. These driveways contain yellow paint on either side, further restricting on-street parking in the area.

SAFETY ANALYSIS:

Staff pulled data from the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) Crash Analysis Tool to further determine whether the crash history indicates a safety concern associated with the curve. **The data identified three property-damage-only crashes during the past ten years. All three occurred west of the curve and do not indicate a crash pattern associated with the area identified in the resident's request.**

Staff also visited the area following the request to ascertain if any other sight triangle issues or safety concerns exist that were not readily apparent. Staff did not identify any additional concerns in the area.

STAFF COMMENTS:

The existing parking restrictions are in alignment with the Municipal Code, standard industry practices, and have been augmented by the painted yellow curb on the outside portion of the curve. A crash history review and a site visibility review did not reveal any additional safety concerns.

The City Council may direct staff to add additional on-street parking restrictions on the outside of the curve as requested by the requestor. This would require modifications to the parking restrictions contained in section 18.31 of the Municipal Code and would likely require yellow curb markings to delineate the restricted area.

Typically, the first step when considering additional on-street parking restrictions is to survey surrounding residents to gauge neighborhood support for the proposed change before preparing an ordinance to modify the parking restriction.

The image below shows the details of the existing parking restrictions and the request.





MEMO

To: Mayor and City Council
From: Justin Clausen, PE, Director of Public Works
Date: August 25, 2026
Subject: Parking Meter Enforcement Hours

BACKGROUND:

At the March 24, 2026, City Council meeting, the Council referred to staff a request from Patty Yoder, Executive Director of Food at First, regarding downtown parking meter enforcement near First Christian Church.

The request described parking challenges experienced by Food At First clients and volunteers particularly in Lot N (west of First Christian Church, north of City Hall) during food distribution periods and requested consideration of modifying the current parking meter enforcement hours.

PARKING METER REGULATIONS:

Parking meter regulations are defined in the Municipal Code. Section 18.4 of the Municipal Code establishes parking meter enforcement hours applicable to Lot N as 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday, except City holidays or as otherwise provided.

STAFF COMMENTS:

Parking meter hours and regulations are intended to remain consistent throughout the downtown parking system, providing users with predictable expectations regardless of where they park.

The Council could choose to modify parking meter hours by directing staff to bring back a modification to the Municipal Code for the Council's consideration. The change could be systemwide or lot-by-lot. A systemwide approach would continue to provide uniformity and predictability across the downtown parking area. A lot-by-lot approach would create different operating rules depending upon where a vehicle is parked and could increase user confusion and enforcement complexity.

The impact of any timing change should be considered in the context of how the metered parking is intended to provide turnover for business patrons and service

providers across the system. Additionally, any change would also result in additional operational expenses due to the need to update parking signage and rate plates inside of several hundred meters themselves plus the potential for loss of revenue. While these changes may solve the immediate issue, they could potentially lead to other, unintended issues.

The Council could alternatively direct staff to evaluate a permit or temporary hangtag program for Food at First users. Such a program would require additional development regarding eligibility, administration, permitted locations and times, enforcement, and safeguards against misuse.

Alternatively, enforcement could be modified on a complaint basis only. This solution presents challenges in the context of equitable enforcement and the potential for appeals in other park enforcement circumstances.

While staff recognizes the difficulties described in the letter, small changes in the parking system regulations can have significant impacts particularly in the context of user expectations, enforcement, and expenses and revenues. It is typically recommended that the parking system regulations be as standardized as possible for users. Staff would recommend any changes that are considered remain as consistent as possible for all users.

To: Mayor and Ames City Council

From: Justin Clausen, PE, Public Works Director

Date: August 25, 2026

Subject: Pedestrian Safety at Gray Avenue and Sunset Drive

BACKGROUND:

At the April 28, 2026 City Council Meeting, the Council referred to staff a request from Claire Hosch for review of pedestrian and driver safety conditions at Gray Avenue and Sunset Drive.

The intersections in question are located south of Lincoln Way adjacent to high density college fraternity/sorority housing. Gray Avenue and Sunset Drive have a curving roadway geometry and the existing pedestrian crossings do not meet current standards for crossing location or Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) slope and elevation requirements.

Over the past ten years (2016-2026) there have been five crashes reported to the Iowa Department of Transportation's (DOT) Crash Analysis Tool database. The crash data does not indicate a common crash pattern or an increasing trend in reported crashes. Additionally, no pedestrian-involved crashes were reported during this period.

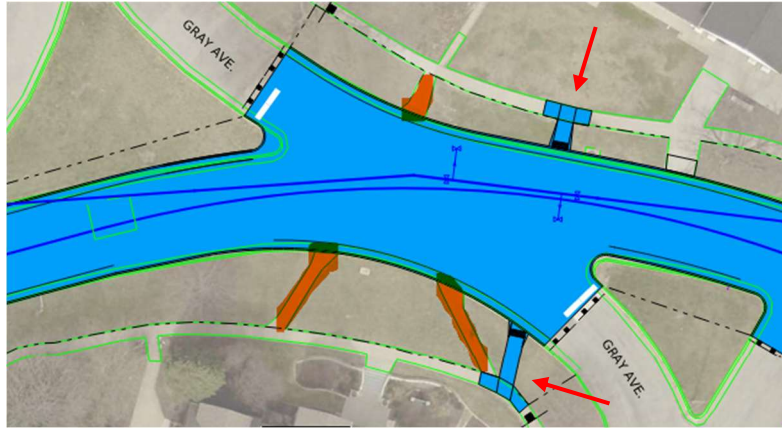
CITY RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT:

The timing of the request coincides with a reconstruction project on Sunset Drive adjacent to Gray Avenue that began in May 2026 and is anticipated to be completed in fall 2026. This reconstruction is intended to upgrade underground utility infrastructure, reconstruct the street pavement, and upgrade pedestrian crossings, bringing them up to current standards.

While the curving geometry of the roadway will remain, the project design already included modifications to the pedestrian ramp locations prior to receipt of this request, including the crossing along Sunset Drive near Gray Avenue identified by Ms. Hosch.

Pedestrian crossings and associated curb ramps are subject to specific ADA requirements related to slope, elevation, and alignment. **The crossing is being relocated further east to meet those requirements, improve visibility, and place it closer to the eastern stop-controlled intersection at Gray Avenue. Additionally, this will help improve the visibility of the crossing and align it closer with the eastern stop-controlled intersection at Gray Avenue as shown in Image 1 below.**

Image 1:



Existing pedestrian crossings are shown in orange. Relocated pedestrian crossing locations are shown in blue and identified with red arrows.

STAFF COMMENTS:

The reconstruction project currently underway is already designed to address concerns noted in the referral to staff from City Council. Staff recommends completing the improvements currently under construction and evaluating their effectiveness before considering additional modifications at this location.



MEMO

To: Mayor and City Council
From: Justin Clausen, PE, Public Works Director
Date: August 14, 2026
Subject: North-South Railroad Quiet Zone

BACKGROUND:

At the August 25, 2026, City Council meeting, the Council referred to staff a request from Scott Ripperger regarding a desire to silence the train whistles on the north-south railroad line in Ames similar to the east-west railroad line.

QUIET ZONE DESIGNATION:

The east-west rail line is owned and operated by the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) company and facilitates over 40 trains per day. This rail line is a primary east-west transportation route across the United States for the UPRR.

The City worked with UPRR in the early 2000s to establish the existing east-west Quiet Zone. That system utilizes supplemental safety improvements and wayside horns at individual crossings rather than relying solely on locomotive-mounted horns. The Quiet Zone was put into practice in 2010 following several years of study, funding, and infrastructure improvements at crossings.

The Quiet Zone does not completely eliminate the use of the horns as the locomotive engineer still has discretion in terms of emergency or safety to utilize the locomotive horns to warn those in the area.

NORTH-SOUTH RAIL LINE

The north-south rail is also owned by and operated by the UPRR, however, this line experiences on average fewer than four trains per day. This line primarily serves an agricultural hub north of Ames and the number and frequency of trains tends to vary with agricultural seasons.

To establish a Quiet Zone, the City would be required to demonstrate compliance with Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) safety requirements. The FRA evaluates the risk associated with each crossing and the corridor as a whole. Supplemental safety

measures, such as raised medians or four-quadrant gate systems, may be necessary to sufficiently reduce risk when routine locomotive horn sounding is eliminated.

There are six (6) crossings within the City along the north-south rail line. The table below indicates the crossing locations, major challenges, potential solutions, and a planning level cost estimate for the necessary improvement:

Crossing Location	Challenges	Solution	Planning Level Estimate
9 th Street	Adjacent streets too close	Four-Quadrant Gate	\$1,000,000
13 th Street	Multi lane street	Four-Quadrant Gate	\$1,000,000
16 th Street	Adjacent streets too close	Four-Quadrant Gate	\$1,000,000
20 th Street	Adjacent streets too close	Four-Quadrant Gate	\$1,000,000
24 th Street	Multi lane street	Four-Quadrant Gate	\$1,000,000
Bloomington Road	Multi lane street but the median helps	Median Improvements	\$250,000
TOTAL			\$5,250,000

Several crossings have adjacent intersections or driveways located too close to the railroad tracks to accommodate lower-cost treatments such as raised medians. Other crossings involve multilane streets where more extensive protection, such as four-quadrant gates, would likely be necessary.

It is difficult to estimate costs for installation of four-quadrant gates. However, several projects across the Midwest from the early 2020s saw prices around \$700,000 for each four-quadrant gate. Therefore, the estimates above provide an order of magnitude which Council may consider for the project. **Actual costs will depend on site-specific railroad design.**

STAFF COMMENTS:

In the early 2000s, when the east-west rail line Quiet Zone project was implemented, the north-south rail line was also considered for a Quiet Zone. However, there was no direction to move forward with the north-south line due to high implementation costs.

As the table above indicates, cost remains a significant factor in order to implement a Quiet Zone. While FRA grants exist to help with some of the costs, those grants are competitive and are often awarded to projects that close a crossing or provide a grade separation to eliminate any interaction between the modes of transportation. **The grants often have a local match as well and have traditionally been an 80/20 split meaning for a \$5,250,000 project, the City would need to fund 20% of the cost, or \$1,050,000.**

Should the City Council desire to explore a north-south Quiet Zone in more detail, it would be appropriate to retain a consultant to study the corridor in more detail and produce a more detailed preliminary design and cost estimate. Staff anticipates a study would likely cost several hundred thousand dollars to implement and coordinate with the UPRR. Funding would need to be identified or prioritized from existing programs in order to study the area.



Department of Planning & Housing

Memo

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Kelly Diekmann, Planning and Housing Director

DATE: August 21th, 2026

SUBJECT: Request to Consider Annexation of a Manatts laydown area south of HWY 30 at the Dayton Interchange (1901 S Dayton)

Council received a letter from representatives of Manatts dated June 29th requesting the City Council consider annexation of their property to continue with use of the property as a laydown yard (See attached). The site abuts the City to the north and is accessed from South Dayton (see location map).

The request was in response to a 2025 rezoning request to Story County to change zoning for the site to allow permanent industrial use of a laydown area instead of its use as temporary use. The temporary use approval has expired by County standards and Manatts needed to either discontinue the use or receive a zone change to industrial to make the use permanent.

The City of Ames provided comments to the Board of Supervisors noting the site abutted the City and that joint planning of the area for annexation was part of the County's Comprehensive Plan when new development is proposed. **The intent of the City comments regarding the rezoning was to fulfill the vision for this area as a gateway to the City and have the area developed with commercial uses rather than industrial.** As a result, the Supervisors deferred a final decision on the rezoning request until Manatts had approached the City about a timeline for being annexed to the City, either immediately or at deferred date.

Manatts indicates that their desire is to continue with industrial use on the site indefinitely and they have no plans for commercial. Manatts finds the laydown area beneficial to their operations in relation to the quarry to the east, which has many years of permitted use remaining. Long term, Story County and the City believe that the quarry area may become public open space administered by Story County Conservation when the mining operations ceases.

The purpose of annexation for Manatts is to ensure that the use would be approved since they do not know if the County would approve the use indefinitely if there is no

plan for annexation. If no agreement on annexation is reached with the City, staff does not know how the Supervisors would proceed regarding their rezoning request to the County.

OPTIONS

Option 1-

Take no action on the landowner's request to initiate an annexation. If the City has no interest in the request the applicant can then proceed with their rezoning request to Story County.

Option 2-

Direct staff to evaluate options and consult with Manatts regarding conditions related to annexation that may be beneficial to the City and still allow for the continued use of the property as laydown area. This option could result in a minimum taxable valuation or payment in lieu of taxes, use restrictions, site enhancements for landscaping and buffering, and/or a sunset date to discontinue use. Staff would then provide a report to Council to determine whether to initiate an annexation with or without any specific conditions for a pre-annexation agreement.

Option 3-

Place the item on a future agenda for discussion regarding annexation as requested by Manatts.

STAFF COMMENTS

Establishment of the use as a laydown yard was considered temporary by Story County at the time it was approved in support of local road projects. The site is partially in the flood plain with a limited area of approximately 10 acres used for the laydown yard. The laydown yard is used for storage of materials and for temporary batch plant operations. No permanent facility is planned.

The City has long held an interest in improving the image of the community at this southwest gateway. Development north of the Hwy 30 has fulfilled this vision over the past 15 years. Development opportunities to the south have been more limited and the former Cyclone Truck stop site that is vacant has not been commercially redeveloped. The sites to the south of Highway 30 have reasonably good visibility and regional access, but do not currently have momentum to transition to commercial development with the surrounding quarry, laydown yard, and vehicle storage/repair facility.

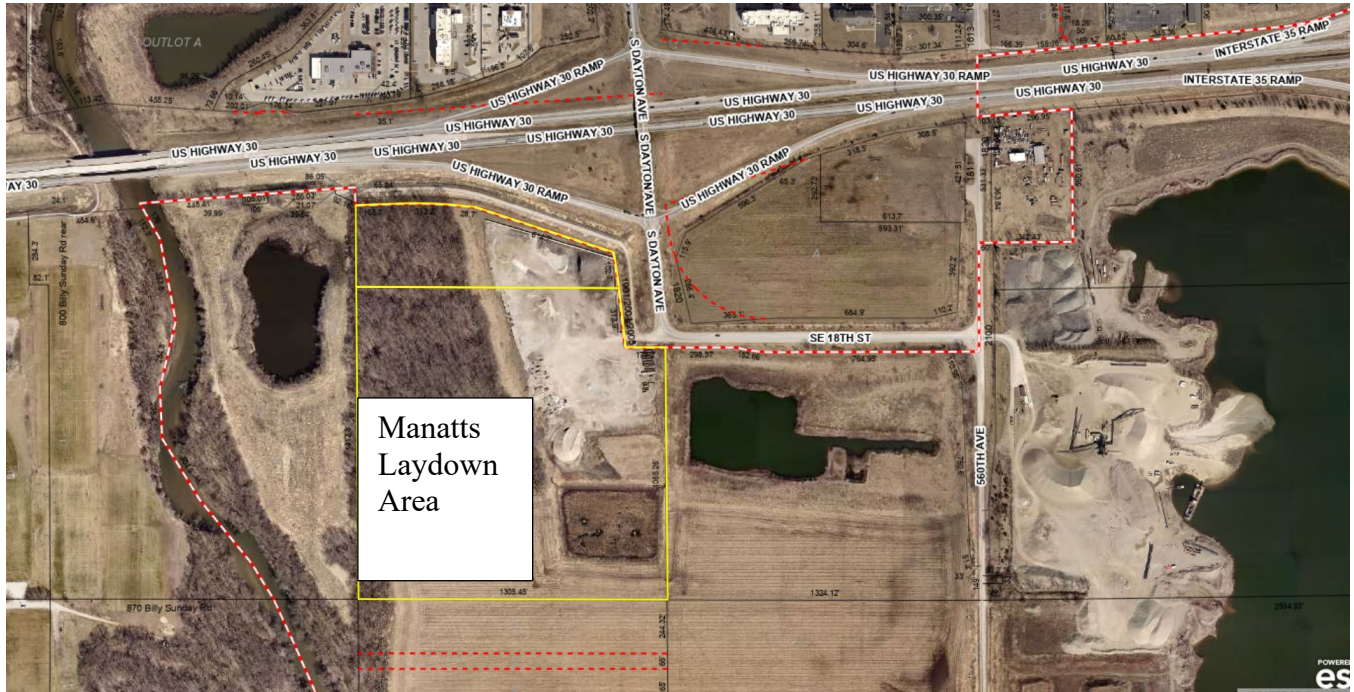
Ultimately, if Council agrees to annexation with no limits on future use, the area would likely need a comprehensive plan amendment to industrial/employment to acknowledge the use pattern of the area.

It should be noted that the owner of the former truck stop property has previously urged that the Manatts site revert to open space and not a laydown yard to help market the site for

commercial. **They recently indicated that if Manatts continues with industrial use they feel that industrial zoning would be the best use for their site as well.**

At this time staff believes that Option 2 is worth investigating over the next few months to determined what is in the best interest of the City.

Location Map



Hall, Renee

To: Hall, Renee
Subject: FW: Non-agenda Communication - FW: Annexation of 1901 South Dayton Avenue

From: Joel Mills <joelm@manatts.com>
Sent: Monday, June 29, 2026 1:46 PM
To: Diekmann, Kelly <kelly.diekmann@cityofames.org>
Cc: Chris Sawin <chriss@manatts.com>; Mona Bond <monabond51@gmail.com>
Subject: Annexation of 1901 South Dayton Avenue

[External Email]

Mr. Kelly Diekmann,

Please accept this email and provide it to Ames City Council for their review of our annexation proposal.

Manatts has operated a laydown yard at 1901 South Dayton Avenue for approximately the past decade. We respectfully request that the Ames City Council approve the annexation of this property, currently located in Story County, into the City of Ames and designate it as industrial zoning.

This site enables Manatts to efficiently deploy portable asphalt and/or concrete production equipment. The use of portable equipment at this location allows us to take full advantage of nearby natural resources, including the Manatts-owned quarry to the east, which is operated by Hallett Materials. Utilizing this yard for portable equipment reduces the need to transport materials over long distances, improving efficiency and helping control costs.

We recognize that this annexation request represents a departure from the Ames Plan 2040. However, it is important to note that the 1901 South Dayton Avenue site is identified in the Ames Plan 2040 “Existing Land Use, 2019” map as industrial. We believe it is appropriate to reconsider the future land use designation for areas south of Highway 30, given the long-standing industrial activity and available natural resources in this corridor.

Currently, the Ames Future Land Use Map designates this property and surrounding areas as general commercial and notes the adjacent quarry to the southeast. We respectfully request that this designation be reevaluated by Ames City Council. Considering the quarry has an anticipated lifespan of another 50+ years and the area’s consistent industrial use, it would be more appropriate to maintain general commercial development north of Highway 30.

The 1901 South Dayton Avenue site allows Manatts to meet local infrastructure needs by utilizing locally sourced materials, significantly reducing costs compared to transporting rock, concrete, or asphalt from more distant locations. Manatts does not intend to construct permanent vertical structures at this site. Instead, operations will continue using portable equipment, with stockpiles of recycled asphalt, aggregate, and sand maintained year-round to support rapid production without delays associated with material delivery.

Manatts has worked closely with Story County Conservation regarding the western portion of the property. The existing timbered area will be preserved and designated within the Greenbelt District, ensuring it remains undeveloped. The current yard size is sufficient for operational needs, and there are no plans for yard expansion. Additionally, Manatts has collaborated with Story County Conservation to select appropriate shrub species for planting along the north and east sides of the existing block wall to enhance visual screening.

It is also important to note that this request is solely for annexation and does not include a request for municipal utility extensions such as sanitary sewer, storm sewer, or water service. As such, the City of Ames would not incur costs to expand infrastructure to serve this property. The Ames Plan 2040 states that “annexation of other areas may be justified due to readily available infrastructure.” We believe the improvements made to the 1901 South Dayton Avenue site over the past decade position both Manatts and the City of Ames to continue a strong partnership, enabling the efficient deployment of portable equipment and supporting cost-effective paving projects.

Thank you for your consideration.

Joel Mills

Environmental Manager

641.501.1399 cell

641.522.9206 ext. 1239

manatts.com

