# MEMO

**To:** Mayor and Ames City Council

**From:** Justin Clausen, PE, Public Works Director

**Date:** September 8, 2026

**Subject:** City of Ames Pollinator-Friendly Community Plan

**BACKGROUND:**

At the May 26, 2026 City Council meeting, the Council referred to staff a request from a resident, Lisa Kuehl, for formal adoption of the City of Ames Pollinator-Friendly Community Plan.

This plan was initially submitted to the Ames City Council in the non-agenda packet on May 23, 2023. The Council received the plan and took no additional action at that meeting.

**SUMMARY OF THE PLAN:**

The City of Ames Pollinator-Friendly Community Plan was developed in conjunction with a City of Ames partnership with Prairie Rivers of Iowa. A task force comprising City of Ames staff, community members, and Prairie Rivers of Iowa staff assisted in establishing the priorities of the plan. The plan identifies 4 main goals:

1. Create and enhance habitats that support native pollinator diversity
2. Continuously monitor pollinator abundance within the City of Ames and urban fringe area over the next 10 years.
3. Provide a healthier environment for pollinators
4. Deliver marketing to amplify awareness of the Ames Pollinator-Friendly Community Plan

Under each of these goals, there are strategies and actions identified to support the goals. Many of these actions involve the use of city staff time and/or resources in order to continually support the actions and ultimately the goals of the plan.

The plan includes volunteer committees that composed of community members. Public Works Engineering staff currently sit on those committees in an advisory capacity and work to advance the goals of the plan throughout the community on private and city-owned property.

**Additionally, the City currently provides approximately $40,000 annually to Prairie Rivers of Iowa to facilitate implementation of the Pollinator-Friendly Community Plan. This work focuses on coordination, communication, and guidance to align community efforts with the goals of the plan. Funding for this work is provided through the Storm Water Utility Fund.**

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CITY OF Ames

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**STAFF COMMENTS**

The City of Ames Pollinator-Friendly Community Plan includes a number of action items that would require policy decisions regarding the expansion and prioritization of pollinator habitat on both City-owned and private property.

**Should the City Council desire to formally adopt the City of Ames Pollinator-Friendly Community Plan, there are action steps that would require the city to commit to expansion of pollinator habitats, education, promotion, and increased partnerships with private property owners. Staff believes implementation of these action items would require additional staff time and financial resources beyond those currently committed to the program.**

Even without formal adoption, City staff continues to identify opportunities to expand pollinator habitat when those opportunities align with projects in the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) or can be incorporated into routine maintenance activities. **Staff believes this approach continues to advance the goals of the plan while balancing those goals with other infrastructure needs and available resources.**

Recent severe weather and flooding events have also created additional demands on staff resources and the Storm Water Utility Fund. As future budgets are developed, staff believes these recent stormwater infrastructure needs should be considered when determining the appropriate level of ongoing funding for implementation and facilitation of the Pollinator-Friendly Community Plan

The FY 2026/27 operating budget includes approximately $40,000 for continued facilitation of the plan. **Should the City Council decide to formally adopt the plan, staff would evaluate the additional staff and financial resources necessary to support implementation of the identified action items and incorporate those needs into the FY 2027/28 budget process for consideration.**

**Alternatively, if the City Council takes no action to formally adopt the plan, funding for facilitation of the plan would not be included in the subsequent fiscal year operating budgets. The approximately $40,000 currently dedicated to facilitation would instead be available for other Storm Water Utility priorities, including needs identified as a result of recent flooding events throughout the community.**

**City staff would continue to participate in the various planning and advisory committees and identify opportunities to advance the goals of the plan through Capital Improvements Plan projects and routine maintenance activities when appropriate. However, without continued City funding for facilitation, ongoing coordination and advancement of the plan would transition to a volunteer- and community-led effort.**

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