Comprehensive Plan: Resident Involvement Key to Success

What will Ames look like in 2040? Where will new housing and commercial areas be built? Will there be new parks or expanded trails? How will this growth affect the environment or surrounding communities? Planning for the future is always challenging, but having a common vision of community values helps community leaders make decisions when opportunities are presented.

The City of Ames is spearheading a community planning process to create a new Comprehensive Plan. The “Ames Plan 2040: Live • Grow • Belong,” is a multi-step effort that will empower residents to identify community interests and priorities related to Ames’ future and growth for the next 20 years. The new plan will articulate community interests, character, quality of life, and vision for the future. The plan is also critical for coordination of City investments in features such as parks, open space, streets, and infrastructure. Public involvement is essential to developing a representative plan of both short and long term community interests.

The new Comprehensive Plan will replace the City’s current plan adopted in 1997, known as the Land Use Policy Plan (LUPP). The LUPP had an ambitious goal to focus on land use and growth into 2030. However, Ames developed more quickly than anticipated. Some of those changes include an increase of 16,000 people, construction of 2,200 new single-family homes, expansion of CyRide, the addition of new U.S. 30 interchanges, and the development of Ada Hayden Park, Furman Aquatic Center, and an expanded Ames Public Library.

The new comprehensive plan will be developed through multiple steps including assessment of background and existing conditions, identification of growth and redevelopment scenarios, and formulation of community goals and policies. Public input will be sought during multiple stages of the Plan. Ultimately the City Council will consider input from all of these steps to adopt a new plan for the City to guide growth and change.

Community engagement will be a combination of online and in-person opportunities including surveys, commenting tools, open houses, and meetings. The best way to stay involved is to sign up for updates through the website and to follow updates online.

Get involved today through the online public engagement option at www.CityOfAmes.org/CompPlan.
Watch the Salt!
Once salt is in the environment, it doesn't go away. It ends up in our lakes, rivers, streams, and wetlands, putting our aquatic life at risk and endangering our freshwater resources.

You can keep sidewalks and driveways safe while protecting our waters by following these simple steps. First, use a shovel to clear walkways and other areas before the snow turns to ice. The more snow you remove manually, the less salt you will have to use and the more effective it will be.

Second, if you need to salt, be sure to scatter it. There should be space between the grains. Finally, when pavement temperatures drop below 15 degrees, salt won't work. Switch to sand for traction or a different chemical that works at lower temperatures.

Fire Hydrant Flushing Set for Spring
The Ames Public Works Department plans to begin flushing rust from city water mains on Wednesday, March 27, weather permitting, and continuing for approximately two weeks. Each year, this program provides Ames residents with the safest and highest quality water possible.

Flushing serves the following purposes:
- Dislodges and removes mineral deposits and sediments from the water mains
- Verifies the proper operation of fire hydrants and valves
- Helps identify weaknesses in the water system
- Checks for closed valves and weak flows in the water system

During the flushing process, Ames residents may experience rust in the water, even when crews are not working in the immediate area. To avoid rust, follow these tips:

- Turn on cold water first to check for rust. This avoids drawing it into your hot water heater.
- If the water looks rusty, run the tap for one to two minutes until it clears.
- If rust discolors clothing in a washing machine, rust remover is available at the City Hall information desk, 515 Clark Ave., Ames fire stations, the Water Treatment Plant, 1800 E. 13th St., or by calling 515.239.5550.

Specific information about the times, dates, and locations of the crews will be released to the local media prior to beginning the flushing, or you may check the City’s website at www.CityOfAmes.org.

Reserve the Block Party Trailer!
Block parties are a great opportunity for residents to interact, welcome new residents, and build neighborhood connections. The volunteers who originally organized the Street ‘N’ Greet Block Party Trailer believed that neighborhood block parties strengthen relationships within and between neighborhoods and help Ames be a more welcoming and inclusive community.

The Street ‘N’ Greet Block Party Trailer makes having a block party convenient and easy. The trailer is available free of charge to Ames residents. Inside the trailer you’ll find street barricades, folding tables and chairs, canopy tent, portable lighting, a sound system, outdoor games and activities for children and adults, and more.

The trailer is available for weekend block party events from the end of March through October. Each weekend the trailer is available for two events: Fridays (5 to 9 p.m.) or Saturdays and Sundays (10 a.m. to 9 p.m.).

Beginning Monday, March 11, submit an online reservation request to schedule the trailer at www.CityOfAmes.org/trailer. City staff will contact you regarding the requested date and event details for your block party. Please contact the Parks and Recreation Department at 515.239.5341 with questions.
Project Share Provides Assistance To Residents Who Need Help

The Ames Electric Services Project Share program continues to be a success because of the compassion and generosity of our customers. This winter season, through January 15, 2019, we have been able to provide $10,020 in assistance to 77 households. A simple way to share the warmth with those in need is to make a monthly pledge or a one-time contribution to Project Share.

The purpose of the Ames Electric Services Project Share program is to solicit and accept contributions which are used to assist our low-income customers. A committee appointed by the Ames City Council determines the permissible uses of the funds donated to the Project Share program. The committee has adopted guidelines to ensure that every dollar contributed is used to assist low-income customers.

All expenses incurred administering the program are covered by Ames Electric Services as a donation in-kind. Mid-Iowa Community Action (MICA) assists the City of Ames in the administration of the program by determining eligibility of applicants for Project Share funds.

Please Consider a Contribution to Project Share

I wish to make a monthly contribution to Project Share. I understand this amount will be listed on my monthly utility bill and that I can cancel my pledge at any time by contacting the City of Ames Utility Customer Service office.

$1/month  $2/month  $5/month  $10/month  other ___/month

I wish to make a one-time contribution to Project Share rather than making a monthly pledge. I have enclosed a $________ donation to Project Share.

Name: ____________________________________________________________

Address:___________________________________________________________

Please return this form with your utility bill payment or mail to: Ames Electric Services, Attn: Project Share Committee, P.O. Box 811, Ames, IA 50010-0811

Get Involved in SunSmart Ames

SunSmart Ames is a community solar project designed to generate green, renewable electricity for Ames Electric Services.

Ames Electric Services customers are able to invest in the project by buying generation units or “Power Packs.” Each Power Pack represents a one-time investment and will entitle customers to a bill credit based on the amount of energy generated by the solar array and the market price of electricity.

A Power Pack costs $333. Our goal is to have 80% of available Power Packs reserved before construction of the solar farm begins. We currently stand at 61%.

For more information visit, www.CityOfAmes.org/solar, or call the Energy Guy at 515.239.5177.
Ask the Energy Guy

Q: What are ways to reduce carbon dioxide emissions?
A: Good question, but first a bit about carbon dioxide. Carbon dioxide is used as a measure of overall greenhouse gas emission proliferation in our atmosphere, and it’s relatively easy to measure. By taking ice core samples at the poles, we can go back many years to measure levels and track changes over time. Understanding carbon levels over time helps us understand the impact of energy production and use, and the impact of making changes to reduce CO2. According to the Energy Information Administration, carbon dioxide from fossil fuel combustion makes up about 82% of total greenhouse gas emissions. According to Friends of the Earth, there are five things you can do to reduce carbon dioxide release to our atmosphere.

- Choose green energy if available. Buy electricity from a supplier that supports wind, solar, biomass, or refuse derived fuel (RDF). Roughly 20% of electricity production in Ames comes from RDF and wind.
- Cut down on car journeys. Walk, ride a bicycle, or use public transport whenever possible. Ames is fortunate to have the CyRide public transit system.
- Reduce air travel. Aviation is the fastest growing source of carbon emissions.
- Reduce waste and recycle more. Say no to plastic bags and Styrofoam containers. Recycle as many goods as you can. In Ames, our waste-to-energy facility produces refuse derived fuel for the Power Plant from local garbage.
- Save energy. According to Energy Star, heating and cooling our homes accounts for about 45% of our energy consumption, water heating 11%, clothes washing 10%, lighting 7%, refrigeration 6%, electronics 4%, and “other stuff” 17%. Look for ways to reduce your consumption, which reduces your carbon footprint.

Prime Time Power

Even though it’s winter, customers can still plan ahead for warm weather. Prime Time Power is available to homeowners and small businesses with central air conditioners.

An important note: You do not need to reapply for Prime Time Power if you signed up in a previous year. The $5 credit during each of the four summer months is automatically applied to your account.

For more information, call Utility Customer Service at 515.239.5120 or Steve Wilson at 515.239.5177.

City Side is a publication of the City of Ames, Iowa

Editor
Susan Gwiasda
Public Relations Officer

Questions?
515 Clark Ave.
Ames, IA 50010
Phone: 515.239.5204

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Renewable Energy

For December 2018
14.9% of electricity used this month was generated from wind.
2.58% of electricity this month was generated by refuse derived fuel (RDF) from the Resource Recovery Plant.
.02% of renewable energy used this month was generated by solar.
132 Ames customers have invested in solar voltaic systems.
98 LED street lights installed for a total of 2,974.

Degree Day information available at www.CityOfAmes.org/Electric