



Neighborhood News

Quarterly Neighborhood Update - Winter 2015

Neighborhood Issues Discussed at Summit

By Zachary Bauer, Neighborhood Intern

Neighborhood representatives gathered at City Hall recently for the annual Neighborhood Summit hosted by the City Council. A broad range of topics and issues facing neighborhoods were discussed at the summit.

Fleet Services Director and former Public Works Operations Manager Corey Mellies provided an update on the Emerald Ash Borer Response Plan, urban forest diversification, and reforestation. (For

additional information, see page 2.)

Civil Engineer Eric Cowles discussed public outreach tools used before and during Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) projects. The Public Works De-

partment contacts property owners, business owners, residents, and others to inform them about future projects. Information includes project details, maps, restoration information, and contact information. For small construction projects, flyers and door hangers are distributed to nearby residents at least 48 hours in advance of the work.

The Safe Neighborhoods Initiative was also discussed, including how residents can be proac-

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IMPORTANT DATES:

- Monday, Jan. 19**
Martin Luther King Jr. Day: City Hall **Open**
- Monday, Feb. 16**
Presidents Day: City Hall **Closed**
- Saturday, April 4:**
Eco Fair at City Hall

Rent Smart Program Helps with Renting Process

Landlords and tenants can now utilize a new program to make the renting process easier. "Rent Smart Ames" was created to provide tenants and landlords with the resources and expertise to make renting in Ames a "smart choice."

Through a collaborative effort between the City of Ames and Iowa State University, Rent Smart Ames provides landlords and tenants with important information about renting. The new program guides tenants through the renting process from the moment they decide to rent in Ames to the return of their security deposit after moving out. Tenants are supplied with information about what to look for in a rental unit, what to expect while renting, and how to be a smart renter.

Additionally, landlords can utilize the program at no charge to publicize their rental units. Rent Smart Ames also provides landlords with the knowledge and educational resources needed for renting in Ames. Landlords have access to information regarding code requirements, fair housing, landlord's rights and responsibilities, and much more.

To learn more about Rent Smart Ames and to begin listing and searching rental housing, visit cityofames.org/RentSmartAmes.



Summit, continued from page 1

tive in preventing crime in their neighborhoods.

Police Chief Chuck Cychosz explained that Ames is divided into four patrol areas with officers assigned to each area. However, officers are not able to be everywhere at once. For this reason, neighbors are encouraged to call the non-emergency number (515.239.5133) if they see anything suspicious. Whether the issue is an emergency or not, the police still want to know what is happening.

The summit concluded with a presentation by City Planner and Neighborhood Liaison Jeff Benson about a recent survey that was conducted regarding neighborhood satisfaction. Of the neighborhood associations that

responded to the survey, residents are overwhelmingly satisfied with their neighborhoods. Benson detailed the top three neighborhood programs that were reported: Yard Waste Free Days, the Street 'N' Greet block party trailer, and the Neighborhood Improvement Program.

The survey also reported that residents substantially rely on email notifications from the City, versus other communication channels, so information will continue to be sent out electronically to neighborhood representatives.

If you would like to create a neighborhood association in your area or learn more information about neighborhood associations, contact Jeff Benson at 515.239.5400 or jbenson@city.ames.ia.us.

EAB Response Plan Begins

Steps are underway to combat the arrival of the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB). The City's EAB Response Plan charts a course of action to proactively remove ash trees and replant with a tree variety that will diversify our urban forest. EAB, an invasive beetle which has been confirmed in nearby communities, kills all species of ash trees and

has been spreading throughout the country.

The City of Ames has inventoried all trees in the public rights-of-way (the area between the sidewalk and the curb along streets), in the maintained areas of City parks, and at City-owned facilities. More than 2,300 ash trees were identified on City property. The EAB Response plan begins with the removal of ash trees followed by replanting of replacement trees.

Trees targeted for removal will be posted with a sign, and residents in neighborhoods where tree removal is underway will be notified with door hangers. The EAB Response Plan addresses concerns with ash trees on public property. For more information on EAB and options for trees on private property, go to www.cityofames.org/trees.



Ash trees along public rights-of way.

Block Party Trailer Reservations Available Online March 16

Neighborhoods will soon be able to reserve the Street 'N' Greet Block Party Trailer by filling out an online application form, which can be found on the City of Ames website at www.cityofames.org/trailer.

The new reservation process allows community members to submit their contact information, the location of the block party, and three preferred dates to have their block party. Once the form is completed, a City staff member will contact the person making the reservation to complete the remaining elements of the application process.

Residents can still call the Department of Planning and Housing at 515.239.5400 to initiate the reservation if they would rather complete the reservation over the phone.

The Street 'N' Greet trailer is available free of charge to Ames residents for use at neighborhood parties. Reservations for the 2015 season begin March 16, and the trailer may be reserved weekends from April 1 until the end of October.



The Street 'N' Greet trailer holds a variety of items for use at neighborhood block parties.

Think Spring with Rain Garden Rebate Program

Spring planting may seem like a long way off right now, but winter is the perfect time to start thinking about garden plans.

The City's Rain Garden Rebate Program is part of the Ames Smart Watershed Program. Smart Watersheds is intended to increase local awareness of the importance of protecting our local streams and lakes. It promotes methods to capture and infiltrate storm water in residential areas. One of these methods is rain gardens.

A rain garden is a garden that captures rain from roofs, driveways and yards, and is planted with native and/or horticultural flowers. Capturing runoff in a rain garden allows water to infiltrate into the soil rather than run into

streets and storm drains.

Rain gardens can be used in residential yards to capture and infiltrate stormwater if the soils drain properly. These gardens reduce the amount of nutrients and other pollutants entering local streams.

Almost anyone that has adequate drainage in the soils in their yard could have a rain garden if an area is available, along with other factors. A simple soil test must first be performed in the area being considered for a rain garden.



The City of Ames is offering a rebate of up to \$400 for the installation of residential rain gardens within city limits. The program is limited to the first 12 residential applicants per year.

Learn more about the Rain Garden Rebate Program at www.cityofames.org/smartwatersheds.

Keep Pets and Neighbors Safe, Happy

Pets can be a wonderful addition to your home and family. Being a responsible pet owner not only keeps your pet safe and healthy, but also contributes to being a good neighbor.

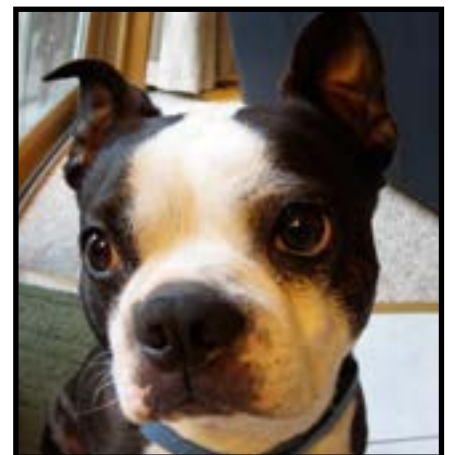
Chapter 3 of the Ames Municipal Code establishes regulations regarding the treatment and control of animals in the city for the good of pets, people, and property. A sample of some of the City's pet-keeping laws includes:

- All pets (including cats) must be kept solely on their owner's property, unless they are being exercised on a lead, or engaging in active, controlled obedience training. Dogs, cats, and other animals can also be penned or loose on their own property in compliance with the code.
- Nuisances, such as prolonged barking or excessive accumulation of animal solid waste, are prohibited.

- When walking your pet, you are required to "scoop the poop."
- Pets must be vaccinated for rabies if they are 3 1/2 months or older. Bites must be reported to the Ames Animal Shelter immediately.
- Laws regarding the humane treatment of animals are enforced.

With ice, snow, and freezing temperatures typical of Iowa winters, don't forget your pets may need extra attention this time of year. Here are a few cold weather pet safety tips:

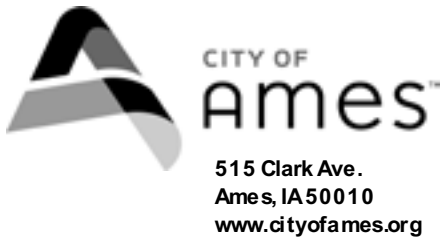
- Keep your pets indoors if possible.
- Outdoor shelter must provide protection (from wind, rain or snow), insulation, and continuous access, as needed.
- Straw and/or dry, thick blankets are good insulators for an outdoor dog house.
- Regularly check water bowls to break the ice or refill as necessary.
- Be aware that pets can be



attracted by the sweet taste and smell of anti-freeze; however, this liquid is a deadly poison for your animals.

- Make sure your pets are wearing an I.D. tag; it is their ticket home.

For more information on the regulations regarding the treatment and control of animals in the City, plus tips on winter pet care, go to www.cityofames.org/animalshelter.



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Annual Eco Fair is April 4

The City of Ames 2015 Eco Fair will be from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, April 4, at the Community Center Gym, 515 Clark Avenue. Bring the family and play games, see interesting displays, register for door prizes, and enjoy refreshments.

The Eco Fair will showcase information on energy conservation and sustainable practices, along with energy-saving products.

Please join us at this free, family-friendly event.

Have an idea? We want to hear!

Submit your own story ideas for Neighborhood News. Neighborhood News articles or ideas should showcase our local neighborhoods or neighbors.

To submit information for Neighborhood News via email: printern@city.ames.ia.us.

Neighborhood News

Neighborhood News is a quarterly publication of the City of Ames, Iowa, mailed directly to Ames residents who are members of established Neighborhood Associations or who ask to be placed on the mailing list. You can receive the newsletter via U.S. Mail or request to be put on the e-mail list.

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