

ITEM #: 31  
DATE: 04-28-20

**COUNCIL ACTION FORM**

**REQUEST: PRELIMINARY PLAT FOR 321 STATE AVENUE (BAKER'S SUBDIVISION)**

**BACKGROUND:**

The City of Ames is the property owner of a 10.86-acre site located at 321 State Avenue. The property is located on the west side of State Avenue and east of Wilmoth Avenue. The property is currently zoned Residential Low Density (RL) (See *Attachment A*). The proposed subdivision will support affordable housing goals of the City as a mixed income development with a minimum of 51% of the homes affordable to low- and moderate-income households. The City of Ames will be the developer for the subdivision.

The proposed Preliminary Plat consists of 27 buildable lots; 26 single-family home lots and 1 lot for future development. There are also three Outlots for purposes of open space, stormwater management, and a future bike trail. (See *Attachment B, C, D, E*). The layout includes the construction of one new public street named Latimer Lane. **The proposed plat follows the design chosen by the City Council as the preferred concept on February 25th.** Council directed staff on February 25<sup>th</sup> to proceed with the preferred single-family layout that matches the proposed design, including a lot for future development of multi-family housing to the south, single-family homes along Wilmoth, creation of a loop street for single-family homes, and a central open space within the loop street.

The 26 single-family home lots will be accessed from Wilmoth Avenue, Latimer Lane and Tripp Street. Access to State Avenue from abutting homes along Latimer Lane is restricted and no access from the alley along the north property line is planned. The proposed street design meets City subdivision standards in regard to lot size and orientation. Staff has included a landscaping easement along the State Avenue rear lot lines in order to support a small buffer in this area. Due to the oversized right-of-way of State Avenue, the proposed lots are approximately 50 feet from the street.

The single-family lots (1-26) are generally consistent in size throughout the development. The lots range in size between .13 and .33 acres. All lots meet minimum size requirements and frontage requirements for the RL zoning district. The proposed lot width exceeds the minimum standard of 35 feet at street line and 50 feet at the building line, the lot widths will allow for options to configure sites with modest sized homes and one or two car wide driveways and parking options. Staff also reviewed options for including additional lots within the Outlot Y area but settled upon the original open space proposal depicted in February. The addendum provides additional information on lot design.

Lot 27 south of Tripp Street is planned for future multi-family development. The zoning

designation of Lot 27 will be changed in the future to accommodate multi-family uses that are not currently permitted in RL zoning. Any future rezoning will follow the established process for a public hearing with Planning and Zoning Commission for their recommendation and a public hearing with the City Council for a final decision. The City Council has targeted this summer to review and discuss concepts for multi-family development in this area.

There are three Outlots in the proposed subdivision, which total 1.78 acres. The Outlots will function as open space, storm water detention, and a small city park. Outlot Y is centrally located and will be used as open space toward a new .5-acre park to be owned and maintained by the City. Outlot Z is located to the southeast along State Avenue and is devoted to stormwater detention and treatment. If feasible, the pond design may in the future also support an initiative of creating fishponds through a program of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The far southeast boundary of the site is also subject to the 100-year flood plain. The floodplain will all be contained on Outlot Z, no individual lots will be within the 100- year flood plain. Outlot X along the portion of the north property line from Manning Avenue to State Avenue will contain the future bike trail as part of the Shared Use Path Trail Connection South of Lincoln Way. The construction of the bike path shown within Outlot X will be coordinated with development of this site consistent with the infrastructure requirements of the Subdivision Code. The remaining portion of the trail between South Wilmoth Avenue and Manning Avenue will be located in a combined paved trail/alley design discussed in greater detail below.

**An exciting new concept being introduced by Electric Services for this subdivision is a distributed geothermal heating and cooling system. (See Attachment G) This system will include loops and a pump house within Outlot Y and provide the heating and cooling for each home in the subdivision and potential for multi-family housing in the future.** The proposed layout has been reviewed by the City's engineer for coordination with other public utility needs. The geothermal system will be installed, owned and maintained by Ames Electric. The homes constructed within the subdivision would be required to utilize geothermal heating and cooling. **Staff estimates a substantial energy savings from the efficiency of the system, with no substantial increase in initial housing costs to have a heat pump in lieu of a conventional heating and cooling system. There will also be ongoing savings for the homeowners depending on cost of electricity compared to natural gas. This system will serve as a trial concept to prove the viability for future subdivisions developed by private sectors entities.**

#### **BIKE TRAIL DESIGN AND LOCATION:**

The north boundary of the site is the planned location for the construction of the Shared Use Path Trail Connection South of Lincoln Way from Wilmoth to State Avenue. This segment is part of a larger City project that extends from Beedle Drive to Campustown. Staff considered multiple configurations for this trail segment to address issues related to lot size, utility locations, safety, and paving costs. Currently the alley is unimproved and there are overhead power lines within the alley area.

Staff is currently considering a 16-foot paved alley improvement as a combined bicycle/vehicle improvement. This improvement also requires the undergrounding of utility lines in the alley right-of-way. The alley paving is planned to be funded by CDBG funds and removal of overhead electric lines by Ames Electric.

**Although this is the preferred accommodation by staff for the bicycle path, its full costs are not known at this time. If the overall expense is too great at the time of bidding, the City will consider creating a lower cost (less paved area) option for a separated bicycle path outside of the alley and adjusting the lot dimensions accordingly. The alley project could also be deferred to a date when additional CDBG funding is available. If the combined bicycle facility is not feasible, the alley will not be paved as it does not serve the proposed subdivision.**

### **PUBLIC OUTREACH:**

On January 23, 2020, City staff from multiple departments participated in an Open House meeting to address three potential City projects in the State Avenue area; the bike path, relocation of Fire Station #2, and development of 321 State Avenue. Staff presented a map of the 321 State development scenarios of either placing the multi-family or single-family housing units on either the north or south side of the parcel and discussed different attributes of the site. Staff shared the feedback received from the neighborhood with City Council prior to proceeding to a preliminary design phase. Information from the meeting can be found at Planning Division webpage under the [CCOAMSproject link](#) (College Creek Old Ames Middle School).

On February 17, 2020, City staff along with Civil Design Advantage (CDA) Engineering, the City's consulting design engineer for the project, held a second neighborhood meeting to share five (5) design concepts that included lot layout configurations. There were approximately 18 neighborhood residences in attendance who shared their feedback for City Council's consideration at the February 25, 2020 meeting. Residents were notified directly via mail about the neighborhood meetings in January and February.

The proposed subdivision includes a public notice requirement for all property owners within 200 feet of the site prior to the Planning and Zoning Commission review. **Although no notice is required prior to City Council review, staff provided a courtesy notice by mail to single-family property owners from Village Drive to Highland Avenue south of Lincoln Way. Email notification was also provided to interested parties for the City Council meeting.**

### **PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION:**

At the April 15, 2020, the Planning & Zoning Commission meeting staff reviewed the proposed layout and discussed some of the design features that were still under review, including the alley improvements and bike path options. The preliminary plat presented to Commission included the bike path in a separate outlot at that time. The Commission voted 6-0 to recommend approval of the Preliminary Plat for Baker's Subdivision to City

Council, reflective of the subdivision layout with the outlot for the bike path.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

1. The City Council can approve the preliminary plat for Bakers Subdivision if it finds the preliminary plat complies with City zoning and subdivision standards.
2. The City Council can deny the preliminary plat for Bakers Subdivision, if the Council determines the design does not meet the standards of the Municipal Code.
3. The City Council can direct changes to the plat or defer action on this request and refer it back to City staff and/or the applicant for additional information.

**CITY MANAGER’S RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

The proposed subdivision design accomplishes many of the City Council’s goals for this site that was acquired in 2015. The proposed single-family lot layout integrates with the existing single-family homes to the west and north by the pattern of its design. The proposed lots create usable lots for a mix of smaller and medium sized homes. The overall street layout provides for connectivity and integration of the homes with each other. The proposed layout conforms to the zoning requirements and infrastructure requirements of the Subdivision Code. **Future rezoning to accommodate a multi-family use south of Tripp Street will occur at a later date after City Council has reviewed potential development concepts.**

Additionally, the development of the site includes coordination and cooperation with a number of City departments to create a high-quality residential subdivision. This includes department support by Parks and Recreation for the .5-acre park, Public Works for storm water features and bicycle/shared use path improvements, and Ames Electric Services for the geothermal trial project. Currently approximately \$537,00 of the 2019-20 CDBG funds (including \$250,000 of GO Bonds) have been budgeted for this project, with anticipated budget of approximately \$489,000 of CDBG funds for 2020-21, totaling 1,026,000. This amount does not include any projected revenue from the sale of lots of homes.

With City Council approval of the preliminary plat, staff and CDA can move forward on finalizing design plans and prepare an estimated cost and bid package for public improvements needed for the final plat.

**Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council act in accordance with Alternative #1 to approve proposed the preliminary plat.**

## ADDENDUM

**Project Description.** The Preliminary Plat of “Baker’s Subdivision” includes 26 single-family lots for development, 1 future development lot and, three Outlots (Outlots X, Y, Z). Outlot X (.08 acres) is to be used as an Outlot for future bike trail construction in conjunction with the abutting alley to the north. Outlot Y (.50 acres) is to be used as a park land and other support functions. Outlot Z (1.20 acres) will be the primary stormwater detention facility for the development and contains the 100- year flood plain to the far south. *(See Attachment B-E - Preliminary Plat)*

The main access for the development is comprised of Tripp Street, Latimer Lane and Wilmoth Avenue. The proposed Plat includes the construction of Latimer Lane, which provides direct access to 13 single-family lots in the northern half of the subdivision. Tripp Street, constructed in 2019, is designed to allow for a west to east roadway that provides vehicle and pedestrian access to Latimer Lane and Lot 27 in conformance with subdivision requirements through the subdivision. The remaining 13 single family lots in the subdivision will gain frontage and driveway access from South Wilmoth Avenue.

The lots fronting on South Wilmoth Avenue will gain access from South Wilmoth and are designed as such to make use of an existing street. This helps to minimize new street construction. Excepting out corner lots which are 68-80 feet in width the majority of the lots along South Wilmoth are anywhere from 53’ to 55’ feet in width. This allows for adequate space to place driveways and allow for accessory building or garages with one- or two-story homes. The majority of homes configured along Latimer Lane are slightly smaller in width at the street line ranging from 37’ to 52’ feet but widen significantly from the building line into the rear half which provide for adequate space to configure one or two-story homes and accessory buildings or garages. The average size of the lots along Latimer Lane are larger due to additional space in the rear of the lots.

The lot design allows for conformance to the subdivision standards. All of the homes will have frontage on a local residential street. The homes along the east leg of Latimer Lane will be “through lots” by design but are permitted when the rear of the lot abuts an arterial street which in this case is State Avenue. A 5’ landscaping easement is shown along the rear of these lots to provide greenspace between the edge of the State Avenue shared use path and any fences that may be placed along the rear of these properties in order to provide safety along the path and allow for additional buffering between the rear of the homes and State Avenue.

All of the lots in the subdivision have public utility easements (P.U.E.) along the front and rear to allow for future utility placement as well as storm sewer easements along the rear of the lots. Development of the lots south of Tripp Street along South Wilmoth will require more grading than those further north as the natural grade will be steeper due to the topography of the site.

**Density.** The total net development area of the subdivision for single-family homes is 4.68 acres with lots that range in size from .13 acres to .33 acres. Density calculations have been based on net area consistent with the allowance for the RL zone, by

subtracting out of the gross lot area the total area to be held as Outlots, the future development lot, and land to be dedicated to the City as public street right-of-way. With a total net area of 4.80 acres the net density of 26 proposed single-family homes is 5.41 dwelling units per net acre, whereas up to 7.26 units per acre is permitted.

**Outlot Y Development Options.** City Council reviewed multiple design concepts at its February 25<sup>th</sup> meeting. Council directed staff to prefer a single-family layout that match the proposed design, including a lot for future development of multi-family housing to the south, single-family homes along Wilmoth, creation of a loop street for single-family homes, and a central open space within the loop street. In consultation with the City's consulting design engineer, Civil Design Advantage (CDA), staff explored additional lot configurations for the loop street to ascertain optimal lotting configurations, including the configuration of Outlot Y. During the review process staff explored options for use of Outlot Y.

City staff concluded up to three additional single-family home lots could be configured within the Outlot Y area and meet design standards and access limitations. Options included one or two lots with open space and storm water treatment or fully developing the area with three lots and provide for all open space and storm water facilities in the Outlot to the south. Staff also considered using the Outlot exclusively for storm water to reduce overall costs of development.

After discussion and review with other City departments it was determined that at this time planning for Outlot Y as open space, subject to Council approval and final cost estimates, is a desirable use of the site. It is believed that the open space and amenity of a park adds value to the neighborhood environment. This configuration of Outlot Y and the addition of additional storm water piping assists in providing the water necessary to maintain fish in the pond in Outlot Z. The fishpond option is in response to a DNR program for stocking ponds that the City would then maintain as a City facility.

**Lot 27 Multi Family Development.** City Council will continue discussions with the surrounding neighborhood on possible configurations of multi-family development later this summer. The intent is for the City to partner with an affordable housing developer and prepare an application for financial assistance through Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC). Numerous options could be chosen from duplex style housing to small apartment buildings. To accomplish this goal of additional housing options, part or all of the site would require a rezoning to a Planned Residence District (PRD) or to Medium Density zoning. The proposed subdivision layout does not impact future rezoning options for the City. Depending on future multi-family design a road extension from the intersection of the west leg of Latimer Lane with Tripp Street into Lot 27 is possible.

**Public Improvements.** One new public street will be constructed known as Latimer Lane. The street has a loop design that serves 13 lots in the north half of the subdivision. On-street parking will be permitted on Latimer Lane. Latimer Lane will be a 55' wide Right of Way and will be a 26' foot wide street as required by street design standards in the Subdivision ordinance. Tripp Street which was constructed in 2019 has a 55' right of way and is a 26' wide street which meets street design standards in the subdivision ordinance.

Tripp Street connects to South Wilmoth Avenue on the west and State Avenue on the east for outside connections. The State Avenue frontage will be graded to improve drainage but will be left as a non-urban section that does not have curb and gutters. Street lighting will be provided by Ames Electric throughout the subdivision.

**Water.** Water service is already provided along South Wilmoth Avenue to serve lots 1-13. Existing water main is also located along State Avenue. Tripp Street also has 8" water service currently in place. Latimer Lane will have 8" water main installed upon construction to serve lots 14-26. Lot 27 will be serviced from the 8" Tripp Street main. The water service will connect to the system at Tripp Street from South Wilmoth Avenue and State Avenue. The water mains will primarily serve all of the proposed lots from the front along and within the public rights-of-way.

**Sanitary Sewer.** Sanitary sewer currently exists as 8" main along South Wilmoth Avenue to serve Lots 1-13 and will be installed along Latimer Lane to service lots 14-27 as 8" main. The line will go from Latimer Lane south across Tripp Street in order to serve the future development of Lot 27 and connect the city system near the south property line of the subdivision in Outlot Z. The City has concluded that sanitary sewer capacity is available to serve the proposed subdivision.

**Geothermal Heating & Cooling.** A distributed or neighborhood geothermal system is planned to be installed for the heating and cooling of the proposed homes in this subdivision. Ames Electric will own the geothermal system. Each home will have appropriate connections for the system and must hook up to the system for heating and cooling services to replace the need for a furnace and air conditioning unit. The system will originate underneath Outlot Y via subterranean vertical boreholes and a surface level pump house. The system will deliver heating and cooling to the subdivision via delivery lines along South Wilmoth Avenue, Tripp Street and Latimer Lane. A layout and design are included in attachment G. In the event the geothermal does not materialize, the layout of the subdivision will not change.

**Transit.** Cy Ride currently has bus stop locations at the intersection of Lincoln Way and State Avenue approximately 3 blocks north of the proposed subdivision and near the intersection of South Wilmoth and Lincoln Way approximately 3 blocks to the northwest of the proposed subdivision. CyRide currently has no plans to extend service into Baker's subdivision. As such this subdivision will not have direct CyRide service from within the subdivision. Pedestrian access to the two nearby Lincoln Way CyRide stops is available from the proposed subdivision site.

**Sidewalks, Pedestrian Trails and Street Trees.** Across the northeast edge of the subdivision between Manning Avenue and State Avenue a 20-foot wide outlot labeled as Outlot X is proposed with a 10-foot wide bicycle trail connection to the alley. The trail is part of the Shared Use Path Trail Connection South of Lincoln Way project that will eventually extend from Dotson Drive to Campustown. The remainder of the trail will be located within the alleyway north of the subdivision abutting the property line west of Manning Avenue. The improvement would include a division between the alley and bike trail with detectable warning panels at the trail access point with the alley at Manning

Avenue. The trail access point into the alley has a tapered design at the access point with the alley at the south end of Manning Avenue. The alley would not be paved unless it was part of a combined bicycle facility design.

At the Planning and Zoning Commission meeting an earlier version of the Preliminary Plat included Outlot X as a 15-foot wide area for the bike path located outside of the alley right-of-way. However, the bike path was planned to transition into the alley to make a connection across Wilmoth. In the event the alley improvement option is not determined to be feasible, the original concept could be reinstated. This would result in a reduction of lot size for the abutting lots and the construction of a 10-foot path with 2.5 foot shoulders areas between the property lines and the alley right-of-way.

Tripp Street currently has a 5'-foot sidewalk installed along the south side of the street. A 5-foot sidewalk will be installed along the north side of the street as part of the subdivision. South Wilmoth Avenue has sidewalk in place from the north edge of the subdivision to Tripp Street. A 5-foot sidewalk will be extended south along South Wilmoth to the south edge of Lot 1. A shared use path is currently in place along the west side of State Avenue and will provide pedestrian access to and from the subdivision. Latimer Lane will have 5' wide sidewalks installed on along the single-family home frontage. Sidewalks will be replaced and improved in certain locations along the east side of South Wilmoth Avenue.

Chapter 23 of the Municipal Code, requires street trees for residential subdivisions along both sides of the street at a spacing of 30-50 feet on center to allow for the growth of the tree canopy, however, adjusted spacing is permitted by the Code for obstructions in the right-of-way including driveway locations, underground utilities, and the location of street lights. Adequate spacing is available in most areas for street tree planting on the proposed plat. The 5' wide landscaping easement north of Tripp on the rear of the properties abutting State Avenue will contain trees planted in lieu of street trees in the ditch along State Avenue.

### **Storm Water Management.**

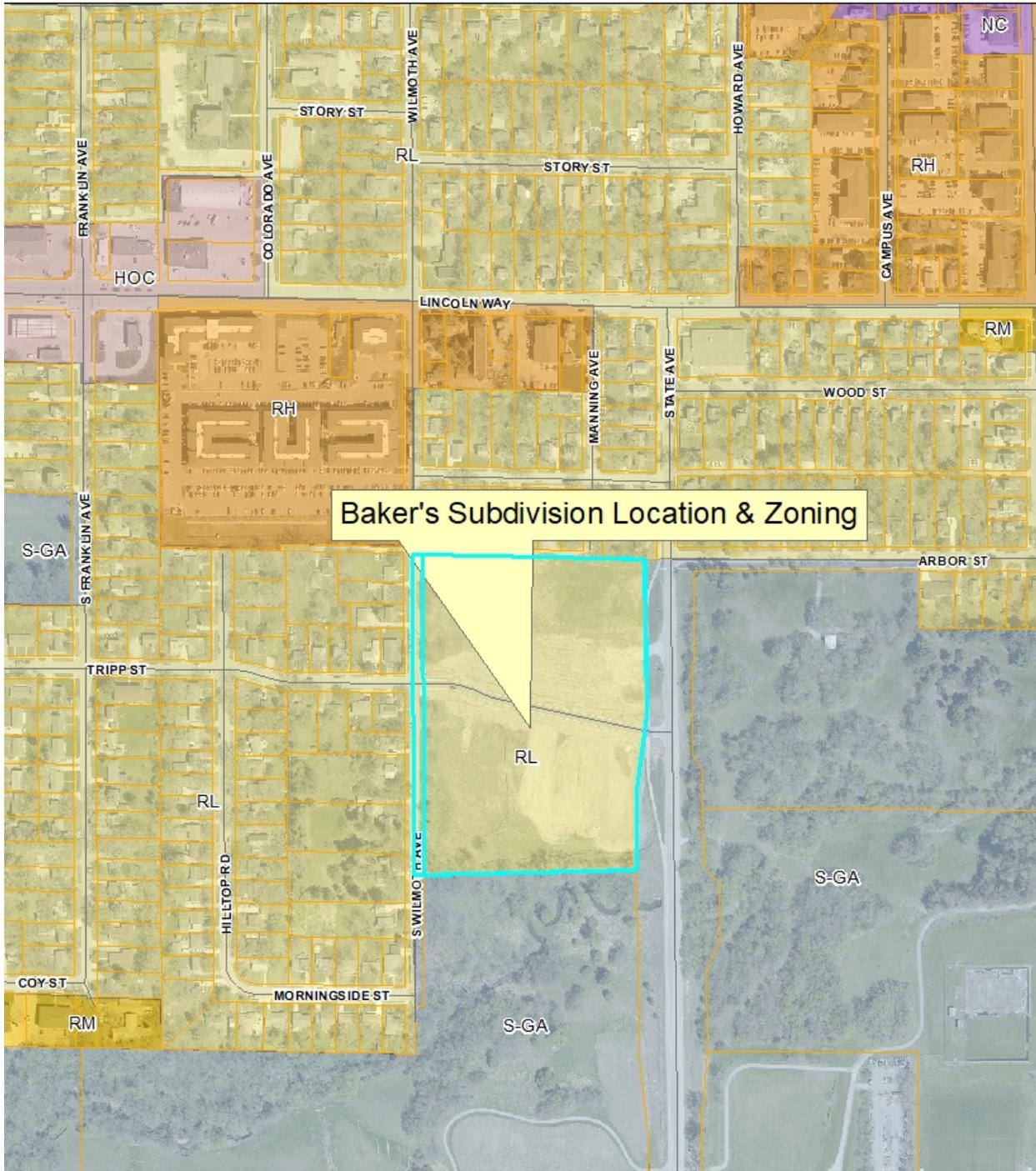
Storm Water Management is principally provided via a detention basin along the southeast side of the subdivision where it will collect stormwater from the north and west within the subdivision. The stormwater lines are proposed along the rear property lines of the homes abutting South Wilmoth, along Tripp Street, along the north edge of the subdivision along the rear property lines of the homes facing Latimer Lane near the bike path then flowing south along Latimer Lane into the basin inside Outlot Z. The stormwater will discharge to the south according to stormwater management regulations into College Creek. The Public Works Department would like to pursue a DNR certification in the future to stock the detention pond with fish. This will allow fishing to occur at the pond to be overseen by the Parks & Recreation Department. The ability to design the pond for fish may be revised depending on cost based on final bids for this project. If financially the timeline for the DNR certification has not yet been determined and will be dependent on budgetary abilities for small improvements around the pond such as paths and benches. If found to be unfeasible the grading design of the pond can be changed without a Major Amendment to the preliminary plat.

**Applicable Law.**

Laws pertinent to the proposal are described on *Attachment F – Applicable Law*. Pertinent for the Planning and Zoning Commission are Sections 23.302(3) and 23.302(4).

**Public Notice.** Courtesy mailed notice was provided to single-family home property owners south of Lincoln Way between Hyland and Village. Staff provided additional notice to an interested parties list and the CCOAMS neighborhood representative. A sign notifying the public of a pending zoning action was also placed at the site.

# Attachment A- Location & Zoning



Baker's Subdivision Location & Zoning

## Baker's Subdivision Location & Zoning

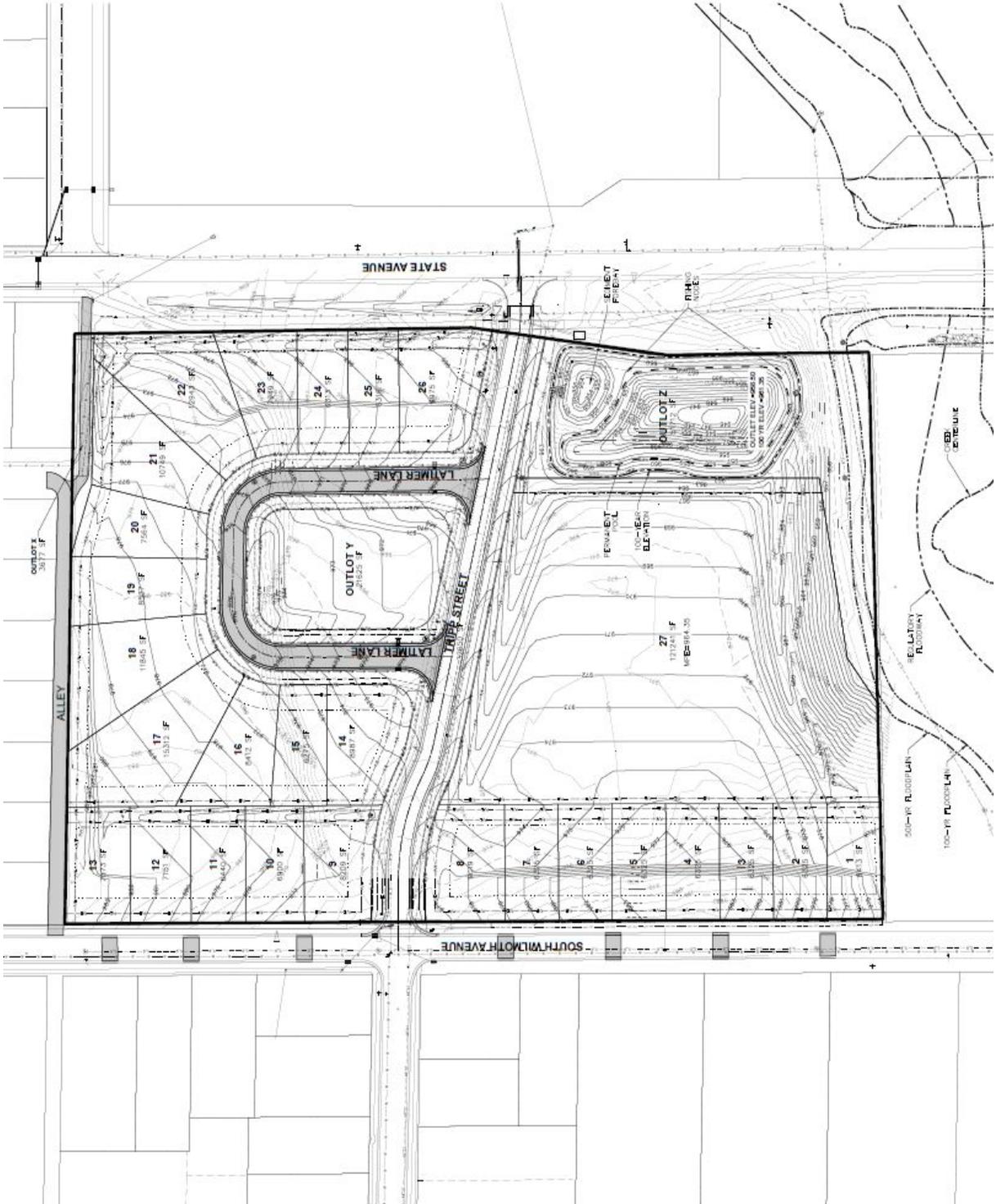


# Attachment B- Preliminary Plat

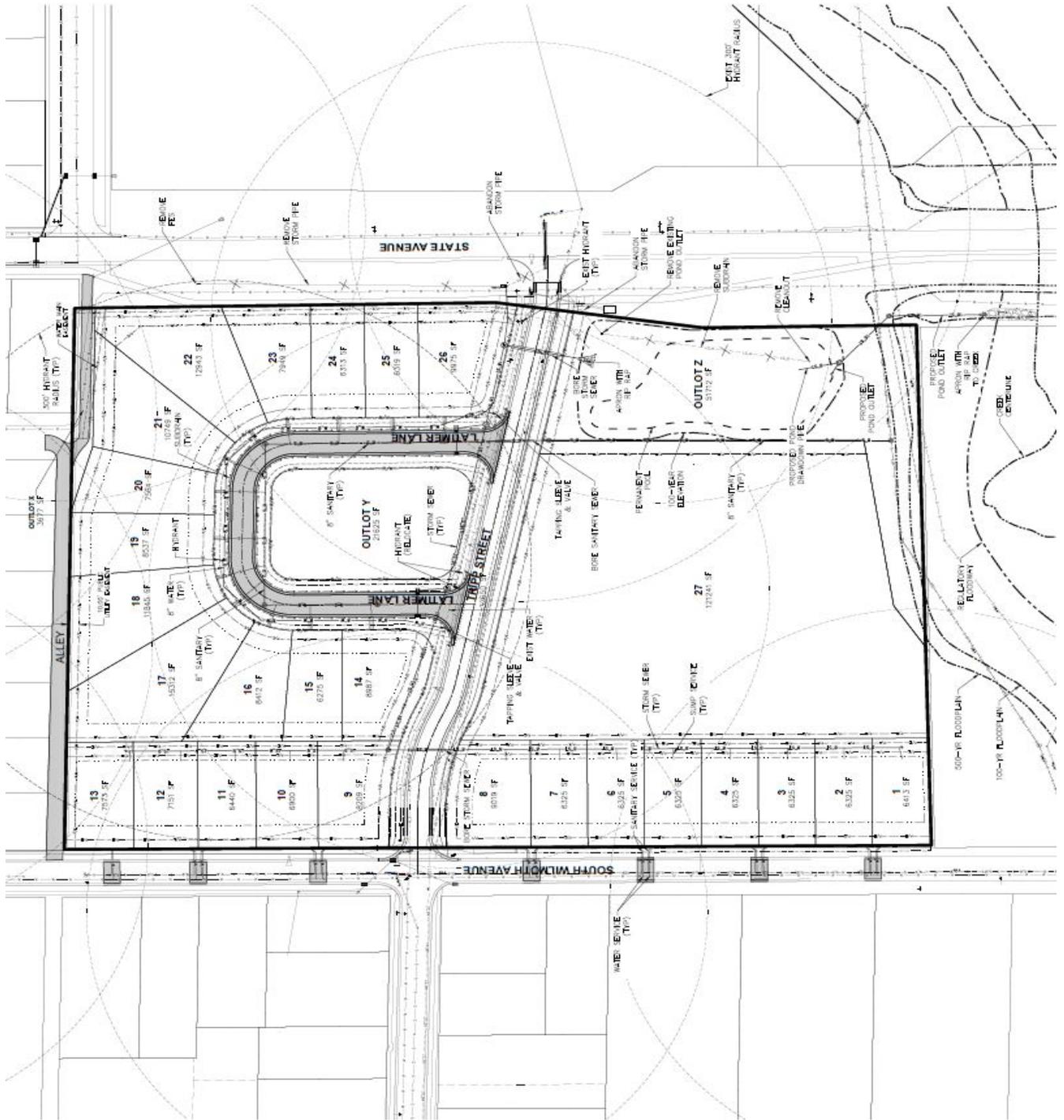
1. NO ACCESS ALLOWED OFF OF TRIPP STREET
2. NO PARKING ALLOWED ON BOTH SIDES OF LATIMER LANE



# Attachment C- Grading Plan



# Attachment D- Utility Plans





**Attachment F**  
**Applicable Subdivision Law**

The laws applicable to this Preliminary Plat Subdivision include, but are not limited to, the following: (verbatim language is shown in *italics*, other references are paraphrased):

Code of Iowa Chapter 354, Section 8 requires that the governing body shall determine whether the subdivision conforms to its Land Use Policy Plan.

Ames Municipal Code Chapter 23, Subdivisions, Division I, outlines the general provisions for subdivisions within the City limits and within two miles of the City limits of Ames.

Ames Municipal Code Section 23.302(3):

(3) *Planning and Zoning Commission Review:*

- (a) *The Planning and Zoning Commission shall examine the Preliminary Plat, any comments, recommendations or reports assembled or made by the Department of Planning and Housing, and such other information as it deems necessary or desirable to consider.*
- (b) *Based upon such examination, the Planning and Zoning Commission shall ascertain whether the Preliminary Plat conforms to relevant and applicable design and improvement standards in these Regulations, to other City ordinances and standards, to the City's Land Use Policy Plan, and to the City's other duly adopted Plans.*

Ames Municipal Code Section 23.302(4):

- (4) *Planning and Zoning Commission Recommendation: Following such examination and within 30 days of the regular meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission at which a complete Application is first formally received for consideration, the Planning and Zoning Commission shall forward a report including its recommendation to the City Council. The Planning and Zoning Commission shall set forth its reasons for any recommendation to disapprove or to modify any Preliminary Plat in its report to the City Council and shall provide a written copy of such reasons to the developer.*

**Attachment G-Preliminary Geothermal Design (\*Lot labels Have Changed\*)**

