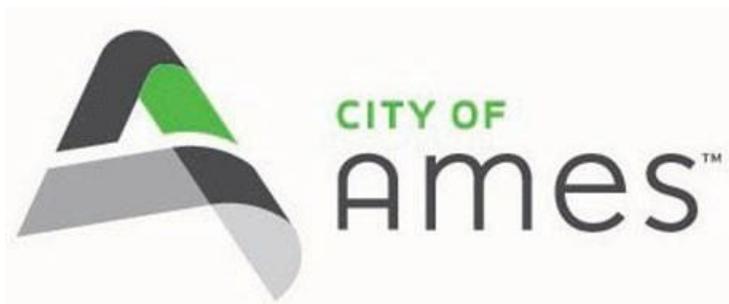


41<sup>st</sup> Annual Report

**Ames Residential**  
Satisfaction  
Survey

**2023**



## 2023 Ames Resident Satisfaction Survey

### 41<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL STATISTICAL REPORT

The City of Ames, Iowa, conducts an annual satisfaction survey of residents. In April 2023, the City mailed questionnaires to 1,350 city residents whose names were randomly selected from the City of Ames utility customers list (population= $\sim$ 20,000+). Additionally, 1,000 Iowa State University (ISU) students were randomly selected from a mailing list generated by the ISU Office of the Registrar. Stratified random sampling was used to have representation from the students based on classification (sophomore to graduate levels). First-year students were intentionally excluded from the ISU sample due to their minimal exposure to and use of the City of Ames' services.

Utility bill customers received a 12-page survey booklet via the U.S. mail. The booklet included the same standard benchmarking questions as were presented in the 2022 survey. There was a modification to the wording of the question focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion; additional questions on recycling and options, questions about CyRide (public transit), and some updating of questions.

The survey was also available online. A link to the online survey was provided in the letter of introduction that was mailed out with the paper version of the survey. This link ensures that only randomly selected respondents have access to the survey. The online survey was available in five languages: English, Spanish, Chinese, Arabic, and Korean.

The selected ISU students received the same online survey via email developed using the Qualtrics Survey Software. The analysis was completed with assistance from Nora Ladjahasan, Amy Logan, and Eli Wilson from the Institute for Design Research & Outreach, College of Design, Iowa State University.

This statistical report summarizes results from 596 respondents who returned usable questionnaires: 298 came from Ames utility bill customers, referred to as non-student residents in this report (50%) and another 298 from ISU students (50%). Fifteen percent of non-student residents ( $n=46$ ) took the online survey. This is slightly higher than last year (11%, or 22 non-student respondents). No one responded to the online survey using any of the other languages available.

Only 298 surveys from the students were included in the analysis to have the same representation as the non-student residents. Incomplete surveys and those who had lived in Ames for a shorter period of time were excluded from the student samples.

The response rate for the Ames residents' group (non-student residents) was 22% and 30% for ISU students. The overall response rate for this year is 26%, which is 3% higher than last year (23%).

The number of questionnaires mailed or emailed included an oversampling of students in order to come up with the desired sample size that reflects target populations. The sample size needed to confidently generalize the findings was 382 for both groups (95% confidence level and a confidence interval of 5). The 596 completed surveys indicate that we are 95% confident that the questions are within  $\pm 4.0\%$  of the results if everybody participated in the study. In other words, the findings or the data significantly reflect the responses of the total population. For more details on calculating sample size, refer to: <https://www.checkmarket.com/sample-size-calculator>.

## Respondents' Personal and Social Characteristics

Table 1 illustrates the personal and social characteristics of respondents who completed the questionnaire. Column 1 lists characteristics of the respondents who participated in the survey. Column 2 shows personal and social characteristics of Ames residents collected from secondary data sources such as the U.S. Census and world population review. Columns 3-7 show personal and social characteristics of the individuals who completed surveys between the years of 2019 and 2023.

Of the respondents in this year's survey, there are more male respondents than female respondents (58% and 39%, respectively). This follows a trend in 2020. However, in the past two years (2021 and 2022), there were more female participants in the survey. Three percent of the respondents opted not to respond to the gender question, and another 1% indicated the third category (non-binary/3rd gender). Male respondents are higher than the census statistics (54%).

A majority of respondents were White (87%), 6% were Asian, 3% stated "Other," 1% were Black or African American, and 3% preferred not to answer. The racial composition was the same as last year. The survey also asked respondents if they identified as having Hispanic or Latino heritage. Three percent of respondents preferred not to answer the question on whether they are of Hispanic or Latino heritage. Of those responding to the survey question, only 6% indicated they were of Hispanic or Latino heritage. A majority (94%) were not. This is the same as last year.

Educational attainment was another demographic characteristic requested in the survey. Sixty-three percent of the respondents have bachelor's degree or higher (including some grad work and graduate degree) which is 2% higher than the 2022 secondary data estimate <https://worldpopulationreview.com/us-cities/ames-ia-population> (<https://www.towncharts.com/Iowa/Education/Ames-city-IA-Education-data.html>).

Sixty-one of the respondents are employed (30% had full-time employment, 31% part-time). Twenty-eight percent were retirees, which is higher than last year (23%). Nine percent declared that they were unemployed (this is higher than the July 2023 labor department estimate of 2.8% unemployment rate from [https://www.bls.gov/eag/eag.ia\\_ames\\_msa.htm](https://www.bls.gov/eag/eag.ia_ames_msa.htm), July 2023).

Thirty-four percent of respondents reported their household income to be less than \$25,000, 15% reported their income to be between \$25,000 and \$49,999, 22% reported earnings of \$50,000 to \$99,999, and another 29% of respondents make more than \$100,000 annually. Compared to previous surveys, there were more respondents with a household income of \$100,000+ (21% for 2022, 18% for 2021).

**Table 1. Demographic Characteristics**

Characteristic	2022/2023 2nd Data	Survey Year				
		2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
<b>Length of Residence</b>						
Less than 1 year	-	1	<1	0	1	12
1-3 years	-	30	33	35	34	24
4-6 years	-	20	23	27	24	12
7-10 years	-	8	5	5	8	6
More than 10 years	-	41	38	33	34	46
<b>Gender*</b>						
Female	46	57	44	57	55	39
Male	54	42	54	41	42	58
Non-binary/3rd Gender				1		
Prefer not to answer		1	1	1	2	3
<b>Age (18 and over)*</b>						
18-24	60	33	46	37	36	34
25-44	15	29	21	31	27	23
45-64	15	19	16	14	14	16
65-74	7	11	11	11	13	16
Over 75	3	9	6	7	10	10
<b>Education **</b>						
Some HS	3	<1	<1	<1	1	<1
HS diploma	12	5		5	3	6
Some college	24	29	39	30	30	31
College degree	61.3	25	30	22	23	27
Some grad work		9	6	13	13	9
Graduate degree		30	20	30	30	27
<b>Employment Status***</b>						
Employed part-time	97.2	3	34	37	36	30
Employed full-time		31	3			
Retired	-	20	16	18	23	28
Unemployed	2.8	1	15	8	10	9
Full-time homemaker	-	8	<1	1	1	2
<b>Household Income****</b>						
Less than \$25,000	27	36	42	40	42	34

\$25,000-\$49,999	22	16	16	19	16	15
\$50,000-\$74,999	18	13	10	15	14	12
\$75,000-\$99,999	10	11	10	8	6	10
\$100,000 +	23	24	22	18	21	29

\* <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/amescityiowa#>

\*\* <https://www.towncharts.com/Iowa/Education/Ames-city-IA-Education-data.html>

\*\*\* [https://www.bls.gov/eag/eag.ia\\_ames\\_msa.htm](https://www.bls.gov/eag/eag.ia_ames_msa.htm) (July 2023)

\*\*\*\* <https://worldpopulationreview.com/us-cities/ames-ia-population> (2023)

More than half of the survey respondents (53%) own their residence; the others rent. Most renters (74%) reported renting due to their short-term stay in Ames. Other reasons for renting were lack of adequate income (45%), followed by little or no upkeep (15%), and more security (8%) (Table 2).

Respondents who are homeowners differ from renters on several personal and social characteristics. Homeowners have lived in Ames longer than renters (28.7 years and 5.7 years, respectively). Of those who have lived in Ames more than 10 years, 79% are homeowners. On the other hand, 62% of the renters have lived in Ames for less than 4 years.

Not surprisingly, the average age of respondents who are homeowners (59 years old) tends to be older than renters (28 years old). Of those between 25 and 44 years old, almost half (49%) are renters. Of those between the ages of 45 to 64, nine out of 10 (92%) are homeowners. In contrast, 98% of those under 25 years of age are renters, and 97% of full-time college students currently rent. For those with a college degree or higher, 67% are homeowners and 33% are renters.

Finally, homeowners typically have higher household incomes than renters. Eighty-six percent of homeowners earn \$50,000 or more, whereas only 16% of the renters earn more than \$50,000. (Statistics from this paragraph are not shown in any tables.)

**Table 2. Housing Characteristics**

Characteristics	2023** 2nd Data	Survey Year				
		2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
		Percent				
<b>Housing type</b>						
Rent	58	49	55	57	53	47
Own	42	51	45	43	47	53
<b>If rent, for what reason?</b>						
Short-term stay in Ames	-	75	77	77	79	74
Lack of adequate income	-	40	39	37	44	45
Little or no upkeep	-	32	24	23	26	15
More security	-	10	5	6	7	8
<b>Location of home</b>						
Northwest	-	42	42	46	40	50
Southwest	-	29	32	29	34	25
Northeast	-	16	11	14	11	12
Southeast	-	12	15	11	15	12

\*<https://worldpopulationreview.com/us-cities/ames-ia-population>

Respondents also were asked to identify the location of their home in Ames, as seen on Figure 1 below. Fifty percent of the respondents reside at the northwest part of the city (compared to 40% in 2022), 25% are from southwest (34% in 2021), 12% from northeast (11% in 2021), and 12% from southeast side (15% in 2022) (Figure 1).

There are more respondents from northwest and northeast parts of the town compared to last year and less from southwest and southeast parts.

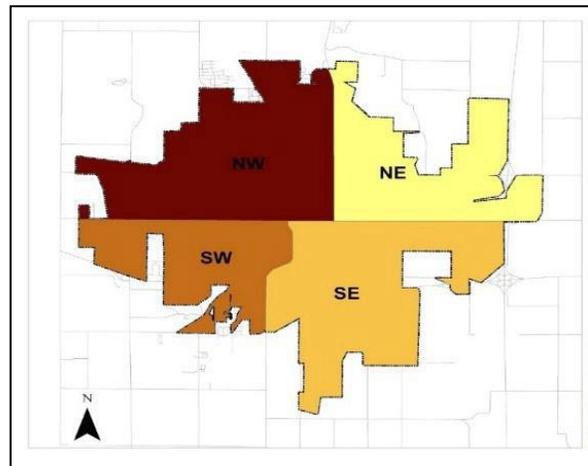
### Figure 1. Geographic Sections

50% = Northwest

25% = Southwest

12% = Northeast

12% = Southeast



### Priorities for On-Going Services

Respondents were asked to indicate their priorities for the upcoming City budget by indicating allocation levels (less, same, or more) on various services paid for by property or sales taxes. Budgeted funding amounts for each of the services were indicated. Table 3 shows the residents' preferences about spending priorities. A majority of respondents reported that they would like the City of Ames to spend the same amount as the previous year on all 10 service priorities. Over 86% of the respondents agreed that fire protection should remain at the same funding level as last year.

On a scale of 1 to 3 (1 – less spending, 2 – same spending, and 3 – more spending), nine out of ten of the programs received an average score of 2.1 or higher, indicating that most residents are pleased with the current budget. The budget for law enforcement received a score of 1.9. An average score below 2.0 indicates that although a majority of respondents (61.3%) would like the spending to remain the same, there was a strong enough minority (23.7%) who would like less spending to bring down the average score.

Other ongoing services that received high support for funding reductions were arts programs (Public Art and COTA) (16.1%) and the Ames Public Library (13.1%); however, both also received similar support in favor of raising funding: arts programs (22.7%) and APL (18.4%). There were several ongoing services that received strong support for increased funding. The services that had the highest support for increased funding included 28.8% of respondents supporting more spending on Ames Animal Shelter & Animal Control, followed by 27.6% on human service agency funding (ASSET), and 27.1% for CyRide public transportation. These findings are in Table 3.

**Table 3. On-going Service Priorities, 2023**

On-going Service (budgeted amount)	Should the city spend? .....			
	Less (1)	Same (2)	More (3)	Average
Ames Animal Shelter & animal control (\$575,970) (n=455)	8.1	63.1	28.8	2.2
Human service agency funding (ASSET). (\$1,832,931) (n=449)	9.1	63.3	27.6	2.2
CyRide (public transit) (\$2,120,043) (n=450)	9.3	63.6	27.1	2.2
Recreational opportunities (\$1,060,520) (n=454)	10.1	66.1	23.8	2.1
Parks activities (\$1,723,765) (n=455)	10.3	66.8	22.9	2.1
Arts programs (Public Art & COTA) (\$275,458) (n=453)	16.1	61.1	22.7	2.1
Land use planning (both current and long-term) (\$988,029) (n=451)	11.5	70.5	18.0	2.1
Fire protection. (\$6,408,376) (n=456)	3.7	86.2	10.1	2.1
Ames Public Library (\$4,955,060) (n=452)	13.1	68.6	18.4	2.1
Law enforcement (\$11,150,551) (n=452)	23.7	61.3	15.0	1.9
Other (please specify _____) (n=71)	11.3	63.4	25.4	2.1

**“Other” Suggestions for On-Going Services**

Respondents were asked to specify “Other” on-going services that they felt needed funding or priority. Fifteen respondents provided responses. The topics included environmental concerns, recycling/garbage, traffic planning, public education improvement, as well as several additional requests. Several people commented that they feel things should remain status quo.

- Community Amenities
  - Cultural Attractions
  - Dog Park. Apparently got a new access system. Made everyone sign up for it. Never implemented it.
- Community Planning
  - Historic preservation
  - Land Regeneration
- Environmental/Climate Concerns
  - Carbon reduction
  - Renewable energy
- Other
  - Increase the size of the gnome.
  - Schools are very poor in Ames.
  - Technical equipment
- Status Quo
  - N/A
  - Same
- Transportation Planning
  - Traffic Planning
  - Unclog our roads! More lanes, widen roads before development arrives. Ames

tends to let businesses and apartment building sprout up and then realize our roads are inadequate to handle the traffic volume.

- Waste Disposal
  - Garbage + Recycling
  - Recycling services

Table 4 shows the five-year trends of the “spend more” responses for ongoing City services. In 2023, the categories that received the most support for increased spending were Ames Animal Shelter and Animal Control, with 29% of respondents suggesting an increase in funding, followed by ASSET (human services funding) with 28%. It should also be noted that there is fairly strong support for increased funding four additional categories: CyRide (27% of respondents), Recreational Opportunities (24%), Parks Activities (23%) and Arts Programs (23%).

This year, the most noteworthy change was an 8% drop in support for more funding for law enforcement (23% in 2022 to 15% in 2023). Comparing 2022 to 2023, the other nine categories had year-to-year changes of between 1% and 4%. Over the past three years, CyRide public transportation services has become a stronger priority for respondents to receive additional funding, moving from only 13% supporting an increase in funding in 2021, then jumping to 24% on the 2022 survey and 27% in 2023.

**Table 4. Trends in “Spend More” Responses for On-going Services (%)**

Survey Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Services					
Percent					
Human Service Agency funding (ASSET)	22	25	27	32	28
Ames Animal Shelter and Animal Control	29	28	20	26	29
Art programs	20	23	28	25	23
Park activities	19	23	16	25	23
Recreational opportunities	18	21	9	25	24
CyRide (public transit)	18	19	13	24	27
Law enforcement	17	15	27	23	15
Land use planning (Both current and long-term)	18	15	18	21	18
Ames Public Library	15	16	28	17	18
Fire protection	11	11	27	12	10

When comparing the demographics of respondents with their support of certain services some statistically significant differences have been identified. The demographic data examined included years lived in Ames, age, gender, full-time student status, home ownership, education, employment status, household income, and geographic residence in town. No significant difference in budget increase/decrease by race (Whites versus non- whites) and by geographical residence (four quadrants of the city) were found.

These groups of respondents **supported increased spending** for the following programs and services:

Arts Programs (Public Art & COTA)

- No specific group

Fire protection

- Female

- High school diploma or GED

Human service agency

- Non-student residents
- Female

Law enforcement

- Non-student residents
- Homeowner
- Long-term residents (more than 10 years in Ames)
- Older respondent (older than 75 years of age)
- Homemaker
- \$50,000 - \$74,999 income
- High school diploma or GED

Ames Animal Shelter and Animal Control

- Female

Ames Public Library

- Some Graduate work
- Older respondent (older than 75 years of age)
- Works Full-time

Land use planning (both current planning and long-term)

- ISU Student
- Male

Park activities

- Middle-age respondent (25-44 years of age)
- Renter

Recreational opportunities

- Middle-age respondent (25-44 years of age)
- Long-term residents (7-10 years in Ames)

CyRide (public transit)

- Female
- ISU student
- Short-term residents (less than 1 year in Ames)
- Renter

**Comments on Priorities for On-Going Services**

The most common response from respondents pertaining to funding priorities was that they were unsure of how money should be spent. Many claim to not be well informed enough to make decisions on how the City of Ames should be allocating its funds and to what program or service. One respondent said, "Difficult to say less/same/more without a more detailed discussion of what those effects would be on services." Another said, "Thank you for the information, but I have no context for making these judgements."

Further respondents commented most on City spending. Commenters ranged from desiring the City to spend more on services and programs to desiring less involvement of City funds. The most common sentiment in the spending category was that the City should reallocate current spending to other categories. For example, "Ames should investigate shifting costs from Law Enforcement

activities and towards human services activities to provide more preventative and structural assistance for those in need,” and “If we give more resources to food sovereignty efforts, we’ll have less need for law enforcement.”

Several respondents noted that the city should spend less overall. “Reduce the size (and cost) of government to the few necessary and proper functions. The City of Ames has government that is currently far too large and involved in far too many areas.” Also, “Spend less tax dollars overall.”

One respondent was concerned about inflation, and how City spending is not on par with the disparity in value. “I checked ‘same’ meaning increase for cost of operation due to inflation. The spending must increase with inflation lately.”

Beyond spending action, a few commenters displayed their satisfaction with city services and programs, but more specifically, the library. One said, “[the] Library is great resource for a wide range of community services (library, community meetings, lectures, programs) and the people served.” Another said, “I think it’s great we support the library so much. It provides so many services.”

Commenters also weighed in on the value of City services as well as social services, and how both areas have room for improvement. For City services improvement, some said, “I would love more money going towards fixing the roads around Ames.” “Traffic South - North increased horribly since high density developments south of HWY 30 bypass. Duff and Grand Ave. are huge bottlenecks with added lights and stops.” In terms of social service improvement, many comments revolved around needs for the arts, children, and mental health. “More free activities for children would be a huge bonus for our community.” One also said, “More needs for the arts.”

Finally, two commenters weighed in on long term planning in the city budget, and they claimed their dissatisfaction in its effects. “Land planning has been largely a failure in this town. Seems like a lot of money has gone into it and whoever has the money gets to make the plans.” Another said, “No benefit apparent from land use planning. Long term plans not followed; short term plans don’t work.”

For additional and specific comments, see the appendix.

## **Capital Improvement Priorities**

Respondents were asked to prioritize seven suggested capital improvement project (CIP) areas. Table 5 shows respondents’ 2023 capital improvement priorities. This year, the three highest priorities were reconstruction of existing streets (89% rated this as a somewhat or very important priority), traffic flow improvements (82%) and storm water drainage improvements (78%). Reconstructing existing streets received a mean value of 3.3 based on a 4-point scale (1- not very important, 2 - not important, 3 - important and 4 - very important). Twenty-one survey respondents answered with “other” specified priorities, listed below. There were several comments about ways to improve bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure as well as road/traffic improvements. Additionally, respondents provided comments addressing the City’s sustainability efforts.

**Table 5. Capital Improvement Priorities, 2023**

	<u>Somewhat or Very Unimportant</u>	<u>Somewhat or Very Important</u>	<u>Average*</u>
	%	%	
Reconstructing existing streets	11	89	3.3
Traffic flow improvements	18	82	3.3
Storm water drainage improvements	22	78	3.1
Greenway trails (recreational) improvements	24	76	3.0
Improvements to existing parks	24	76	2.9
Off-street bike facilities (commuter) improvements	34	66	2.8
On-street bike facilities (commuter) improvements	38	62	2.7
Other, specify	19	81	3.1

\*1=very unimportant; 2=somewhat unimportant; 3=somewhat important; 4=very important

**Other responses: (n=21)**

- Bicycle Infrastructure
  - Bike lanes separate from car traffic.
  - Bike paths, keep them off the street, not safe.
  - Completely pave area on south side of south 16th from University to the school between the road and the bike path
- Crime
  - The crime on campus
- Nothing
  - N/A
- Pedestrian Infrastructure Improvements
  - Continued emphasis on pedestrian mobility, more traffic signals and timing
  - Pedestrian friendly areas
  - Sidewalks (x2)
- Public Transportation
  - CyRide
- Recreational Improvements
  - Indoor therapy pools
  - Make a second dog park in northern Ames
  - More activities for kids
- Sustainability Efforts
  - Clean energy
  - Food Forest
  - Long run climate planning
  - Recycling
- Traffic Flow Improvement
  - Dangerous intersections
  - Emphasis on traffic improvement!!!! Please find a way to get people to drive the speed limit. Always like 10mph below.
  - Neighborhood roads

- Water
  - Water hardness quality

Table 6 shows trends in survey respondents' views of the CIP priorities in the last five years. Two of the top three project priorities have remained quite consistent over the past five years: (1) reconstructing existing streets and (2) traffic flow improvements. This year, storm water drainage improvements (78%) narrowly edged out greenway trails (76%) and existing park improvements (76%) for the third priority spot.

In 2023, most of the CIP priorities held steady from the previous year. Although reconstructing existing streets continues to hold the top priority, the percentage of people indicating this was a very high or somewhat important priority rose 5% from 84% in 2022 to 89% in 2023. This year, there was also a slight increase in the priority of storm water drainage improvements from 73% in 2021 to 78% in 2023.

**Table 6. Trends in Capital Improvement Priorities**

<u>Service</u>	Survey Year				
	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>
	Percent very or somewhat important				
Reconstructing existing streets	86	83	83	84	89
Traffic flow improvements	81	81	78	83	82
Storm water drainage improvements	80	80	73	75	78
Greenway trails (recreational) improvements	62	62	77	77	76
Improvements to existing parks	63	63	78	76	76
Off-street bike facilities (commuter) improvements	57	57	69	67	66
On-street bike facilities (commuter) improvements	55	55	66	65	62
Other	60	60	96	68	81

Survey respondents ranked their three highest CIP priorities. Table 7 shows the results of those rankings. Reconstructing existing streets was ranked the highest priority followed by traffic flow improvements, and improvement to existing parks as the three highest priorities in 2023.

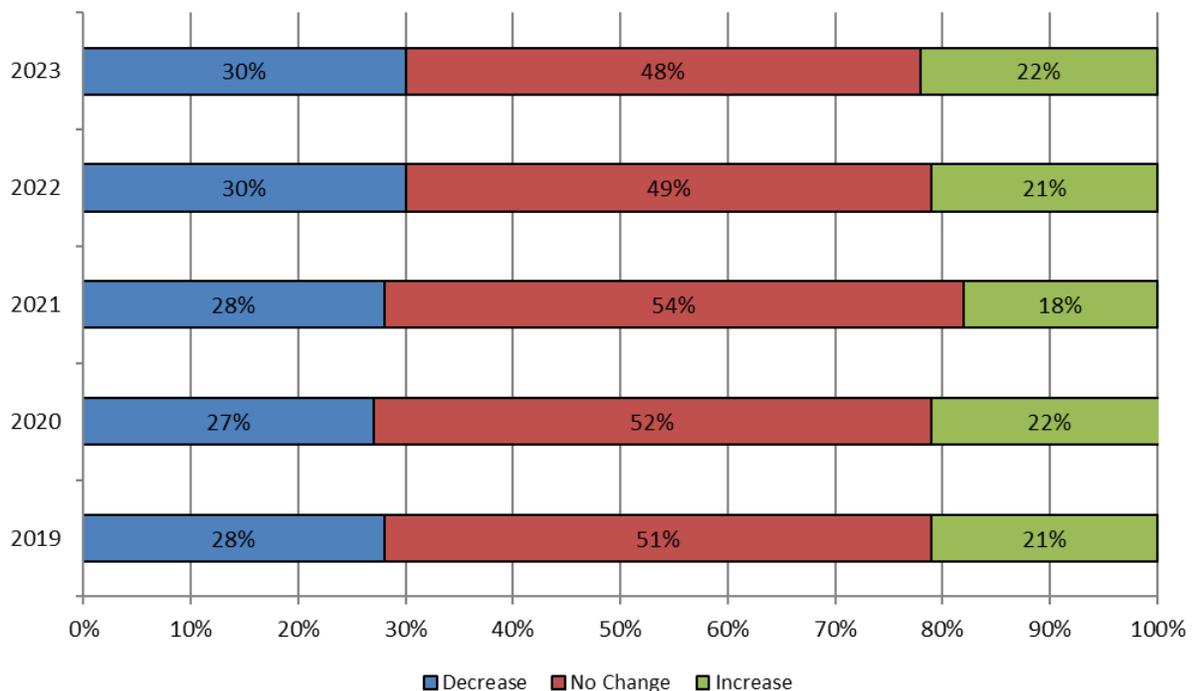
**Table 7. Ranking of Capital Improvement Priorities, 2023**

Capital Improvements	1st Priority (n=439)	2nd Priority (n=433)	3rd Priority (n=429)
Reconstructing existing streets	32.8	21.0	12.6
Traffic flow improvements	29.2	21.5	19.1
Improvements to existing parks	8.7	11.1	16.8
Storm water rainage improvements	7.7	17.3	15.9
Greenway trails (recreational) improvements	7.5	8.8	15.2
On-street bike facilities (commuter) improvements	7.3	9.2	8.6
Off-street bike facilities (commuter) improvements	4.6	10.6	9.6
Other	2.3	0.5	2.3

**Property Tax Adjustment**

The city levy for the next year is \$10.20 per \$1,000 of taxable valuation. This means that the City portion of the property tax on a \$100,000 home in Ames is about \$557 after rollback. When respondents were asked their view about adjusting property taxes next year, 48% indicated they would prefer no change, 30% suggested decreasing property taxes, and 22% suggested an increase in property taxes. Figure 2 shows preferred property tax adjustments over the past five years. This year, the percentage of respondents indicating they would prefer a decrease in property tax remained unchanged (30%) from 2022. Twenty-two percent would accept an increase in property tax, which is also slightly more compared to last year (21%). The percentage of “no change” decreased by 1% (from 49% in 2022 to 48% in 2023).

**Figure 2. Trends in Preferred Property Tax Adjustments for Next Year**



## Resident Satisfaction with City Services

Respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with nine services provided by the City of Ames. Responses were based on a scale of 1 to 4 (1 = “very dissatisfied”, 2 = “somewhat dissatisfied”, 3 = “somewhat satisfied”, and 4 = “very satisfied”) as well as a fifth option, “don’t know.” Figure 3 shows the level of satisfaction with city services continues to be high. From 2019 to 2023, all nine services were rated highly (satisfied to very satisfied) by the respondents.

In 2023, the residents’ satisfaction levels were similar to last year for all nine services provided by the City of Ames. Figure 3 shows that in the past five years, the level of satisfaction was steady with only minimal changes. The satisfaction levels for fire and rescue, public library services, and CyRide were slightly lower than in the 2022 survey. Public nuisance enforcement (e.g., noise, over-occupancy, yard upkeep) consistently receives the lowest overall rating among city services.

**Figure 3. Perceived Satisfaction Levels on Services, 2018-2022 (1=very dissatisfied; 4=very satisfied)**

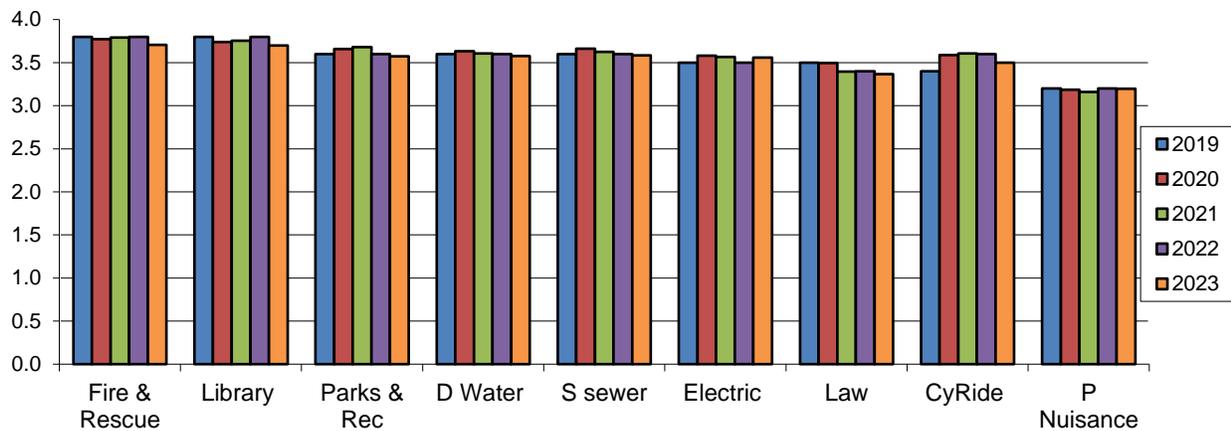


Table 8 summarizes respondents’ satisfaction with city services. Overall, respondents are quite pleased with city services, as five of nine service areas received more than 95% “somewhat or very satisfied” responses. Respondents were least satisfied with public nuisance enforcement services, with only 83.5% of respondents “somewhat or very satisfied,” followed by law enforcement services (87.3%).

**Table 8. Summary Table of Satisfaction with City Services (removing “don’t know”)**

	<u>Very/Somewhat Dissatisfied</u>	<u>Very/Somewhat Satisfied</u>
Fire & Rescue Services (n=367)	2.2	97.8
Library Services (n=393)	3.3	96.7
Sanitary Sewer System (n=427)	4.4	95.6

Parks & Recreation Services (n=450)	4.7	95.3
Electric Services (n=437)	4.8	95.2
CyRide Bus service (n=361)	6.6	93.4
Drinking Water Services (n=452)	8.8	91.2
Law Enforcement Services (n=417)	12.7	87.3
Public Nuisance Enforcement (n=381)	16.5	83.5

## Comments on City of Ames Services

Respondents made comments in one of two categories. The first was their level of satisfaction with the city’s services as a whole, and the second was their thoughts on specific services. For feelings on overall services, the majority of respondents claimed city services in Ames were satisfactory.

Comments include:

- “Ames is a great city to live in thanks to its great services.”
- “It's pretty popular to complain about things, including Ames (I'm looking at you "Ames People"), but overall, Ames is a pretty good place to live. I moved here 30 years ago to go to school and haven't been able to pry myself away. Good job. Keep up the good work.”
- “We have never used the fire rescue services, but otherwise we’ve had a great experience with all of the above.”
- “I recognize that law enforcement staffing levels are a challenge everywhere. I hope that Ames will retain high standards and provide incentives to attract quality staff.”
- “City provides good to very good services.”

Of those who were unsatisfied, topics mentioned range from parking enforcement to appearance on streets. One commenter said, “Could be better. Need to realign their goals and stop focusing so much on things that aren't necessary like parking and bar enforcement,” and another said, “I wish Ames had stricter regulations around height and color of signage, especially along Duff Avenue and Lincoln Way. When cities limit signage to street level with a consistency in colors, the streets just look nicer. Also, if I had a magic wand, I would bury electric wires. I know it is expensive, but what a difference it makes in the look of neighborhoods and the city overall.”

The rest of the comments highlight a specific city service with issues or things they like about them. Topics include parking, nuisance enforcement, CyRide, City website, stormwater, trash, parks and recreation, and library.

- “Need to send out a letter to all about dog barking (excessive) barking. Owner just releases their dogs into the backyard to do whatever with no obedience or control or care for the people around them.”
- “Love to see more free/expanded mass transportation - cut down on oil/fossil fuel consumption.”
- “For storm sewers we need to keep developing these catch basins to trail pits for holding water and flood mitigation.”
- “We need recycling and food waste services.”
- “Adult parks and rec (sports leagues) need better organization and communication.”

For additional and specific comments, see the appendix.

## Police Department

Survey respondents were asked to provide their opinions on priority areas for law enforcement by indicating if the Ames Police Department should give less, the same, or more emphasis to 16 law enforcement activities. Over 50% of respondents indicated the emphasis should be the same for every category, except sex-related offenses investigation and marijuana-related crime enforcement. Table 9 shows respondents' priority preferences for Ames Police Department activities from the 2023 survey.

While most people indicated that law enforcement activities should remain constant, 53% of respondents indicated sex-related offenses investigation should be considered for additional priority. Only 1.6% suggesting less emphasis. Other policing activities that people specified should have additional emphasis included domestic violence and family dispute resolution (39.7%), violent crimes investigation (39.4%), crime prevention and education activities (37.5%), and illegal drug use prevention and enforcement (35.3%).

Over one third of respondents agreed that parking laws enforcement (37.6%) and marijuana-related crimes enforcement (36.4%) should receive less emphasis from law enforcement. Over the past five years, parking laws enforcement has remained a consistent area that respondents agree should have less emphasis from law enforcement. Marijuana-related crimes enforcement has only been on the survey since 2022 but has also received similar support for less emphasis by law enforcement; last year 42% of respondents were in favor of less emphasis. Other categories that respondents felt should receive less emphasis included speed limit enforcement (19%), alcohol-related crime enforcement (17%), noise law and nuisance party enforcement (15%), and illegal drug related crimes enforcement (12%).

**Table 9. Future Emphasis for Police Department Activities**

<b><u>Police Department activity</u></b>	<b><u>Less</u></b>	<b><u>Same</u></b>	<b><u>More</u></b>
Sex-related offenses investigation (499)	1.6	45.5	52.9
Domestic violence & family dispute resolution (501)	2.4	57.9	39.7
Violent crimes investigation (498)	0.6	60.0	39.4
Crime prevention and education activities (501)	3.0	59.5	37.5
Illegal drug use prevention and enforcement (501)	11.8	52.9	35.3
Fraud & identity theft investigation (501)	2.4	67.1	30.5
Alcohol-related crime enforcement (506)	16.8	61.3	21.9
Residential patrolling (505)	9.5	69.7	20.8
Noise law and nuisance party enforcement (503)	14.9	65.4	19.7
Speed limit enforcement (506)	19.2	62.3	18.6
Animal control and sheltering (507)	5.3	76.5	18.1
Juvenile crimes investigation (504)	6.0	77.4	16.7

Traffic control and enforcement (505)	10.5	72.9	16.6
Marijuana-related crime enforcement (503)	36.4	48.1	15.5
Business district patrolling (500)	8.2	82.0	9.8
Parking laws enforcement (505)	37.6	53.9	8.5

Table 10 shows five-year trends for police department activities that should receive “more emphasis.” A majority of survey respondents (53%) indicated that sex-related offense investigation needs “more emphasis.” Other categories with strong support for additional emphasis include domestic violence/family dispute resolution (40%), violent crime investigation (39%), crime prevention and education (38%), illegal drug use prevention and enforcement (35%), and fraud & identity theft investigation (31%).

The trends for areas that need more emphasis have generally remained consistent. Nine out of 16 police activities reported similar numbers between the 2023 and 2022 surveys (change between 0% to +/-2%), which include sex-related offenses investigation (-1%), domestic violence/family dispute resolution (+2%), violent crimes (-1%), crime prevention/education (0%), illegal drug use prevention and enforcement (+2%), alcohol-related crimes enforcement (-1%), noise and nuisance party enforcement (0%), marijuana-related crime enforcement (+2%) and business district patrolling (+2%).

Several policing activities saw larger percent increases from the previous year which might be areas for additional consideration, these activities included residential patrol (+8%), traffic control and enforcement (+7%), fraud & identity theft investigation (+5%), speed limit enforcement (+5%), and parking laws enforcement (+4%).

**Table 10. Trends in “More Emphasis” for Police Department Activities**

Police Department activity	Survey Year				
	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>
	Percent				
Sex-related offenses investigation	51	55	54	54	53
Domestic violence/family dispute resolution	30	41	33	38	40
Violent crimes investigation	34	38	37	40	39
Crime prevention and education activities	38	34	34	38	38
Illegal drug use prevention and enforcement	35	32	29	33	35
Fraud & identity theft investigation	25	23	26	26	31
Alcohol-related crimes enforcement	23	16	19	23	22
Residential patrolling	19	19	19	13	21
Noise laws and nuisance party enforcement	18	20	22	20	20
Speed limit enforcement	15	13	12	14	19
Animal control and sheltering	18	19	15	15	18
Juvenile crimes investigation	13	14	11	14	17
Traffic control and enforcement	11	10	11	10	17

Marijuana-related crime enforcement	-	-	-	14	16
Business district patrolling	7	9	8	8	10
Parking laws enforcement	5	6	5	5	9

### Comments on Police Department (n=48)

The police department received positive comments from the survey. Here are examples:

- “Overall, I feel like the police department does a good job. I feel very comfortable and safe living in Ames.”
- “Friendly and helpful.”
- “Police are very visible in the community. I rarely go around town and don’t see at least one officer.”
- “Police have a tough job, and we must respect that and show patience when dealing with law enforcement.”
- “You all are amazing, and we’re blessed to have such dedicated public servants. Thank you. You deserve deep gratitude.”

The majority of respondents detailed positive experiences with the Ames Police Department; however, the next most common response detailed a lack of knowledge or unawareness. “Not totally informed or familiar with Ames Police Department.” Another respondent suggested additional information about where crimes are taking place, “I wish Ames Police were able to put out a crime warning like ISU does for sexual assaults and related offenses that happen off campus. I know a lot of those things happen on properties not affiliated with the university and it would be nice to know of patterns of behavior off campus as well as on.”

There was a group of respondents who noticed an excess of traffic violations and suggested increasing emphasis on irresponsible drivers throughout the city.

- “Need more enforcement on driving while talking on cell phone or texting while driving.”
- “Traffic - Ames has gotten worse with people. Turning in front of me when I have right of way. Cell phone use is a problem, running lights and stop signs, turning left in front of me from right lanes.”
- “We really wish there were more efforts at enforcing the speed limit and stop sign violations but that’s pretty minor stuff in the big picture. We appreciate the community outreach. We don’t know whether the police should do more or less of the big list in Section E but we think the police are doing a fine job and thank them for their hard work.”

These comments point to a feeling of danger on the roads as many use the roadways daily for transportation.

Several survey respondents advocated for more outreach from the Ames Police Department, but a similar amount noted that the outreach efforts were satisfactory and did not require more emphasis. Respondents saying they want more outreach said, “Would like to see more community out-reach design of police patrolling - Get out of the cars!” Another said, “Limited contact - no knowledge of activities listed.” Respondents claiming they were satisfied with current levels of outreach said, “Well-run, great public outreach.” Another said, “They have always been great in my

experience. I appreciate their communicative and outreach.”

Also related to the issue of sexual assault, one respondent commented, “With Ames being a college town I think there needs to be less emphasis on alcohol related issues because it is going to happen whether cops like it or not. I think the emphasis needs to be more on things like sexual assault and how to do things safely.” Another felt more could be done regarding sexual assault, “Ames police dept. is living in the DARK AGES when it comes to sexual assault and harassment. Those officers need education. This is based off of personal experience with my daughter.”

In the discussion of Police funding, respondents had mixed ideas. One respondent called for more funding of the police department, “if we had the money all areas need more.” Another respondent disagreed and commented:

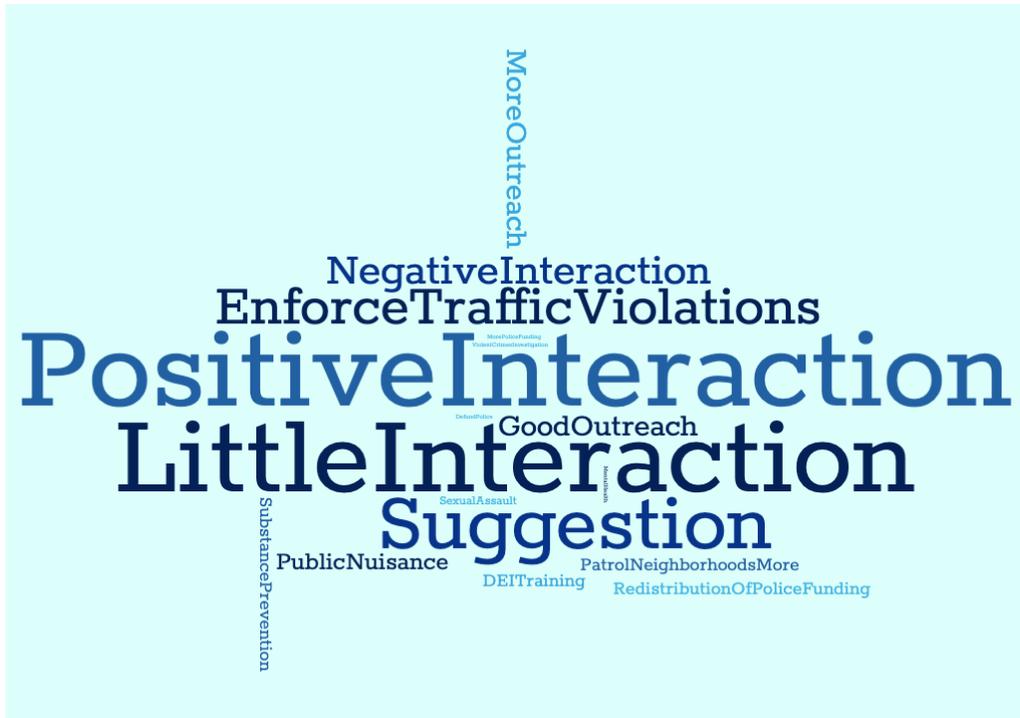
“Defund this department and give funds to schools, fire department, parks and recreation, and anything else. They do not need to have an airplane for traffic surveillance. They do not need body cameras every other year. They need to have teachers teach them how to make do on a budget that is slashed. This department serves the city as a standing militia and not the public. Remove the green dot for safe place as it is a slap in the face and disrespectful as their job is primarily to place blame and fine the community. Move money into having counselors and psychologist without weapons to respond to mentally ill and nonviolent crimes. If there is heavy money given to the department there needs to be monthly deep thorough department wide investigations on individuals and finances. Give the public ability to call the departments insurance providers to question their integrity and premium prices as a form of holding the department accountable. Provide educational hate and racism deconstruction courses to eliminate biases.”

Beyond this, the majority of commenters discussing police funding called for the redistribution of police funds. One said, “For a city of this size, it seems that there are lots of police vehicles and personnel. I presume that is largely due to the presence of ISU. So, look for ways (to the extent that this is not already happening) to shift the cost of this large presence onto those populations (young undergraduate students) that make it necessary. Also, reduce its size to the minimum required. For example, a much smaller police presence is needed during the summer. This is a legitimate role of government, but it can almost certainly be done more cost effectively than it is now.”

Other topics of concern included mental health, DEI training, and better enforcement of nuisances.

The word cloud is the visual representation of the comments. (Figure 4). For original responses, please refer to the appendix.

**Figure 4. Comments on Police Department**



## Fire Department

Survey respondents reported their satisfaction with Ames Fire Department activities. Table 11 shows respondents’ satisfaction ratings. For each activity, at least 53% of survey respondents responded with “Don’t know” (which was excluded in the analysis in Table 11). Nearly all the respondents were somewhat/very satisfied with emergency response times (98%) efforts followed by 97% approval for emergency medical response, extinguishing fires, and fire prevention and community outreach.

**Table 11. Satisfaction with Fire Department Activities (“don’t know” removed)**

Fire Department Activity	Very/Somewhat Dissatisfied	Somewhat/Very Satisfied
Emergency response time (n=215)	2	98
Emergency medical responses (n=391)	3	97
Extinguishing fires (n=148)	3	97
Fire prevention and community outreach (n=247)	3	97

## Comments on Fire Department (n=76)

Twenty-nine of comments were from respondents who said they never needed the services from the Ames Fire Department and/or had little experience dealing with the fire department. Generally, this group assumed the Fire Department was doing a good job and were thankful to have not needed their services.

Many of the comments provided positive feedback regarding the Ames Fire Department. Several of them mentioned how grateful they were for times they needed assistance. One respondent commented on the retrieval of a neighbor's pet cat. Another example included a quick response to a call, noting, "Called 911, Rapid response - Police efficient responders - Live in Windsor Oaks - Senior Center - Quiet - No sirens - Quick response."

Respondents provided positive outreach experiences. There were several comments on education programs. One student stated, "Good open houses for children. Information on how to access services to check/replace batteries for fire and carbon monoxide home detectors." Another said, "Great open house event in 2022! Great for the kids!"

While most of the comments were positive or stated that services were not used, some mentioned that they had no current knowledge. "I know very little about the fire department." And "I do not hear much, good or bad, about the fire department."

One person suggested that the City of Ames should consider building a fire station on the north side of town for faster response time for residents out there where a lot of development is happening. "Suggestion - build another station north Ames, far quicker response to northern residents."

For additional and specific comments, see the appendix.

### Figure 5. Comments on Fire Department



## Ames Electric Services

Survey respondents were asked a series of questions regarding Ames Electric Services, including questions about power outages, satisfaction with various aspects of the Electric Services department, and SunSmart Ames project. Almost two-thirds (72%) of the respondents have their electricity in their homes provided by the city in 2023.

The number of respondents who have experienced a power outage fluctuates every year and is nearly always connected to weather conditions. Table 12 demonstrates this fluctuation. Between 2019-2020 around one-third of respondents reported experiencing a power outage. By 2020, that number climbed to 48%, and in 2021, over 80% of those surveyed reported experiencing an outage due to the community-wide power outage resulting from the uncertain windstorm of derecho in August 2020. However, the rate sharply declined to 43% in 2022 and 53% of respondents in 2023 reported experiencing a power outage. Eighteen percent of respondents experienced a power surge which affected their computer operations in 2023, compared to 12% in 2022.

**Table 12. Respondents’ Experience with Electric Service Interruption**

<u>Service outage</u>	Survey Year				
	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>
Experienced power outage	34	48	80	43	53
Experienced power surge which affected computer operations	12	18	24	12	18

Table 13 shows satisfaction rates with Electric Department services. “Does Not Apply” responses were excluded in this analysis. Ninety-six percent of Ames customers were somewhat or very satisfied with the quality of power, and 93% were satisfied with the ease of reporting an outage. There was also a high rate of satisfaction with the response of employees (92%) and time to restore service (88%).

Respondents indicated favorable rates of satisfaction for the communication of progress in restoring services (87%). Almost a quarter (24%) of respondents reported being very/somewhat dissatisfied with electric rates.

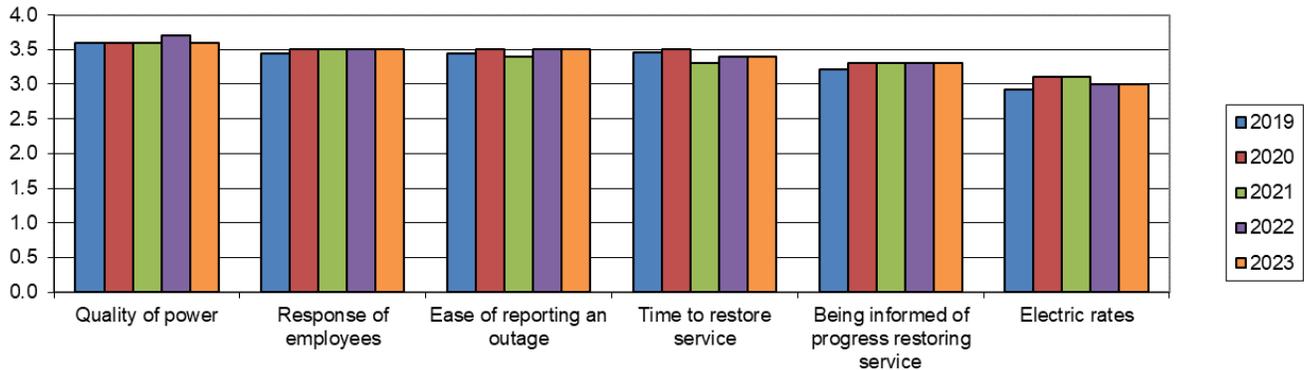
**Table 13. Satisfaction with Electric Department Services**

	Very/somewhat dissatisfied	Somewhat/very satisfied	<u>Average</u>
	Percent		
The quality of power (382)	4	96	3.6
Ease of reporting an outage (324)	7	93	3.5
Response of employees (292)	8	92	3.5

Time to restore service (327)	12	88	3.4
Being informed of progress restoring services (340)	13	87	3.3
Electric rates (376)	24	76	3.0

Figure 6 shows the five-year trends in the level of satisfaction with the Electric Department. The satisfaction levels have remained constant across each category over the five-year period, with some slight variations from year to year. The quality of power had a small dip on the 2023 survey compared to last year.

**Figure 6. Satisfaction with City Electric Department activities, 2019-2023**



Respondents were asked to gauge their interest in participating in the SunSmart Ames community solar farm (<https://www.CityOfAmes.org/Solar>). To participate, Ames Electric Services customers can purchase a share in the project for \$270 and receive a small monthly credit on their electric bill for 19 years. Only 16% of respondents indicated that they were interested in participating in the project.

The survey then asked for feedback on why customers would not want to participate. Of those who were not participating, 45% specified that they are not planning to stay in Ames long term, 25% responded that it was too expensive, and 7% stated that they were not interested.

Other reasons (37%) for not wanting to participate in the program include not knowing enough about the project or not aware of the program, will not qualify for the project because they are still living in an apartment, old age, not cost effective, apathy, and not thinking it's sound long-term project.

## Comments on City Electric Service

### Solar

- Positive SunSmart
  - Ames could do more with solar power and may need to in the near future. City officials should implement more solar power.
  - I am a student at Iowa Student am not interested in investing money, but I fully approve bringing a solar farm into Ames and the growing interest in renewable energy.

- I am curious to see the emission trade off of a solar farm production and upkeep versus the current power grid.
- I believe we do solar program.
- I currently rent but am in the process of buying. So I'll prob do it once I buy it.
- I didn't realize this was still available.
- I do want to do this.
- I have already purchased a power pack.
- I think this would be helpful.
- I would like to participate.
- I'm glad that Ames has its own electric service. That gives us citizens some control over things like investigating alternative fuel sources. I like the idea of solar and I hope Ames Electric Services continue to support it, but from a community and residential standpoint.
- Please continue efforts to provide clean and reliable energy to your customers. Things have gotten better, but there is more that should be done. Thank you.
- This would be a program I would support if I wasn't graduating and moving out of Ames for the time being.
- Would like to see more city emphasis on solar and other renewable energy sources.
- Negative SunSmart
  - I would like to participate, but we rent and do not plan on renting for 20 years to take advantage. I would appreciate shorter term options for renters like us.
  - I would totally be interested in participating in the solar farm; however, I am a senior in college and cannot afford it. Also, I am moving in a few months.
  - I'm a college kid, so I'm just living in the dorms, and this doesn't really apply to me.
  - If we could do this with immediate savings, we'd consider it.
  - Last, I had calculated the return on the power pack was too low.
  - Long term budgets may not cover upfront costs.
  - Monthly bills too low to justify purchase.
  - Solar power is wasteful of money and resources. The production of solar panels produces much waste. If solar were really efficient, you wouldn't need government agents to bribe people to use it.
  - The cost vs. return ratio is negative.
  - This program doesn't seem to actually reduce cost in the long term. This program is only there to make people happy they are being "green."
  - Will need to check on how much the credit is.
  - Would not pay off.

### **Overall Thoughts**

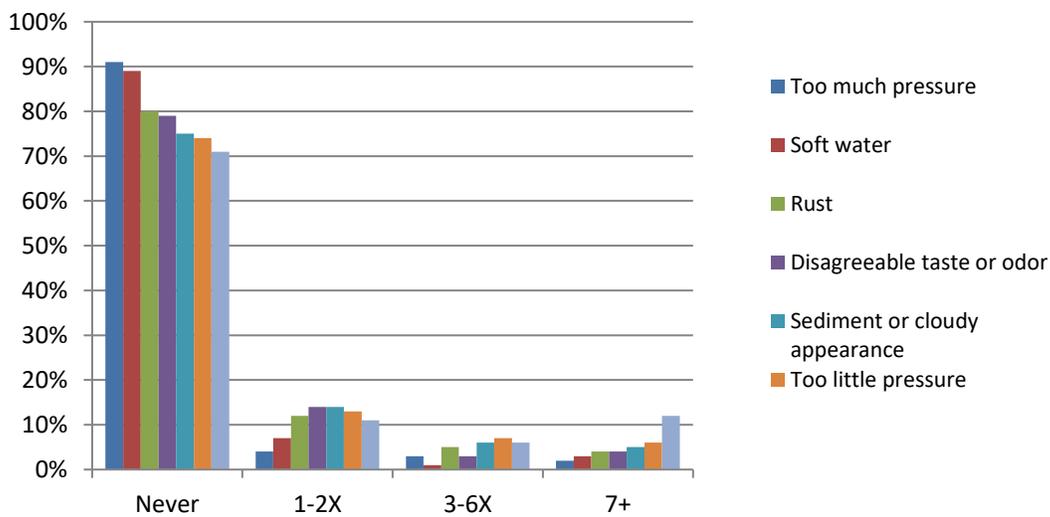
- Satisfactory
- Ames should be proud of electric services. I had a problem with my upstairs lights, the maintenance men just knew it was the meter and wouldn't do anything until Ames checked the meter. I called and the city within an hour they had 2 guys here to check they left their names and numbers and said to call them if the maintenance guy gave me any more problems 10/10 would absolutely recommend them again.

## Drinking Water Service

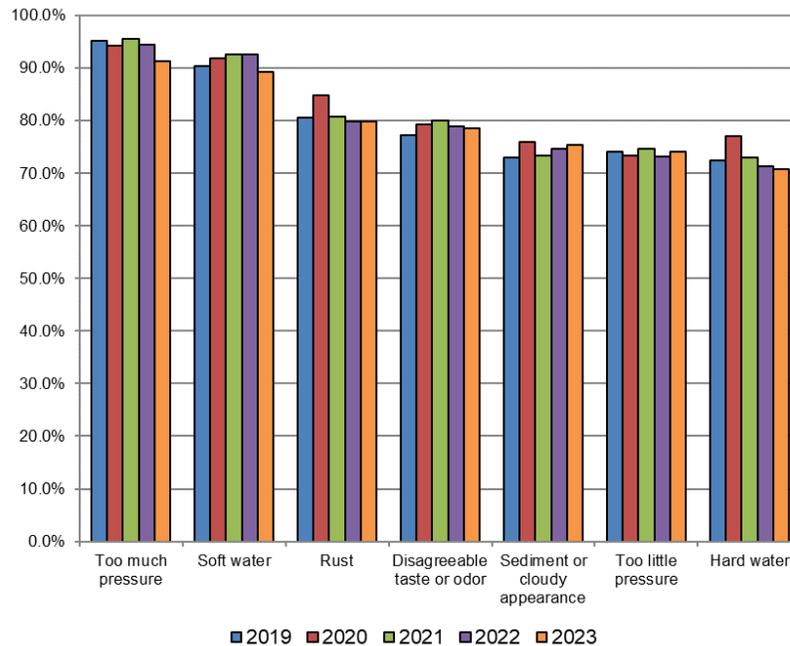
Of the respondents who use City of Ames drinking water and sanitary sewer services, the majority reported never having problems such as too much pressure (84%), soft water (76%), rust (75%), disagreeable taste or odor (73%), sediment or cloudy appearance (71%), too little pressure (69%), and hard water (64%).

Figure 7a shows the frequencies of water service problems as reported in 2023. Most respondents experiencing water problems indicated they had problems once or twice in the past year. These problems range from too much pressure (4%) to a disagreeable taste or odor (13%). Eleven percent of respondents reported experiencing hard water on seven or more occasions in the last year. Figure 7b shows the number of respondents reporting no water problems for the past five years (2019 to 2023). Historically, a majority of Ames residents are pleased with their water. The chief complaints are having hard water and too little pressure.

**Figure 7a. Frequencies of Water Service Problems, 2023**



**Figure 7b. Respondents Reporting No Water Service Problems, 2019-2023**



### Comments on Drinking Water Services

Many respondents commented positively about Ames tap water. Most comments indicated that they were pleased with the quality and taste through words like excellent, best water, delicious, good, and great. “I love Ames water.”

While there were many positive comments, respondents also shared their complaints. Some common comments included hard water, pressure issues, discolored water from hydrant flushing, and sediment in the water. Several people living in apartment buildings said they experience water issues, but they attributed their issues to conditions within the apartment building rather than city water. It was mentioned by some that Ames water used to be better than it is now. General comments include:

- “Very good - I hope this level of quality is maintained.”
- “Ames has the best tasting water in the world.”
- “I very much appreciate the taste of Ames water! It has spoiled me: when we travel, I am sometimes unwilling to drink from the local tap water because of unpleasant taste.”
- “We love award winning Ames Tap Water! Hooray for the city of Ames!”
- “Love Ames water - Don’t use a water pitcher or our fridge water, its good right out of the faucet.”

While this service has received high praise, some commenters did note their issues with it. Some are concerned with its quality in recent times, and its consistency over time. “Water has some appearance and taste since I’ve been in Ames.” “Filter the water more!!! Update your facilities to

higher quality and to accommodate more people.”

Other residents use filtration systems and believe they are not in a place to comment on the Ames services, as they are cleaning the water themselves at home out of their tap.

- “We have a water softener system, so I cannot answer those questions about the water before it goes through that system.”
- “We needed to put a whole house filter on due to sediment in the water clogging up our faucets.”

For additional and specific comments, see the appendix.

### Figure 8. Comments on Drinking Water Service



### Water and Pollution Control Department

Survey respondents were asked to provide their level of satisfaction with water quality and rates on a scale of 1 – Very Dissatisfied to 4 – Very Satisfied. Respondents could also choose “Does not apply.” The satisfaction rates are reported in Table 14. Ninety-two percent of those surveyed were satisfied with water quality, 79% were satisfied with water rates, and 80% were satisfied with sewer rates.

Comparing 2023 data to the previous year, overall, the numbers remained quite steady from the previous year. Customer satisfaction is high among all three categories. Water quality ranked highest with an average score of 3.5 out of 4, indicating a high level of satisfaction.

**Table 14. Satisfaction with Water & Pollution Control Department Services**

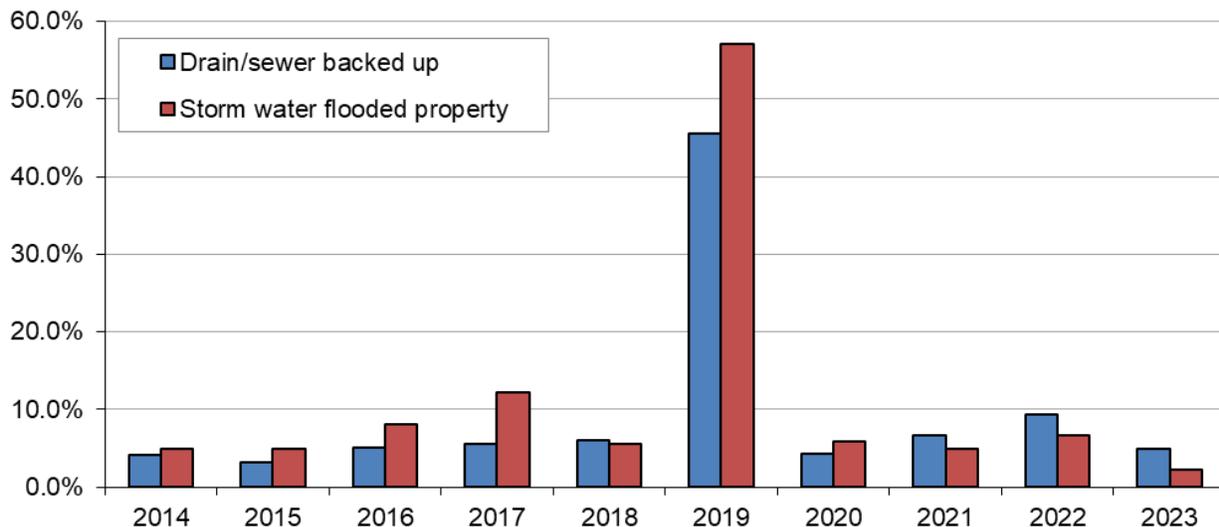
	<b>Very/somewhat dissatisfied</b>	<b>Somewhat/very satisfied</b>	<b>Average</b>
Water quality (n=447)	8	92	3.5
Water rates (n=398)	21	79	3.0
Sewer rates (n=302)	20	80	3.0

\*“Does not apply” excluded when calculating percentages for “very dissatisfied” to “very satisfied.”

Figure 9 shows trends in the number of people experiencing problems related to the City’s stormwater system over the past decade. Generally, fewer than 10% of respondents experienced sewer problems. Major events can be noted; for example, in 2017, there were slightly more stormwater-flooded properties, but the numbers from 2019 far exceed any of the other years. In June 2018, Ames received 5.5 inches of rain in one rain event, leading to a historic flash flooding event that affected many in the community.

This year, fewer respondents experienced flooding or sewer backup events on their property, due in part to very dry conditions in the past year. Only 5% of survey respondents indicated they had a backup in their home (compared to 46% in 2019 and 9% in 2022). Of the 24 people who had a drain backup problem, 42% (n=10) reported the problem to the City, of whom five were somewhat or very satisfied with the response and assistance they got from the city. The survey also asked respondents if they had experienced stormwater flooding onto their properties from the street in the past year. In 2023, only 2.3% of respondents reported stormwater flooding from the street. Of the 11 respondents who experienced flooding, only eight people reported the problem to the City. When asked how satisfied they were with the City’s response to the flooding problem, four reported being somewhat satisfied with the response.

**Figure 9. Respondent’s Experience with City Sewer System Problems, 2014-2023**



## Comments on Water and Pollution Control

There were 29 comments for the Water and Pollution Control section. Comments range from topics of satisfaction levels, water rates, stormwater systems, and water quality.

The majority of comments provided detailed a negative connotation with water pollution and control. Several were dissatisfied with the operations and results of the Ames Water Department.

- “I think that a city should provide storm water control as a basic city service to all and pay for it with general property tax. It seems unfair to start changing for it after it have been provided for decades and then only charge property owners.”
- “City of Ames performs apartment inspections but doesn't ever do anything about the too small pipes in my building which cause often backups, holes in the bathroom floor, and water damage.”
- “I do know of neighbors/neighborhoods near us that have ongoing flooding due to undersized drainage pipes- the area is more populated than projected.”
- “Public water (rivers, creeks, etc...) are disgusting.”

With eight comments being deemed “Unsatisfactory,” only two were “Satisfactory.” One of the comments pertained to drinking water, while the other said “Keep up the good work.”

Beyond this, five of the twenty-nine comments claimed water rates were too high. “Using industry as justification to raise rates yearly is not a good enough reason. Improvements to water service & sanitary control & service due to higher input costs and labor costs should be the reason and should be open and transparent as possible.” Another one said, “Disappointed that water rates continue to increase by large percentage.”

With these being the large areas of input, the remaining comments highlight bad water quality and the need to conserve water. “Water is very hard” and “When in a drought, enforce water reduction use, no watering of lawns etc. conserve water where possible.”

For additional and specific comments, see the appendix.

## Neighborhood Nuisance Enforcement

Table 15 illustrates survey respondents’ satisfaction with the City’s neighborhood nuisance enforcement efforts. Almost half of respondents surveyed indicated that they did not know about nuisance enforcement activities. “Don’t know” ranged from 44% (yard upkeep – overgrown vegetation) to 74% (rental over occupancy). These individuals were excluded from the calculated satisfaction percentages.

Among those who expressed opinions regarding their satisfaction with neighborhood nuisance enforcement, more than two-thirds reported being “somewhat satisfied” to “very satisfied” with each enforcement effort: noise limits (79%), front yard parking on residential property (79%), over-occupancy in rental property (75%), dangerous structures (71%), yard upkeep (67%), and outdoor storage on property (65%).

When satisfaction level was compared against geographic residences of the respondents, the level of satisfaction was the same regardless of where a respondent lives for all six nuisance ordinance enforcements.

**Table 15. Satisfaction in Neighborhood Nuisance Enforcement**

	<u>Very/Somewhat Dissatisfied</u>	<u>Somewhat/ Very Satisfied Percent</u>	<u>Average</u>
Front yard parking on residential property (n=214)	21	79	3.1
Noise limits (n=242)	21	79	3.0
Over-occupancy in rental property (n=129)	25	75	3.0
Dangerous structures (dilapidated, unsecured, holes, collapsing) (n=237)	29	71	2.9
Yard upkeep (overgrown vegetation) (n=282)	33	67	2.9
Outdoor storage on property (old cars, tires, furniture, garbage) (n=268)	35	65	2.8

### Comments on Neighborhood Nuisance Enforcement

Most respondents had no experience with any of the nuisance enforcement issues or felt they were not applicable to their situation. One resident commented, “No nuisance in our neighborhood that I’m aware of.”

Some respondents claimed they were satisfied with Ames’ job keeping the city clean and making sure citizens are following protocol. One said, “I’ve never had a problem with any areas so maybe very satisfied.”

Another portion of respondents claimed to have long wait times in smaller neighborhoods for City action concerning nuisance enforcement. One comment said, “Longer response time for smaller neighborhood issues.”

For those who are aware of nuisance enforcement, several expressed concern at the perceived action by the City of Ames. “[A] beautiful house built in 1921 and it became a party house and was loud and disgusting and the city police did nothing even though I called and reported excessive noise late parties and alcohol poisoning.” Another person expressed disappointment with the city and said, “All of these need stricter enforcement.”

There were several comments about expressing general frustration about certain nuisances that contribute to dissatisfaction among residents. These include barking dogs, overgrown vegetation, unkept properties, trash, snow removal, and parking. Comments included the following:

- “We had problems with a neighbor and a noisy dog (big pit bull) who were living above our apartment.”

- “The residential and college rented homes in Ames are run down, dilapidated, and an eye sore. They look awful and make me not want to live in Ames anymore.”
- “People keep parking on houses driveway blocking the sidewalks! This is so annoying and against the rules.”
- “Yard upkeep of dangerous vegetation should be enforced (dead trees) w/o prejudice as this is dangerous to everyone.”
- “West Ames, specifically, has so much garbage everywhere. No clue where it is coming from. Disgusting.”

A group of respondents felt that property and yard upkeep ordinances weren’t important and should receive less emphasis from the city. These comments focused on letting property owners do what they choose on their private property.

- “It’s not the business of any government bureaucrat or politician. It’s not anybody’s business but the owner of the property.”
- “If it’s their land, they should do what they want with it.”
- “Every ordinance of this type reduces the rights of the property owner. Those rights should be reduced only in extreme and compelling circumstance.”

**Figure 10. Comments on Nuisance Enforcement**



For additional and specific comments, see the appendix.

## Street Maintenance

Residents were given the opportunity to rate street maintenance using a four-point scale from “very poor” (1) to “very good” (4). The average values ranged from 2.9 to 3.3, meaning the road services were rated from nearly good to very good. When “very good” and “good” responses were combined,

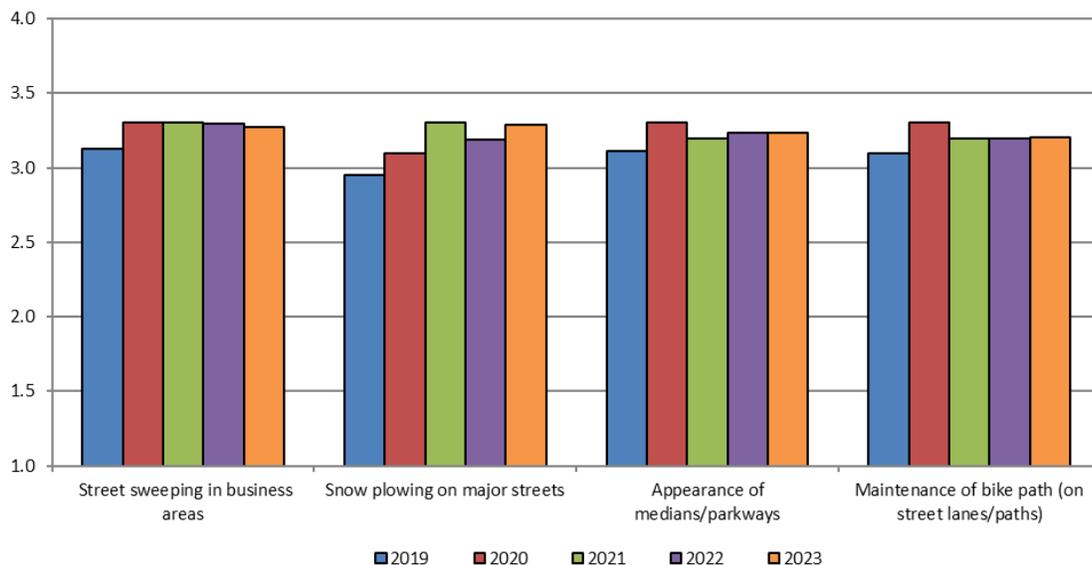
responses ranged from 72% for neighborhood snow plowing to 94% for street sweeping in business areas, as seen in Table 16.

**Table 16. Road Service Ratings**

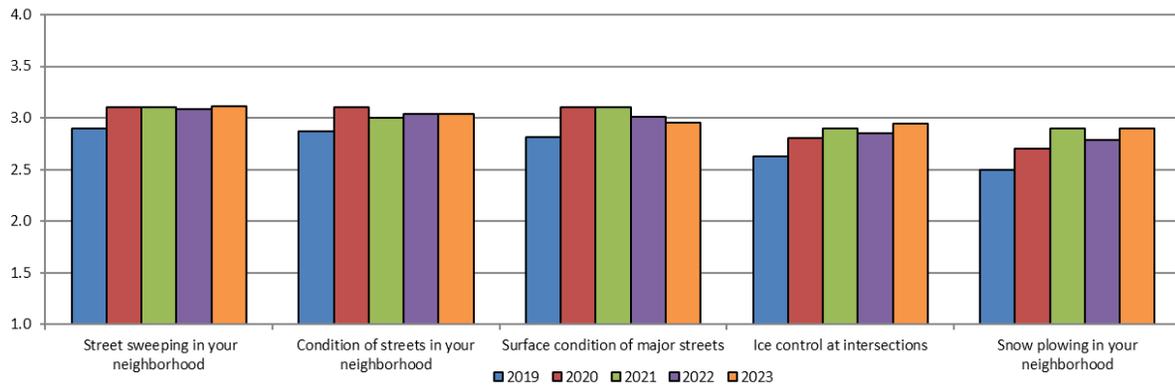
	Very Poor/ Poor	Good/Very Good	Average
Snow plowing on major streets (n=493)	11	89	3.3
Street sweeping in business areas (n=376)	6	94	3.3
Appearance of medians and parkways (n=490)	9	91	3.2
Maintenance of bike path system (on street lanes & paths) (n=405)	13	87	3.2
Street sweeping in your neighborhood (n=421)	16	84	3.1
Condition of streets in your neighborhood (n=498)	16	84	3.0
Surface condition of major streets (n=485)	21	79	3.0
Ice control at intersections (n=486)	21	79	2.9
Snow plowing in your neighborhood (n=491)	28	72	2.9

Figures 11a and 11b compare the respondents’ ratings of the quality of street maintenance over the past five years. Three categories related to snow and ice received improvements in 2023 from the 2022 rating. Seven out of nine street maintenance features were ranked “good” with an average score higher than 3.0. Two street maintenance categories received slightly lower average ratings: ice control at intersections and neighborhood snow plowing. In 2023, six of the nine street maintenance features mentioned in Table 16 were viewed the same regardless of geographic residence. However, snow plowing and street sweeping in the neighborhood and surface condition of major streets were rated higher by those living in the northeast and rated lowest by those from southeast part of the city.

**Figure 11a. Quality of Street Maintenance Features (2019-2023)**



**Figure 11b. Quality of Street Maintenance Features Continued (2019-2023)**



The survey also asked respondents to rate the effectiveness of coordination between traffic signals. Table 17 shows that when categories were combined, 60% of respondents perceived that the traffic signal coordination was “often and/or almost always” effective, compared to 34 percent who perceived the coordination to be “rarely to sometimes” effective.

**Table 17. Signal Coordination Effectiveness (n=382), 2023**

	Percent
Often effective	41
Sometimes effective	27
Almost always effective	19
Rarely effective	7
Don't know	6

### Comments on Street Maintenance

The majority of commenters were concerned with traffic flow, specifically the timing of lights at intersections around the city. Comments were concerned with both vehicle stoplights and pedestrian crossing lights.

- “Traffic signals frequently out of sync.”
- “When a pedestrian pushes a crosswalk button, it takes so long for the light to change.”
- “Total lack of coordination, common to drive, stop at light and when it turns green the next one turns red. Faster and less stressful to drive residential streets.”
- “Think about coordinating traffic signals to non-automotive users better. Having to push a beg button as a pedestrian or cyclist is ridiculous, especially in the winter.”
- “Sometimes seems lights don’t change as fast as should like when no traffic is very low.”
- “Rarely ever get through 2 traffic lights without having to stop.”

In addition to this, many respondents say that traffic flow is ineffective on city streets. Many suggest

improvements to how space is used on the roadways and where new lights could be added or removed to resolve problems. “Certain stops such as 13<sup>th</sup> and Grand, are not optimal during high traffic hours.” Another said, “Traffic lights at major intersections do a poor job of maximizing use of the shared space (the intersection).”

The next most popular comment topic was about safety on the roadway. Many respondents claim that safety adjustments are needed in order to make daily travel safer for residents. “There needs to be a turn arrow at intersection of 13th and Grand going east - west. It’s dangerous.” “Need lights on W. Riverside Rd and 69 is getting busier and more dangerous.”

Many respondents have noticed issues with snow removal during the wintertime. “We live in a cul-de-sac and it often gets passed by for snow removal and street sweeping (for leaves in the fall). We sometimes have to call after a couple days to get it addressed.” Another said, “Snow removal continues to be a challenge. Seems like it takes a long time for major streets to get cleaned.”

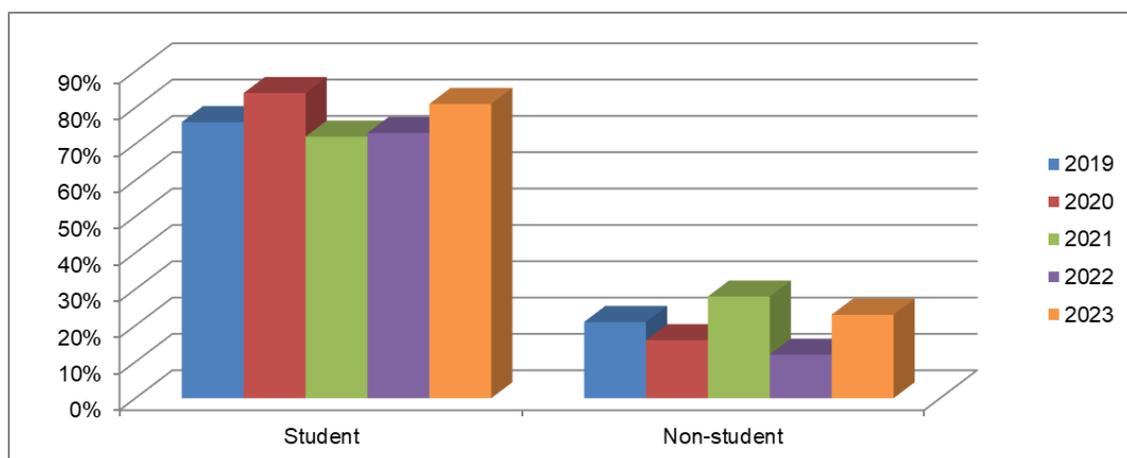
Further comments include topics of bike and pedestrian paths, more or less stoplights, street drainage, road condition, and satisfied/unsatisfied sentiments.

For additional and specific comments, see the appendix.

## CyRide

Ames’ mass transportation system – CyRide – was evaluated in the survey. Figure 12 shows the difference in ridership between those identifying as students and non-students. Among those respondents who used CyRide at least once a week, 70% were students and 30% were non-students.

**Figure 12. Use CyRide at Least Once a Week, 2019-2023**



In 2023, 46% of survey respondents reported some weekly use of CyRide, which is a little lower than last year (44%). In the past five years, the use of CyRide has averaged around 44% (between 44% and 45%). In 2023, 54% of respondents reported they never rode the bus.

There was a 1% increase in those using CyRide 7 to 10 times in a week compared to 2022, 3% increase in more than ten times in a week and 1% increase in 2 to 6 times per week. However, there is 3% decrease in those using CyRide once in a week. (Table 18).

A correlation was found between resident demographics and CyRide usage. CyRide users are mostly younger (under 28 years of age) and have stayed in Ames for a shorter period of time (average 7.1 years). The non-CyRide users were older (average age 54) and have lived in Ames longer (average 24 years). The majority of those who using CyRide were students (70%) and mostly renters (79%).

**Table 18. Respondents’ Weekly CyRide usage**

Weekly use	2019	2020	Survey Year 2021 Percent	2022	2023
Never	56	55	56	56	54
2 to 6 times	16	17	25	18	19
7 to 10 times	12	12	8	12	13
More than 10 times	13	13	5	7	10
Once a week	4	3	6	7	4

When respondents were asked what would make them consider using CyRide, if they are not currently using it, half (50%) said “nothing.” Twenty seven percent mentioned they would use the service if there were more frequent routes near their residence. Additional factors that would encourage increased CyRide ridership included more area coverage (21%), longer service (earlier/later) during the day (17%), or no cost (12%) and lower fare (3%) (Table 19).

**Table 19. Services that Would Make You Consider Using CyRide if Not Currently Using This Service (n=246)**

<u>Reason</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>
Nothing	122	50
Service was more frequent on routes near me	67	27
Services were provided to more areas of Ames	52	21
Service was offered on my route longer during the day (earlier or later times)	43	17
The fare when boarding the bus was at no cost	29	12
The fare when boarding the bus was lower	8	3
Other (specify)	33	13

**Other Responses to Consider Using CyRide**

- Direct routes

- Free passes for people on welfare
- Will ride the bus when I stop driving or my vehicle no longer working.
- More accurate/ frequent stops
- Walking distance to bus stop
- Bus stop closer to my house

## Comments on CyRide

- Great Service
  - Appreciate having the service available in Ames and know many consistently rely on it. Provide great service to the community.
  - CyRide is a great asset to Ames. And while I don't personally use it, I am happy to support it for the benefit of the community.
  - CyRide is a wonderful resource and asset in the community. I rode it as a college student in Ames.
  - Good service but keep it a pay option.
  - I am a huge advocate of CyRide. It was an amenity we wanted when we moved here. I would like to see it expand.
  - I enjoy using CyRide; it does a good job.
  - I enjoyed using CyRide as a student and think that it is a valuable asset for a college town.
  - I love CyRide.
  - I take the CyRide downtown and it is awesome. A safe and responsible way to drink the 2-3 times I do on weekends downtown per semester.
  - I utilize CyRide a lot and appreciate the public transportation.
  - I work for CyRide, so I don't generally ride it and am biased towards these questions.
  - It is amazing. The moonlight times are inconsistent though and this was bad during the winter months when people were depending on it for warm transportation.
  - It's a great service. It's very important that buses run on schedule.
  - Love it.
  - The new electric buses look awesome and are super quiet.
  - Very much needed and a plus for the university. I'm retired and enjoy my own car.
  - We have used CyRide in the past and been very happy but do not have the need right now.
  - We think the CyRide app is very useful.
  - You beat Des Moines with no comparison. The fact that I can use it with my Iowa State card on any bus is mind blowing. Des Moines has nothing even close.
- Don't Use
  - Can't answer - don't use CyRide, probably wouldn't.
  - Given our jobs' types can't use CyRide.
  - I commute to West Des Moines for work.
  - I either work from home or commute to Des Moines. CyRide does nothing for me.
  - My husband has Parkinson's and no longer drives. Living now at Green Hills, we

do not have to use CyRide transportation for people who are mobility impaired. We very much appreciate, though, that this is an option for our community.

- Sorry, but I'm not used to riding public bus and will probably stay that way.
- Inconvenient
  - I wish the system was less confusing and disorganized, also more focus on town transit and less on campus.
  - Sorry, but I'm not used to riding public bus and will probably stay that way.
- Expand Service
  - EASE is okay, but I wish there was a route to East Ames.
  - I am a student living with other students who all use CyRide that we pay for through tuition. If residents want to use it, first they need to pay in some way. Whether it's taxes or upfront. Also, as of right now CyRide is PACKED getting to and from classes. If they are going to increase amount of riders, they need to increase frequency and have more routes with less destinations.
  - I would like to see expanded bus services available to all residents in the City of Ames and funded through property taxes. Additional services would include more frequent routes, increased service in off hours, and ability to hail rides. Would also like to see CyRide move towards more emissions-free vehicles.
  - I would like to see expanded routes for CyRide. I live in southeast Ames and am an ISU student. The buses do not come near my apartment, so I have to drive to campus and pay for parking. I cannot park in the commuter lot because the buses that go there do not go to where my classes are. It's frustrating paying for something I am unable to use.
  - It would be great if CyRide went to Reiman Gardens and Scheman/Fisher.
  - Please extend the services for student who work at Research Park up to their offices. Walking in the snow up till InTrans in Research Park made me slip thousand times.
  - Please make expanding service westward a priority
- Don't Expand Service
  - I have 4 kids. Riding a bus regularly as a family is a really tough sell. Also, our city is pretty small, in my amateur experience, it doesn't seem like it can support expanded service.
  - Not looking to pay 1,000,000 per bus for all electric buses.
  - Unfortunately, the US was not built for easy public transit. The money spent to make CyRide more frequent add to encourage ridership would be better spent elsewhere. Public transport changes would have to be made to all of Central Iowa to encourage wider adoption.
- Should Be Free
  - I might hop on the bus if it was free, but I usually drive to specific location for a specific purpose, e.g., grocery store. If my destination is less than 3 miles one way, I usually walk.
  - I occasionally use it now. Would use if no fare.
  - Improving biking trails and sidewalks would help make fare free transportation.
  - WIC, progress Monday free meals - medical could include free pass for these people.
  - Would be great if free - a good way to help out those with reduced.

- No Stops Near Me/Destination
  - I am about 1 km from my nearest stop, so walking to is often faster due to low frequency.
  - I have ridden CyRide mostly on campus. I took my grandkids to go to Reiman Gardens, but bus didn't drop us very close. It was a hot walk the rest of the way.
  - I live in East Ames, and the bus does not come out to me. The EASE service ends around 6, so I do not use public transportation as much as I would like to. I drive to the commuter lot and use the bus from there.
  - I use CyRide to travel to campus but the stops and routes I would have to use for my daily commute mean at least 20 mins of walking. My drive is 10 minutes.
  - Its closest stop is several blocks away and has only one not too frequent route (near Kate Mitchell library).
- Prefer Driving
  - After the pandemic I do have concerns about being in a crowd of people or high-density people situations, Used to ride CyRide all the time during winter months before I retired.
  - I own a car so much more convenient to get around quicker rather than taking multiple buses. I have enjoyed using CyRide when I was younger. It is nice for those who don't own a car and for avoiding looking for parking.
  - I prefer to drive and have the convenience of my own vehicle.
  - It is hard to get people to give up their cars.
  - Retired and more convenient to drive.
- Walk/Bike
  - I live very close to work and usually ride my bike.
  - I walk or ride to most of my destinations (downtown Main Street or ISU) and distance to bus stop gets me halfway to destination so easier to just walk/bike.
- Student Centric
  - It doesn't feel user friendly for residents, just students; Majority of routes are run through ISU campus. Not enough routes and times throughout town.
  - It's really good for students living on major bus routes, but difficult to use otherwise.
- Improve Driver Quality
  - Drive safer - I get scared sometimes.
  - Random driver evaluations should be done. Primarily for safety but also rider quality assurance.
  - The drivers almost never use turn signals when pulling away from a stop or will merge into a secondary lane from stationary without using a signal.

## Community Parks and Recreation

Residents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with various Ames Parks and Recreation features on a four-point scale from “very poor (1)”, “poor (2)”, “good (3)”, “very good (4)” or “don’t use.” The individuals who did not use a park feature were excluded from the ratings in Table 20.

Parks and recreation features continue to receive high levels of satisfaction among those surveyed. When positive ratings of “good” and “very good” scores were combined, participants gave an overall satisfaction rate of 80% for restrooms and 96% for both the overall appearance of the parks and playground equipment. The average rating ranges from 3.0 (restrooms) to 3.5 (overall appearance of the parks) on the 4-point scale.

**Table 20. Users’ Satisfaction with Parks and Recreation Features, 2023**

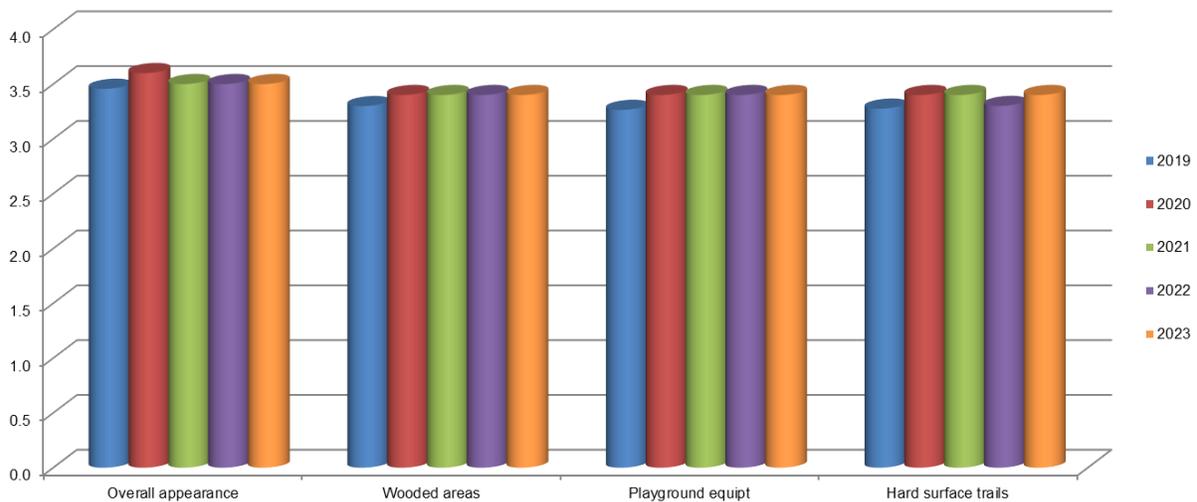
	<u>Very Poor</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Very Good</u>	<u>Average*</u>
Overall appearance of parks (n=508)	1	4	44	52	3.5
Wooded areas (n=439)	2	4	44	50	3.4
Playground equipment (n=307)	1	3	50	46	3.4
Hard surface trails/crushed rock trails (n=452)	1	3	52	43	3.4
Shelter houses (n=385)	1	6	62	32	3.3
Picnic areas (tables/grills) (n=406)	2	6	59	33	3.2
Tennis courts (n=227)	2	8	58	32	3.2
Restrooms (n=368)	2	17	61	19	3.0

\*“Don’t Use” excluded when calculating percentages & average for “very good” to “very poor.”

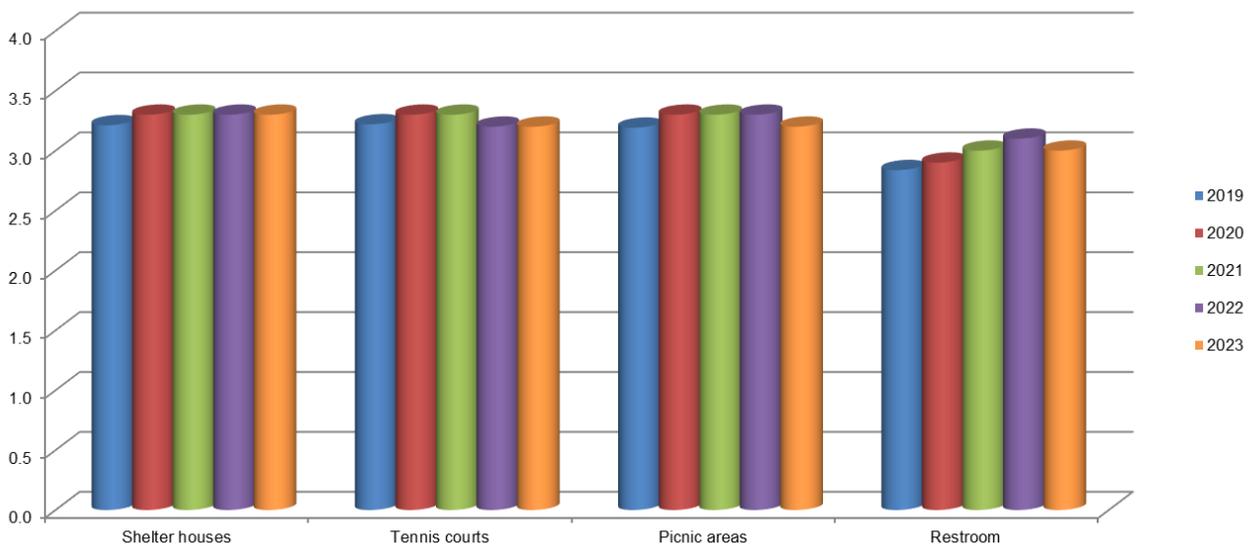
\*1=very poor; 2=poor; 3=good; 4=very good

This year, most features (5 out of 8 items) were rated the same as last year; see Figures 13a and 13b. The average satisfaction rating of hard surface trails gained .1 point from the 2022 survey. Two features, picnic areas and restrooms, were rated slightly lower than in 2022. Restrooms remain the lowest ranked parks and recreation feature, with an average score of 3.0.

**Figure 13a. Rating of Parks and Recreation Features in the Past 5 Years**



**Figure 13b. Rating of Parks and Recreation Features in the Past 5 Years**



**Comments on Community Parks and Recreation services**

**Positive**

- Great Parks
  - Ames has great parks. Our park model should be replicated all over. I do wish the bathrooms would get repaired more quickly when they're damaged. I appreciate the reality of it, insurance and all, but not having a bathroom when you expect one is very disruptive. Overall, great job on the parks.
  - Enjoy the wonderful parks.
  - Favorite thing about Ames!

- I enjoy visiting Ames Parks. Good hangout spots. My favorite is Ada Hayden.
- I like the parks and would like to see more flowers added and more pollinator spots or gardens.
- I love all our parks and am trying to find all the existing walking and biking paths.
- I love going to the parks and I feel very safe every time I go!
- Like all the parks in Ames :)
- Love it!
- New Miracle league on the North Side has been a wonderful addition. Especially enjoy where little free libraries have been installed for access to books in the community.
- Nice place to go.
- Thank you for the all-inclusive playground.
- The large number of Parks makes Ames a great place to live and be proud of.
- The parks always seem to be well taken care of.
- The parks are my favorite part about Ames, especially all the hiking and fishing opportunities, and sand volleyball. Keep up this priority.
- There are some really cool parks in Ames that I can take my little brother to.
- Very good overall.
- We love Ada Hayden and Brookside best of the city parks. We frequent them with our 4 kids. We also like the sidewalks/biking trails that connect behind Ames High through Brookside, along the rivers.
- Whenever I've been to one of the many parks, I always feel a sense of pride at the appearance of it. Keep making improvements and keep it safe.
- Beautiful
  - I feel we have some of the best parks for a community of our size - spaced throughout town and large to small - kept up beautifully.
  - I think we are fortunate to have our beautiful parks.
- Good Department
  - Ames parks and recreation is really good. I love the Tennis court and shelter houses, but they could work more on tables/grills. I wish we have more playground equipment.
  - Keep up the good work.
  - Parks and Recreation oversee a phenomenal number of activities and parks. We are a fortunate community.
  - Wonderful parks and recreation! Need more opportunities for children - for example, free swimming lessons, free soccer, and free baseball with expert coaches.
- Unique
  - Each park is unique, so this is hard to rate. Brookside has gone a little too natural, but the miracle park at Inis Grove is fantastic! The large shelter at Moore is great. Some walking trails are better than others!
- Safe
  - I love going to the parks and I feel very safe every time I go!
  - We never understand why trees and bushes get cut down at Ada Hayden, nor why the city puts chemical weed killers out when there are young children and going animals out in the spring. Can you please post information about why and what you are doing in the slap case at Ada Hayden? Keep us informed, please? And stop using pesticides as much as possible please.

- Walking/Hiking
  - I love hiking, and I've found that Ames has some pretty good trails, but they're hard to find. Popular apps like All trails don't have any of the trails in Ames listed.
  - I love Moore Park, McFarland Park, Carr Park, and several others that I walk my dog at.
  - I love walking around the parks in Ames.
  - When able to walk - really enjoyed walking around Ada Hayden.
- Sports
  - Please add pickleball court lines to more tennis courts.
  - Some of the tennis courts don't drain well.
  - Tennis courts typically lack tennis wall; would be useful to have more. Court at Emma McCarthy Lee is cracked.
- Grilling
  - I like grilling areas and sand volleyball pits.
  - Would be nice if you could fix some of the grills, like the one in lee park or at miracle park. Besides, open the restrooms on nice days before April 15. Lights in some of the shelters are not working (e.g., Moore Memorial Park).
- Sidewalks
  - During the winter sidewalks are dangerous.
  - I think continuing to add the wide sidewalks whenever a road is re-constructed really benefits the Ames Community.
  - Sidewalk/walkway at gym entrance are not easy to walk through using walker. Light needed outside Admin building at dark difficult to see. Small handrail would be nice too.
- Bike Paths
  - I live at 1505 Maxwell Ave. There is a paved bike trail that goes from the baseball fields on 13th South to Lincoln Way. I really would love if the extension from Lincoln Way South to Menards and eventually the soccer fields was completed. I asked about this over the winter, and it is stuck in budgeting and setting up the easement.
  - I think the main thing that I would love to see is more development of bike paths. There are some nice green spaces in Ames, but many are difficult to access from campus. This would be a huge project, but the idea of being able to bike comfortably Downtown or even to Ada Hayden from campus sounds lovely.
  - I wish that multiuse pathways.
- Good Connectivity
  - Most parks are very walkable and connected.
  - Well-kept park areas and facilities.
- Clean
  - Thanks for keeping the parks clean and fun for my family.
- Community Garden
  - I rent a community garden plot at Ioway Creek. I would like the COA to tighten up the contract and maintain the garden much better.
  - There should be community garden spaces in the parks. You should be able to camp in tents in parks too.
- Playground
  - Thank you for the all-inclusive playground.

- The better playground equipment is in the east half of the city. Playground upgrades or park additions are needed in areas west of ISU. Carroll Marty Disc Golf Course needs TLC. Ames needs single track mountain biking.
- Trails
  - Love all the city trails.
  - Many safe trails to walk on.
  - Parks and trails I've been to are always really nice and clean. Free of litter.
  - Please finish bike trail from North River Valley Park to Hunziker Ball Park @ I-35 and Skunk River (Stops at Lincoln Way).
  - Some trails good, some trails poor.
  - Very much need more paths.
  - We need more trails in more neighborhoods, and to connect them.

### **Improvements Needed**

- More Amenities
  - Basketball courts bigger, more water fountains.
  - Could upgrade picnic tables and have more especially at Brookside.
  - How about some outdoor pickleball courts?
  - It would be nice to have tables at Bandshell is there an alternative table that could be used and not vandalized.
  - Limited parks. Ones we do have, are quite small and overpopulated.
  - More trash cans in public spaces would be appreciated.
  - Need more tennis courts and more parks in west Ames.
  - Some additional lighting would be nice on some trails, but not absolutely necessary.
- More Upkeep
  - Bathrooms in Brookside don't have soap dispensers very nice otherwise.
  - Debris and things on picnic tables.
  - Encourage to leave no trace behind. Some parks look sad because there are no trash facilities, or they are not emptied enough. Hard to leave no trace when facilities are not maintained by the city.
  - Hutchinson Park has broken glass in the grass and sidewalk. Dogs are never on a leash. Dog park need to play obstacles to entertain dogs and owners.
  - I pick up trash when I walk. Would like more trash cans. Signs to encourage people to pick up trash - especially plastic bags are dangerous to wildlife.
  - Park - Lloyd Kurtz Park/Bloomington Heights - Equipment has been broken, under repair/ unable to use for 2 summers - please repair or replace.
  - Parks without a bathroom or shelter house should be upgraded to include those amenities. The city has been resistant to consider building both structures in O'Neil Park even after requests by locals to explore the topic. After the city committed to leaving O'Neil Park alone last year, I think it's time for them to enhance the park. Several of the newly remodeled or new-construction parks in Ames tend to be located in the newer parts of town with higher socio-economic neighborhoods. Ames should commit to upgrading all older parks and show respect for all neighborhoods and citizens. One could look at Ames, and surmise that the City has unintentionally created a park caste system: the older and more centrally located a park is in town, the less amenities a patron may find in that park.
  - The grass on my local Lloyd Kurtz Park is not very healthy. May need some

- fertilizer or reseeding.
- We could update a lot of the parks and recreation I feel like a majority of the sites are old and need to be improved or slightly updated.
- The parks could use more TLC.
- We live on Garden Rd. behind Kate Mitchell School. After the expensive work to clean out the storm sewer and get rid of flood deposited soil and trees on the north side - in 2020 a prairie was established. Several of us say they would mix the prairie each autumn to keep trees from reestablishing. Didn't happen in 2021 or 2022. Will it happen in autumn 2023?
- Reduce Spending
  - Don't spend so much money.
  - The city should drastically reduce the amount of land owned for parks. Proceeds from the sale of such lands should be used to reduce the tax burden on residents. IMO, it is not the proper role of government to own land for use as public parks.
- More Trees
  - I said poor on the wooded areas because they seem to be disappearing and there aren't many wooded areas anymore with so many trees getting cut down.
  - More female trees to catch male tree pollen and cut down on allergies.
  - Too early to be completely informed in this area. But have noticed that wooded areas need to have fallen limbs etc. cleaned up, wood chipped (can put back down for compost. Ioway Creek needs to be cleaned up, fallen trees in creek, trash etc.
  - Would like more wooded areas or free areas with less equipment but just open area.
  - Would love to have more wooded/wild areas with narrow/challenging trails like reactor woods. Also, little signs by native plants that also list their names in public parks would be amazing. Best way for kids to learn their trees/shrubs/flowers.
- Trail Cleanup
  - After windy days, it would be nice to get trees that have fallen picked up in wooded areas - example is the Carr Park trail.
  - Brookside Park trail has sand on it for 2 years, very dangerous to bike on.
  - Cycling trails need more regular maintenance.
  - Parks rarely clears trails in the winter anymore, there has been a pile of sand on the trail in North River Valley Park at the low water down for almost 2 months.
  - Please be take greater care when maintaining the bike paths.
- Restrooms
  - Most is very good, but for restroom is really worse and bad.
  - Each public park needs to have a public bathroom.
  - I wish that the park bathrooms were open earlier in the spring. It gets very nice and people love to be outside, but it's a bummer when you have to go and they're still closed for the season.
  - It would help if restrooms were open when Ames has youth sports.
  - More restrooms would be great.
  - Not enough trails or connectivity between parks. Restrooms are disgusting, lighting is poor, burned one at Inis Grove has been out of commission too long.
  - Restroom quality varies from park to park.
  - Restrooms generally are not super clean at parks or are just outhouses.

- Restrooms needed year around! People are going behind the closed buildings. We need a place to go in the winter too.
- Some restrooms better than others.
- Suggestion parks bathrooms heated and lights open all year long.
- Thank you for providing these! They are great for hosting events. It would be great if the bathrooms were checked more often for maintenance.

## Ames Public Library

Generally, survey respondents rated the Ames Public Library’s features highly. The survey asked respondents to provide opinions on 13 features provided by the Ames Public Library. Table 21 shows the results. Many respondents indicated that they don’t use the various library features. The least used library feature is the library newsletter - Page One; 73% of respondents indicated they don’t use it. On the 4-point scale, average scores ranged from 3.4 (good) to 3.8 (very good).

The highest rated feature, with an average score of 3.8, was the welcoming atmosphere of the library. Other highly rated (3.7) library features included meeting and study rooms, the range of materials available, customer service, and ease in asking questions of library staff by phone. The feature receiving the lowest rating was wait time for requests/holds.

**Table 21. Users’ Ratings of Ames Public Library Features, 2023**

<u>Feature</u>	<u>Very Poor</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Very Good</u>	<u>Don't Use*</u>	<u>Average*</u>
Welcoming atmosphere (n=374)	<1	1	14	54	31	3.8
Meeting/study rooms (n=256)	<1	<1	13	34	53	3.7
Range of materials available (books, videos, magazines, software) (n=364)	1	1	18	49	32	3.7
Customer service (n=351)	<1	1	17	47	35	3.7
Asking questions of library staff by phone (n=229)	<1	1	12	30	58	3.7
Bookmobile service (n=181)	<1	<1	11	22	66	3.6
Use of library resources from home via computer (n=252)	1	1	14	31	53	3.6
Availability of seating (n=317)	<1	1	21	37	41	3.6
Internet/computer services (n=248)	<1	1	17	28	54	3.6
Handicapped accessibility (n=176)	<1	1	12	20	67	3.6
Programs (story hour, book discussions, concerts) (n=203)	1	1	13	22	62	3.5
Page One - the library newsletter (n=144)	1	1	10	16	73	3.5

Wait time for requests/holds (n=289)	1	2	24	27	46	3.4
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\*Don't Use response not included in calculating the average

Forty-nine percent of respondents use the Ames Public library as often as they would like to use it. Of those respondents who use the public library, 34% were ISU students.

For non-library users, both students and non-students reported the same major reasons: not having time and acquiring materials from other sources. While 23% of non-ISU students listed parking as a barrier for not using the Ames Public Library more often, only 14% of Iowa State students listed that as a reason.

**Table 22. Comparing Students & Non-students' Reasons for Not Using the Ames Public Library (respondents could choose multiple responses)**

Respondent Status	I don't have time	I get materials from other sources	Parking is a problem	Library is not open during hours that are convenient to my schedule	Other
Iowa State University student (n=159)	61%	40%	14%	13%	18%
Non-ISU student (n=100)	55%	38%	23%	12%	14%

Other reasons mentioned for not using the Ames Public Library were:

- By non-student (n=9)
  - Busy volunteering
  - Buy own books
  - Got lazy
  - No time
  - Not accessible
  - Not needed
  - Odd hours
  - Old Age
  - Safety concerns
- By ISU students (n=28)
  - Use ISU library instead (16X)
  - Far from home (not convenient) (4X)
  - Transportation (3X)
  - Not often in the area
  - Books I am interested in are not available
  - Do not have proof that I am a citizen of the city of Ames
  - Don't care to go
  - Not convenient

## Comments on Ames Public Library

A majority of respondents are generally very pleased with the Ames Public Library. They used the following encouraging words and comments: always satisfied, amazing, excellent, love, beautiful, fantastic, use frequently, “a necessary option in any community,” wonderful, and a great resource. They also mentioned the nice, friendly, and helpful staff. Some of the features mentioned were the Libby App, books on CD, clean facilities, the range and quality of programs/services, outstanding children’s programming, and gender-neutral bathrooms.

Several respondents commented about enjoying the library’s atmosphere, “a warm and welcoming environment.” One survey respondent noted, “I love it! Very welcoming space, it was the first place to really feel like home when I moved here.”

There were a number of requests provided by respondents to make the library even better including funding ongoing maintenance, having additional evening events for young adults, adding evening play time/groups for working parents, and improving protection for patrons and workers. Several respondents suggested adding resources to the library’s collection: gaming consoles available for checkout, western fiction, large print books, and more online books available in Spanish. Two respondents lamented the long wait times for popular items. One person felt that there was a better book section in the past.

Library parking is an issue with mixed comments. More respondents commented that they viewed parking as a barrier to library use.

- “The parking and timings are the main issues when it come to the library.”
- “Parking can be a problem”

A number of ISU students commented that they prefer using the Parks Library because it is more convenient and has most of the resources that they need. Another student commented, “Unfortunately, not a super appealing resource as a student. It is a bit too out of the way from campus for a car-less student to make any resources it has over the university library worth using.” Many respondents commented about the library being a great community resource, “The Ames Public Library is a wonderful asset to our community! I especially appreciate the programs that educate the public on controversial issues. The candidate panel discussions, the welcome to all users.” And another respondent commented, “Our library is tremendous. Kudos to the Library staff and the army of volunteers that might it all as magnificent as it is. I think the average Ames citizen doesn’t appreciate how truly remarkable it is.”

The need for more electronic services was another topic of discussion in the comments. “More public computers for children to use in the children’s section.” “I appreciate the availability of a variety of audiobooks. Please continue to make more audiobooks.”

Others mentioned topics of political issues within the library, namely how it can feel exclusionary for some groups of people, as well as the recent movement of literature censorship. “The city needs to take a strong stand in opposition to censorship. Professional librarians should be in charge of building collections, not legislators.” Another said, “Doesn’t seem inclusive to citizens right of center.” Beyond this, multiple commenters were concerned with events that the library was hosting, including offering drag story time for children. “Drag Queen story time is highly offensive

and deeply harmful to kids.” Another said, “After seeing they hold Drag story hours, I am extremely uncomfortable being there at story time. We avoid it now at all costs, that is completely unnecessary.”

For additional and specific comments, see the appendix.

**Figure 14. Comments on Ames Public Library**



## Information Dissemination

The next section of the questionnaire focused on residential preferences for City of Ames communications. Respondents were asked to rate the usefulness of City communications sources on a three-point scale: 1- “not useful”, 2 - “somewhat useful”, 3 - “very useful” as well as “don’t use”. Table 23 shows the results. The most frequently used sources for local government information included the City of Ames website (73%), Facebook/Twitter/ Instagram (64%), and CitySide (utility bill insert) (59%).

When asked about the degree of usefulness of those sources, the most useful source was reported to be social media, including Facebook/Twitter/Instagram (average of 2.5 on a 1-3 scale). Also, the City of Ames website ([www.CityOfAmes.org](http://www.CityOfAmes.org)) was the most highly used source, and first in terms of usefulness (2.4).

**Table 23. Usefulness of Media Sources for Government Information, 2023**

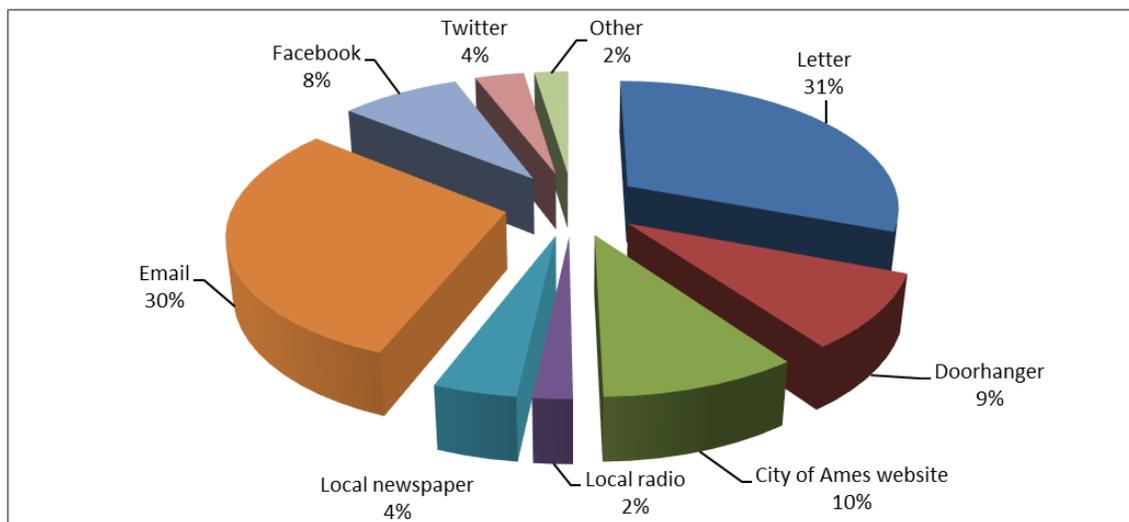
Media	Don't Use Percent	Use	
		Percent	Average*
City of Ames Web page (www.CityOfAmes.org) (n=335)	27	73	2.5
Facebook / Twitter / Instagram (n=290)	36	64	2.5
CitySide (utility bill insert) (n=270)	41	59	2.4
Ames Tribune newspaper (n=199)	56	44	2.1
ISU Daily newspaper (n=230)	50	50	2.1
KASI/KCCQ radio (n=145)	68	32	2.1
Des Moines Register newspaper (n=196)	57	43	2.0
KHOI Community Radio (n=121)	74	26	2.0
Ames Television/Cable TV 12 (n=122)	73	27	1.9

\*1=not useful; 2=somewhat useful; 3=very useful

Next, those surveyed were asked to choose one preferred method for communications about construction projects, programs, meetings, and other news in their area. Figure 15 shows that the letter (31%) is the most favored method of communication, followed by email (30%), the city website (10%), and a door hanger (9%).

The responses varied slightly for ISU students. Email is the best way to communicate (34%), followed by the City of Ames website (19%), Facebook (13%), sending a letter (12%), Twitter (7%), the local newspaper (5%), a door hanger (4%), and local radio (2%).

**Figure 15. Preferred Method to Learn about City Services, Programs, or Projects, 2023**

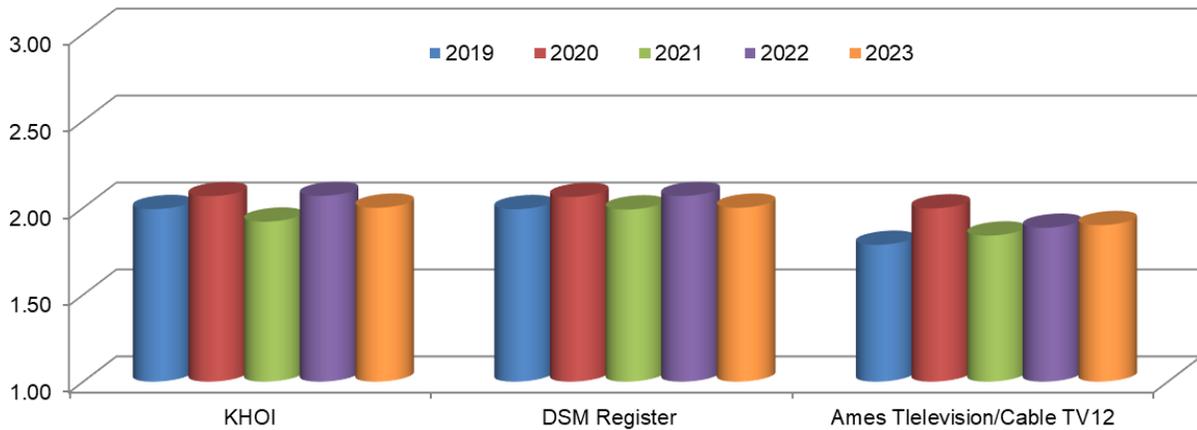


Figures 16a and 16b illustrate trends in the perceived usefulness of City communication sources over a five-year period. Those rankings have stayed generally consistent over the years with slight

variation in average scores this year compared to the previous year. Social media followed by the City of Ames website and CitySide newsletter remain the most useful sources of City information.

There was a slight increase in the perceived usefulness of the following communication sources of information regarding construction projects, programs, and meetings in the city this year compared to last year: the City of Ames Web page, City Side (utility bill insert), ISU Daily newspaper, and Facebook/Twitter/Instagram. News sources that saw a slight decrease in perceived usefulness in 2023 were the Ames Tribune newspaper, the DSM Register, KASI/KCCQ, and KHOI.

**Figure 16a. Usefulness of News Sources Over the Past 5 Years (Users only)**



**Figure 16b. Usefulness of News Sources Over the Past Five Years (Users only)**

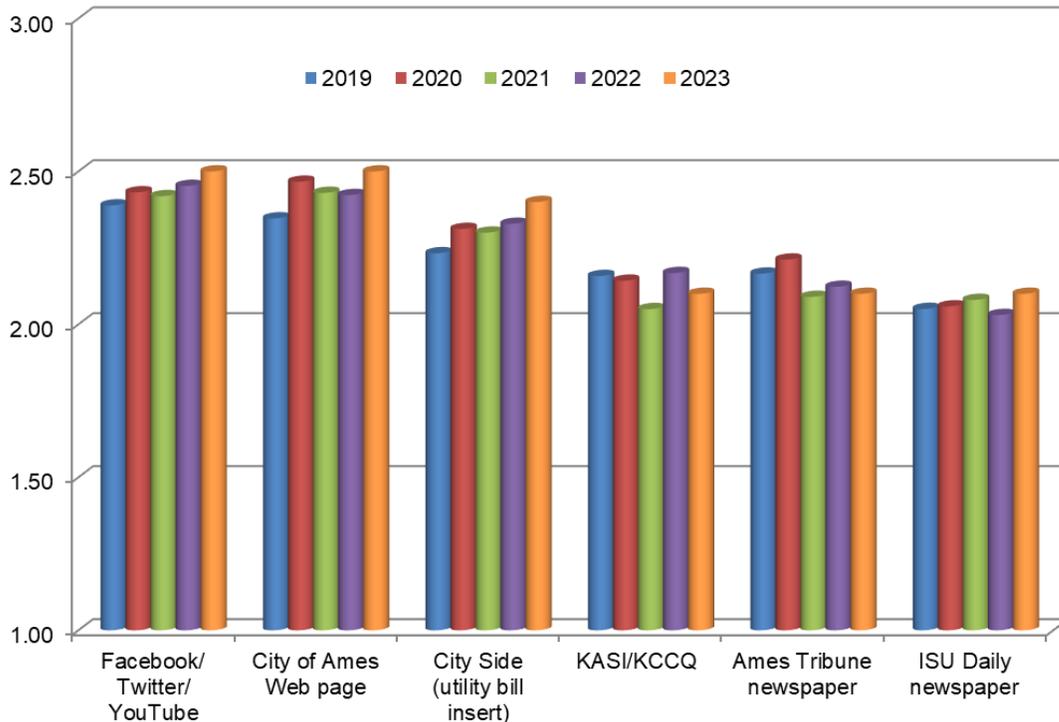


Table 24 indicates the usefulness of various communication tools based on the respondent’s student status. The three primary sources that were equally useful to ISU students and non-student residents were the City of Ames Web page, CitySide (a utility bill insert), and Facebook/Twitter/Instagram. The least useful news sources were the ISU Daily newspaper and Ames Television/Cable TV12 for non-student respondents. Even if their average scores were different from each other, they were not statistically significant. This means that there were no statistically significant differences between student and non-student responses on the usefulness of the aforementioned news sources.

**Table 24. Usefulness of News Sources for Non-student and ISU Students**

Information Sources	Non-student	Student
City of Ames Web page (www.CityOfAmes.org)	2.50	2.47
CitySide (utility bill insert)	2.43	2.10
Facebook / Twitter / Instagram	2.41	2.55
Ames Tribune newspaper	2.09	2.08
KASI/KCCQ radio	2.07	2.07
Des Moines Register newspaper	2.00	2.09
KHOI Community Radio	2.00	2.00
ISU Daily newspaper	1.87	2.21
Ames Television/Cable TV 12	1.77	2.10

\*No source was found statistically significant at .05 nor .01 levels

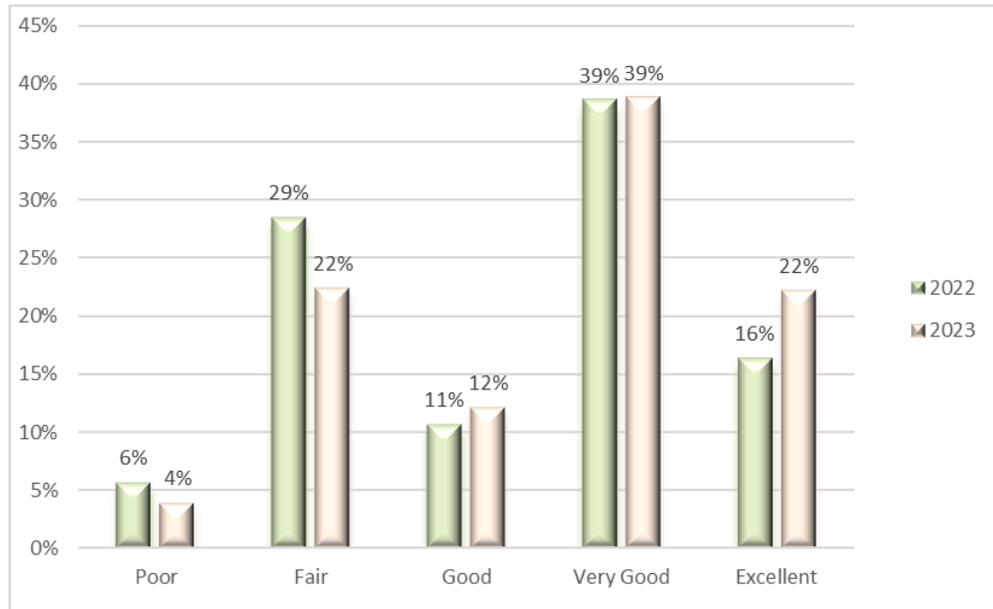
Note: Average was computed using these values: 1=“not useful”; 2=“somewhat useful”; 3=“very useful”

## Your Mental Health

Respondents were asked to rate their mental health. On a scale of 1 to 5 (1- “poor” and 5- “excellent”), the average mental health rating was a little bit higher compared to last year (3.5 for 2023 and 3.3 for 2022).

Figure 17 shows the overall mental health rating of respondents for two years. There was a 6% increase among the respondents who indicated that their overall mental health was very good/excellent in the past two years (55% for 2022 and 61% for 2023). Furthermore, there was a 2% decrease in the poor mental health rating. A little over one-third of the respondents rated their mental health to be stable (39% as very good for both years).

**Figure 17. Overall Mental Health Rating**



When the demographic information of the respondents was correlated to their mental health rating, several variables had significant relationships.

Those who give a higher overall mental health rating were:

- Non-student,
- Male,
- Homeowner,
- Works full-time,
- With graduate degree,
- Longer term Ames residents (lived in Ames for more than 10 years)
- 65 years and older, and
- With higher incomes (\$150,000 or more).

The lowest mental health rating was given by those who had:

- An income level of under \$25,000,
- Works part-time,
- Some college,
- Those who have lived in Ames for 1 to 3 years, and
- 18 to 24 years old.

Race (whites versus non-whites), being Hispanic/Latino, and geographic residence had no impact on the overall mental health ratings.

## Access to Professional Mental Health Services

For the second year the Ames Community Survey included a new question, “In the past six months, have you felt you needed to access professional mental health services?” More respondents indicated that they had not felt the need to access mental health services this year compared with last year (57% for 2022; 69% for 2023).

Of the 29% of the respondents (n=118 respondents) who accessed the professional mental health services this year, only 41% indicated that they received the help they needed, 31% responded that they were not able to get the help they needed, and 28% of respondents preferred not to answer the question.

*Please remember, all residents can access the Statewide Crisis Line, 1-855-581-8111, or Text support, 1- 855-895-8398 or visit [YourLifeIowa.org](http://YourLifeIowa.org). The Crisis Line provides information and referral, counseling, crisis service coordination, and linkages to crisis screening and mental health services, including dispatch of the Central Iowa Community Services (CICS) Mobile Response Team, 24-hours a day in Story County. Additional resources are available that incorporate help with alcohol, drugs, gambling, as well as mental health and suicidal thoughts.*

## Community Gardens

The survey also asked respondents to gauge their interest in community gardens. On a scale of scale of 1 to 5 (1 – “not interested at all”, 2 – “somewhat not interested”, 3 – “uncertain”, 4 – “somewhat interested”, 5 – “very interested”), the average value was 2.83 (indicating an uncertain level of interest). Forty-one percent were not interested (“not interested at all” and “somewhat not interested” combined) in getting involved in community garden, 21% were “uncertain”, and 38% were interested (“somewhat interested” and “very interested” combined).

Those who were more interested in community gardens were:

- ISU students,
- 25 to 44 years of age,
- Lived in Ames for 4 to 6 years,
- Some college,
- Income of \$25,000 to \$49,999, and
- Renter.

However, their views on community gardens were not affected by race (whites versus non-whites), Hispanic/Latino, gender, employment, and geographic residence.

## Sense of Community

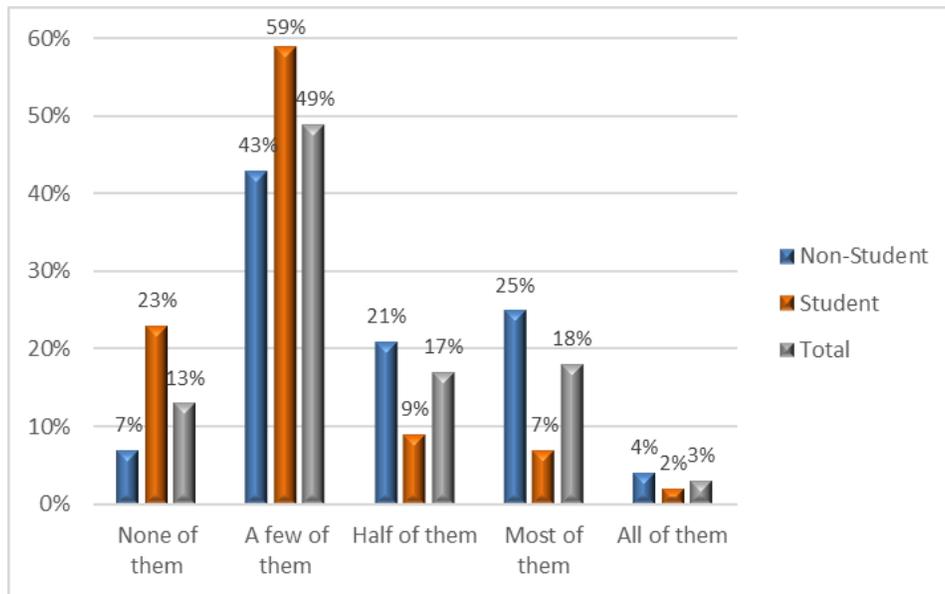
For the sixth year, the survey included a question asking about the respondent’s perception of connection with the community. *Sense of community* is a *feeling* that members have of belonging, a *feeling* that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members’ needs will be met through their commitment to be together (McMillan, 1976)

<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/e5fb/8ece108aec36714ee413876e61b0510e7c80.pdf>. A clear and empirically validated understanding of sense of community can provide the foundation for lawmakers and planners to develop programs that meet their stated goals by strengthening and preserving community.

Figure 18 shows that in 2023, more than one-third (38%) of the respondents reported to know about half or more of their neighbors. This is a slight increase from 35% in 2022, but down from 57% in 2019. When the numbers are examined by student and non-student populations, 18% of the students reported knowing about half or more of their neighbors, compared to 50% of non-students.

This year, only 7% of non-student respondents reported that they didn't know any of their neighbors, compared to 23% of the student population. In 2022, 4% of non-students didn't know any of their neighbors, compared to 31% of ISU students.

**Figure 18. Neighbors You Know**



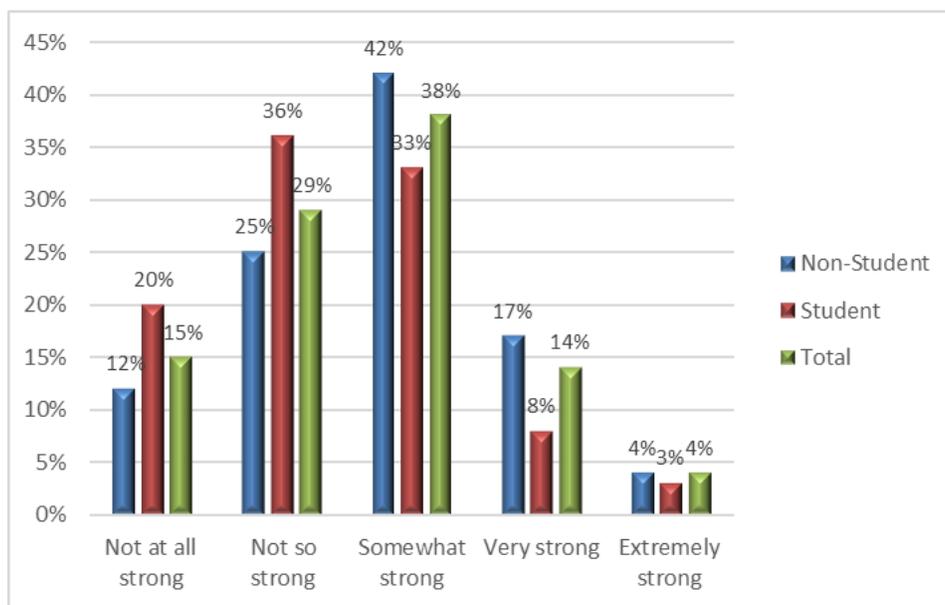
On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 – “not at all strong” to 5 – “extremely strong”), respondents were asked to rate their perceived level of sense of community in their neighborhood. Looking at the average score, the sense of the community by all respondents was 2.6 (2.8 for non-students and 2.4 for students). Combining the “extremely strong” and “very strong” responses, only 18% of all respondents felt that the sense of community in their neighborhood is strong, but when divided by students and non-students there was a noticeable difference (21% non-students felt a strong sense of community compared to 11% of students), see Figure 19.

On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 - “not at all strong” to 5 - “extremely strong”), the strength of the sense of community was viewed differently by demographic groups:

- Household income: the higher the household income, the higher is the sense of community.

- Employment: full-time homemaker had stronger sense of community compared to other employment statuses.
- Length of residence: Long-term residents had stronger sense of community than short-term residents.
- Age: 45 to 74 years of age has the strongest sense of community; younger respondents (18 to 24) have the lowest rating.
- Hispanic/Latino: Hispanic (2.65) compared to non-Hispanic/non-Latino (1.96).
- Residence geography: SE residents had weakest sense of community (2.33), followed by SW (2.48), NE (2.53), and lastly, NW (2.79).
- Gender: no difference.
- Race: no difference.
- ISU student vs. non-student: no difference.
- Home ownership: no difference.
- Education: no difference.

**Figure 19. Sense of Community in the Neighborhood**



Respondents responded to a series of statements regarding community involvement. Table 28 summarizes the responses. When asked if “issues facing my community are important to me,” 96% agreed (somewhat agree/strongly agree), which significantly increased from 76% in 2022. More than two-thirds of the respondents (79%) indicated that they were knowledgeable about issues facing their community, compared to 50% of respondents from the 2022 survey. However, over half of respondents (64%) contributed financially as a sign of support.

More than half (54%) of those surveyed reported that they are engaged in addressing the issues in the community. One-third (33%) of the respondents indicated that they currently volunteer for a nonprofit organization serving the city (which was a big jump from last year (24%)). When asked if they serve on the Board of Directors for a non-profit organization, only 10% indicated that they were board members.

**Table 25. Community Involvement, 2023**

Community Involvement Issues	Strongly Disagree/ Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree/ Strongly Agree	Average
Issues facing my community are important to me (n=420)	4	96	4.2
I am knowledgeable about the issues facing my community (n=420)	21	79	3.6
I currently support nonprofit organization(s) with financial contributions (n=405)	36	64	3.4
I am engaged in addressing the issues of my community (n=411)	46	54	3.0
I currently volunteer for a nonprofit organization serving the City of Ames (n=386)	67	33	2.4
I currently serve on a Board of Directors for a nonprofit organization serving the City of Ames (n=379)	90	10	1.6

Table 26 shows the demographic characteristics of the respondents who were likely to be involved in community activities.

- Homeownership is the only demographic characteristic that showed a significant difference between the two groups (owner versus renter).
  - Renters are more likely to be engaged in addressing the issues of their community, currently serve on a Board of Directors for a nonprofit organization serving the City of Ames, and currently, volunteer for a nonprofit organization serving the City of Ames compared to homeowners.
  - On the other hand, homeowners were currently supporting nonprofit organizations with financial contributions, and were knowledgeable about the issues facing their community.
- Older residents were more willing to provide financial assistance to nonprofit organizations.
- For short-term residents, issues facing the community are important to them.
- Residents living in the northeast part of the city reported being knowledgeable about issues facing the community.
- Gender, household income, and race showed no significant difference on any of the six community involvement statements.

**Table 26. Community Involvement by Demographic**

	Age	Length of Residence	Gender	HH Income	Home ownership	Geographic Residence	Race
Issues facing my community are important to me (n=420)		Short-term			Renter		
I am knowledgeable about the issues facing my community (n=420)					Owner		
I am engaged in addressing the issues of my community (n=411)					Renter	NE	
I currently support nonprofit organization with financial contributions. (n=405)	Older				Owner		
I currently serve on a Board of Directors for a nonprofit organization serving the City of Ames (n=375)					Renter		
I currently volunteer for a nonprofit organization serving the City of Ames (n=386)					Renter		

**Sense of Belonging**

The survey asked respondents to indicate their level of agreement with six statements regarding community integration and sense of belonging to the Ames community. Respondents were asked to respond to six statements were on a 5-point scale (1 – “strongly disagree,” 2 – “somewhat disagree,” 3 – “uncertain,” 4 – “somewhat agree,” 5 – “strongly agree”) as well as the option “don’t know.”

Table 27 shows that respondents feel that the City of Ames has the attributes for community integration. Respect and a sense of belonging were felt by majority of the respondents. Ninety-five percent of the respondents felt that they were treated with respect in Ames, followed by feeling that they belong in this town (92%). These are a lot higher than last year (80% and 71%, respectively)

The city has the social infrastructure for community integration such as:

- Ames has a strong commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (89%),
- There are one or more organizations in this town where respondents feel they belong (88%),
- Ames is a place where they could perform up to their full potential (87%), and

- I feel valued as an individual in the Ames community (86%).

The average value shown in Table 27 ranges from 3.7 to 4.3, indicating that the respondents agree that those integration/sense of belonging measures are present and/or being observed in the city.

**Table 27. Community Integration and Sense of Belonging, 2023**

Issues	Strongly disagree/ Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree/ Strongly Agree	Average
I am treated with respect at this town (n=428)	5	95	4.3
I feel I belong at this town (n=430)	8	92	4.1
I feel Ames is a place where I could perform up to my full potential (n=421)	13	87	4.0
I have found one or more organizations in this town where I feel I belong (n=396)	12	88	4.0
Ames has a strong commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (n=403)	11	89	4.0
I feel valued as an individual in the Ames community (n=416)	14	86	3.7

Table 28 shows that there are some differences in the integration/sense of belonging measures by demographic. Due to the small sample sizes of other races (Black, American Indian, Asian, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander and other), these were grouped as non-white. Thus, race was analyzed as white versus non-white.

Older residents felt Ames is a place where they could perform up to their full potential. Those living in northwest Ames feel that they feel they belong to this town higher compared to those living in the other sections of the city. In terms of homeownership, owners rated their sense of belonging in the city higher compared to renters in four out of six measures such as feeling of belongingness in this town; City of Ames having a strong commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion; being treated with respect at this town; and feeling Ames as a place where they could perform up to their full potential. However, renters felt that they were valued higher as an individual in the Ames community compared to owners.

Perception was the same regardless of length of residence, gender, household income, and race in all of the six measures.

**Table 28. Community Integration and Sense of Belonging Demographic**

	Age	Length of Residence	Gender	HH Income	Home ownership	Race	Geographic Residence
I feel valued as an individual in the Ames community (n=358)					Renter		
I feel I belong in this town (n=374)					Owner		NW
Ames has a strong commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (n=361)					Owner		
I am treated with respect at this town (n=374)					Owner		
I feel Ames is a place where I could perform up to my full potential (n=375)	Older				Owner		
I have found one or more organizations in this town where I feel I belong (n=360)							

**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)**

The survey asked respondents to answer the following open-ended question, “What could the City of Ames do to demonstrate its commitment to ensuring that all residents feel they belong?” One hundred and eleven respondents (19%) provided answers to this question. The responses varied widely across a range of topics. Six percent of respondents were satisfied with the existing efforts the City is making towards diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts. Another five percent responded that they didn’t know what the City could do. Several respondents do not think that it is the City’s responsibility to ensure that everyone “feels” like they belong.

One strong theme was strengthening social networks through a variety of methods, including more connection between the Ames community and the ISU Campus, more community events, having better community outreach and communication from City, and more DEI-specific events or opportunities. One respondent proposed, “recognizing citizens who do a lot to contribute to community building. I know there is some of this already, but I think [we] could be much more.” Those suggesting stronger connection between the Ames community and ISU suggested, “have

more interactions between the community and the college.” Another commented, “More Ames community organizations [should be] closer to campus.”

A group of respondents recommended more social or community-wide events, cultural festivals, innovative events, and social gatherings to welcome and engage different groups of people. Suggested events included bringing back the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Pancake breakfast, having more community events at the library’s site, free food events, more events like the farmer’s market, free events, and festivals or events showcasing local businesses and restaurants.

In addition to free, social community events, a number of respondents requested improved community outreach and communication from the City regarding community events. For example, a respondent suggested, “communicating when events are taking place more effectively. I almost never know when things are happening.” Another community member proposed a door-to-door outreach once a year to highlight community events. Several community members also suggested listening to residents, “hear out all residents’ opinions and do their best to fit the needs.” One respondent requested more transparency for residents and opportunities like this survey that provide opportunities for open, honest feedback. Others suggested the City could focus on local groups and “[promote] neighborhood opportunities, picnics, celebrations....”

Another topic highlighted in the survey was the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion as part of the social network of the community. These comments were specifically asking for funding and support for more gatherings or events emphasizing DEI, AAPI, “the beauty of diversity,” and cultural celebrations, “where we can come together and learn from one another.” Another respondent asked for the inclusivity of all holidays, if not already done. One person shared, “[we need to] educate to reduce ignorance, include diverse peoples, cultures, and events. Discourage hate and misinformation.”

Several people expressed negative attitudes towards the City of Ames’ DEI efforts, stating, “Ames does a lot of surface-level equity and inclusion, but when it comes down to policy, the policies are often the opposite. Example, the climate action plan will disproportionately disadvantage those of lower socio-economic status. Community gardens are anti-equitable because new residents get plots only if established residents/gardeners don’t want them...” Another comment suggested, “Stop the reverse-discrimination policies of DEI. Think about what you are doing when you place the needs of the few over the needs of the many. How can you support such illogical measures?” Another respondent suggested, “Give up equity and concentrate on equality.”

A number of respondents called for diverse representation on boards and councils, as well as among City staff. One person commented, “Continue to build diverse staff and officeholders that represent our diversity.” Another responded, “[this] needs to be modeled. Promoted and encouraged [by] city council and all employees. The public library does a wonderful job through their many events and spaces. Should be weaved into all city policies, practices, and events.” With regard to diverse hiring practices, one resident shared a story that their partner, who speaks English as their second language, was passed over for a city job because his English grammar was not quite high enough for the standard. The resident feels that the requirement to pass an exam to work for the City seems non-inclusive and unethical, since grammar rules are not applicable daily for many City jobs.

Several people suggested revising law enforcement procedures. “Don’t have cops harass people for minor things. Be present for people to come up to police officers when needed.” Another desired that the police, “fairly enforce laws without any bias....” A third requested that there be follow-up with police reports. There was also a request for stronger traffic patrolling for speeding and moving violations.

In the past year, the State of Iowa passed several laws that restricted citizens’ rights to gender affirmation and abortion rights. One statement expresses the pain that some people are feeling with regard to the changing state legislative environment: “The new laws passed by the State of Iowa made it harder to feel like you belong.” A handful of others agreed that the City of Ames needs to speak out against new state legislation. The following comments illustrate this.

- “Support all people regardless of gender, sexual orientation, race, and financial status. Help make change within the government for Iowa and be a voice for people who don’t have much of one.”
- “Supporting and promoting social justice - showing Iowans that Ames does not have the same biases that other places do.”
- “Speak out against the hateful legislation that is presented at the state level. I love Ames, but the state of Iowa scares me, and I want to move.”

Continuing along these lines of supporting all people, many respondents asked for better affirmation and safe spaces for specific, marginalized groups. Here are examples of specific comments.

- “More support for Latino and Black community.”
- “More affirmation of immigrants/refugees, members of the LGBTQ+ communities and people of color. I am privileged: white, heterosexual, and well educated. Ames needs to be welcoming to all people.”
- “Become sanctuary city - providing more assistance and access to necessary supports for people in marginalized communities.”
- “More action against and harsher punishments for racism and discriminations. As a gay male, I do not feel safe in this city. Perhaps do more to promote diversity and belonging.”
- “More available spaces for niche groups to congregate.”
- “More queer safe spaces and action against discrimination.”
- “Do more for the elderly.”
- “More stuff for musicians/artists, transgender folk, and LGBTQ+.”
- “Work harder to treat minorities and people with mental health conditions respectfully and with inclusion.”

Another group of respondents suggested that the city could use more affordable housing, lower taxes, and improved physical and mental health services as ways to improve quality of life and reduce homelessness and poverty. Several comments emphasized advocating for renters and the landless:

- “...Laws to protect against raising rent prices outside unreasonable means. Base it off of some metric or index that determines price. Provide a service that evaluates price and condition of dwelling...”
- “Ames needs to solve the apartment issue. There is no reason to force 1-2 weeks of homelessness on college students between leases due to the greediness of the property

managers...it is...ridiculous that literally nobody in the city is advocating for students in this way! Rent keeps going up, beyond what students, graduate students, postdocs can afford...rent is 60% of what I am paid monthly as a graduate student on a stipend..."

- "The city could change the laws so it is easier for people who don't own property in Ames to live here. A good example is the lady who wants to live in her bus on city streets, Let her! She isn't hurting anyone and she could probably use some respect and community support."

Physical infrastructure improvements were another way that respondents felt the city could make them feel they belonged. The following are examples of physical improvements that respondents requested:

- Ensuring more facilities are handicap accessible.
- CyRide
  - Make it free.
  - Improve public transit, and multimodal forms. Car-centric infrastructure is discriminatory and promotes poverty through requiring a car to maintain employment. Develop good non-car infrastructure that is safe and comfortable for people to use year-round.
- Park equity - all parks having same amenities regardless of park's size, location, age, etc.
- More access to community gardens.
- Home maintenance - help with insulation, siding, and windows.
- Follow through on promises for repairs.
- Improved traffic flow.

Another area of discussion was around educational opportunities. Several people provided general comments focused on education and free classes or learning opportunities for all ages. A more specific suggestion was to have accessible land-based education within walking distance or near a CyRide route. There are mixed feelings among respondents towards issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Most would like to have stronger social connections within the community. To read the full comments, please see the appendix.

**Figure 20. Suggestion on How the City of Ames Could Demonstrate its Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**



## Organized Trash

Questions related for organized trash were added in this year’s survey. Residents are currently able to choose from among several haulers to provide curbside garbage collection. In some communities, residential garbage collection is provided by a single hauler through a contract with their city. Organized trash collection would reduce traffic, noise, and carbon footprint, but eliminates the customer choice of hauler. When asked how interested they are in a system where residential garbage collection is provided by one hauler, with the cost and services provided determined by a city-wide contract, almost half of the respondents (41%) were interested, 31% not interested, and more than a quarter (29%) were uncertain. The average interest rating was 3.05 on a 5-point scale (1 being not interested at all to 5 as very interested).

Half of the respondents (50%) selected their garbage company and 89% were satisfied with their current collection agency.

An additional section about recycling was added in this year’s and last year’s survey to gauge respondents’ attitudes toward adding recycling services. The City of Ames has used a waste-to-energy process to make refuse-derived fuel (RDF) out of garbage since 1975. The RDF is co-burned with natural gas in the Ames Power Plant to create electricity. Some items thrown in the trash are non-burnable or high-moisture items, and they make poor fuel. Survey respondents were asked if they were willing to sort (or currently do so) certain types of garbage.

This year’s survey found that, overall, more respondents were more willing to sort certain products from their garbage compared to 2022. Percent increase ranged from 10% (organics) to 32% (glass). Glass is the waste product that respondents were most willing to sort (87%), followed by metal (80%) and plastic (80%). Respondents were least willing to sort organics from their garbage with 51% indicating that they were not willing to sort organic material from their garbage (Table 29).

**Table 29. Respondents’ Preferences for Sorting Waste Types from Their Garbage**

<b>Waste Type</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
Glass	54.9%	87.2%
Metal	64.0%	80.3%
Plastic	64.8%	80.0%
Organics	38.4%	48.8%

Next, survey respondents were asked their preferred method of disposal of sorted waste, with options including: 1) no-charge centralized drop-off, 2) curbside collection for a fee, 3) willingness to participate in either program, 4) not interested, and 5) other. See Table 33 for results. Almost 1/3 (31%) of the respondents would participate in either program (no charge centralized drop-off or curbside collection for a fee). Another quarter of them preferred no-charge centralized drop-off, while 26% preferred curbside collection for a fee. (Table 30)

When asked if they currently pay for curbside recycling through their garbage hauler, only 10% said yes.

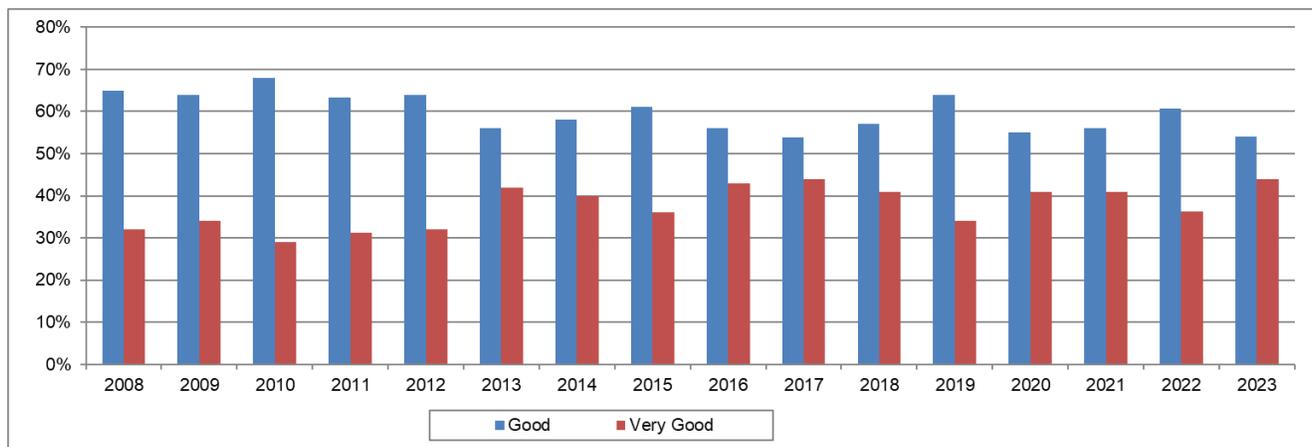
**Table 30. Preferred Method of Disposing of Sorted Waste Items**

<b>Method</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
Would participate in either one	30.7%	30.8%
No-charge Centralized Drop-off	30.5%	26.2%
Curbside Collection for a fee	23.0%	23.1%
Not Interested	11.0%	14.3%
Other	4.8%	5.7%

## **City of Ames Overall Service Quality**

Each year, survey respondents are asked to give an overall evaluation of the quality of services that they receive from the City of Ames as well as provide any additional comments. This year, 44% of respondents provided a “very good” rating, an increase from last year (37% in 2022). The number of respondents rating the City of Ames as “good” was 60% in 2022 and 54% in 2023. When the positive ratings of “good” and “very good” are combined, 98% of Ames residents were satisfied with city services, which is slightly higher than last year (Figure 21).

**Figure 21. Trends in Overall Satisfaction with City of Ames Service Quality (good/very good)**



## Best Thing About Living in Ames

There was a total of 272 people who responded to the open-ended question of the “Best thing about living in Ames,” some providing multiple responses. Responses discussed many things that make Ames a great place to live. Some of the top reasons people like living in Ames include safety, diversity, cleanliness, access to parks, small town feeling with big city amenities, convenience, having Iowa State University in the community, and the people. For full comments, please refer to the appendix.

Adjectives describing the city include safe, accessible, clean, quiet, nice, peaceful, beautiful, and home. Several people commented that Ames is a good place to raise a family. Respondents noted the low crime rate and safety. The people, community, and city leaders are among the best parts of living in Ames. Respondents also discussed diversity and cultural attractiveness. Many respondents remarked that residents are friendly, welcoming, and have a sense of community.

Overall, the most mentioned best things about living in Ames were the people and the sense of community. On a similar note, many positive topics in this realm include good values, good city staff and administration, and friendly people. Some responses were:

- “Sense that the community and public officials care about Ames, its residents, our safety and enjoyment of life here.”
- “It’s a large enough community that there is a lot of diversity and things that happen, but the actual community itself feels rather small and connected.”
- “It feels like people in the community care about each other.”
- “I love the community. I have not met a single bad person while living here less than a year. The students are all great and friendly. Outside of school the people and neighborhoods are nice to be around.”
- “Community leadership and residents who sincerely care about helping others.”
- “Wonderful city well managed city, friendly people we have lived in many cities and Ames tops them all.”

On a similar note, many commented on the city's size in relation to the amenities it provides. Respondents mention that Ames has a small-town feel, but big city amenities. "Big city feel - shopping, trails, recreation, etc. - all in one place without being a 'big' city." Another says, "It still has a small-town feel, yet there are so many wonderful amenities that make us seem like a bigger city." Many of these comments point to the university as being a perk in how the city is able to accomplish this duality. "The size and number of perks we get for being a major university town."

There were numerous comments regarding Iowa State University and its positive contribution and connections to the Ames community. ISU sports, activities, and the recreation center were commonly mentioned. Some appreciated the size and cultural diversity of the ISU community. Other respondents appreciated the academic community, campus atmosphere, and trees on the campus. Living in a college town is an asset to many of the respondents. A respondent commented, "Living in a college town with Big 12 sports our vibrant Main Street."

Another large portion of respondents commented on the lack of car dependency, and how many places and amenities are accessible by walking and biking: "I can walk to run errands if needed" and "Walk anywhere/pedestrian friendly."

Others described Ames as a smaller city with big city amenities, resources, and activities. Public transportation (CyRide), Ames Public Library, schools, the Farmers' Market, local businesses, quality health care, and Main Street (downtown) were among the most mentioned features of the city. Respondents appreciated the quantity and diversity of options in activities and restaurants that are offered in Ames.

Other best things about living in Ames include the water quality, prompt response to storms and snow, availability of retail facilities, the living cost, low traffic, and city upkeep.

For additional and more specific comments, please see the appendix.



Other road-related issues mentioned include the need to improve roads for both vehicles and pedestrians, as well as the timing of infrastructure projects. Many comments are mentioned about road improvement and repair, highlighting Duff Avenue, Lincoln Way, 13th Street and S. 16th Street: “Try to make sure construction projects are complete by the end of the year. As a pedestrian, the entire last winter I had to walk in the grass along S 16th Street because they tore up the sidewalk and did not finish it until this spring.” Another said, “Projects should be done so that the most minimal disruption of heavy traffic areas are done once, but even with consideration to lower traffic areas as well. Impact to multi-year work done by different agencies increases everyone’s costs and lowers satisfaction.”

Many respondents discussed the need to make Ames more walkable and bikeable by creating more sidewalks and walking and biking trails. “Make intersections safer for vulnerable road users and also less of a pain to navigate. Cars are obviously prioritized, but vulnerable road users should be prioritized over cars.”

Public transportation is another topic that emerged from the responses. Several respondents are satisfied with the CyRide service, though many wish it was more robust. Improvements that could make it better include adding more routes, more sheltered bus stops, and a greater coverage area. One comment specified, “Regular mass transit commuter (e.g., train, bus) transportation to Ankeny/Des Moines.”

Several respondents raised concerns about climate change and global warming. As climate adaptive actions, respondents emphasized the city recycling program, waste disposal system, and the use of alternative energy sources. “Climate change is an incredibly pressing issue. More clean energy, trees, and carbon reduction should be prohibited,” – mentioned one respondent. Another respondent comments on taking necessary actions towards renewable energy. One response is to “Renewable energy - solar wind geothermal and implementing them ASAP.”

Another theme was a greater focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion. Topics highlighted student outreach, racial and economic equity as well as making all feel welcomed in the community. Commenters mentioned, “Bringing the community together” and “Making sure all feel welcomed in the community.”

Several comments asked the City to cut costs to ease the tax burden on residents. Some feel that government interference does not help the city and is not a good use of tax funds. Some also say that long term city planning has not proved to be able to solve issues. “Cutting costs; less time planning and developing new subdivisions; cut back on parking requirements.” Another said, “I feel that the role of government should be much smaller than it is currently.”

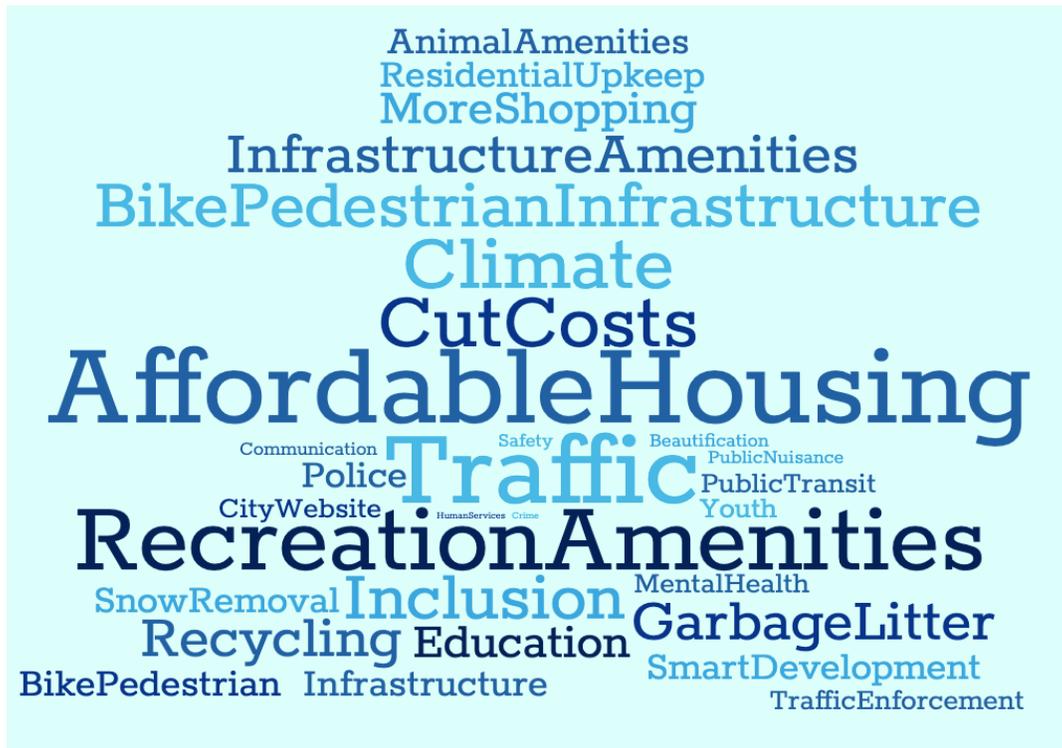
Respondents highlighted trash, litter, and recycling as an issue that the city does need to focus on. Many say litter is a problem within the city, and efforts need to be made to help clean up the city. “City wide trash pick-up along roadways” and “Trash pick-up around the city instead of just the parks.” Beyond this, many say a recycling program is needed. “A comprehensive recycling program for residents.” “Please have local recycling center.”

There were a number of other comments on various topics the city should focus their efforts on.

These include animal amenities, more shopping, snow removal, human services, better outreach from the city, smart development, and beautification.

For additional and specific comments, see the appendix.

**Figure 23. Other Issues the City Should Focus On**



## General/Additional Comments

Respondents were asked to provide any additional comments that they wished to share. A total of 74 respondents answered this question. Almost a third of the comments were positive. Many people commented that Ames is a great city. Examples of the positive comments include:

- Ames is a nice place to work and live.
- Ames is an awesome place to live. I was born and raised here and love the community.
- I enjoy all the green space in the town.
- I am happy at ISU and in Ames. It is great to be going to school in such a great community.
- I brag about Ames snow cleanup!
- My niece from Jakarta just visited. She travelled to New York, Chicago, Seattle, San Francisco, and LA. When asked which city she liked the best she said Ames.

Several people provided comments about how they see Ames differently than most of Iowa. "I love living in Ames. There are very few other cities in Iowa that I would choose to live. I am considering moving to another state, largely because of the actions of the Iowa Legislature and governor. Their

values are largely antithetical to my own. If only we had more local control.”

People also used this space on the survey to provide suggestions and improvements that the City could make to make Ames an even better community. These suggestions included more free activities for kids, better public restrooms in public parks, and installing lower wattage streetlights (too bright near housing). Another person requested that there be more recent traveling Broadway entertainment brought to Ames. One person noted that although they like the utility bill drop-off box in front of the Ames City Hall, they miss the former drive through drop off box. They feel that the new designated utility drop-off parking spot is often filled with other City Hall patrons. There were also several infrastructure requests: continuing to maintain city green space, making the city more walkable, planting more trees, street maintenance across the city, and helping improve the alleys, “especially between Duff and Douglas, 13th and North. Lots of us use this alley, need more rock, less grading.”

A number of comments surfaced around issues of housing and cost of living. Several people mentioned the cost of living in Ames can be challenging. One person remarked that, “I like Ames but my income limits my activities.” A second comment expressed that challenge of finding work in a city saturated with talent, “Ames is an excellent place to live, but difficult to stay long term if you are an engineer.” A third respondent shared, “Ames should really focus on the cost of living. I understand that having a lot of students here means Ames is a popular place to live therefore the cost of rent and living needs to go up to match the amount of people who live here. Rent is absolutely absurd. It is incredibly hard to find a decent place to live and every year the cost of rent goes up. I don’t know if this is a city issue or an issue for the rental companies here but it’s hard to be in school and succeed when I have to worry about how I’m going to afford a place to live. I shouldn’t have to move to Boone to be able to rent or buy a home/apartment. Ames really needs to work together with the housing companies to ensure affordable living for both long-term and short-term residents.”

Housing issues are being felt by both homeowners and renters. There were two comments from homeowners who weren’t pleased with the city’s assessment of their home. One felt the assessment was too high and did not match the appraised value she received from a home appraiser. Another person complained that their home assessment value went down 40% after the most recent assessment. Along with homeowners feeling the changing assessment valuations of their homes, renters are also feeling the squeeze of the current market. Here are examples of the comments that some renters made regarding the current situation:

- Do something for preventing rent hikes. Raising rent not only drives students away from attending ISU, it drives people away and their money. Lower rent allows more spending and commerce within the city. Use family size and poverty level to determine amount of rent that is reasonable.
- Fix rent issues in Ames. Lapses between leases force houselessness on students for 1-2 weeks. Rent keeps going up. How do you expect to have students live and thrive here when the financial burden is so immense?
- I had a lot of issues with [a property management company] during the last year, but I did not find any legal services in Ames that at least send them a notice to respect more to their clients more.
- Rent is too expensive!
- We love living in Ames with its amazing parks and library. We want to be part of this

community and therefore are active volunteers for several organizations. Unfortunately, as renters, we are left out of many of Ames environment related incentives. For example, we can't use an electric car with nowhere to charge at home, we can't get power packs or pay for recycling and are afraid that the anti-equitable, Climate Action Plan will prevent us from ever purchasing a home and being part of this long term. Why does Ames still not have recycling, yet plans to implement a climate action plan that was reviewed as inequitable? Only having rich, low environment impact residents because others are priced out and therefore their environmental impacts simply shifted to another town is not the solution."

Several comments were discussed city project planning and management. One person wished that road work could be done more efficiently, commenting that the 13th Street project seemed to take a very long time to complete. Another comment was focused on pre-planning for areas of growth with appropriate infrastructure rather than reacting to growth. "If you want to grow you need to provide easier access to those areas. Currently, it appears that we wait until a street/area is over congested, and then we go in and add or improve roads and intersections." Six respondents also discussed traffic flow and traffic congestion, especially along the Duff Avenue corridor. Another person asked if there had ever been any thought put into having a commuter bus from Ames to Des Moines. Two people shared comments that they would like to see safety improvements for Ames's biking infrastructure, more consistency across the city. Both would like bicycles to be removed from the roads and provided either a separate bike path or use of the sidewalk rather than periodic bike lanes or on road biking.

Other comments included a complaint about neighborhood upkeep, building more houses rather than apartments, and more focus on what exists rather than acquiring more land for future development. Another respondent complained about having their right of way tree's roots damaged by a contractor during a city project. There were two people who felt strongly that the City of Ames should spend less of their resources on issues related to diversity, equity, and inclusion and more on essential services.

This year, ten people provided comments on the survey itself. Among the comments about the survey, three people expressed appreciation that they could participate in the survey and that the city was asking for feedback. Another four participants felt the survey is too long. For the complete comments, please see the appendix.

## APPENDIX 2023

### Comments on Priorities for On-Going Services/ Local Sales Tax Funding

#### Spending

- Spend More
  - I checked “same” meaning increase for cost of operation due to inflation. The spending has to increase with inflation lately.
- Spend Less
  - Library gets WAY too much money.
  - Reduce the size (and cost) of government to the few necessary and proper functions. The City of Ames has government that is currently far too large and involved in far too many areas.
  - Spend less money. That way, you have to steal less money.
  - Spend less tax dollars overall.
  - Money is tight; we have to cut some things for safety.
- Reallocation of Spending
  - Ames should investigate shifting costs from Law Enforcement activities and towards human services activities to provide more preventative and structural assistance for those in need.
  - I’m shocked how much is spent at the library.
  - If we give more resources to food sovereignly efforts, we’ll have less need for law enforcement.
  - Increase for affordable housing.
  - Law enforcement do not need that much seriously.
  - Slash funds from law enforcement and provide them “how to budget” finance courses.
- Spending Transparency
  - I want more transparency in how the police are spending 11 million!
  - The police seem to be overly funded perhaps transparency in the allocation of police budget is in order.

#### Sentiment

- Satisfied
  - I think it’s great we support the library so much. It provides so many services.
  - Library is great resource for a wide range of community services (library, community meetings, lectures, programs) and the people served.
  - Mostly same also means either no option or not enough knowledge.
- Unsure
  - Difficult to say less/same/more without a more detailed discussion of what those effects would be on services, but the above responses represent my priorities.
  - I am uneducated in this area. No major opinions.
  - I can only give a little.
  - I do not have any big recommendations around allocation of resources, but I know planning for city land uses take time and thoughtful analysis. Just want to make sure, resources are there for that purpose.
  - I don’t feel knowledge about the costs of these services - probably in most cases there is a need for increase in finances.
  - I don’t know the circumstances.
  - Not sure how you expect a citizen to understand what you are asking.

- Thank you for the information, but I have no context for making any judgments.
- This is a ridiculous question. Without any knowledge of specifics on these budgets or being an expert in costs in these fields how can someone give a reasonable assessment?

## Services

- Improve City Services
  - Contract with the various haulers to cut down on the # of trucks driving the streets each day, offer recycling pick up. In Minnesota, small cities around the Twin City Metro have great recycling programs.
  - Having kids in sports, any time I travel I see how great other city's services are. It makes me a little embarrassed when other teams and their fans come to Ames. I wish the city would work more with the HYSC and other sports clubs to enhance those services. That support should come in the form of money, land, and maybe some zoning adjustments.
  - I want to see the city invest in clean energy and carbon reduction.
  - I was unsure if "park activities" include park maintenance and what recreational opportunities are.
  - I would love more money going towards fixing the roads around Ames.
  - More green energy, less burning trash.
  - New Ames animal shelter (and larger)
  - Traffic South - North increased horribly since high density developments south of HWY 30 bypass. Duff and Grand Ave. are huge bottlenecks with added lights and stops.
- Improve Social Services
  - I believe private donors are willing to contribute to animal-related services. Parks and Recreation and CyRide have demonstrated good standards and provide excellent services. Social services will need more help now that state of Iowa is pulling back. Planning will be important for adapting to change.
  - I would like more directed towards homeless and troubled youth orgs. And fix roads! They're practically gravel in some spots.
  - More free activities for children would be a huge bonus for our community.
  - More needs for the arts.
  - More support for live music in Ames.
  - Our household appreciates outdoor activities especially after experiencing more activities and options for outdoor recreation and better facilities at city parks.

## Other

- Long Term Planning Failures
  - Land planning has been largely a failure in this town. Seems like a lot of money has gone into it and whoever has the money gets to make the plans.
  - No benefit apparent from land use planning. Long term plans not followed; short term plans don't work.

## Comments on City of Ames Services

### Overall Sentiment

- Satisfied
  - 10/10 would live here again.
  - Ames is a great city to live in thanks to its great services!
  - City provides good to very good services.
  - Having just gone through the assessment appeal process with the Assessor's Office, I have several comments. First, the staff, especially Ranie, were very pleasant and tried to be helpful when I called with questions. The process, however, is confusing and stressful. Assessors should be required to actually look at properties instead of making assumptions. I read through the Iowa Assessor's Manual as I tried to decide if and how to appeal. It is confusing to a layperson, and one member of the Assessor's staff even agreed with me. The Ames Assessor should provide clear information online about how the monetary value they apply to each feature of a house and how they arrive at the final determination of the assessment, such that a homeowner can replicate the results and then compare it to similar properties. I finally decided not to go through with the Board of Review because it was too stressful, I felt the deck was stacked against me, and I could not reasonably replicate the results of the comparable that the office provided me without more information. I do know that some of the information on neighbor's homes was inaccurate.
  - I recognize that law enforcement staffing levels are a challenge everywhere. I hope that Ames will retain high standards and provide incentives to attract quality staff.
  - If I didn't like it here, I might move to a place where I did like it.
  - It's pretty popular to complain about things, including Ames (I'm looking at you "Ames People"), but overall, Ames is a pretty good place to live. I moved here 30 years ago to go to school and haven't been able to pry myself away. Good job. Keep up the good work.
  - Thanks for all you do to make Ames great.
  - The City of Ames Services help make Ames a wonderful place to live. Thank you!
  - We have never used the fire rescue services, but otherwise we've had great experiences with all of the above.
- Unsatisfied
  - Could be better. Need to realign their goals and stop focusing so much on things that aren't necessary like parking and bar enforcement.
  - There should not be trans events for children.
- Don't Use
  - I have not personally used their services but have had very positive reports from those who have. A brief experience of terrible loud, throbbing noise on Lynn Street next to Baptist church made me glad I don't live there, it would be intolerable!

### Service

- Parking
  - 15 years living here, feel very well-run city, no major crime, traffic problems - Main St. downtown parking a bit iffy, at times.
  - I would like to see somewhat regular patrol done parking violated, own neighborhood has several apartment buildings on residential streets. We have to call police dept. often to report many different violations.
- Nuisance Enforcement

- Appreciate sanitary plant being out of town to avoid smell. Need more ordinance enforcement on yard and house upkeep, too many properties appear abandoned.
- I live close to the Campustown and am concerned about the litter problem and lack of upkeep in the neighborhood. It doesn't seem like businesses are held accountable for litter. Those of us who live adjacent feel that it's not just a student area, it's our neighborhood too. But there doesn't seem to be a commitment to keep it clean.
- Let the yards grow.
- Need to send out a letter to all about dog barking (excessive) barking. Owner just releases their dogs into the backyard to do whatever with no obedience or control or care for the people around them!
- Nothing was done about the partying and loud music late into the night in my residential neighborhood in Old Town Ames on 7th Street between Northwestern and Hodge. And I had a sleeping baby!! Police did not help. Also, neighbors are not keeping up their yards and overgrowth now includes trees behind fencing, starting to look like a forest and very unkept. I had lived there since 1972 and I am very angry at slumlords in what was a nice part of Ames.
- Please restrict burning around Furman. When I go swimming it often smells smoky, bothers my breathing.
- Public nuisance enforcement is silly, people are struggling, just let them be. F--- property values CyRide guys aren't paid enough.
- Cut Costs
  - City of Ames Services: Stop spending so much money. It's not yours. You took it from your neighbors.
  - Reduce the size (and cost) of government to the limited, necessary functions. The city of Ames has government involved in far too many areas. So, my comments in the individual sections for details. Thanks.
- CyRide
  - Don't use CyRide enough for an opinion.
  - Love to see more free/expanded mass transportation - cut down on oil/fossil fuel consumption.
  - No free fares for Cyride! either it pays for itself or sell it to someone who can administrate and run effectively to turn a profit with fare pricing standards and offer more routes. would like to know how much ISU is contributing to this endeavor since all equipment is on ISU property.
  - Only use CyRide when parking at the Center to go to campus.
- Website
  - Electric Portal is great.
  - The new payment drop-off box for electrical service is very inconvenient.
- Stormwater
  - For storm sewers we need to keep developing these catch basins or trail pits for holding water and flood mitigation
- Trash
  - I moved from a different state and the recycling and garbage system here seems crazy to me. Especially the recycling. Charging people money and then you have to return the cans to get the money back but half the time the machine doesn't work and then I was told that the cans just go in the garbage anyway, so I don't understand what the point of any of it is. Also not being able to recycle from your home or throw glass away or recycle glass seems insane.
  - We need recycling and food waste services.

- Solar
  - I would like to see improved options for expansion of rooftop solar rebates for commercial and residential homeowners within the city limits, including net metering.
- Water
  - Love the water and the service, dislike the cost.
- Education
  - Move money from police department to education system.
- Electric
  - My neighborhood has experienced several power outages over the past two or three years. These outages don't seem to have affected other areas of Ames. Electrical infrastructure in South Ames needs updated.
  - There are many opportunities for increased use of solar and wind power, and with oils increased price, these alternatives should be implemented.
- Library
  - Our new library is amazing! Such a pleasant experience to visit here! I filled out their survey at the library. Parks and Rec Fitness classes are awesome. I love them!
- Parks
  - Adult parks and rec (sports leagues) need better organization and communication.
  - I would love to see edible landscapes be utilized throughout the city.
  - Parks are one of my favorite things about Ames - we could use more on West side.
  - Would like more emphasis in safety maintenance in wooded areas of public parks.

## Comments on Police Department Activities

### Interactions

- Positive Interactions
  - Friendly and Helpful
  - I always thank the police dept when I see or talk to them or give the a “thumbs up”! Why is “Illegal imgration” not an “emphasis?”
  - I don't have a keen understanding of the emphasis the Police Department puts on each issue, but I do have respect for its work and am generally comfortable that police leaders have a good handle on priorities.
  - I have had positive interactions with the Ames Police.
  - I have never had a poor interaction with APD, and I have a negative bias towards the police. So that is a big compliment. Every one of them I've interacted with has been very kind, and I appreciate their community involvement.
  - I see the police often even if they aren't handling a case, so I think that's great.
  - I think the Ames PD does a great job. We feel pretty safe in our city.
  - I value our area and law enforcement.
  - I went to discuss a found bicycle in the woods to report it. The female officer was kind and efficient.
  - I'm not completely sure if most of these should/should not change - I do feel confident we have good law enforcement still, I do worry that some profiling may happen for teens, college students, etc. (non-residents and foreign students).
  - My experience with Ames police has been very good.
  - My perception of Ames police is positive. Would recommend priority to crime prevention and investigation.
  - Overall, I feel like the police department does a good job. I feel very comfortable and safe living in Ames.
  - Personally, never had a poor interaction. Had interactions that sometimes resulted in Ames. But they were fair and professional.
  - Police are very visible in the community. I rarely go around town and don't see at least one officer.
  - Police have a tough job, and we must respect that and show patience when dealing with law enforcement.
  - The Ames Police Department is great. I've always felt that we've been very fortunate in that regard.
  - You all are amazing and we're blessed to have such dedicated public servants. Thank you. You deserve deep gratitude.
- Negative Comments
  - Every time I've had the displeasure of interacting with Ames PD, they've been egotistical, lazy bullies. They do not investigate violent crimes, preferring to place misbehaved children in joint locks and plaster cars with tickets. Their performance is downright embarrassing. Especially compared to the quality of officer on ISU campus, right next door. Try harder. Do better.
  - Have been in dispute with neighbor about his dog barking all the time. Have notified animal control numerous times with no result. I will be notifying them about the dogs in my backyard area that do the same. And so does Ames PD. The laws are not being enforced.
  - I couldn't get my car started while in the parking lot at Fareway one night before a

blizzard. I walked to the police station and talked to an officer in his car outside the station. He gave me a card with tow services but said he couldn't help me because I had to be in a street. I thought I could have help from the police if I could count on anyone.

- Police Department in general appears to be more isolated and becoming less appropriate. PD is lacking oversight from city.
- They don't do enough to stop dog barking. It is out of control.
- Very disappointed in responses for our youth and letting them do whatever they want. Telling parents they can't do anything.
- Your \*\*\*\*\* officer came and gave a talk at my co-op about what to do in an active shooter situation. He told us his first point is to uphold gun rights because he swore an oath. Then he made fun of our questions and concerns at the end of his presentation.
- Little Interaction
  - 1. Delighted to hear APD is improving their service for residents with mental health problems 2. Several of my black friends have been pulled over and given a ticket for minor things like having a headlight out or turn signal out. I and other of my white friends have been pulled over for this and not given a ticket. Are there just 1 or 2 officers harassing blacks or is it the APD policy to harass blacks. BTW all my black friends are professionals - ISU faculty, ministers, etc.
  - Again, thankfully, I have not needed law enforcement support, so I am not really able to identify where more or less emphasis is needed. I really like seeing their presence when they drive through my neighborhood and just being part of the community, such as when I see them at the Farmer's Market, in a store, coming and going across from Food at First, etc.
  - Don't use.
  - Have not had any encounter with the police dept.
  - Have only lived in Ames since the last week in August 2022.
  - Haven't had any involvement with Ames Police Department.
  - Honestly, I can't evaluate most of the questions above since I have not witnessed any crimes in Ames recently. I believe Ames Police Department has been doing great jobs. Occasional encounters with police officers are always friendly and welcoming.
  - I do not have much experience with this police department. From what I have seen I don't have any major complaints.
  - I honestly have little idea what APD priorities are currently. I don't see holes in protection of the of the city.
  - Like the fire department, I don't have a lot of exposure to the police department, and that's a good thing. APD does a lot of community outreach. When I say they should do more it's not because I think they're lacking, just that the return on that in goodwill is very important. It's invaluable to build rapport with people before they have to call the police when they're in distress. APD does a good job of that, and I think there could be even more.
  - Limited contact - no knowledge of activities listed. Based on news - relatively little problems in most area
  - most choices were same, as not much knowledge or opinion known.
  - Never an interaction with the PD.
  - Not much interaction.
  - Not totally informed or familiar with Ames Police Department.
  - Parking downtown should be free! Friendly "dogs off leash" should not be pursued.

Keep police efforts positive whenever possible. My interactions with Ames Police have been minimal, but I especially appreciate efforts made to be friendly and helpful. Police should not use violence - especially guns! - in reacting to peaceful protest and minor offenses.

- Thankfully, I've never needed the PD in an emergency.

## **Outreach**

- Good Outreach
  - Again, thankfully, I have not needed law enforcement support, so I am not really able to identify where more or less emphasis is needed. I really like seeing their presence when they drive through my neighborhood and just being part of the community, such as when I see them at the Farmer's Market, in a store, coming and going across from Food at First, etc.
  - Like community outreach.
  - They have always been great in my experience. I appreciate their communicative and outreach.
  - They waste too much money holding coffee clutches.
  - Well - run, great public outreach.
- More Outreach
  - Events for young kids 3-5.
  - More citizen police classes.
  - Not much of a presence in town.
  - Would like to see more community outreach design of police patrolling - GET OUT OF THE CARS! Also, parking enforcement on residential streets of business vehicles parking where they feel, not following proper parking rules, but also parked unregistered (illegally or expired) vehicles should be immediately towed as those vehicles should not be on the road - this includes utility trailers owned by construction companies. Minor parking issues (too far from curb) should be overlooked more especially if behind a large vehicle that's already 9' wide, not impeding traffic up to 9' from curb to driver's side of vehicle since legal road vehicles w/o oversize is 9'.

## **Funding**

- More Funding
  - If we had the money all areas need more
- Less Funding
  - Defund this department and give funds to schools, fire department, parks and recreation, and anything else. They do not need to have an airplane for traffic surveillance. They do not need body cameras every other year. They need to have teachers teach them how to make do on a budget that is slashed. This department serves the city as a standing militia and not the public. Remove the green dot for safe place as it is a slap in the face and disrespectful as their job is primarily to place blame and fine the community. Move money into having counselors and psychologist without weapons to respond to mentally ill and nonviolent crimes. If there is heavy money given to the department there needs to be monthly deep thorough department wide investigations on individuals and finances. Give the public ability to call the departments insurance providers to question their integrity and premium prices as a form of holding the department accountable. Provide educational hate and racism deconstruction courses to eliminate biases.
- Redistribute Police Funding
  - Be competitive in salaries for police.

- For a city of this size, it seems that there are lots of police vehicles and personnel. I presume that is largely due to the presence of ISU. So, look for ways (to the extent that this is not already happening) to shift the cost of this large presence onto those populations (young undergraduate students) that make it necessary. Also, reduce its size to the minimum required. For example, a much smaller police presence is needed during the summer. This is a legitimate role of government, but it can almost certainly be done more cost effectively than it is now.

## Other

- Enforce Traffic Violations
  - As a regular walker and biker (recreation and commute), I feel in danger at most intersections. People in cars race through yellow and fully red lights. As example the intersections at 6th and Grand and 9th and Grand.
  - Have observed cars barely slow down at 4-way stops.
  - I haven't seen a police car come to a complete stop at a stop sign.
  - Need more enforcement on driving while talking on cell phone or texting while driving.
  - Stanton Ave speeding.
  - Too much speeding on Aspen Rd.
  - Traffic - Ames has gotten worse with people turning in front of me when I have right of way. Cell phone use is a problem, running lights and stop signs, turning left in front of me from right lanes.
  - Traffic control in more residential areas. High traffic times near the high school and other school areas. Example, East 13th street and other outlying areas should not be nearly as much concern as in town areas.
  - We really wish there were more efforts at enforcing the speed limit and stop sign violations but that's pretty minor stuff in the big picture. We appreciate the community outreach. We don't know whether the police should do more or less of the big list in Section E but we think the police are doing a fine job and thank them for their hard work.
- Sexual Assault
  - Ames police dept. is living in the DARK AGES when it comes to sexual assault and harassment. Those officers need education. This is based off of personal experience with my daughter.
  - With Ames being a college town, I think there needs to be less emphasis on alcohol related issues because it is going to happen whether cops like it or not. I think the emphasis needs to be more on things like sexual assault and how to do things safely.
- DEI Training
  - Delighted to hear APD is improving their service for residents with mental health problems.
  - DEI training
  - I'm 21 and the police are over patrolling the bars. There is no reason to go anymore. Students keep to themselves on Welch Ave, which is separate from the residential area. There are no aggressive crimes being committed. I've been to many bars and college bars over the country and Ames is the only city with this level of intense enforcement. And for what? I believe it is a waste of money, and they should focus time and money elsewhere. Same goes with the parking. There is simply not enough parking in Ames. If you don't want cars parked on streets, then make more parking.
- Patrol Neighborhoods More
  - Do not remember the last time I saw a patrol car in our neighborhood! Saw a person

- run a stop sign right in front of a patrolman and he did nothing! Way too many people running stop signs and red lights.
  - It would be nice to see them patrol more in the neighborhoods.
  - More patrol officers needed.
- Mental Health
  - We appreciate that Ames is investing in qualified mental health personnel to respond to relevant calls - keep that up and continue investing. And we appreciate the police's law enforcement.
- Substance Prevention
  - Please reduce the use of mind-altering substances in our community.
  - Public marijuana use seems to be on the rise. It is at the very least the same level of nuisance as someone smoking a cigarette in a prohibited space.
  - Spend less money. End the drug war.
- Violent Crime Investigation
  - The number of violent crimes in Ames seem to be increasing over the years. There are also too many crazy men with access to guns.
- Public Nuisance
  - Cats running loose.
  - Have been in dispute with neighbor about his dog barking all the time. Have notified animal control numerous times with no result. I will be notifying them about the dogs in my backyard area that do the same. And so does Ames PD. The laws are not being enforced.
  - There is a neighbor a few houses north of us that does not mow. I think there are some mental health issues involved. I'm not sure the best way to help this issue long term.
  - They don't do enough to stop dog barking. It is out of control.
- Suggestion
  - I wish Ames Police were able to put out a crime warning like ISU does for sexual assaults and related offenses that happen off campus. I know a lot of those things happen on properties not affiliated with the university and it would be nice to know of patterns of behavior off campus as well as on.
  - I wonder if some random walk through of our schools might provide several positive several positive rewards for students and officer knowledge of the surroundings and school setup.
  - It would be good to have someone in the lot behind Main St. to South during farmers markets - people do not follow one way and dangerous.
  - Living south of campus, I wish the police did more to control the rowdy parties and trash that is left everywhere on the weekends.
  - Now that there are no longer police in schools. I think the schools need better enforcement of drug prevention/enforcement.
  - Parking downtown should be free! Friendly "dogs off leash" should not be pursued. Keep police efforts positive whenever possible. My interactions with Ames Police have been minimal, but I especially appreciate efforts made to be friendly and helpful. Police should not use violence - especially guns! - in reacting to peaceful protest and minor offenses.
  - Suggestion - build new animal shelter.
  - The Police Department spends WAY too much time focusing on Welch Ave. and controlling and raiding the bars. I personally don't know why they care so much about raiding.

- The police must emphasize making Ames a safe community and be trusted by the community. They must ensure they recognize the humanity in the offenders they perceive.
- Those uniforms need more color. Support the community and add some local art to those outfits! Seriously, uniforms other people and cater to us vs them mentalities.
- Too hard a-- on students.
- We had problems with a neighbor and a noisy dog (big pit bull) who were living above our apartment. The landlord didn't allowed pets on upper floors [poor isolation] but the person had an emotional support animal. We would have liked if the police or the landlord would have done more. We ended up moving. There should be better control of emotional support pets and bad quality floors (isolation).
- You need more iPhone enforcement.

## Comments on Fire Department Activities

- Service Not Used
  - Fortunately, we have not had a fire or emergency.
  - Glad I haven't had to use it.
  - Have not had any encounter with the fire dept.
  - Have not interacted with the Ames Fire Department.
  - Have not needed their services.
  - Have not needed this service.
  - Have not needed to use fire department services.
  - Have not used Fire Department services. Open houses good for children.
  - Haven't had the need – thankfully.
  - Haven't had to utilize this department while at ISU.
  - Haven't had need.
  - I have never contacted the fire department.
  - I have never interacted with the fire department.
  - I have not had to use their services.
  - I have only needed them once and they were understanding and helpful.
  - I haven't used or needed their services, but I fully support any initiatives that benefit the fire and emergency departments.
  - Luckily have never needed them.
  - Luckily I haven't had to use their services, but from what I see in news reports etc. They do an excellent job.
  - My impressions are the Ames Fire Department is good; have never had to use it.
  - Never used.
  - Thankfully, I have not needed these resources, but the facilities look well maintained when I walk or drive by them.
  - Thankfully, we have not needed emergency services.
  - Thankfully, we haven't needed the fire dept. in the 40 years or more that we've lived here, but I'm confident in their skills and response time.
  - The fire department is right down the street from my house. I have not ever utilized the services but thank you to all the fire people who serve our community.
  - This actually is a proper role of government. Fortunately, I have had no personal need for the services of the fire department. To my knowledge, they are doing a good job.
  - We fortunately have not had to use fire department services.
  - We have not had need for their services.
- More Outreach
  - Can they do some outreach at a Farmers' Market so we know what they do and don't do or any tips that are constant issues in the community?
  - They need to have more public image than police department. People trust fire department, not the police department.
  - Unaware of any outreach events, might need more communication.
- Positive Outreach Experience
  - Good open houses for children. Information on how to access services to check/replace batteries for fire and carbon monoxide home detectors.
  - Great open house event in 2022! Great for the kids!
  - I saw their program once. They trained on how to put down the fire. Good!
  - I work at Campustown and we communicate with them quite often. All the times

- have been very awesome!!
- They have helped me with medical emergencies. They always come to our block party for the 4th of July and are kind and helpful.
- We appreciate the fire department's social activities in the community, bringing trucks out to block parties, etc.
- Positive Experience
  - A neighbor had severe health issue and the F.D. did a good job helping her on several occasions.
  - Called 911, Rapid response - Police efficient responders - Live in Windsor Oaks - Senior Center - Quiet - No sirens - Quick response.
  - Emergency medical personnel were professional and compassionate when needed.
  - Have yet to have a fire department related inquiry. In my apartment complex there was a fire call last year where everyone had to evacuate but I had no idea what was going on. They did arrive quick and were very helpful to the people in the apartment unit they were aiding.
  - I like the smoke detector replacements for the needy.
  - I support them.
  - I truly appreciate their help with my smoke detectors.
  - Last year I was sent to ER once by Ames Fire Department staff. They responded promptly and took good care of me until our arrival at the hospital. I really appreciate their help.
  - My husband was in a health care center and needed to go to the hospital. They responded within 5 minutes it was amazing.
  - My impression is the Ames Fire Department is very professional.
  - The 2 times I have used fire services, I had a great experience.
  - The fire in our neighborhood was very well handled by the fire department.
  - The one time I interacted with the fire department, I was very satisfied with how they were able to quickly address the situation while keeping many of the people present calm (many of whom were intoxicated).
  - The only time we have called the Fire Dept (non-emergency) was several years ago when our cat got trapped behind our washer/dryer. Two people came quite quickly (it was around midnight) and moved the appliances.
  - They get to places very fast in Ames, so I am pleased!
  - They work harder than they need to based on how many false alarms at dorms/apartments from students not being smart.
  - Years ago, I had a small fire, and they were excellent. Otherwise have not had any reason to use them.
- Good Department
  - Excellent! Caring employees who do a fantastic job!
  - Firemen are hot.
  - Good people and so glad they all are so committed to their profession!
  - Great job!
  - I feel like they are always ready and know what to do when arriving on scene.
  - I have little direct contact with Fire Department personnel but when I do they seem quick, sharp, professional, and courteous. I have great trust in their abilities and their kindness.
  - Keep up the good work. Stay Safe!
  - Love the free smoke alarm program.
  - Top notch!

- Need New Station
  - Suggestion - build another station north Ames, far quicker response to northern residents.
- No Current Knowledge
  - Do not know anything about AFD.
  - Fortunately, I have had only one event to test emergency medical response, and it was over 10 years ago. No current knowledge.
  - Have not heard of any community outreach programs or events.
  - I do not hear much, good, or bad, about the fire department.
  - I just don't know much about it.
  - I know very little about the fire department.
  - Thankfully I don't know much about how well the fire department performs, and I'd like to keep it that way. :)
- Negative Example
  - I have concerns about my apartment for emergencies, and even though I've informed the fire department. I don't believe it will be addressed until after someone dies.

## Comments on City Electric Service

### Solar

- Positive SunSmart
  - Ames could do more with solar power and may need to in the near future. City officials should implement more solar power.
  - I am a student at Iowa State and am not interested in investing money, but I fully approve bringing a solar farm into Ames and the growing interest in renewable energy.
  - I am curious to see the emission trade off of a solar farm production and upkeep versus the current power grid.
  - I believe we do solar program.
  - I currently rent but am in the process of buying. So I'll prob do it once I buy it.
  - I didn't realize this was still available.
  - I do want to do this.
  - I have already purchased a power pack.
  - I think this would be helpful.
  - I would like to participate.
  - I'm glad that Ames has its own electric service. That gives us citizens some control over things like investigating alternative fuel sources. I like the idea of solar and I hope Ames Electric Services continue to support it, but from a community and residential standpoint.
  - Please continue efforts to provide clean and reliable energy to your customers. Things have gotten better, but there is more that should be done. Thank you.
  - This would be a program I would support if I wasn't graduating and moving out of Ames for the time being.
  - Would like to see more city emphasis on solar and other renewable energy sources.
- Negative SunSmart
  - I would like to participate, but we rent and do not plan on renting for 20 years to take advantage. I would appreciate shorter term options for renters like us.
  - I would totally be interested in participating in the solar farm; however, I am a senior in college and cannot afford it. Also, I am moving in a few months.
  - I'm a college kid, so I'm just living in the dorms, and this doesn't really apply to me.
  - If we could do this with immediate savings, we'd consider it.
  - Last I had calculated the return on the power pack was too low.
  - Long term budgets may not cover upfront costs.
  - Monthly bills too low to justify purchase.
  - Solar power is wasteful of money and resources. The production of solar panels produce much waste. If solar were really efficient, you wouldn't need government agents to bribe people to use it.
  - The cost vs. return ratio is negative.
  - This program doesn't seem to actually reduce cost in the long term. This program is only there to make people happy they are being "green."
  - Will need to check on how much the credit is.
  - Would not pay off.

### Overall Thoughts

- Satisfactory
- Ames should be proud of electric services. I had a problem with my upstairs lights, the maintenance men just knew it was the meter and wouldn't do anything until

Ames checked the meter. I called and the city within an hour they had 2 guys here to check they left their names and numbers and said to call them if the maintenance guy gave me any more problems 10/10 would absolutely recommend them again.

## Comments on Drinking Water Service

- Great Water
  - 1. Ames has the best tasting water in the world. 2. The Ames water is much harder than it was 40 years ago. 3. Now that we have plastic water mains there is little rust. 4. Now that the water is not softened as much as the old days there are more chances for cloudy water. 5. When is soft water a problem? Maybe you meant software? 6. The water pressure is always high enough that I can always get my glass full quickly 7. I never blame the water leaks on too high of pressure.
  - Ames has the best water ever.
  - Ames tap water FTW!
  - Best city water of all the places I've lived before.
  - Best drinking water for taste and clarity.
  - Delicious.
  - Excellent.
  - Excellent tasting water.
  - Excellent Water.
  - Fantastic job, some of the best water in the country. Keep it up.
  - Good water. We have a home treatment system.
  - Great Water.
  - Great!
  - I like the taste of Ames water.
  - I love Ames Water.
  - I love our drinking water.
  - I love the Ames Tap Water.
  - I think the water in Ames is good. It does seem to gum up the plumbing of faucets. I'm not sure how much can be done about that. For this survey question, having the positive "never" answer on the left is contrary to the previous questions where the responses were more positive as they moved to the right.
  - I very much appreciate the taste of Ames water! It has spoiled me: when we travel, I am sometimes unwilling to drink from the local tap water because of unpleasant taste.
  - Love Ames water - Don't use a water pitcher or our fridge water, its good right out of the faucet.
  - Love water in Ames.
  - No complaints!
  - Seems good.
  - Usually tastes good.
  - Very good - I hope this level of quality is maintained.
  - Very satisfied. Better than any other city we have lived in.
  - Water has been great.
  - We have fantastic drinking water!
  - We have good water!
  - We love award winning Ames Tap Water! Hooray for the city of Ames!
  - Wonderful water quality!
- Great Service
  - Great service! Good awareness campaign prior to hydrant flushing. Thank you.
  - Had one main break nearby and response was great. I reported it and gentleman on phone was nice and it was fixed within the day.

- In general, very good water system and maintaining of pressures.
- These guys are nailing it.
- Water service has been very good. Thank you.
- Could Be Better
  - Clean it, it pales in comparison to Idaho water available to its residents. We filter our water at home. Filter the water more!!! Update your facilities to higher quality and to accommodate more people.
  - Don't drink city water.
  - Get fluoride out of the water.
  - Good sometimes smell chlorine.
  - I saw a report that Ames had a bad rating on the new list of handful chemicals in the water, slightly concerned.
  - I think something should be done to try and clean out the microplastics.
  - I wasn't aware that soft water was a problem. That's what the new WTP does.
  - I'm from out of state. The water always looks white and tastes different than what I'm used to.
  - It is widely agreed upon by most students that the sinks in dormitories smell odd or unpleasant. I am unsure of the cause.
  - It's been quite off and on.
  - My water softener filter completely changes color from white to dark rust color in 3-4 months.
  - Only see rust when flushing pipes.
  - Priority on reducing PFAS would be beneficial.
  - Softening level controlled by HOA where I live. Do have to take magnesium pills because water is so soft for drinking.
  - Sometimes I worry the water has traces of bleach because it is seemingly bleaching parts of the shower curtain that get wet.
  - The color/odor problems occurred on campus at ISU. I don't know if that's a City of Ames issue or an ISU issue. Water service at home has been fine.
  - Too much lime in water.
  - Water has some appearance and taste since I've been in Ames.
  - Water is too hard always.
- High Water Rates
  - Our water seems just fine, and we feel very lucky for the hard work the city down in this area, but we do wish the cost was lower.
- More Information
  - Please be transparent about water issues. Why were so many streets throughout town torn up and then immediately repaved? And now Grand Ave has random holes being dug in front of houses? I saw piping in the street. I also heard an NPR segment where there were concerns about lead pipes in the Midwest. Does Ames have lead pipes? Is this what is being addressed along Grand Ave. currently?
  - Seems we have just without warning way too often.
- Use Filter System
  - Tap water does not taste good and we use filtration and bottle services (Brita, other filters, store bought water).
  - Use a Brita pitcher.
  - We have a water softener system, so I cannot answer those questions about the water before it goes through that system.
  - We have well water.

- We needed to put a whole house filter on due to sediment in the water clogging up our faucets.

## Comments on Water and Pollution Control

- Satisfactory
  - Keep up the good work. I wouldn't mind if some of the rules on backflow prevention were relaxed. Just a thought. :)
  - Water taste is excellent. Rates aren't great - especially with the recent increase - but probably comparable to other cities.
- Unsatisfactory
  - City of Ames performs apartment inspections but doesn't ever do anything about the too-small pipes in my building which cause often backups, holes in the bathroom floor, and water damage.
  - Had two of our bedrooms flood due to poor maintenance on gutters and foundation but nothing has been done.
  - I do know of neighbors/neighborhoods near us that have ongoing flooding due to undersized drainage pipes- the area is more populated than projected.
  - Mostly dissatisfied with the river water.
  - No more fluoride in the water please.
  - Our water service pressure was higher than recommended for residential use and we had to install a pressure regulator, which was an out-of-pocket cost. We had to lower our pressure by 20 psi in order to prevent leaks or burst pipes. We called the city about this with no resolution, so we were forced to fix this ourselves.
  - Public water (rivers, creeks, etc...) is disgusting.
  - Some water fountains in parks are not working.
- High Water Rates
  - Disappointed that water rates continue to increase by large percentage.
  - I don't support raising rates in support of industrial growth in East Ames.
  - Rates are too high because Danfoss uses potable water for cooling - why not well water?
  - Using industry as justification to raise rates yearly is not a good enough reason. Improvements to water service & sanitary control & service due to higher input costs and labor costs should be the reason and should be open and transparent as possible.
  - Water rates seem a little high.
- Unsure
  - I live in an apartment, so I am unsure about certain prompts.
- Bad Stormwater Drainage
  - I reported pooling on Duff in front of our house (2822 Duff) last year. No response until this month (April). 2 men have looked at it 2 to 3 times but no solution yet.
  - I think that a city should provide storm water control as a basic city service to all and pay for it with general property tax. It seems unfair to start charging for it after it has been provided for decades and then only charge property owners.
  - We had water in our basement several times after heavy rain. We are unsure if this is a neighbor's down spout issue or a city issue.
  - We've had storm water enter our basement, but it's from the driveway part of our home, not the street.
  - With large rainfall, the intersection still retains large amounts of water backing up in yard. Project was done in area, its better, but still causes trouble in heavy rain.
- Bad Water Quality
  - Water is very hard and makes my hair fall out when I shower.
- Conserve Water

- When in a drought, enforce water reduction use, no watering of lawns etc. conserve water where possible. Restaurants were pretty good in asking if you would like water at your table to help conserve. We must be more aware and reactive to protecting our water resources.

## Comments on Neighborhood Nuisance Enforcement

### Positive

- Good Department
  - Inspections division is very responsive and knowledgeable. Thank you for your hard work.
  - Not sure this is the right place but when we had not-running vehicles on our street and I went to the police station and complained. They had ticketed the cars before I had even gotten back. They were very courteous, and the problem was resolved promptly.
  - These have got to be thankless parts of the City's responsibilities, but I think they are important. These ordinances set expectations for newcomers, as well as old-timers, and provide a collective presentation of our community.
- Satisfied
  - I've never had a problem with any areas so maybe very satisfied.

### Indifferent

- No Issues
  - I have not made any reports, so cannot judge response.
  - I haven't had to deal with much of this, thankfully. Keep up the good work.
  - I've never encountered or reported these nuisances.
  - No nuisance in our neighborhood that I'm aware of.
  - Not a homeowner so I'm not very aware of this, but I do enjoy walking the neighborhood in old town. It was charming.
  - Unfamiliar with ordinances.
  - We have never had occasion to ask the city to intervene in a noise issue.
  - We haven't dealt with these issues in our neighborhoods and don't live near any college students.
  - We live in a residential area and don't have concerns with our neighbors.

### Negative

- Lack of Enforcement
  - All of these need stricter enforcement.
  - We had problems with incredibly loud neighbors all night for about a year and there didn't seem to be any resource for us! Just because we can't afford a single-family home, we should still be able to sleep!
- Ignored Nuisance
  - A landlord bought a house next to mine in a nice part of old town Ames and my beautiful house built in 1921 and it became a party house and was loud and disgusting and the city police did nothing even though I called and reported excessive noise late parties and alcohol poisoning.
- Slow Response
  - Longer response time for smaller neighborhood issues
- Less Enforcement
  - I generally oppose ordinances that micro-manage what can and cannot be done on private property. Every ordinance of this type reduces the rights of the property owner. Those rights should be reduced only in extreme and compelling circumstances.
  - If it's their land, they should do what they want with it.
  - The plants growing in somebody else's yard are not my business. Whether

somebody wants to park their truck on concrete or grass is not my business. When I say it is not my business, it also means it's not your business either. It's not the business of any government bureaucrat or politician. It's not anybody's business but the owner of the property.

### **Nuisances Mentioned**

- Dogs
  - 1) Should be warned 1 time, 2) Citation 2nd time, 3) Mandatory owner/Dog Obedience training or removal of dog from neighborhood
  - Dog barking
  - Keep Ames clean. Ames is a very clean town. Dog poop might be my biggest concern.
  - We had problems with a neighbor and a noisy dog (big pit bull) who were living above our apartment. The landlord didn't allowed pets on upper floors [poor isolation] but the person had an emotional support animal. We would have liked if the city or the landlord would have done more. We ended up moving. There should be better control from the city of emotional support pets and bad quality floors (isolation).
- Overgrown Vegetation
  - AMES needs to readdress the obstruction of view at a lot of our residential street corners. Ex: 11th and Grand (NW corner going east), corner of 11th and Clark, go east to the next stop sign. These obstructions are wood fences, bushes trees. Either have the homeowners take down, so I do not have to pull out across crosswalk to see clearly both ways!!
  - Good heavens, overgrown vegetation is a good thing, not a nuisance unless the vegetation is Japanese knotweed or daylilies in that case eat them, they are edible. Pesticides are the nuisance.
  - I've reported trees hanging over sidewalks before, but I wish the city would patrol it without relying on residents to report it. It could be as simple as a couple people driving in neighborhoods to check on trees in the area between the road and sidewalk.
  - What happens if you're worried about a neighbor's tree falling on your house but they won't take it down?
  - Yard upkeep of dangerous vegetation should be enforced (dead trees) w/o prejudice as this is dangerous to everyone. Some older abandoned homes or fire damaged unlivable homes fenced immediately within 48 hours, not snow fence, regular chain link portable fencing.
- Unkept Properties
  - I live by the church at E 9th and Carroll we have complained about this for years, but nothing is ever done. The neighbors and I are tired of the mess.
  - I live in the Roosevelt neighborhood and have grown tired of driving by the home on Grand that has a large inventory of upholstered furniture stored in plain sight on its extended porch. It took far too many years before another home on Grand with an obvious hole in its roof was finally razed. I don't know the owners' circumstances and it is important to be kind and patient with offenders, but such highly visible eyesores do not reflect well on our community as a whole.
  - My extreme dissatisfaction is mainly due to \*\*\*\* Grand.
  - The residential and college rented homes in Ames are run down, dilapidated, and an eye sore. They look awful and make me not want to live in Ames anymore, which is why I plan to leave as soon as I graduate. I also know that homes need to meet standards to be insured and many of these homes do not meet that standard.

- The same house on Grand Ave has been an eye sore for years! Ticketing for lack of snow removal on sidewalks needs to go up.
- Tyler Ave has one residence that does not control thistles, fallen branches etc.
- Trash
  - I live in South Campustown neighborhood. I would like to see more enforcement of trash on property and cleanup of the streets in Campustown.
  - West Ames, specifically, has so much garbage everywhere. No clue where it is coming from. Disgusting.
- Parking
  - I think there should be a review of front yard parking ordinances and then a campaign to educate the masses what they are. I feel that front yard parking limits visibility for drivers pulling out of driveways. The view of oncoming traffic in the street is blocked by cars parked in front of houses whether on the grass or on a driveway.
  - People keep parking on houses driveway blocking the sidewalks! This is so annoying and against the rules.
- Fireworks
  - Lots of complaints in our neighborhood about people setting off fireworks in June and July after 10 pm - even after midnight - I know this is hard to police - The Kate Mitchell neighborhood Facebook page (over 300 members) frequently posts which house the fireworks come from.
- Loud Vehicles
  - Loud vehicles, mufflers, and bass woofers
  - Noisy motorcycles on Duff
  - Why are motorcycles allowed to be so loud?
- Snow Removal
  - Please enforce lawn care and snow removed on sidewalks. Consider fining repeat offenders.

## Comments on Street Maintenance

### Traffic Flow

- Walk Light Timer
  - 6th Street and Grand Avenue traffic light needs better timing during off peak hours.
  - 9th and Duff walk signal seems broken. Would like more sidewalks in residential areas.
  - As a pedestrian, many of the lights are hit or miss when it comes to walk light regularity. For example, the new light at S Duff and Billy Sunday Road has glitched out multiple times before creating potentially dangerous situations. I have had it give me the walk light for about 3 seconds and then immediately turn it off as the traffic light turns yellow while I'm in the middle of crossing.
  - Bad traffic signal effectiveness on Lincoln Way south of campus, also with all the new stoplights. And the manually coordinated intersections on game days are an absolute nightmare.
  - Grand Avenue between 24th and Lincoln way is not good. Frequently stopping because side street traffic trips lights. Also, something needs to be done at Grand and 13th street to minimize light cycling between turning vehicles from Grand.
  - I have never seen a traffic signal give a green light for both directions at the same time. I have never had to wait more than 120 seconds to get a green light.
  - I honestly see NO coordination between signals.
  - I lived for several years in Germany, where traffic lights were timed to create a wave. If you drive down a major street you would encounter mostly green lights, apparently timed to traffic and time of day. I feel like I encounter one light after another turning yellow or red just as I get to it.
  - It seems on major streets (Lincoln Way/Duff) I either have mostly green lights, on mostly red at every intersection; there is no in between.
  - Lights on Lincoln are not coordinated.
  - My biggest complaint is the traffic signal on Lincoln Way and University Blvd. When crossing to go to Hilton Coliseum and walking east, the walk signal comes after the left turn signal. The game traffic keeps driving through the walk signal. This is very dangerous as we have almost been hit along with others! The walk signal should be first.
  - None of the streetlights on Lincoln Way are coordinated.
  - Our road is often having to wait for an extended period of time at stoplights - South Franklin, Lincoln Way intersection.
  - Rarely ever get through 2 traffic lights without having to stop.
  - Series of lights from Airport Road and Duff to 16th and Duff need better coordination; people get stuck in middle of intersections because the light ahead hasn't changed.
  - Several intersections on main roads routinely have their sensors not working or are out altogether. I hope the construction on 16th and Duff is helping that. Also, University Blvd needs more major work done than just filling the potholes. The pothole patches do not last very long and end up being a bigger issue than the original pothole.
  - Signals overnight should be flashing red/yellows.
  - So often have to stop at almost every light from 13 Street all the way to route on Duff.

- Some lights' timing is really long even when no cross traffic. Example at University and 6th street. University lights stay green for almost a minute with no cars.
- Some take FOREVER to change.
- Sometimes seems lights don't change as fast as should like when no traffic is very low.
- The intersection of Lincoln way and Dayton Ave in the evening - those lights change very fast. I would prefer slower light changing.
- The one at 11th and Duff is being weird the last few weeks.
- The signal at the end of the ramp onto Duff from 30 going east is often messed up.
- The traffic signal at University and 6th for older folks or people walking isn't long enough.
- There are some stoplights (specifically on Grand Ave.) that will remain red for long periods of time regardless of traffic. Busy intersections that don't have a green arrow also seem inefficient.
- There is always some intersection that needs them that does not have them.
- Think about coordinating traffic signals to non-automotive users better. Having to push a beg button as a pedestrian or cyclist is ridiculous, especially in the winter. Upgrading to radar-based or some other type of crosswalk detection would be so much nicer.
- This is my number 1 complaint. I often use the intersection of State and Lincoln Way to go west. This light seems to require hours of waiting. It takes less time for a long train to cross Kellogg. Please fix this!
- Total lack of coordination, common to drive, stop at light and when it turns green the next one turns red. Faster and less stressful to drive residential streets. If you had coordination, you could move more traffic instead of creating parking lots.
- Traffic gets backed up very easily on Duff. The traffic isn't well coordinated.
- Traffic lights tend to be very long in all directions. Frustrating when only one car is coming out of Vet Med in the mornings and you have to wait at the light to go straight or turn in for long periods of time.
- Traffic signals are horrible in Ames. Don't make sense.
- Traffic signals frequently out of sync.
- When a pedestrian pushes a crosswalk button, it takes so long for the light to change.
- When road work being done traffic lights not adjusted to compensate for long backup of traffic.
- Would have been nice if synced on Grand so not stopping so much.
- Ineffective Traffic Flow
  - Ames is extremely frustrating to get around in. Ineffective traffic flow compared to numerous other Iowa cities.
  - Certain stops such as 13th Grand are not optimal during high traffic hours.
  - Fine for now, will definitely need maintenance in the future.
  - Need to convince ISU to allow right turn on red from university to 6th Street.
  - Please pave Adams St. Dawes Drive and Calhoun Av. It gets a lot of traffic - best way to I - 35 and Dayton from this neighborhood.
  - Specifically on Grand and 13th, Stange and 13th, much of South Duff, Grand and 6th - traffic frequently gets very backed up, preventing access to other streets.
  - The Duff train screws it up!
  - the only place this really matters is South Duff and Lincoln way through campus. I'm not sure it could be done any better, but I often stop at most lights when driving

through those areas and avoid them as much as possible.

- Traffic lights at major intersections do a poor job of maximizing use of the shared space (the intersection). There are long periods of nobody going through the intersection even though cars are waiting in all directions. I would drastically reduce the period when lights are red in all directions (as they cycle from one direction to the next). Also, the software does not seem to adapt to time-of-day conditions very well. Specifically, turning left from eastbound 13th onto northbound Stange is often very slow during busy periods (4:00-5:30pm).

### **Road Condition**

- Poor Road Condition
  - Mortensen Rd. is terrible to drive on and has a decent amount of traffic.
  - Street maintenance - we were promised by the city personnel that our curb would be repaired and grass would be replanted after the used street in front of our house as a storage for dirt or equipment when doing roof maintenance.
- Lack of Upkeep
  - A major topic I hope has changes soon. I have had multiple flat tires because of the upkeep of our roads. Also, the city does its due diligence to clear roads of ice and snow, but something isn't effective. Just this past season I slid into an intersection twice, thankfully without there being an accident.
- Poor Street Drainage
  - Comment for street maintenance. Water pooling in roads every time it rains, too much road construction every year on same roads.
  - Joints in streets need to be sealed. Water gets in and freezes and cracks open in winter.
  - Litter is a huge problem in ditches - sometimes plugs the storm sewer behind our house.
- Poor Snow Removal
  - Plowing and ice control this winter was extremely poor.
  - Snowplows definitely do not follow speed limits in my residential neighborhood. They drive as if they're playing an arcade auto game. I can understand traveling at higher speeds along the main roads. Pedestrian safety should be their #1 priority, followed by damage to private property as #2. A plow hooked the steel storm drain in the corner of my yard this past winter. It sounded like an explosion. I immediately went outside to see what happened. A 6-inch piece of concrete landed three feet from my glass front door, around 50 feet from the storm drain. Thankfully, no vehicles were parked in the driveway, as they surely would have been pelted by projectile concrete had they been parked outside. I have been picking up bits of concrete in my yard all winter and spring. Also, the lights need to be coordinated at the intersection of N. Grand and 24th St. It's a free-for-all! 1. Lanes condensing from two to one or vice versa on 24th, which aren't very clearly marked. 2. There is no turning signal light only for 24th St. drivers. You simply have to pray every time you make a left-hand turn onto Grand. 3. The incline on westbound 24th St. at Grand intersection doesn't allow drivers travelling west to be able to see if there's a car waiting to continue east behind the first car that's waiting to turn left onto northbound Grand. Cars traveling east on 24th St. can only see the first cars stopped on westbound 24th. I say a prayer every day before I turn left from westbound 24th to southbound Grand. Let's make this intersection safer Ames!!!
  - Snow removal continues to be a challenge. Seems like it takes a long time for major streets to get cleaned.

- Street sweeping/snow clearing of dead-end streets appears to be not a priority. After 3" of snow, plows cover all but the dead-end streets, even where plowing to the end is easily done - See Kansas Dr/Missouri Dr, etc. Always leave large snow piles at intersection making leaving these streets difficult with a car (4WD vehicle needed sometimes!). Maybe see evidence of street sweeping in a single year, some years never see the evidence.
- As for snow removal and ice treatment, this seems to get done early and with much fanfare at the start of the season (when everyone is paying close attention). After the first few winter storms, however, response time seems to decrease. Snow removal should proceed in full force the moment it stops falling - whatever time of day or night that it happens. That's a tall order, but that's what it takes to get the job done well.
- Too often snowplows push a huge pile of snow in front of our driveway that we have just shoveled by hand. We are glad for the current street repaving happening now - and it seems to be going quickly - so thank you.
- Very poor plowing on Greeley Street! Other streets can be completely clean, but Greeley will be COVERED and impossible to get through!
- We live in a cul-de-sac and it often gets passed by for snow removal and street sweeping (for leaves in the fall). We sometimes have to call after a couple days to get it addressed. That being said, they are always accommodating when we call.

### **Safety Adjustments Needed**

- Poor Snow Removal
  - Huge problem in Ames, mainly South-North traffic. City solution - has to add more lights and stops. Horrible, Grand Ave Extension isn't enough!
  - I appreciate it when the snowplows try to move the snow to the center of our circle rather than onto the curb by our house. I would like to see a Yield sign on Eisenhower at the intersection with Buchanan heading north. A lot of people, especially students heading to Ames and Gilbert high schools, fail to yield to traffic on Buchanan. Too many near misses! Also, a four-way stop is needed at Eisenhower and Bloomington. There is a lot of traffic coming out of the sub-divisions and traffic on Bloomington is heavy and frequently speeding. There are often ten-minute waits to turn onto Bloomington. Thanks!
  - I would need another page to list all my complaints. Please, please make the left turn on S. 4th onto Duff protected left turn only. Same thing for Welch on to Lincoln. Duff and Lincoln Way is a tragedy.
  - Mortensen westbound where it merges from 2 lane to 1 west of Kum and Go - put visual sign of the merge pattern back in place - people apparently don't understand wording sign that exists.
  - Need lights on W. Riverside Rd and 69 is getting busier and more dangerous.
  - Need turning arrows on 13th and Grand.
  - Please update the turn signal on S Duff and 3rd. Adding an arrow blinking yellow would be more helpful than a solid green line on the turn lane.
  - There are needs to be a turn arrow at intersection of 13th and Grand going east - west. It's dangerous.
  - There needs to be protected left turn arrows at 13th & Grand going East/West.
  - There's a stoplight on the intersection of Sheldon and Lincoln that takes forever to turn.
  - Think traffic speed should be 35 not 45 on University Blvd south of football stadium.

Traffic signals well-coordinated on Grand. Not well coordinated on University Blvd. Often have to stop at every stoplight.

- We need more left and right turn lanes with "green arrows." Make the "wait time" the same in both directions at intersection. It is rude to make cross traffic wait longer. Get rid of "all medians," not needed and antiquated, turn them into left turn lanes where possible. Much easier for snow removal too. Get rid of "bump out curbing" that narrows the streets. Dangerous situation!! Our neighborhood street (Vermont court) needs curb repair and resurfacing too. Hasn't been done at all - just put some black goop on to fill many, many cracks in the pavement.
- Would like more arrows at major intersections e.g., Stange + 13<sup>th</sup>.
- Unsafe Bike Paths/Lanes
  - Bike path on East side of Duff needs to be wider, appears unsafe for riders.
  - Bike paths/lanes get little attention during the winter.
  - N. George Washington Carver, 24th are poor condition bike paths are disjointed - sidewalks are NOT bike paths (people forced to cross major streets when paths end midway).
  - Pretty awful - I constantly have to veer my bike around potholes and there's a complete lack of any pedestrian friendly development. I constantly feel in danger when walking or biking because cars are always speeding by or there aren't proper stop signs or enforcement to protect pedestrians. Need much more bike and walking paths and less high-speed roads.

### **Proposed Changes**

- Add Bike Paths
  - Can you add more bike paths and more walking paths around Ames?
- Less Stoplights
  - Need more roundabouts and not lights at State and Mortensen, Hyde and 190<sup>th</sup>.
  - Please focus on street maintenance (potholes & RR crossings). Also, Ames has TOO MANY traffic lights. Please adopt the following rule: if the city adds a new traffic light somewhere in town, it must remove a traffic light from some other intersection in town. Finally, I doubt the competency of those who do "city planning." Drive around Somerset Village and you will discover that the intersections are unsafe. For example, the intersection of Stange Rd & Aspen Rd is on a curve, with obstacles (parked vehicles, bushes, and electricity boxes) blocking visibility. The layout of the "community" is foolish and inefficient. The speed limit is not respected by most drivers. When pedestrians and/or bicyclists try crossing Stange Rd, it is dangerous.
  - Way too many traffic lights!
- Expand Funding
  - Keep spending as much as the budget allows to improve our roads.

### **Overall Sentiment**

- Satisfactory
  - Have improved over the years. Glad to see attention to South 16th St.
  - I think it's improved getting through Campustown - I think it could still be even more coordinated.
  - Streets are in great shape overall.
  - The streets are pretty good. Sending this survey out during construction season was a bold choice. :) I understand the realities of roads in Iowa, where it freezes. While the construction delays are infuriating, I do appreciate their end result. I don't know if this is the right place for this, but I am not a fan of the places where roads have

been narrowed. Places like the intersection of 24th and Hayes. I used to live north on Hayes and could turn right when traffic was backed up. When it was redone a few years ago a curb was put in to prevent that. Decisions like that feel hostile to people that drive that every day.

- Unsatisfactory
  - It leaves a lot to be desired.
  - There are a number of intersections, particularly with 13<sup>th</sup>, which are painful to go through.

## Comments on CyRide

- Great Service
  - Appreciate having the service available in Ames and know many consistently rely on it. Provide great service to the community.
  - CyRide is a great asset to Ames. And while I don't personally use it, I am happy to support it for the benefit of the community.
  - CyRide is a wonderful resource and asset in the community. I rode it as a college student in Ames.
  - Good service but keep it a pay option.
  - I am a huge advocate of CyRide. It was an amenity we wanted when we moved here. I would like to see it expand.
  - I enjoy using CyRide it does a good job.
  - I enjoyed using CyRide as a student and think that it is a valuable asset for a college town.
  - I love CyRide.
  - I take CyRide downtown and it is awesome. A safe and responsible way to drink the 2-3 times I do on weekends downtown per semester.
  - I utilize CyRide a lot and appreciate the public transportation.
  - I work for CyRide, so I don't generally ride it and am biased towards these questions.
  - It is amazing. The moonlight times are inconsistent though and this was bad during the winter months when people were depending on it for warm transportation.
  - It's a great service. It's very important that buses run on schedule.
  - Love it.
  - The new electric buses look awesome and are super quiet.
  - Very much needed and a plus for the university. I'm retired and enjoy my own car.
  - We have used CyRide in the past and been very happy but do not have the need right now.
  - We think the CyRide app is very useful.
  - You beat Des Moines with no comparison. The fact that I can use it with my Iowa State card on any bus is mind blowing. Des Moines has nothing even close.
- Don't Use
  - Can't answer - don't use CyRide, probably wouldn't.
  - Given our job types, can't use Cyride.
  - I commute to West Des Moines for work.
  - I either work from home or commute to Des Moines. CyRide does nothing for me.
  - My husband has Parkinson's and no longer drives. Living now at green hills, we do not have to use CyRide transportation for people who are mobility impaired. We very much appreciate, though, that this is an option for our community.
  - Sorry, but I'm not used to riding public bus and will probably stay that way.
- Inconvenient
  - I wish the system was less confusing and disorganized, also more focus on town transit and less on campus.
- Expand Service
  - Ease is okay, but I wish there was a route to East Ames.
  - I am a student living with other students who all use CyRide that we pay for through

tuition. If residents want to use it, first they need to pay in some way. Whether it's taxes or upfront. Also, as of right now CyRide is PACKED getting to and from classes. If they are going to increase amount of riders, they need to increase frequency and have more routes with less destinations.

- I would like to see expanded bus services available to all residents in the City of Ames and funded through property taxes. Additional services would include more frequent routes, increased service in off hours, ability to hail rides. Would also like to see CyRide move towards more emissions-free vehicles.
- I would like to see expanded routes for CyRide. I live in southeast Ames and am an ISU student. The buses do not come near my apartment, so I have to drive to campus and pay for parking. I cannot park in the commuter lot because the buses that go there do not go to where my classes are. It's frustrating paying for something I am unable to use.
- It would be great if CyRide went to Reiman Gardens and Scheman/Fisher.
- Please extend the services for students who work at Research park up to their offices. Walking in the snow up to InTrans in Research Park made me slip thousand times.
- Please make expanding service westward a priority.
- Don't Expand Service
  - I have 4 kids. Riding a bus regularly as a family is a really tough sell. Also, our city is pretty small, in my amateur experience, it doesn't seem like it can support expanded service.
  - Not looking to pay 1,000,000 per bus for all electric buses.
  - Unfortunately, the US was not built for easy public transit. The money spent to make Cyride more frequent add to encourage ridership would be better spent elsewhere. Public transport changes would have to be made to all of Central Iowa to encourage wider adoption.
- Should Be Free
  - I might hop on the bus if it was free, but I usually drive to specific location for a specific purpose, e.g., grocery store. If my destination is less than 3 miles one way, I usually walk.
  - I occasionally use it now. Would use if no fare.
  - Improving biking trails and sidewalks would help make fare free transportation.
  - WIC, progress Monday free meals - medical could include free pass for these people.
  - Would be great if free - a good way to help out those with reduced.
- No Stops Near Me/Destination
  - I am about 1 km from my nearest stop, so walking to is often faster due to low frequency.
  - I have ridden CyRide mostly on campus. I took my grandkids to go to Reiman, but bus didn't drop us very close. It was a hot walk the rest of the way.
  - I live in East Ames, and the bus does not come out to me. The EASE service ends around 6, so I do not use public transportation as much as I would like to. I drive to the commuter lot and use the bus from there.
  - I use CyRide to travel to campus but the stops and routes I would have to use for my daily commute mean at least 20 mins of walking. My drive is 10 minutes.
  - Its closest stop is several blocks away and has only one not too frequent route.
- Prefer Driving

- After the pandemic I do have concerns about being in a crowd of people or high-density people situations. Used to ride CyRide all the time during winter months before I retired.
- I own a car so much more convenient to get around quicker rather than taking multiple buses. I have enjoyed using CyRide when I was younger. It is nice for those who don't own a car and for avoiding looking for parking.
- I prefer to drive and have the convenience of my own vehicle.
- It is hard to get people to give up their cars.
- Retired and more convenient to drive.
- Walk/Bike
  - I live very close to work and usually ride my bike.
  - I walk or ride to most of my destinations (downtown Main Street or ISU) and distance to bus stop gets me halfway to destination so easier to just walk/bike.
- Student Centric
  - It doesn't feel user friendly for residents, just students - majority of routes are run through ISU campus. Not enough routes and times throughout town.
  - It's really good for students living on major bus routes, but difficult to use otherwise.
- Improve Driver Quality
  - Drive safer - I get scared sometimes.
  - Random driver evaluations should be done. Primarily for safety but also rider quality assurance.
  - The drivers almost never use turn signals when pulling away from a stop or will merge into a secondary lane from stationary without using a signal.

## Comments on Community Parks and Recreation Services

### Positive

- Great Parks
  - Ames has great parks. Our park model should be replicated all over. I do wish the bathrooms would get repaired more quickly when they're damaged. I appreciate the reality of it, insurance and all, but not having a bathroom when you expect one is very disruptive. Overall, great job on the parks.
  - Enjoy the wonderful parks.
  - Favorite thing about Ames!
  - I enjoy visiting Ames Parks. Good hangout spots. My favorite is Ada Hayden.
  - I like the parks and would like to see more flowers added and more pollinator spots or gardens.
  - I love all our parks and am trying to find all the existing walking and biking paths.
  - I love going to the parks and I feel very safe every time I go!
  - Like all the parks in Ames :)
  - Love it!
  - New Miracle league on the North Side has been a wonderful addition. Especially enjoy where little free libraries have been installed for access to books in the community.
  - Nice place to go.
  - Thank you for the all-inclusive playground.
  - The large number of Parks makes Ames a great place to live and be proud of.
  - The parks always seem to be well taken care of.
  - The parks are my favorite part about Ames, especially all the hiking and fishing opportunities, and sand volleyball. Keep up this priority.
  - There are some really cool parks in Ames that I can take my little brother to.
  - Very good overall.
  - We love Ada Hayden and Brookside best of the city parks. We frequent them with our 4 kids. We also like the sidewalks/biking trails that connect behind Ames High through Brookside, along the rivers.
  - Whenever I've been to one of the many parks, I always feel a sense of pride at the appearance of it. Keep making improvements and keep it safe.
- Beautiful
  - I feel we have some of the best parks for a community of our size - spaced throughout town and large to small - kept up beautifully.
  - I think we are fortunate to have our beautiful parks.
- Good Department
  - Ames parks and recreation is really good. I love the Tennis court and shelter houses, but they could work more on tables/grills. I wish we have more playground equipment.
  - Keep up the good work.
  - Parks and Recreation oversee a phenomenal number of activities and parks. We are a fortunate community.
  - Wonderful parks and recreation! Need more opportunities for children for example: free swimming lessons, free soccer, free baseball with expert coaches.
- Unique
  - Each park is unique, so this is hard to rate. Brookside has gone a little too natural, but the miracle park at Inis Grove is fantastic! The large shelter at Moore is great. Some walking trails are better than others!

- Safe
  - I love going to the parks and I feel very safe every time I go!
  - We never understand why trees and bushes get cut down at Ada Hayden, nor why the city puts chemical weed killers out when there are young children and going animals out in the spring. Can you please post information about why and what you are doing in the slap case at Ada Hayden? Keep us informed, please? And stop using pesticides as much as possible please.
- Walking/Hiking
  - I love hiking, and I've found that Ames has some pretty good trails, but they're hard to find. Popular apps like All trails don't have any of the trails in Ames listed.
  - I love Moore Park, McFarland Park, Carr Park, and several others that I walk my dog at.
  - I love walking around the parks in Ames.
  - When able to walk - really enjoyed walking around Ada Hayden.
- Sports
  - Please add pickle ball court lines to more tennis courts.
  - Some of the tennis courts don't drain well.
  - Tennis courts typically lack tennis wall; would be useful to have more. Court at Emma McCarthy Lee is cracked.
- Grilling
  - I like grilling areas and sand volleyball pits.
  - Would be nice if you could fix some of the grills, like the one in Lee Park or at Miracle Park. Besides, open the restrooms on nice days before April 15. Lights in some of the shelters are not working, e.g., Memorial Moore Park.
- Sidewalks
  - During the winter sidewalks are dangerous.
  - I think continuing to add the wide sidewalks whenever a road is re-constructed really benefits the Ames Community.
  - Sidewalk/walkway at gym entrance are not easy to walk through using walker. Light needed outside Admin building at dark difficult to see. Small handrail would be nice too.
- Bike Paths
  - There is a paved bike trail that goes from the baseball fields on 13th South to Lincoln Way. I really would love if the extension from Lincoln Way South to Menards and eventually the soccer fields was completed. I asked about this over the winter, and it is stuck in budgeting and setting up the easement.
  - I think the main thing that I would love to see is more development of bike paths. There are some nice green spaces in Ames, but many are difficult to access from campus. This would be a huge project, but the idea of being able to bike comfortably Downtown or even to Ada Hayden from campus sounds lovely.
- Good Connectivity
  - Most parks are very walkable and connected.
  - Well-kept park areas and facilities.
- Clean
  - Thanks for keeping the parks clean and fun for my family.
- Community Garden
  - I rent a community garden plot at Ioway Creek. I would like the COA to tighten up the contract and maintain the garden much better.
  - There should be community garden spaces in the parks. You should be able to camp

in tents in parks too.

- Playground
  - Thank you for the all-inclusive playground.
  - The better playground equipment is in the east half of the city. Playground upgrades or park additions are needed in areas west of ISU. Carrol Marty Disc Golf Course needs TLC. Ames needs single track mountain biking.
- Trails
  - Love all the city trails.
  - Many safe trails to walk on.
  - Parks and trails I've been to are always really nice and clean. Free of litter.
  - Please finish bike trail from North River Valley Park to Hunziker Ball Park @ I-35 and Skunk River (Stops at Lincoln Way).
  - Some trails good, some trails poor.
  - Very much need more paths.
  - We need more trails in more neighborhoods, and to connect them.

### **Improvements Needed**

- More Amenities
  - Basketball courts bigger, More water fountains.
  - Could upgrade picnic tables and have more, especially at Brookside.
  - How about some outdoor pickleball courts.
  - It would be nice to have tables at Bandshell - is there an alternative table that could be used and not vandalized?
  - Limited parks. Ones we do have are quite small and overpopulated.
  - More trash cans in public spaces would be appreciated.
  - Need more tennis courts and more parks in west Ames.
  - Some additional lighting would be nice on some trails, but not absolutely necessary.
- More Upkeep
  - Bathrooms in Brookside don't have soap dispensers. Very nice otherwise.
  - Debris and things on picnic tables.
  - Encourage to leave no trace behind. Some parks look sad because there are no trash facilities, or they are not emptied enough. Hard to leave no trace when facilities are not maintained by the city.
  - Hutchinson Park has broken glass in the grass and sidewalk. Dogs are never on a leash. Dog park needs play obstacles to entertain dogs and owners.
  - I pick up trash when I walk. Would like more trash cans. Signs to encourage people to pick up trash - especially plastic bags are dangerous to wildlife.
  - Park - Lloyd Kurtz Park/Bloomington Heights - Equipment has been broken, under repair/ unable to use for 2 summers - please repair or replace.
  - Parks without a bathroom or shelter house should be upgraded to include those amenities. The city has been resistant to consider building both structures in O'Neil Park even after requests by locals to explore the topic. After the city committed to leaving O'Neil Park alone last year, I think it's time for them to enhance the park. Several of the newly remodeled or new-construction parks in Ames tend to be located in the newer parts of town with higher socio-economic neighborhoods. Ames should commit to upgrading all older parks and show respect for all neighborhoods and citizens. One could look at Ames, and surmise that the City has unintentionally created a park caste system: the older and more centrally located a park is in town, the less amenities a patron may find in that park.
  - The grass at my local Lloyd Kurtz Park is not very healthy. May need some fertilizer

- or reseeding.
- We could update a lot of the parks and recreation - I feel like a majority of the sites are old and need to be improved or slightly updated.
- The parks could use more TLC.
- We live on Garden Rd. behind Kate Mitchell School. After the expensive work to clean out the storm sewer and get rid of flood deposited soil and trees, in 2020 a prairie was established. Several of us said they would mix the prairie each autumn to keep trees from reestablishing. Didn't happen in 2021 or 2022. Will it happen in autumn 2023?
- Reduce Spending
  - Don't spend so much money.
  - The city should drastically reduce the amount of land owned for parks. Proceeds from the sale of such lands should be used to reduce the tax burden on residents. IMO, it is not the proper role of government to own land for use as public parks.
- More Trees
  - I said poor on the wooded areas because they seem to be disappearing and there aren't many wooded areas anymore with so many trees getting cut down.
  - More female trees to catch male tree pollen and cut down on allergies.
  - Too early to be completely informed in this area. But have noticed that wooded areas need to have fallen limbs etc. cleaned up, wood chipped - can put back down for compost. Ioway Creek needs to be cleaned up, fallen trees in creek, trash etc.
  - Would like more wooded areas or free areas with less equipment but just open area.
  - Would love to have more wooded/wild areas with narrow/challenging trails like reactor woods. Also, little signs by native plants that also list their names in public parks would be amazing. Best way for kids to learn their trees/shrubs/flowers.
- Trail Cleanup
  - After windy days, it would be nice to get trees that have fallen picked up in wooded areas. Example - Carr Park trail.
  - Brookside Park trail has had sand on it for 2 years, very dangerous to bike on.
  - Cycling trails need more regular maintenance.
  - Parks rarely clears trails in the winter anymore. There has been a pile of sand on the trail in North River Valley Park at the low water for almost 2 months.
  - Please be take greater care when maintaining the bike paths.
- Restrooms
  - Almost very good, but for restrooms, really bad.
  - Each public park needs to have a public bathroom.
  - I wish that the park bathrooms were open earlier in the spring. It gets very nice and people love to be outside, but it's a bummer when you have to go and they're still closed for the season.
  - It would help if restrooms were open when Ames has youth sports.
  - More restrooms would be great.
  - Not enough trails or connectivity between parks, Restrooms are disgusting, lighting is poor, burned one at Inis grove has been out of commission too long.
  - Restroom quality varies from park to park.
  - Restrooms generally are not super clean at parks or are just outhouses.
  - Restrooms needed year around! People are going behind the closed buildings. We need a place to go in the winter too.
  - Some restrooms better than others.
  - Suggestion: park bathrooms heated and lights open all year long.

- Thank you for providing these! They are great for hosting events. It would be great if the bathrooms were checked more often for maintenance.

## Comments on Public Library

### Positive

- Wonderful
  - A wonderful library, I feel spoiled! Thanks!
  - Fantastic!
  - Just that I'm grateful.
  - Outstanding! Keep it that way!
  - The library is one of my top favorite things about Ames - I recommend a visit to anyone arriving to Ames for the best time. A wonderful welcoming and inclusive resource for all.
  - The library is wonderful.
  - This library is so awesome, spacious, and entertaining. I think as a young kid I would beg my mom to take me to the library if it was like this one!
  - Wonderful Library. Wait time for audio books long.
- Love
  - I love the Ames library! Along with the parks one of my favorite things in Ames. Great selection of materials tons of resources. Growing up my family would drive 50 miles to go to the Ames library. I love living near it now.
  - I love the Ames Public Library! The workers are always very helpful with any questions I have and friendly. I am always happy when I leave!
  - I love the APL. Repair Café event. This is good in the fact it helps people that have a need and provides community unity.
  - I love the library I wish I had more time to spend there!
  - I love the used book sales.
  - Love our library (5x)
  - We have a lovely, large library and I don't use it as much as I should, but I have many friends that use it often and we share books too.
  - We love the library - we rave about it to visitors. We love the focus on diversity.
- Excellent
  - Excellent facility - well kept!
  - Excellent Library
  - Excellent service and facilities. I use the library often. I do miss the ten-minute parking spots for picking up books.
  - The library is such an appreciated resource and outlet for families. Would like to see more 1-to-3-time community courses offered for all ages. I would also appreciate a seed library located at the library.
  - They are a great place.
- Beautiful
  - Very well kept – clean.
  - We are blessed to have such a beautiful library and very functional.
- Great
  - Great asset to community - like diversity of programs.
  - Great library.
  - Great Library, Loan to Audio Books long wait time.
  - I have heard many good things from friends.
- Atmosphere
  - Great atmosphere for outdoor amenities.
  - I love it! Very welcoming space, it was the first place to really feel like home when I moved here:)

- Very open, welcoming environment.
- Great Staff
  - Great staff, offering of materials, internet can be iffy at times.
  - Staff is kind and enthusiastic to help with any questions.
  - The library and librarians are first rate! We are grateful for all they do to make the library useful and welcoming and a happy, community centered place. We love the bookmobile! Shout out to Nathaniel and Linda who are always kind and patient and friendly. Thanks to whomever keeps the FB page so current.
  - The research and help desk staff were very helpful in assisting me with finding resources and making copies.
  - The workers there are very kind and always willing to lend a hand.
  - We are new to Ames and have very impressed with the library and its Staff!

## Resources

- Good Resource
  - Amazing infrastructure. I especially like the private study rooms on the second floor.
  - Amazing resource. The APL is the best of the best. The online portal is super convenient.
  - APL is a gem in our community! So grateful to have such an incredible resource with amazing stuff in our town.
  - I especially appreciate the wide range of services and help from the staff. Organization of volunteer services is excellent and helpful resource.
  - I love being able to go to the library for a quick visit for a book or DVD of interest. I do go there often to pick out DVD movies as I finish them quick so it is nice to have a welcoming and accessible environment.
  - Love this resource and the including atmosphere and materials.
  - Nice facility - helpful librarians.
  - Our library is tremendous. Kudos to the Library staff and the army of volunteers that might it all as magnificent as it is. I think the average Ames citizen doesn't appreciate how truly remarkable it is.
  - Sure is nice to have the elevator. I like to use the old newspaper lookup services.
  - Tea Bar RAWKS:)
  - The Ames Public Library is a wonderful asset to our community! I especially appreciate the programs that educate the public on controversial issues. the candidate panel discussions the welcome to all users.
  - The library is a community treasure.
  - The library is the best place to go with kids in winter. We are big fans of the reading challenges as well.
  - To volunteer 3x / week at the library - proof that I value it.
  - Yes - good for meetings.
- Libby App
  - Don't use library as much as since moving from old town to southeast Ames. Still use their eBook selection via Libby App.
  - I have included my use of Libby in my answers related to resources.
  - I love the Libby resource for audiobooks and the conversation circles groups (I attend German). I would also go to one in Korean, but I know that's a smaller demographic even with a Korean church in town.
  - I'm 94, no longer drive and have poor vision. But the library has been a special place since my children were toddlers. Now I use Libby and am so grateful for this opportunity to read.

- Mainly I use electronic content – it’s invaluable to me.
- More Electronic Resources
  - I appreciate the availability of a variety of audiobooks. Please continue to make more audiobooks.
  - More public computers for children to use in the children's section.
  - Now that Netflix is getting rid of their rental DVDs program, I will be using the library to rent DVDs and Blu-ray.

### **Improvements Needed**

- Improve Seating
  - Comfortable seating is not always available. Also, I don’t know how to use resources.
  - Need soft seating in Auditorium.
  - There is not much seating area by or across from the main desk. Couple of computer assist tables with 2 chairs. What is with the masks by personnel behind the glass at front desk. Goodness stop the hysteria and move on with your lives.
- Improve Facilities
  - Please put tall toilet in the handicap stalls. The present ones are too low for those of us with bad knees.
  - The search function on the website could be a lot better.
  - Would like to have plexiglass removed from customer service desks, hard to hear each other, don’t feel like employees are engaging with customers enough. Just sitting behind shields
- Donate
  - I donate books for book sales.

### **Negative**

- Decline in Services
  - Children’s section has declined.
  - Since the remodel, the building is larger and well maintained but the atmosphere is a bit sterile, less welcoming. It’s easy to walk in and spend an hour or two without encountering any library staff. Would be nice to see a welcoming face, at least upon arrival/departure.
  - We use the newspapers; now takes more time to take elevator up to second floor and then halfway across.
- Drag Events are a problem.
  - After seeing they hold Drag story hours, I am extremely uncomfortable being there at story time. We avoid it now at all costs, that is completely unnecessary.
  - Ames Public Library is not marketed to the public, but to the woke. It’s Ames Woke Library, one of many libraries which push normal people away by promoting sexual perversion and inviting sexual perverts to entertain children. I don't trust the staff with my children. They purchase garbage books and remove the quality ones from circulation. Go woke, go broke. "The wheels of justice turn slowly but grind exceedingly fine."
  - Drag Queen story time is highly offensive and deeply harmful to kids.
  - Offering drag queen shows at the public library is offensive, especially ones targeted at kids and teens. Anything attempting to expose minors to sexuality is inappropriate.
- Homeless Problem
  - It has become extension of homeless shelter.
- Don’t Use It
  - I have never been there.

- I have not used it. I go to Parks Library on campus.
- I just don't think about it and perhaps time.
- In this day in age, there is almost no reason to maintain a public library. The collected knowledge of all human history is available to anyone at any time via increasingly easy and comprehensive Internet searches. IMO, this is another area where government should dramatically reduce its role and use the savings to reduce the tax burden on citizens.
- Never been, don't plan to.
- Only been there to vote.

## Others

- Political Issues
  - Doesn't seem inclusive to citizens right of center.
  - The city needs to take a strong stand in opposition to censorship. Professional librarians should be in charge of building collections, not legislators.
  - Woke does not equal welcoming. The library should be neutral in the culture wars. When a hold is placed on an item, the person that item checked out should receive a notification. In the absence of fines this is particularly necessary. The lack of aged volumes in the collection suggests overly aggressive weeding.
- Use University Library
  - Do not use because I use the university library.
  - I am a student at Iowa State, if I need a library, I use the one on campus.
  - I use Parks library as a student.
  - I use the university library. Sorry.
  - I visited it a couple of times and loved it. But as student I also use ISU library.
  - I work at ISU so I use that library.
  - Unfortunately, not a super appealing resource as a student. It is a bit too out of the way from campus for a car-less student to make any resources it has over the university library worth using.
  - Why focus on a public library, when half of the Ames population is Iowa State Students who have access to Parks Library for free at Iowa State? Another section of the population is also Iowa State employees who have access as well.
- Parking
  - Could use more handicapped parking spots in front of library.
  - I wish parking was free.
  - Parking can be a problem.
  - Parking can be an issue esp. Sat. Mornings. My only real issue is parents who don't watch their kids in the children's section.
  - The parking and timings are the main issues when it come to the library.

## **“What could the City of Ames do to demonstrate its commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion?” Comments (N=111)**

### Affordable Housing

- Eliminate the drug problem which stems from a money problem which stems from increased rents. People having more money for bills instead of it going to rent would improve the community instead of the few owners. Laws to protect against raising rent prices outside unreasonable means. Base it off of some metric or index that determines price. Provide a service that evaluates price and condition of dwelling. This will limit money from also leaving Iowa if owner is a non-resident.
- More affordable housing
- Lower rent prices
- Also, Ames needs to solve the apartment issue. There is no reason to force 1-2 weeks of homelessness on college students between leases due to the greediness of the property managers. They don't even pre-clean the units themselves. They have tenants do it. I have had the same experience with two separate pm companies in Ames. It is \*\*\*\*\* ridiculous that literally nobody in the city is advocating for students in this way! Rent keeps going up, beyond what students, graduate students, postdocs can afford. Every single year rent goes up. Rent is 60% of what I am paid monthly as a graduate student on a stipend.

### Connection to Campus

- More Ames community organizations closer to campus.
- Have more interactions between the community and the college.

### Community Events

- Bring back the 4th of July Pancake breakfast! :D
- By having events that encourage any person to join.
- Can't change the weather, so have more city events on the library's site.
- Continue to host and promote community friendly events.
- Do more things everyone can go to.
- Free food events.
- Have more city-wide events.
- Have more events like the farmer's market.
- Having cooler stores and events to go to - there is nothing to do in Ames.
- Hosting free events for anyone in the community.
- I think the city could do more to showcase local businesses, particularly restaurants. It would be great to have more festivals/events showcasing local businesses.
- More social activities/things to do.
- Organize more community events.

### Community Gardens

- Community gardens

### Diverse community representation

- Continue to build diverse staff and office holders that represent our diversity.
- Giving them the opportunity to get involved in activities decisions even if they are small.
- Have diverse persons represented on boards.

### Don't Know

- Do not know.
- I have no idea.

- I really don't know.
- I'm unsure how the city could help.
- n/a
- Uncertain.

#### Educational Opportunities

- Accessible land-based education with walking distance/CyRide nearby.
- Educate to reduce ignorance. Include diverse peoples and cultures and events. Discourage hate and misinformation.
- Educational opportunities.
- Free classes and or learning activities for all ages.

#### Elderly

- Do more for the elderly.

#### Emphasis on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

- Emphasize diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Emphasize the beauty of diversity with events or gatherings.
- Encourage and fund more cultural festivals that celebrate the diversity of Ames residents.
- Having events to celebrate cultures where we can come together and learn from one another.
- Host AAPI or DEI events.
- Inclusivity of all holidays if not done already.
- More DEI opportunities.
- More inclusion
- Needs to be modeled. Promoted and encouraged city council and all employees. The public library does a wonderful job through their many events and spaces. Should be weaved into all city policies, practices, and events.

#### Affirmation for marginalized groups

- Work harder to treat minorities and people with mental health conditions respectfully and with inclusion.
- More affirmation of immigrants/refugees, members of the LGBTQ+ communities and people of color. I am privileged: white, heterosexual, and well educated. Ames needs to be welcoming to all people.
  - LGBTQ+
    - More action against and harsher punishments for racism and discriminations. As a gay male I do not feel safe in this city. Perhaps do more to promote diversity and belonging.
    - More stuff for musicians/artists, transgender folk, and LGBTQ.
  - Elderly
  - BIPOC
    - More support for Latino and Black community

#### Infrastructure repairs

- Follow through on promises for repairs.
- Help with insulation, siding, and windows.

#### CyRide, pedestrian, and accessible infrastructure improvements

- Free CyRide
- Improve public transit, and multimodal forms. Car-centric infrastructure is discriminatory and promotes poverty through requiring a car to maintain employment. Develop good non-car infrastructure that is safe and comfortable for people to use year-round.

- Make sure that more facilities are handicap accessible.

#### Improved Community Outreach and Communication

- Better community outreach
- Communicating when events are taking place more effectively. I almost never know when things are happening.
- Door-to-door outreach once a year to highlight community events.
- Create more engagement opportunities in area neighborhoods.
- Hear out all residents' opinions and do their best to fit the needs of them.
- Opportunities are unknown.
- Listen
- More community outreach, encourage recreational activities.
- More notice of community events.
- Promoting neighborhood opportunities, picnics, celebrations, etc. Parks and Rec is strong and needs to continue for kids and adults.
- Share more local groups to be included throughout the community.

#### Improved Physical and Mental Health Services

- Consider physical and mental health services, of high quality, available to all citizens. Encourage zoom/computer access to physical and mental health connecting to providers in larger cities. Ames is a desert of health services.
- Expand availability or access to mental health service.
- Medical health services

#### Legislation

- Speak out against the hateful legislation that is presented at the state level. I love Ames, but the state of Iowa scares me, and I want to move.
- Support all people regardless of gender, sexual orientation, race, and financial status. Help make change within the government for Iowa and be a voice for people who don't have much of one.
- Supporting and promoting social justice - showing Iowans that Ames does not have the same biases that other places do.
- The new laws passed by the state of Iowa made it harder to feel like you belong.
- This has always been a challenge but has been made more difficult by the 2023 Iowa legislative session. Continue to provide events that recognize diversity - LGBTQ, racial, cultural, community conversations on mental health.

#### Not City's responsibility

- Feelings are not the government's responsibility.
- I am not sure everyone wants to belong. But you could make them feel that they are helping others, so point out how much the city is helping others. (Of course, some may not want to help others and feel the city is wasting resources.
- Stay in your lane! This is not a municipal responsibility!
- This is another area that is not the proper role of government. I support no spending on things of this nature.

#### Park Equity

- All parks having same amenities regardless of park's size, location, age, etc.

#### Poverty/Homelessness

- More attention needs to be paid to the homeless and others that are economically disadvantaged. For instance, try to make the aquatic center available to all.

- The city could change the laws so it is easier for people who don't own property in Ames to live here. A good example is the lady who wants to live in her bus on city streets, Let her! she isn't hurting anyone and she could probably use some respect and community support.

#### Revised Law Enforcement Procedures

- Fairly enforce laws without any bias at all.
- Don't have cops harass people for minor things. Be present for people to come up to police officers when needed.
- Follow up with police reports.

#### Safe Spaces

- Become sanctuary city - providing more assistance and access to necessary supports for people in marginalized communities.
- More available spaces for niche groups to congregate.
- More queer safe spaces and action against discrimination.

#### Taxes

- Do their jobs and spend our tax dollars wisely.
- When I questioned a tax increase the gentleman told me that maybe I couldn't afford to live in Ames. I see this as the general attitude at city hall. And I have lived here all my life.
- Lower taxes and reduce the size of city government.

#### Comments directed at City Hall or Staff

- Don't force them to use government garbage collection. It's just garbage.
- Give up equity and concentrate on equality.
- Recognizing citizens who do a lot to contribute to community building. I know there is some of this already, but I think more could be much more.
- So when I moved here with my finance in 2020, he needed to find a job. He applied for a position with the city. He had to take basically a standardized test to be considered. I believe this was held at the library or city hall - I forget. There were several grammar/language questions on the exam. My fiancé is bilingual and fluent in both languages. However, English is his second language. He was unsure about several of these grammar questions. He did not perform well enough on that section to be considered for a position, although he by no means flunked the exam. He is Filipino. I feel like this odd standardized exam to work for the city is extremely non-inclusive. In fact, it is exclusive, it excluded my fiancé, a person of color, from a position with the city because he didn't grow up in the US and learn tricky grammar rules like a native US citizen would have learned. I do not believe that these grammar rules would be necessary for any city position, quite frankly. He communicates perfectly clearly. This standardized exam put a horrible shadow over our move-in experience in Ames. We truly felt like it was an unethical practice.
- The city seems to think a lot of itself - maybe just dial that back about 10%.
- There needs to be more transparency to residents and surveys like this one that allows for open and honest and feedback. Would be helpful to have more information presented rather than a resident having to search for buried content on website.
- This is so broad, inform the citizen in a broader way. Electronic is not the only way. Unify, help the homeless, more community wide events.

#### Other Comments

- Bring community together, more advocacy for churches.
- Community involvement and belongingness, to me, only occur during farmer markets, which are in one portion of Ames and are relatively far from where I am at.

- Give them time and money.
- Having more sense in equality within races.
- I don't have any good solutions for you, but thought it might be helpful to describe the problem: COVID disrupted a number of social connections that have not returned. As a recently retired individual, I'm feeling a bit of a disconnect and am considering how to get more involved. I'm quite particular about my commitments (enjoying not being too tethered to responsibilities) so I'm a bit unsure how to proceed, as I don't want to overcommit either.
- Need surveillance cameras in Apt complexes.
- Nothing extra- live with college students, don't care to but it's cheaper and closer to school.

#### Traffic Flow

- Improve traffic flow.
- Stricter traffic patrolling - speeding moving violations etc.

#### Negative Job

- Ames does a lot of surface level equity and inclusion, but when it comes down to policy, the policies are often the opposite. Example: the climate action plan will disproportionately disadvantage those of lower socio-economic status. Community gardens are anti-equitable because new residents get plots only if established residents/gardens don't want them, cutting Bridge Home funding etc.
- Decide if residents are more important than temporary students. Students should have the real world.
- Stop the reverse-discrimination policies of DEI. Think about what you are doing when you place the needs of the few over the needs of the many. How can you support such illogical measures?

#### Positive View

- Already doing this
- Ames does a lot. You all should be proud of that. :) Keep doing what you're doing.
- I believe Ames is very inclusive as it is.
- I feel they are doing great!
- I think it is good right now. I love being here.
- It's fine, the last thing we need to more DEI bureaucracy.
- Recognize everyone for being awesome.

## “What is the best thing about living in Ames?” Comments

### People

- Community
  - “Community” of people that live here.
  - A lot of events that brings community together like Farmers’ Market.
  - Community (3x)
  - Community is very kind and welcoming. I simply love Ames.
  - Community leadership and residents who sincerely care about helping others.
  - Community, open and welcoming environments, room for opportunities everywhere.
  - Community, small-town feel, CyRide
  - I like that it is a true community, especially when the students are gone. The locals are very good about creating a welcoming space.
  - I love the community. I have not met a single bad person while living here less than a year. The students are all great and friendly. Outside of school the people and neighborhoods are nice to be around.
  - I love the people the community, the arts, the support, the walkability, the rivers, and woodlands.
  - It feels like people in the community care about each other.
  - It would be the neighborly feeling in a larger town, now it seems like the town belongs to the students and residents don’t matter as much.
  - It’s a large enough community that there is a lot of diversity and things that happen, but the actual community itself feels rather small and connected.
  - Nice sense of community.
  - People
  - Perfect sized community with clean and safe parks, neighborhoods, and recreational parks.
  - Progressive community, excellent H2O, great park system.
  - Sense that the community and public officials care about Ames, its residents, our safety, and enjoyment of life here.
  - The community is amazing. I am a student at ISU, and I work part-time. The people that I meet when I work are just incredible. I would want to live here after I graduate college.
  - The community of people, water quality and how family friendly it is. It is a very safe place to be.
  - The community on campus
  - The people
  - The people and nature
  - The people are great! Water, library, community, downtown main street, arts - performing arts.
  - The people in the community
  - The people, the services, the cultural opportunities, and safety
  - The people!
  - The people! The ability to take part in many big city events even though were still a pretty small town.
  - The people. Recreational Parks. Restaurants/coffee
  - The school district and community
  - The sense of community
  - The size of community and student involvement

- Good Values
  - Ames is a caring place to live with values I appreciate. An oasis in a space that is recently more regressive politics and hatred towards humans.
  - Strict Rules
  - That it is an eco-forward city. I also love the Farmers' Market.
  - The people, the care and concern for making it the best city, lovely parks, love Ada Hayden, waste to energy process.
  - The nice people and clean parks
  - The security, and Ames really seems to care about its residents and makes changes that align with the people's wants.
- Friendly
  - Friendly
  - Friendly - have excellent medical services - doctor specialists - great downtown area.
  - Friendly and helpful
  - Friendly people
  - Friendly people and neighborhoods
  - Friendly people, available resources
  - Friendly, honest people
  - Friendly, relatively safe community
  - Good, friendly neighbors and small town, non-congested living environment.
  - Overall - Iowa nice people - facilities - light traffic - moved up from Texas - Great Place here.
  - Overall, it is very friendly.
  - Very friendly residents, professionally kept properties, and beautiful public properties.
- Diversity
  - Diversity x2
  - Having a diverse community, many options for housing, studies, youth etc. A small town feel but many quality groups + entertainment options.
  - More diversity than rural area
  - Student diversity
  - The cultural mix
  - The diverse experiences available is proportionately greater than other Midwest towns this size.
  - The diversity and inclusivity. The number of quality of community events and activities.
  - The diversity, volume of people is not too much and not too little.
- City Admin/Staff
  - City admin, staff, and residents are actively planning for the future with an eye toward change that change that will help make the city on even better place for everyone.
  - The people our city services and leaders, having ISU in our community, the peace and serenity, ease, and time to get around town.
  - Wonderful City well managed city, friendly people we have lived in many cities and Ames tops them all.
- Family
  - Great place to raise a family.
  - I'm close to family.

- Kid-friendly
- Living close to family
- My boys
- My relatives and a few friends reside here.

### **Transit**

- Biking and Walking
  - Ability to walk or ride a bike nearly anywhere. I would be excited for free CyRide access for even more transportation options. I appreciate the level of safety I feel moving about the community.
  - Almost everywhere in Ames is bikeable, which is super nice.
  - Being able to get most places without a car.
  - Campus town is very walkable.
  - Ease on getting around on bicycle.
  - I can walk to run errands if needed.
  - I love the walking and biking paths. I love the proximity to Iowa State University activities. I really like the size of the town and knowing when there are improvements, we all benefit. I like that most of my answers in the survey were rather noncommittal because it seems the city is doing a good job. I hope Lincoln Way development goes forward and helps downtown thrive.
  - Walk anywhere/pedestrian friendly.
  - Walking paths
- CyRide
  - CyRide and the overall community. I have never felt unsafe.
  - CyRide Safety
  - Public transit(2x)
  - Trails

### **City**

- Good Town
  - Everything but the police department and corn
  - Great town
  - Living in a town that isn't too bad and without terrible.
  - SO much character
- Big City Advantages/Small Town Feel
  - The best thing about living in Ames is having many of the advantages of a big city with a small-town feel.
  - Ames is a great community. It still has a small-town feel, yet there are so many wonderful amenities that make us seem like a bigger city.
  - Big city feel - shopping, trails, recreation, etc. - all in one place without being a 'big' city.
  - Doesn't have many of the negatives of a bigger city (crime, homelessness, etc.) but still has a lot of opportunities and services.
  - Feels like living in a smaller town but offers most needed amenities.
  - It has a small town feel even though it is still a large city. Everyone is welcoming.
  - It's about the right size to have some city amenities without many big-city problems.
  - Nice small town with reasonable people and good events.
  - Small city/suburb feel but lots of businesses and a good downtown. Also, good parks in the surrounding areas like Ledges and Ada Hayden.
  - Small enough to feel homey, big enough to feel small city.
  - Small town feel with a good selection of big city amenities. Local leaders also willing

- to use science-based decision making.
  - Small town feel with good amenities.
  - Small town feel with many the activities and options of larger city.
  - Small town feel with plenty of resources for the college students such as restaurants, parks, and stores.
  - Small town feel, but bigger city amenities.
  - Small town feel, green spaces, nice amenities, close to Des Moines.
  - Small town feel, less crime than Des Moines.
  - Small town feeling, safety.
  - The "small town" atmosphere. (Please do not seek to make Ames a bigger and bigger city.)
  - The size and number of perks we get for being a major university town.
- University
  - Balance of university and small community
  - College Life(2x)
  - College Atmosphere
  - Going to Iowa State.
  - Great University and Library
  - ISU x4
  - It hurts to say, but living on the ISU campus is a great experience. I mostly mean that because I wish that the rest of the city made me want to leave campus more. That said, it is a difficult task since campus is so pleasant.
  - Jack Trice stadium
  - Living in a college town with Big 12 sports our vibrant Main Street
  - My friends and ISU
  - Sorority
  - That college
  - The campus
  - The campus and people
  - The College
  - The easy access to campus and being close to campus!
  - The relationship with Iowa State University. Having 3 grandchildren here.
  - The university and cultural activities, low crime.
  - The university community involvement.
  - The university.
- Quality of Services
  - Access to goods and services.
  - Attention to infrastructure.
  - Excellent public services overall - transportation, healthcare. We have everything we need here.
  - Good services, nice people, good grocery stores.
  - Great school system, Great City Services.
  - Quality of services.
  - Services abound.
  - The public services are awesome.
  - Variety of services for a city this size.
  - Variety of services/activities/arts
  - We have wonderful emergency response teams. 2. Water taste is the best of any city we've lived in 3. The city is well run and employees are responsive.

- Proximity to Services
  - Being close to grocery stores, city parks.
  - Being Close to the university.
  - Being so close to everything, college life as well as job opportunities after.
  - Clean and easy to get around.
  - Convenience.
  - Convenience of living near work.
  - Ease of getting where I want to go.
  - Everything's close.
  - I like how easy it is to get around Ames. Even if I don't have a car, I can still get to almost every place I need to.
  - It's easy to get around and it has a lot of opportunity.
  - It's only 5 hours from Chicago.
  - Proximity to services and amenities.
  - The design of the city.
  - The location.
- Opportunities
  - Opportunities for entertainment, education and healthcare, Ada Hayden, Reiman Gardens.
  - The opportunities available is the best thing about living in Ames.
  - Wide range of goods, services, and opportunities.
- Things to Do
  - Ames punches way above its weight in things to do and food options.
  - I enjoy campus life, and restaurants like the Mucky Duck.
  - I love Ames, lots of cultural things to do at has become less comfortable to be outside alone like for a walk at night.
  - It is just a very well-put-together city, has many things available for college students like myself to make use of. It's not too big to make me feel uncomfortable (I come from a small town), and it's big enough that it always has something to do. Plus, the water here is top quality.
  - Lots to do from sports to arts; Bicycle friendly.
  - Oh man, so much. It's a great place to live. I like the parks, the safety, the stuff to do.
  - The restaurant options.
  - The variety of entertainment and how safe it is.
  - The variety of things to do here! Lots of restaurants and businesses to explore but also outdoor activities are available.
  - There is a lot of coffee shops and parks and lots of good trees to hammock on in these parks. There are good places to walk; I like that I can grab coffee downtown and then go on a nice walk from there.
  - Too many to move, but always something going on.
  - Variety of activities, small town feel, friendly, low violent crime - generally feel safe in Ames. We really enjoy outdoor summer concerts.
  - Variety of things to do; not much crime.
- Atmosphere
  - Atmosphere
  - Big sense of community for anyone; sense of belonging for everyone and all are welcome here.
  - How welcoming it is, also the different food choices.
  - I love the atmosphere Ames is a great place for students.

- I love the vibe campus brings to Ames. The city-like architecture and walkable main areas where roads aren't huge are very inviting. I wish that more areas looked like this. I believe Duff Avenue needs some serious work. When driving down it the view is ugly and it's a traffic is a nightmare. I can only imagine the hell pedestrians go through.
- It's in Iowa.
- Affordable
  - Cheap, many services
  - Cost of living
  - Fairly affordable
  - Good value for tax deductions. Welcoming Community.
  - I enjoy quality of life and how cheap it is to live here.
- Appearance
  - City appearance
  - It is beautiful.
- Clean
  - Clean, quiet
  - Clean, safe, location
  - The general cleanliness and good infrastructure.
- Downtown
  - Downtown area is the best area.
  - Downtown businesses
  - Like Main Street and the Downtown Ames activities would like to see them advertised more.
  - The downtown atmosphere, parks, and public programs.
- Quiet
  - How quiet it is.
  - It is peaceful and quiet; very low crime rate.
  - Mellow
  - Quiet
  - The peaceful
  - The peacefulness of the friendly beautiful, safe, environments and parks.
- Home
  - Home
  - I already live here. There is much value in not moving.
  - I grew up here.
- Safe
  - Feels safe.
  - How peaceful it is around here and how safe it feels to live here.
  - I feel safe protected and safe walking around and going to parks throughout Ames. There's not really a bad side of town to avoid.
  - It is a safe community with most things a person would need.
  - It is safe, quiet, and has things + events to do + go to.
  - It's relatively safe, clean, and has good amenities.
  - Low crime, good community, people care.
  - Nice, safe, small.
  - Nice safe, quiet neighborhood
  - Overall safety, and parks/green space
  - Relative safety; arts and entertainment opportunities.

- Relatively Safe, traffic
- Safe and welcoming
- Safe, happy, positive, community center environment
- Safety, International population
- Safety, Cleanliness
- Safety, Utilities, Nice Restaurants + ISU Sports
- Security, trees, sidewalks
- Very low crime

## **Amenities**

- Good Amenities
  - Access to various amenities and helpful staff.
  - All of the amenities
  - Amenities and People
  - Ease of getting around, getting familiar, access to variety of stuff.
  - Good restaurants
  - Parks / Trails / Library
  - Rec. services, Mary Greeley, Animal Shelter, Parks, Eating places, ISU events.
  - Small city but still has many amenities.
- Quality of Life
  - General quality of life
  - Good quality of life, low crime.
  - Nice apartment
  - Quality of Life
  - Too many things to count - we moved here in 1989 expecting to stay 5-7 years. 34 years later we have zero desire to move.
  - Too many to list. I do wish the city would let more businesses in - instead they go to Ankeny.
- Library
  - Ames Public Library
  - It's a tie between the parks and the library. Plus, we have an awesome downtown.
  - Library, many walking trails.
  - Location, medical access, ISU, parks
  - The Ames public library, parks and recreation spaces. Wide variety of community and college events to take part in.
- Parks
  - Ada Hayden
  - Beautiful parks and outdoor spaces
  - Good parks / trees
  - Green areas and trails, good service,
  - Green spaces easy travel
  - Green spaces, new shopping area downtown
  - I like how it has lots of parks and walking areas.
  - I love the parks and tennis courts.
  - I think Ames does a wonderful job providing green spaces which makes it very easy to have variety in outdoor activities without having to travel that far.
  - Nature
  - Number of outdoor spaces
  - Number of quality parks
  - Outdoor Areas, Disc Golf courses

- Parks and sidewalks as well as downtown!
- Parks and the Ames Library
- The environment. It's a busy and happening place with a lot to do especially in the spring/summer.
- The number of trails and parks there are.
- The parks
- The parks, little traffic, and nice people.
- The parks! Hiking, music in the park, and fishing are some of our favorite things. Library is close second.
- The trail system
- Use of the parks and friendly people at the golf courses.
- Variety of parks and outdoor rec areas.
- Water
  - Good water
  - Great water quality
  - Tap Water
  - the district and all the woods
  - The tap water.
  - The water

## Comments on Other Issues City Should Focus On

### Transport

- Street Improvements
  - Better driver sight clearance at street intersections, some are blocked by bushes and parked cars.
  - Continue repaving and replacing roadways.
  - Coordination of construction activities with ISU/IDOT/Story County. Projects should be done so that the most minimal disruption of heavy traffic areas are done once, but even with consideration to lower traffic areas as well. Impact to multi-year work done by different agencies increases everyone's costs and lowers satisfaction.
  - 1. East Lincoln Way redevelopment or beautification. 2. Building more homes in the Ames school district, not Gilbert's district. 3. SE 5th St and 6th St extensions to the East of Target and Walmart to connect with East Lincoln Way.
  - Fix sidewalks in residential.
  - Flooding from rain water, especially for houses at the bottom of hills.
  - Get rid of downtown parking meters! Move back ALL existing curbs 2ft so that big pickups don't stick out and block lane traffic. Downtown streets have become too narrow for 2 cars to pass safely by each other!! Absolutely no excuse for this problem to occur. When you are going to do major intersection repair (16th and Duff), please have "alternative routes/detour signs" posted to reroute traffic. Traffic jams at this intersection is evidence of very poor planning of city traffic staff.
  - Improving the appearances, the business district, Duff - Grand - Lincoln Way.
  - It is time to be proactive, rather than reactive, in traffic planning. 1. Why is S. 16th and Grand a mess again this year? Should have done it last year. 2. S. Grand Extension should be 4 lanes all the way to Airport Road. 3. Right Turn only lane on Dakota, NB at Lincoln Way (with turn lanes at Duff) from University to Dayton. 4. Dakota should be 4 lanes from Riverside Rd to Highway 30.
  - Let's get moving on the downtown project. Those open areas on Lincoln Way are an embarrassment.
  - Move timely construction projects, progress seems very slow.
  - Potholes
  - Potholes, the very irregular walking surface downtown
  - Probably just road rebuilding.
  - Road construction and traffic flow
  - Road improvements and crime monitoring
  - Some street roads are really bad and hard to drive.
  - Street construction – don't have so much going on at one time where traffic is backed up everywhere.
  - Streets! Too many holes! Too rough.
  - Try to make sure construction projects are complete by the end of the year. As a pedestrian, the entire last winter I had to walk in the grass along S 16th Street because they tore up the sidewalk and did not finish it until this spring. It is also frustrating when sidewalks don't get plowed correctly or cared for.
  - Upgrade streets
  - Widening more lanes on South Duff
  - Will repeat, lower signage on Duff Avenue and Lincoln Way and bury electric wiring when possible.
  - Traffic

- 13th and Grand traffic, Lincoln Way between Duff and Grand is old and rundown. Save the Mall.
- Diverting as much traffic away from Duff Ave.
- More turn lanes that use green arrow. So many places where left turns hold up traffic for crazy amounts of time. Messes up whole flow of traffic. Also, dog park - no kids allowed... decide whether you are or are not using the new access system.
- Pedestrian flow vs vehicle flow/safety in Campustown - making sure students know to use crosswalks and wait for signals.
- The traffic light situation in this town is ridiculous. It's nearly impossible to get from one end of grand to the other without stopping at 3 different lights for no reason. Half the time, the light turns red the second someone gets to the intersection with no one coming on the cross street. There has to be a better way.
- Thru traffic in Ames is terrible, especially compared to a town like Cedar Falls. It would cost a lot of money, but a northwest arterial with limited access would be nice (say North Dakota at the tracks to Bloomington.) The south Grand extension is marvelous.
- Traffic control 13th and Grand - Duff congestion.
- Traffic Flow in relation to construction projects.
- Traffic flow is big, and not having major construction like on Duff & 16th while school is in session. It makes it a PAIN to go anywhere.
- Traffic flow!! Stop adding lights and stop signs. Some are not needed.
- Traffic on South Duff
- Traffic Enforcement
- Ames is great. I hate that everyone speeds and people rarely come to a complete stop at stop sign.
- Reducing Spending
- The amount of people that drink and drive.
- Public Transit
- CyRide
- CyRide frequency, number of buses, and number of routes should be increased.
- Regular mass transit commuter (e.g., train, bus) transportation to Ankeny/Des Moines
- Bike/Pedestrian Infrastructure
- ADA at buildings, Parks, and intersections. Look beyond what is normal for you.
- Bike + walking infrastructure
- Complete the bike trail between Lincoln Way and 16th street. There are two sections of bridges sitting next to the uncompleted trail. They have trees growing through them now. If this trail was completed, Ames would have a fully secured loop through the community. Duff and Dayton Aves. are not rider safe. The funds for the bridge have already been spent, the bridges just need to be installed and the path completed.
- I wish the city was more walkable.
- Improving mobility for non-car users. Make intersections safer for vulnerable road users and also less of a pain to navigate. Cars are obviously prioritized, but vulnerable road users should be prioritized over cars.
- More sidewalks
- Pedestrian underpasses on Lincoln Way to University
- Pedestrian/biker safety

## Trash

- Recycling
  - A comprehensive recycling program for residents.
  - Accessibility to recycling. Requiring apartment complexes to provide recycling bins.
  - Garbage + Recycling
  - Please have local recycling center. Please. Please.
  - Recycling
  - Trash/Recycling/ Composting
- Garbage/Litter
  - Apartment complexes not allowing their garbage to go all over the neighborhood.
  - City wide trash pick-up along roadways -Better communication about what's happening, can you email newsletter? -Decreasing light pollution and especially chemical pollution on most outdoor areas, including most areas of most parks
  - Litter control; Lack of options for cans and bottles return; Expanding bike paths along the Skunk River to Ada Hayden; and Homeless options.
  - Trash garbage trucks all the time down the street.
  - Trash is a big concern of mine at the moment. Seems to be everywhere.
  - Trash pick-up around the city instead of just the parks and more housing options for those without homes.

## Amenities

- Animal Amenities
  - Add another dog park in the north side of town.
  - Build a better animal shelter.
  - Dogs. I grew up with dogs and like dogs, however my biggest fear of violence is attack by a dog.
  - Working on making the dog park better, fill in holes, new gravel around the perimeter.
- Infrastructure Amenities
  - Community owned broadband access.
  - Get more easily accessible service - free food - medical - etc. now downtown church, northwestern Ave church. salvation army food on east Lincoln - need transportation to these.
  - I'm biased as a (likely) future Landscape Architecture student, but the improvement (and possible increase?) in community spaces would be nice. Additionally, future focus into recreational activities near campus that aren't bars would be well used. A lot of students at ISU have the idea that there isn't anything to do in Ames, so a focus on non-bar businesses in the Welch Avenue area would be nice. This won't be an essay, but I think that non-alcohol options for nightlife (e.g., movie theaters, non-alcohol-gearred events venues, etc.) would be very well utilized while providing opportunities for students who do drink to reduce their drinking while also enabling students that don't drink to engage in social culture more comfortably. While I know some of these exist (such as Cybowling and Billiards in the Memorial Union), I think some options the city provides could be extremely profitable and well-used. As an example, consider the Chauncey Building in Iowa City which has a theater, arcade, and bowling alley. While providing entertainment for students, it also functions to bring non-student residents downtown. While the Chauncey doesn't really fit in Ames as it exists now, the resources it provides would be similarly appreciated. Additionally, car-free spaces like their ped-mall create event spaces that are accessible to students and the public. While there aren't any super clear options for

equivalents here in Ames, the idea of an outdoor space that students can spend time in instead of just stumbling between bars might be nice.

- More charging stations for those who switched to electric cars.
- Providing natural gas service to residential homes. Alliant is way too high.
- Water quality
- Recreation Amenities
  - Attracting more fun things to do.
  - Cultural events such as music concerts and fairs, folk art, environmental outreach.
  - Having more recreational areas and stores that would give college students fun things to do in the community and give the community money.
  - Increasing recreational activities during the summer AND winter.
  - Indoor pool options (heated) for health and recreation. Continue to encourage new/improved shopping and rec opportunities.
  - Indoor recreation areas for colder seasons and recycling services.
  - Love to have an 18-hole city golf course. Maybe add water?
  - Make indoor recreation opportunities for children. consolidation and organization of community boards/committees too many and unorganized.
  - More events to bring people to Ames and especially more diverse businesses.
  - Redoing the landscape architecture in some areas. Also get more activity facilities for students.
- More Shopping
  - Attract more stores. Need more lakes.
  - Helping bring business back to the mall area - lots of new neighborhoods in North Ames, dislike having to drive to the Duff area feel like catering to college students and non-residents.
  - More places to shop and eat North side of Ames.
  - Need more food and job options for college students.
  - Shopping

### **City Services**

- Public Nuisances
  - Ames has a high population of smokers. Don't want cigarette butt receptacles on public streets. Encourage smoking too much.
  - Unsolicited salespeople going door to door.
- Police
  - Defunding policing activities and investing in community led programs that alleviate economic incentives for crime.
  - Law enforcement
  - Law enforcement and their fundings.
  - Law enforcement. Making Duff and commercial districts more walkable
- Snow Removal
  - As someone who uses sidewalks 365 days a year, I would like to see snow removal ordinance enforced.
  - Plowing the streets in a timely manner during snowfall.
  - Storm draining and snow removal in some areas - love trails.
  - Winter Weather Prep
- Education
  - Educating people on rules
  - Elementary, school, non-ISU neighborhoods
  - School Quality

- Scientific activities
- STEM/Robotics - we used to have a community makerspace - could we bring something like that back, but in a sustainable way?
- Human Services
  - Human services, the arts and music funding
- City Website
  - Automatic Utility bill pay is too difficult; update and modernize city websites.
  - Decrease the online payment service fee when paying utilities service. The credit card transaction is \$3.50 each time.
  - It's hard to find what I need on the city's website and FB page.
- Crime
  - Sex crimes at ISU

### **Outreach**

- Communication
  - Better communication and connection between departments, Bringing electrical utility lines underground.
  - Finding a way to keep citizens better informed of what is going on in town, i.e., developments, road closures for construction.
- Inclusion
  - Inclusive queer design and safety
  - It's a big ask but bringing the community together, reducing the divisive trends... or ice cream Tuesdays?
  - LGBTQ issues
  - Making Ames a community that cares more about diversity, equity, and inclusion than it does about property values.
  - Making sure all feel welcomed and included in the community. City council and city employees should model and promote these values.
  - Racial equity/ Economic Equity
  - Student outreach
- Youth
  - Disruptive juveniles in middle/high school
  - Swim lessons for ages 18 month - 3yr old & 3-5 yr old like city of Ankeny. It pays for itself. We have to commute and utilize their city services and end up shopping there when in town.
  - Youth development & support

### **Other**

- Climate
  - Careful consideration of city-based risks, especially climate (power, waste management, erosion control/management in city water ways)
  - Climate change
  - Climate change - actions citizens need to take now.
  - Climate change is an incredibly pressing issue. More clean energy, trees, and carbon reduction should be prioritized.
  - Environmental quality and quality of life
  - Improving habitat quality for native species within city limits
  - Sustainability and climate change
- Cut Costs
  - Cutting costs; less time planning and developing new subdivisions; cut back on parking requirements.

- Food sovereignty, pesticide regulation, river water quality, native land restoration and education.
- Form/review a philosophy of the role of government. As indicated in the comment blocks, I feel that the role of government should be much smaller than it is currently. This underlies and informs the response to specific issues that arise over time. So, responding/rating every specific issue is not particularly useful until that philosophy is formed/adjusted.
- Less government interference.
- Spend less money. Don't be corrupt. Lower taxes. Stop bullying your neighbors with nuisance laws. Don't promote immoral behavior or degeneracy.
- The City should look for ways to economize where possible.
- Tighten spending on arts and some recreation.
- Smart Development
  - Encourage higher density development; not to the exclusion of low density residential, but enough to increase the portion of the city which is nearby work, school, and shops without use of long car trips. Enables more efficient use of transit and other alternate transport.
  - End urban sprawl.
  - Keep growth in check.
  - Managing time/location of consumption
- Beautification
  - The beauty of the city. I think improving the look and adding more greenery, flora, the condition of buildings, etc. would draw more people to Ames.
  - Trees. The city needs to plant more trees.
- Affordable Housing
  - Affordable Housing, Indoor Places for kids/play structures for winter.
  - Affordable permanent non rental housing. Increased support for the Bridge House.
  - Cost of living
  - Homelessness, especially if the southern broader opens to immigrants. Food pantries, etc.
  - Housing for low- or lower-income families
  - Housing is far too expensive.
  - I know this drum gets beaten a lot, and it's an impossibly complicated nut to crack, but affordable housing. Ames is a popular place to live, which is a good problem to have, but it does have some downsides. I wish more folks could afford to live here. I also wince every time I hear someone say they're moving to Ankeny but going to keep working in Ames. I would like to better understand what Ames could do to stem that tide. Then we could decide whether we wanted to or not.
  - Low-income housing.
  - Need more low-income housing.
  - Rate of which rent rising. Want your citizens to have more money to spend within Ames then keep rent from becoming unreasonable. Pass a law for rent hikes. Provide an inspection and evaluation for apartments for price evaluation based on condition of apartment etc. like you would for buying a home. Fine and tax owners of apartments for rent hikes.
  - Reducing property taxes
- Residential Upkeep
  - Consolidating HOAs. It is odd how we are intended to maintain a retention pool.
  - Limiting rundown rental properties in middle-class neighborhoods (forcing

- property managers to keep up their rental properties).
- Yard and house maintenance in residential areas enforcement - police response.
- Yards not mowed, weeds.
- Mental Health
  - Continue to support ARCH program after pilot ends. Provide leadership to coordinate homelessness prevention and housing alternatives.
  - Drug abuse outreach and homelessness control
  - Mental Health
- Safety
  - Public safety in public schools
  - Safety of college students

**Amenities**

- Good Amenities

## **General/Additional Comments**

### **Assessment Complaints**

- I recently purchased my house, I had an appraisal that I had to pay for to purchase the house. The city's new assessment is completely wrong. I sent in my current appraisal, but I was told the city has its own algorithm. If it were anyone but the city doing this, it would be called organized crime.
- Ironically, the valuation on my residence was cut over 40% this year. Don't believe this should have happened as I had made an investment of new flooring in the year and would only be one year older. While others complained about higher valuations you will now be taking me much lower.

### **Better City Project Planning**

- If you want to grow, you need to provide easier access to those areas. Currently it appears that we wait until a street/area is over congested, and then we go in and add/improve roads and intersections. S. 16th and Grand is a perfect example. Why wasn't the current work done when S. 16th was paved? Apparently, no one in the traffic planning could figure out that paving a road would draw more growth and traffic.
- I wish that road work (like 13th St. last year) could be done more efficiently. It seemed like there were a lot of days where nothing happens, making the project take way too long.
- Related to transportation questions: Are there any considerations for a commuter bus between Ames and Des Moines?

### **Bikes on Road**

- Get bikes off the roads. There are enough bike paths and sidewalks in Ames and Iowa for bikers to use. Especially roads that speeds that are over 35 mph. Allowing people to bike on roads like Dayton or Riverside is dangerous for everyone.
- Keep providing the survey periodically I believe striping bicycle lanes on the streets are dangerous! Example is striping on North Duff Ave. If not provide off street bicycle lanes, let bicycles use sidewalks. That would be less dangerous than on street striping. The pedestrian use of sidewalks is not that great. Another example of this is at the intersection of south 3rd street and south Duff, that is, going east on S. 3rd. Please look at the situation.

### **Comments Regarding Survey**

- Informational survey, happy to take part in it.
- My degree is in statistics so I have some knowledge of survey building. You might want to look at part 5 and 6 of the Community Development Section. Looks like they should be yes/no questions as worded.
- Please carefully consider my comments. Although I probably represent a minority view on many of these, that minority is likely larger than you think.
- Putting this survey online was the difference between me filling it out and me not filling it out. Thanks. Good work using a short URL with tinyurl.com. Consider hosting that URL redirecting on the City's own website. That makes the URLs look friendlier to people using them, and gives you more control over them. I don't know what platform is hosting the website, but there are a lot of plugins that offer redirect functionality.
- Survey too long
- Thank you for taking the time to expense to survey.
- Thanks for getting input.

- This survey is so long that I have become apathic. I see that you don't know who is filling out this survey. Does this survey seek to get a certain response percentage? If so, will there be more requests for participation until there is compliance? If you ask me to fill out the survey again, I will do it. Am I allowed fill out the survey as many times as I want?
- This survey is too long; should have provided a progress bar above each page to tell how many more questions remain. Sorry, I'm running out of steam answering some questions. :)
- Too many questions

### **Cost of Living**

- Ames should really focus on the cost of living. I understand that having a lot of students here means Ames is a popular place to live therefore the cost of rent and living needs to go up to match the amount of people who live here. Rent is absolutely absurd. It is incredibly hard to find a decent place to live and every year the cost of rent goes up. I don't know if this is a city issue or an issue for the rental companies here but it's hard to be in school and succeed when I have to worry about how I'm going to afford a place to live. I shouldn't have to move to Boone to be able to rent or buy a home/apartment. Ames really needs to work together with the housing companies to ensure affordable living for both long-term and short-term residents.
- I like Ames but my income limits my activities.

### **DEI**

- A commitment to "DEI" does not equal a commitment to the concepts of diversity, equity, and inclusion. DEI as currently understood undermines true diversity, equity, and inclusion. Our taxes should go to essential service, not ideological concepts.
- Diversity Inclusion and Equity (DIE) needs to die before it causes the death of civilized society. Corruption in government leads to waste of resources. Resource scarcity leads to disputes. Disputes between people without civil society's barriers lead to war. It is natural for man to desire his neighbor's property. If you think you can manage your neighbor's property better than he can, the only just course of action is to offer to purchase it. Stealing it is wrong. It doesn't matter if you think you're smarter. It doesn't matter if judicial precedent gives you approval (e.g., eminent domain). Theft is wrong.

### **Lack of Employment Opportunity**

- Ames is an excellent place to live, but difficult to stay long term if you are an engineer.

### **None**

- I don't have any.
- N/A
- none let me be done, please send me the gift card I would be completely ecstatic.

### **Other**

- I am going to put my address as my primary address because I am a student at Iowa State.
- Prefer to select garbage hauler. City wide contracts do not encourage any hauler to perform above the minimum in the contract. Also, a small group of single folks & elderly combine a single garbage collection to save money. City wide forces everyone to pay into a system. Unless you have a tiered (10gal/10-30gal/30-

60gal/90 gal) pickup system, those who use little pay for those who use a lot. Some haulers provide a tiered system and options for yard waste or outright recycling - not the "single" stream burning of trash Ames currently uses and doesn't really recycle much other than some metals and SOME glass.

- Slumlords and people who don't upkeep their yards are ruining the beauty of this town. I have lived in my house since 1972 and my neighborhood has gone way downhill.
- Stop focusing on grassing land for future development and focus on improving what exists currently.
- The food waste drop off at the resource recovery center is unacceptable, there is always broken glass all over, the smell is overwhelming the flies and bird poop are unhealthy to be around. To encourage use there needs to be a better area and process for this.
- Trees in right of way near my home have had the roots cut by city contract but the coverage of the roots are poorly done.
- We have enough apartments more housing of homes. Repair our streets. Better street light programing and streets are dark.

### **Positive**

- Ames is a great place to work and live!!
- Ames is an awesome city and I've enjoyed watching it develop into something great.
- Ames is an awesome place to live. I was born and raised here and love the community.
- Ames is an outstanding community; I leave for 6 months in the winter but always look forward to coming back in the spring.
- Even though I'm frustrated with some things, Ames has a lot to offer. It is a nice place to call home.
- Generally, Ames is a wonderful community to live in - we have had mostly positive interactions with city departments with some frustrations noted in this survey.
- I enjoy all the green space in the town.
- I am happy at ISU and in Ames. It is great to be going to school in such a great community.
- Love Ames
- Moving to Ames was an excellent decision for us and we weighted the quality of community service very heavily in our decision to move here. Our interactions with the city have been very positive.
- We moved from California to get out of that crowded B.S. Now enjoy Midwest values. Love Ames
- While there are always things to improve, I came back to Ames for a few years ago for family reasons not intending to stay long, but I have loved everything I have seen so much since then that I am no longer sure I will leave.
- I brag about Ames snow cleanup!
- I love living in Ames. There are very few other cities in Iowa that I would choose to live. I am considering moving to another state, largely because of the actions of the Iowa Legislature and governor. Their values are largely antithetical to my own. If only we had more local control.
- It is a very friendly town overall and we are very lucky and happy to be here.
- My niece from Jakarta just visited. She travelled to New York, Chicago, Seattle, San Fransisco and LA. When asked which city she liked the best she said Ames. BTW she did visit Iowa City also.

- Retired military - have lived in 6 countries - 4 states - much prefer Ames - Midwest nice - weather is good - pretty town - light traffic - good shopping, sports, medical facilities, close to DSM airport, big stores as needed.
- Thank you all so much for your hard work.
- Thank you for all you do to help keep Ames safe friendly and beautiful.
- Very nice town
- We are new to Ames in the last year and truly enjoy living in Ames!
- This is a good town. This state sucks.

### **Rental Issues**

- Do something for preventing rent hikes. Raising rent not only drives students away from attending ISU, it drives people away and their money. Lower rent allows more spending and commerce within the city. Use family size and poverty level to determine amount of rent that is reasonable.
- Fix rent issues in Ames. lapses between leases force houselessness on students for 1-2 weeks. rent keeps going up. How do you expect to have students live and thrive here when the financial burden is so immense we don't know what each next month holds...
- I had a lot of issues with Martin Property Management during the last year, but I did not find any legal services in Ames that at least send them a notice to respect more to their clients more.
- Rent is too expensive!
- We love living in Ames with its amazing parks and library. We want to be part of this community and therefore are active volunteers for several organizations. Unfortunately as renters, we are left out of many of Ames environment related incentives example we can't use an electric car with nowhere to charge at home, we can't get power packs or pay for recycling and are afraid that the anti-equitable Climate Action Plan will prevent us from ever purchasing a home and being part of this long term. Why does Ames still not have recycling, yet plans to implement a climate action plan that was reviewed as inequitable? Only having rich, low environment impact residents because others are priced out and therefore their environmental impacts simply shifted to another town is not the solution.

### **Suggested Improvement**

- Ames is a great place. It could improve on more free activity for kids and public restrooms at all public parks.
- Ames needs additional recent traveling Broadway hits vs travel to Des Moines for shows. Thank you for the opportunity for comments.
- I beg you to purchase and install streetlights with lower wattage for the subdivisions. The new lights are too bright. They keep children awake, and adults too. They are not good for the migrating birds. They are really hard to live with.
- I like to drop off my utility bill. Dislike that it has been changed to not drive up to it. Now people are parking in the spot designated for dropping off the payment.
- Please maintain the city green space and make the city more walkable.
- Please plant more trees to help combat the seemingly large number being cut down for developments.
- Street maintenance is needed throughout the entire city! The city is well run and we are happy to live here. Great job, City of Ames!
- The alleys need help, especially between Duff and Douglas, 13th and North. Lots of us use this alley, need more rock, less grading.

### **Traffic Flow/Transportation**

- Bad traffic flow and getting worse on Duff, and now South 16<sup>th</sup>.
- Better movement of Traffic. Example - 13th is 4 lanes until Ontario and then 2 lanes. instead of restricting traffic make it flow better. Better timing of traffic lights and better traffic law enforcement. Speeding and running of stop lights and signs. It would be nice to see a patrol car in the neighborhood once in a while.
- Fix traffic lights so you don't have to wait 5 minutes for it to change when no other traffic is coming. Also, so the traffic is backed up for 3 different lights and you can't go anywhere from a side road that has no lights.
- I have driven Ames streets daily for 32 years. Despite major investments, conditions are worse than ever and many improvements only make things worse. E.g., 15 years ago a plan was announced to improve the 13th and Stange intersection. It still hasn't happened.
- Please improve south- north traffic flow! Stop adding lights and stop signs, sync lights, make no turn left on duff and Grand, Expand north Duff to 4 lanes, new street along west skunk river.

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