

APRIL 2024

MONTHLY PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS



Report compiled by
Jeremy Neefus, Principal Clerk
City Manager's Office

Contact the City Manager's Office at 515-239-5101



515 Clark Avenue, Ames, IA 50010



FIRE

Development Review Process Improvements: On March 22, Fire Chief Rich Higgins and Planning and Housing Director Kelly Diekmann met with around 50 members from the Ames Homebuilders Association (AHBA) to highlight a new approach and commitment by City staff to the development review process in Ames. Staff is also meeting one-on-one with willing members of the AHBA to better understand their needs and make process improvements to provide customers with exceptional customer service.



Fire Station #1 Training Room Refresh: The training room at Fire Station #1 was recently refreshed with a new interactive touchscreen smart TV, dimmable lights, updated paint, and new tables and chairs. Also included in the refresh was installation of recycled carpet from the former Department of Transportation building that was recently demolished to make way for the Fitch Family Indoor Aquatic Center.



FLEET

Police Vehicles: In recent years, the process of purchasing vehicles has undergone significant changes. This is most evident in the Ford Police Interceptors that are used for patrol. The City made the decision to switch to purchasing hybrid vehicles due to their sustainability and financial advantages. Last year, there was a shortage of hybrid vehicles, so two non-hybrid units were purchased to make needed replacements. Staff was recently notified that hybrid production is starting with previous non-filled orders, meaning that new orders will be delayed even further. Needed vehicle replacements cannot wait, so more non-hybrid units will be ordered to meet these immediate needs in a reasonable timeframe. A new hybrid order will be placed to get the City in the queue to receive them, but recent trends have shown that estimated fulfillment dates are not guarantees. Staff hopes to be back to ordering exclusively hybrid patrol vehicles in the next few years to keep moving toward the goal of an all-hybrid patrol fleet.



LIBRARY

Black Arts Festival: The Library’s 2024 Black Arts Festival on April 20 was a fun, lively day! Musicians, spoken word artists, visual artists, a dancer, and a storyteller shared their talents for an audience of all ages.

Watch for information on the upcoming Juneteenth event in collaboration with several local organizations.



Coffee with Mel: Ames Public Library hosted 1430 KASI’s Coffee with Mel on April 26. Staff had the opportunity to talk about some current and upcoming projects along with services and collections that community members may not know about. The Library enjoys welcoming other organizations to share activities in the area.

Community Input Events: As part of Ames Public Library’s Strategic Planning process, Community Input Open Houses will be held for the general public Saturday, May 4, from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. and Monday, May 20, from 5:00 – 7:00 p.m. Library staff is also leading input sessions with a variety of focus groups.



PARKS AND RECREATION

Ames City Auditorium: On April 12, the Auditorium wrapped up its Fifth and Clark Friday’s series with a performance from Des Moines based indie pop rock band Lady Revel. This concert series expanded from five concerts in FY 2022/23 to eleven concerts in FY 2023/24. Average attendance per show almost doubled this year compared to last year and staff is confident it will continue to grow in future years. Funding consisted of \$750 in sponsorships and \$2,750 in grants. These revenue sources will continue to be pursued in the future.



On April 13, the Auditorium completed its “Tribute Series” with a performance from Thrash of the Titans: A Tribute to the Big 4 of Metal. Attendance for this performance was approximately 125. Three concerts in the “Tribute Series” were held this spring with an average attendance of 115 per show. Ticket revenue was shared, with 50% going to the artists and 50% kept by the Auditorium. Approximately 67% of the audience indicated that it was their first time seeing a performance at the Auditorium. Staff is beginning to plan a similar series for spring 2025 and is optimistic that attendance will grow in year two of the series.



The Parks and Recreation Commission and the City Council directed staff to explore the option of using an outside vendor to sell alcohol and concessions during Auditorium events. Parks and Recreation staff worked with other City departments to develop policies and procedures for selling alcohol and concessions, which were approved by the City Council. Staff distributed a Request for Proposals and received one proposal on April 19. Staff has reviewed the proposal, deemed it to be favorable, and is working with Purchasing to develop the contract for the vendor. Once the signed contract has been approved and the vendor has been approved for sales by the Iowa Alcoholic Beverages Division, staff will announce the starting date for alcohol and concession sales, with the goal of starting by July 1, 2024.

Ames/ISU Ice Arena: The Ames/ISU Ice Arena was a recipient of the Kiwanis Youth Grant provided through the Ames Noon Kiwanis Club. The \$1,500 grant funded eight Skate Helpers for the facility! Skate helpers assist beginning skaters, youth and adult, feel comfortable on the ice by providing stability assistance and will be available during public skate. Skate Helpers also slide into wheelchairs. Thank you, Ames Noon Kiwanis!



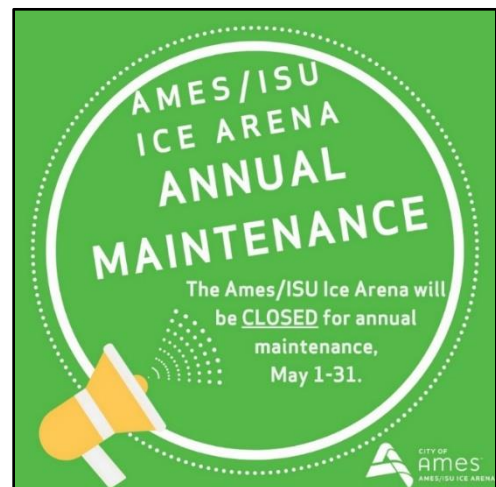
The Ames/ISU Ice Arena will close for annual facility maintenance, May 1 - May 31. Future scheduling is available online at www.cityofames.org/prcalendars.

Aquatics: A hiring event for Furman Aquatic Center lifeguards was held Saturday, April 6, at Forker Pool, and 15 people attended to take the pre-skills test and/or interview for a position. An additional event was held April 23 with six individuals being interviewed.

Two lifeguard certification classes were held in April with 40 registered students. A Lifeguard Instructor (LGI) class was also held with five registrants.

The last session of winter/spring swim lessons finished April 14 with 116 registrations.

A lifeguard review class was held April 20 with 14 returning lifeguards attending.



Fitch Family Indoor Aquatic Center: The existing buildings on the site have been demolished and the holes have been filled with soil and compacted. During excavation of the parking lot in the southwest corner of the site, buried rubble was discovered. Upon further exploration, it appears the basement slab of the old church was left in place and the basement walls were pushed in and buried. This will need to be removed and Story Construction is working with the contractor on a change order for this work.

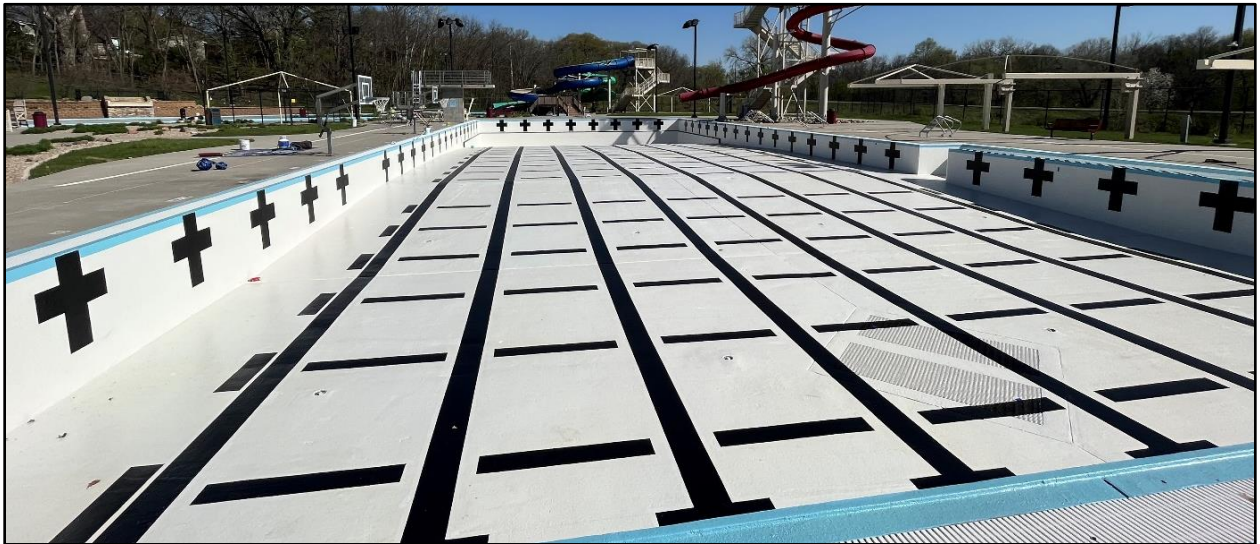


A Groundbreaking Ceremony was held on April 24 with over 100 donors, business leaders, consultants, and staff in attendance.





Furman Aquatic Center Pool Basin Painting: Amusement Restoration Companies (ARC), Burnet, Texas, has finished the Furman Aquatic Center Pool Basin Painting Project. Water's Edge Aquatic Design, Kansas City, Kansas, confirmed the project specifications have been met.



Homewood Golf Course: As of April 24, 2024, Homewood Golf Course has had 2,965 rounds played. By that date last year, Homewood had 1,969 total rounds played. The table below shows the current clubhouse rental hours and revenue amounts compared to the same time frame last fiscal year.

	July 1, 2022 – April 25, 2023	July 1, 2023 – April 25, 2024
Paid Event Hours	137.75	108.75
Revenue from Paid Events	\$13,953	\$11,123.75
Non-Paid Events Hours	166.25	186.75

Mini Pitch: Staff contracted with CGA to conduct a site survey at Lloyd Kurtz Park. This information will be used to develop the specifications, which will be bid as soon as construction documents are ready. Installation is expected to be completed in fall 2024.

New Playground Equipment: Play Pro Recreation, Clive, Iowa, installed a new playground structure and swings at Lloyd Kurtz Park, 3710 Hyde Ave.; Country Gables Park, 500 Crystal St.; and Christopher Gartner Park, 400 Abraham Dr. Staff is now installing Engineered Wood Fibers (EWF) and concrete borders around each playground. All three playgrounds are expected to be completed by mid-May.

Parks: Park restrooms opened for the season in April. Drinking fountains will be operational in early May. Staff also installed the boat dock and the accessible canoe/kayak launch at Ada Hayden Heritage Park for the season.

With staff assistance, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources and the Ames Anglers installed 50 cut cedar trees into the north lake at Ada Hayden Heritage Park to be used for fish habitat.

Wellness: New sessions of Wellness and Fitness classes began in April with the classes and registrations shown below:

Class	Registrations
Fitness Classes	517 (490 in-person and 27 virtual)
Beginner Line Dance	18
Yoga Basics	10

A Viennese Waltz Dance class, which began Monday, April 22, is the newest adult dance class to be offered. The class was sponsored by the Durbin-Zheng family who generously donated the instructor fee. Ames Parks and Recreation is very grateful for the contribution.

New weight room equipment was ordered and will be installed at the end of June.

Silver Sneakers, a chair-based fitness class, continues to be popular, as shown in the picture below.

