

AMES PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING
City Hall Council Chambers – 515 Clark Avenue
Tuesday, September 17, 2024

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC: The Parks and Recreation Commission welcomes comments from the public during discussion. The Standards of Decorum, posted at the door and available on the City website, define respectful conduct for public participation. If you wish to speak, please complete a green card and hand it to City staff prior to the meeting. When your name is called, please step to the microphone, state your name and address for the record, and limit the time used to present your remarks to three minutes so others have the opportunity to speak. The normal process on an agenda item is staff may first give a report on the item, Commissioners may ask questions for clarification, public input is received, a motion is placed on the floor, the Commission discusses the issue or responds to the audience concerns, and the vote is taken. In consideration of all, if you have a cell phone, please turn it off or put it on silent.

1. Call to Order: 4:00 p.m.
2. Approval of Minutes from August 15, 2024
3. Public Forum (For items not on the agenda)
4. Iowa Multisport Request to Host the Ames Triathlon on June 22, 2025 at Ada Hayden Heritage Park
5. Ames Cyclone Aquatics Club 2025 Rock the Blocks Swim Meet (Memo)
6. 2025-2030 Capital Improvement Plan Discussion
 - a. CIP Public Input Feedback
 - b. E-mail and Phone Correspondence Regarding the CIP
7. Project Updates
 - a. Fitch Family Indoor Aquatic Center
 - b. Steven L. Schainker Plaza
 - c. Mini Pitch
8. Monthly Report
9. Commission Member Comments
10. Next Meeting:
 - a. October 17, 2024, at 4:00 PM (Regular Meeting)
11. Adjournment

AMES PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

DATE: August 15, 2024

COMMISSION

PRESENT: Jeff Iles, Janet Rathe, Duane Reeves, Nathan Shimanek, Debra Tapp, Jeff White

ABSENT: Sarah Cady

STAFF PRESENT: Keith Abraham, Courtney Kort, Joshua Thompson,

CALL TO ORDER: 4:00 PM

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM JULY 18, 2024

Reeves moved, with a second by Iles, to approve the July 18, 2024, meeting minutes. No discussion. No opposition. Motion Approved.

PUBLIC FORUM

No public forum.

MOTION APPROVING THE VINTAGE COOPERATIVES OF AMES FITNESS AGREEMENT FOR AUGUST 12, 2024 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2025.

Kort stated that the first contract was last year, and the classes have been successful, with enrollment meeting the minimum for each class. Iles asked about the prices. Kort stated that the only change from last year's agreement is the fee structure, which now matches the rest of our fitness classes.

Motion by Reeves, with a second by Iles, to approve Alternative #1, Approve the Vintage Cooperatives of Ames Fitness Agreement from August 12, 2024, through December 31, 2025. No discussion. No opposition. Motion Approved.

2025-2030 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT DISCUSSION

Abraham reviewed the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) process, funding, and timeline. He asked the Commission to think of things they wanted to see in the CIP and reminded them that not every suggestion can be implemented.

Abraham stated that the Department typically receives around \$800,000 per year. However, if the City continues to add additional parkland and amenities, \$800,000 will not be sustainable, and maintenance will need to be deferred. Once maintenance is deferred, it can cost millions.

Shimanek feels that the Commission's role as citizen oversight is to represent the majority of people who use our facilities and don't say a word because they appreciate what is offered. Sometimes, one person will come in with a negative aspect, and we tend to focus on that instead of all the people who are really enjoying what we already have, especially with costs increasing. He feels we should look at how best to serve the most people.

Reeves encouraged the commissioners to attend public input sessions as the people who attend are engaged and speak from the heart.

PROJECT UPDATES

Fitch Family Indoor Aquatic Center

Abraham informed the Commission that the footings and foundations were going in, that some of the contingency funds had been used, and that there had been some change orders. Thus far, no contamination has been detected, and there has been no groundwater.

Steven L. Schainker Plaza

The concrete expert believes the contractor may have lost control of the pour. Where the mesh is next to the surface, there are already areas of cracking and some corrosion. The expert is not in favor of the bonding/coating option.

The concrete along the spray pad needed to be bonded per city code. Some areas will need to be corrected. Everything except the ice ribbon is to be completed by October 1.

Mini Pitch

Staff is working with a local company to finalize design and construction documents and will work toward getting the plans and specs approved at the next Council meeting.

MONTHLY REPORT

Thompson is happy to report that three new maintenance workers will start next week and one the week after. The supervisor position will be posted in September.

Kort informed the Commission that the Recreation Coordinator and Ice Arena Coordinator positions have been posted, and there has been significant interest and many applications.

The Gym flooring project will take place from September 9 to 15. The gym, weight room, and cardio room will not be open during this time.

Most area pools are closed or closing this weekend. Staff will keep as much of the facility as they can safely operate open until Labor Day. The Duck Derby will close out the season. Ducks are on sale at the Community Center, and the winners will receive some great prizes from local businesses.

Abraham spoke about the agility course, shelter, and restroom project in Carr Park. There is not enough funding to complete the entire project. We may do the agility course and a

smaller shelter in this area, as this may not be the best place for a restroom in the park system.

COMMISSION MEMBER COMMENTS

Iles mentioned there have been some concerns regarding motorized scooters at Miracle Park. Abraham says they are not allowed. They have been jumping off the ramps, which can damage the surface and harm patrons.

Shimanek said he encountered some problems while running in Carr Park. These scooters are not peddled and can go quickly and keep up with vehicle traffic. They are full-on electric dirt bikes that can kill someone.

Staff is also looking into the use of e-bikes in the park system. There is no biking or peddling involved with some of these bikes. There will need to be more discussion on it, probably sooner rather than later. There are problems with the very competitive bikers at Ada Hayden. Staff is working to find the balance between encouraging people to get out and making sure they are safe.

White said that he was at the 13th St. dam recently and one of the fishermen asked if the department could stock trout in the river. White's observation is that the area has seen an increase in paddling, tubing, and fishing. Abraham said staff could contact the DNR, as he doesn't know if they have a river stocking program.

Rathe stated that people have mentioned the increase in homeless camping in the restroom facilities and at Bandshell Park.

Abrham stated that a team is discussing public and staff safety concerns and the overall issue of homelessness across the city. Assistant City Manager Pa Goldbeck is leading the effort and has asked for funding to hire a facilitator to unite social service providers, homeless individuals, and others.

NEXT MEETING: September 19, 2024, at 4:00 PM (Regular Meeting)

ADJOURNMENT: Rathe moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:14 PM

COMMISSION ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: **WAIVER OF ENFORCEMENT OF NO SWIMMING RULE AND THE PROHIBITION OF MOTORIZED VEHICLES ON TRAILS AT ADA HAYDEN HERITAGE PARK FOR THE AMES TRIATHLON ON JUNE 22, 2025.**

BACKGROUND:

Iowa Multisport (IM) is requesting to use Ada Hayden Heritage Park (AHHP) to host its fifth Ames Triathlon on June 22, 2025. The event consists of a 500M swim in the north lake, a 12-mile bike ride that starts in the park and travels through north Ames, northwestern portions of Story County and finishes in the park, and a 5K run that uses the hard surface path in the park. The north parking lot is used for staging of the bikes and safety vehicles for the event. The shelter area is used for registration and the finish line for the event. In 2024, event organizers did not allow participant parking in the main parking lot. IM worked with adjacent businesses and utilized their lots for parking. This year, almost 400 individuals participated in the event.

When the event was initially proposed in 2019, a concern Staff had regarding the event was allowing swimming to take place in the lake. Since the park opened in 2004, swimming has been prohibited due to the steep drop offs in the lake. However, staff met with IM prior to each Ames Triathlon event to ensure they had a firm safety plan in place. All the events have gone well, and safety plans were executed. Another concern staff had was potential damage to the park, but no damage was observed after each event.

Since 2022, staff has given permission for IM to set up bike racks and fencing in the parking lot from 7:00 – 10:30 PM the day prior to the event. Staff did not receive any negative feedback from allowing this and IM is requesting it again for the 2025 event. Staff has given approval for this to take place again for the 2025 event.

Additionally, IM is requesting the following for its June 22, 2025, event:

1. IM requests a **waiver of the enforcement of the “No Swimming” rule at Ada Hayden Heritage Park** for the event on June 22, 2025. Swimming would occur between 7:00 AM and 10:00 AM.

Since this is a rule, Parks and Recreation Commission can grant this waiver.

2. IM is requesting the **use of two motorized golf carts to use for the duration of the event** in order to set up water stations as well as assist volunteers in the event of an emergency.

Since the operation of motorized vehicles on trails is prohibited by ordinance, City Council will need to approve waiving the enforcement of this ordinance.

3. IM is requesting to **get into the park on Sunday, June 22, 2025, for set up beginning at 5:00 AM** which is prior to regular park hours (6:00 AM – 10:30 PM).

City Ordinance delegates this authority to the Parks and Recreation Commission.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Parks and Recreation Commission can:
 - a. Waive the enforcement of the No Swimming Rule at Ada Hayden Heritage Park North Lake, 7:00 – 10:00 AM, on Sunday, June 22, 2025, to allow Iowa Multisport to host the Ames Triathlon.
 - b. Approve Iowa Multisport to enter Ada Hayden Heritage Park at 5:00 AM on Sunday June 22, 2025, for event preparation.
 - c. Recommend City Council waive enforcement of Ordinance 19.9 from 5:00 AM to 1:00 PM on Sunday, June 22, 2025, to allow Iowa Multisport to utilize two motorized golf carts on the AHHP trails.
2. Parks and Recreation Commission can:
 - a. Waive the enforcement of the No Swimming Rule at Ada Hayden Heritage Park North Lake, 7:00 – 10:00 AM, on Sunday, June 22, 2025, to allow Iowa Multisport to host the Ames Triathlon.
 - b. Approve Iowa Multisport to enter Ada Hayden Heritage Park at 5:00 AM on Sunday June 22, 2025, for event preparation.
 - c. Do not recommend City Council waive enforcement of Ordinance 19.9 from 5:00 AM to 1:00 PM on Sunday, June 22, 2025, to allow Iowa Multisport to utilize two motorized golf carts on the AHHP trails.
3. Deny the request from Iowa Multisport to allow swimming in Ada Hayden Heritage Park Lake in order to host the Ames Triathlon.
4. Refer back to staff.

STAFF RECOMMENDED ACTION:

The No Swimming Rule was put in place for the safety of all users. Since the park has opened, staff has consistently enforced this rule. However, staff observed the swimming portion of the triathlon and feels the emphasis that has been placed on water safety is very high. Also, staff has observed portions of the event that took place in the park from setup to final cleanup and the care IM took ensuring the park was better than it was prior to the events was encouraging. Lastly, the use of golf carts to move volunteers and or participants for emergencies at the past triathlon events has been very beneficial. Therefore, waiving enforcement of Ordinance 19.9 for the duration of the event is an important component for the success of the Ames Triathlon. **Therefore, it is staff's recommendation to approve Alternative 1, as stated above.**

To: Parks and Recreation Commission Members
From: Courtney Kort, Recreation Superintendent
Date: September 17, 2024
Subject: Ames Cyclone Aquatics Club (ACAC) Rock the Blocks Swim Meet

The Ames Cyclone Aquatics Club (ACAC) traditionally hosts their annual swim meet, Rock the Blocks, at Furman Aquatic Center (FAC). This event takes place over a three-day period at the beginning of the season. In 2024, Rock the Blocks took place at FAC May 31-June 2.

Parks and Recreation (P&R) staff met with ACAC board members on June 20, 2024, to get feedback and discuss plus/deltas of the 2024 meet. At this meeting, ACAC expressed some difficulties with their meet operations to staff. Examples of obstacles are outlined below.

- Talking trash out, removing blocks at the end of the meet, policing the facility during the meet.
- The need to have access to the facility throughout the day on the Thursday prior to the meet to move in equipment/staging.
- The need for more access to enclosed areas for storage overnight during the meet (Friday and Saturday).
- Date of the meet, expressing a higher participant turnout may be possible if the meet is run 2-weeks after Memorial Day instead of the current 1-week after.
- Moving equipment in and out of the facility, onsite staff communications, lifeguard requirements and emergency action plan with ACAC staff serving as lifeguards on the 50-meter.

P&R staff discussed these items internally to determine possible options or solutions to these items. On July 19, 2024, P&R staff met with ACAC board members to share how P&R may be able to help alleviate these difficulties. A summary of what P&R is willing to do is shown below.

- P&R staff taking out trash, removing blocks at the end of the meet, and being more involved to assist in policing the facility during the meet.
- P&R was open to discuss time options with ACAC to move in items throughout the day on Thursday prior to the meet based on ACAC needs and finding the appropriate times so facility programming and operations were not impacted negatively.
- P&R could coordinate with ACAC to have access to overnight storage on Friday and Saturday at FAC.

- P&R to provide lifeguards for the 50-meter in addition to the lazy river during the meet, at no additional cost.
- P&R was open to exploring meet dates a week later than traditionally scheduled, with the only request being that ACAC let P&R know as soon as possible if that is the intent so the date can be included in the annual agreement and the public can be notified accordingly.

ACAC mentioned that their next scheduled board meeting was on August 20, 2024, and P&R would get more information on the future of the Rock the Blocks swim meet after that meeting. Parks and Recreation staff received an email from ACAC board member Doug McCorkle on August 23, 2024, stating the following.

Hi Courtney and LeAnn,

As promised, the ACAC board of directors met this week to decide the future of Rock the Blocks.

The ACAC board of directors recognizes and sincerely appreciates the proposals the City put forth for Rock the Blocks. We appreciate the collaborative nature of our conversations this summer.

When Frank and I met with you this summer, we disclosed to you that there are numerous hurdles to the feasibility of ACAC holding Rock the Blocks at Furman Aquatic Center. This week, the ACAC board made the difficult decision not to host Rock the Blocks at Furman Aquatic Center. The City's concessions and willingness to work with ACAC made the decision extra difficult, but there simply are numerous other issues beyond the control of the City that the board felt made holding this meet at FAC infeasible.

The ACAC Board looks forward to working with the City regarding ACAC's other uses of the FAC. Thanks again for your time and efforts.

Doug
On behalf of the ACAC board of directors

ACAC has been notified that we would share this information with the Parks and Recreation Commission at the September meeting to make Commission aware of why staff would not be bringing an agreement for the 2025 Rock the Blocks swim meet. ACAC also did disclose that they plan on hosting the meet in 2025 at the Ames High School pool.

2025-30 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)
Public Input
September 11, 2024

Notes

CIP Related Comments/Questions/Responses:

- The City was commended for developing creative stormwater management solutions (e.g. Moore Memorial Park (MMP) pond). The concern is that maintenance is lacking and the pond has become an eyesore. The waterways developed for stormwater to travel to the pond have trees growing in them and they aren't as effective at transporting water as they once were.
 - Response:
 - Parks and Recreation (P&R) staff acknowledged that MMP pond needs maintenance.
 - P&R staff will be clearing vegetation between the electric substation and the Northridge subdivision in the fall/winter of 24/25.
 - Recently, P&R and Public Works staff met to discuss what can be done to improve this pond.
 - A survey was conducted and it was determined that the barrier between the forebay and the main pond has eroded and needs to be repaired.
 - Other solutions are being discussed such as removing the shallow area around the edges as vegetation grows wild and contributes to the problem.
 - There is no funding allocated for this purpose and will be discussed during this CIP cycle.
- The canoe/kayak access in North River Valley Park needs rock.
 - Response:
 - P&R staff will investigate and add rock as needed.
 - The renovation of this access is in the current CIP for Fiscal Year 2027/28.
- The canoe/kayak access at South 16th Street would be better located on the east side of the river near the Dodge dealership.
 - Response:
 - Staff asked the commentor of this suggestion to provide additional details about the location change and why this is important to consider.
 - If this is a legitimate change, an easement would be needed.
 - The renovation of this access is in the current CIP for Fiscal Year 2027/28.

- Consider a soft trail in the park system for biking, running, hiking, fat tire bikes, and cross country skiing.
 - Response:
 - Staff asked the commentor to provide additional information regarding what a trail would look like and where else in Iowa has it been successful.
 - Staff suggested this may be a great opportunity for a group to be formed to provide guidance, volunteer opportunities, and/or funding if this were to move forward.
 - Staff did ask the commentor to provide information as to how other places keep users on the trail and not creating new trails in areas where trails are not wanted (e.g. prairie, etc.).

General Comments/Questions/Responses:

- What is being done to control the willows at Ada Hayden Heritage Park?
 - Response:
 - P&R have done period cutting and mowing of the willows but they resprout and come back thicker than what they were originally.
 - This year, Goats-on-the-go were used on the east side of the park with some success.
 - In August, over 30 volunteers cut willows in several locations along the lake front. P&R staff then treated the stumps with a water friendly herbicide.
 - We will be assessing the success of these different methods to determine which method(s) to continue with.
- What is the status of the well field project in East River Valley Park?
 - Response:
 - There will be an open house held Wednesday, September 18, 4-6 pm at the Water Plant. The well field project will be displayed.
 - At 5 pm, a short discussion of the well field project and other projects will be held.
 - Areas near the power lines where trees were removed will not have trees replanted in the same area so the water lines are accessible in the future.
 - Trees may be planted in other areas of East River Valley or in other areas of the park system.
- What is the status of the flood mitigation project in Brookside Park?
 - Response:
 - The plans are being finalized.
 - A public meeting will be held at a date yet to be determined.

- Plans and specifications are to be taken to City Council in November for approval and then sent out for bid.
 - The project would begin in 2025.
- The vegetation on the path from Ames High School to Furman Aquatic Center is overgrown and needs trimming.
 - Response:
 - P&R staff will get this area trimmed.
- The underside of the Roosevelt Park shelter appears to need a coat of varnish or something.
 - Response:
 - P&R staff investigated and determined nothing needs to be done.
 - These undersides are generally not finished and are left to weather naturally.
- The southern face of the shelter at Ada Hayden Heritage Park needs to be painted.
 - Response:
 - Staff recently sanded the southern side and will be refinishing it.
- Kids have been driving carts across the bridge on hole #9 at Homewood which is a safety issue.
 - Response:
 - Homewood staff will investigate putting a bollard or something to prevent carts from being driven across the bridge.

**PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN
EMAIL AND PHONE COMMENTS**

Dear Keith,

I hope this message finds you well. I am writing to inquire if there are any plans to add new outdoor, free-to-use pickleball courts in Ames in the near future. As an enthusiastic player, I have noticed that the courts at Emma McCarthy Lee Park are consistently full, especially now that the students have returned. I know that the tennis courts at Brookside Park have pickleball boundary lines, but as it turns out, the net used for tennis is a few inches higher than those used for pickleball. While this may not impact a casual player, this significantly impacts the gameplay for more serious players, making these courts unsuitable for play. All of the indoor options in Ames, as far as I am aware, require a fee to enter the gym.

Pickleball is rapidly growing in popularity, and the demand for accessible playing spaces is evident. Having additional courts available, particularly free-to-use options, would greatly benefit our community by promoting physical activity and offering an inclusive environment for players of all ages and skill levels.

I would appreciate any information you could provide about upcoming projects or plans to address this need. Thank you for your attention to this matter and for your ongoing efforts to improve our city.

Best,

Chase Senneff
(515) 745-5526
chasemsenneff@gmail.com

Dear Keith,

Thanks for sending out the email regarding planned or proposed capital improvements in the Ames city parks. First, we appreciate the many beautiful parks in our city. Many of us take the parks for granted and don't fully appreciate the time & money needed to maintain them.

I reviewed the list of anticipated improvements provided in your email and would agree that those are all good priorities except perhaps for the last one; that is the replacement of walking trails around the lake in Ada Hayden Park. We love the park but the condition of those walking trails doesn't seem to merit replacement anytime soon, in my opinion. I'd prefer to see funds go toward more bike trails around town, specially along GWC going north along the country club and on to 190th, then east to Hyde Ave, then back south to Bloomington Road. Perhaps the establishment of new bike trails does not fall under your area of authority?

On another, related topic, I would much favor allocating more funds to the control of the willows & other species of invasive brush/trees taking over much of the lakeshore in Ada Hayden.

Again, thanks for what you do and for the opportunity to provide input regarding our city parks.

Gary Loos

Good morning Keith,

I wear many hats in my position at McFarland Clinic as I am sure you do at the City of Ames. Yesterday I received an email about Parks Capital planning which got me thinking if these would be in your capital planning process. I believe it is great to do these capital improvements around the City of Ames. I too manage a very large facilities capital planning budget for McFarland Clinic so I can relate to the difficulty in identifying projects, prioritizing them, getting them approved and then getting them completed.

So here are a couple questions for you that I wanted to ask before your meeting in September. I am curious if these questions are in your capital planning or another City department.

1. Does the Park's and Recreation operations also include the management of the stormwater retention ponds in the city? My question is I am the Board President of the Northridge HomeOwner Association and I have been working on cleaning up overgrowth along the waterways in the HOA development. These waterways handle the city street's storm water run off and of course pick up any other water flow from the areas around the waterways. My question is more along the retention ponds dredging due to filling in sediment. Can you direct me to how these are addressed within the city stormwater maintenance plan. I understand I need to bring this concern forward in order for it to be considered as a need to be addressed. PDF attached
2. Moore Park pond. I live next door to Moore Park and I see the pond from my backyard and walk these trails frequently. Time flies by so its been maybe 8-10 years back when the City did stormwater improvements in the Northridge area. This large pond was dredged and was made larger to handle the storm water capacity coming towards it. Previously the pond was very unsightly in appearance and dead trees and overgrowth around the water edges. Once the area was cleaned up and all the old dead trees and volunteer growth was removed it was seeded so we once again could see the pond and was very enjoyable for several years. It has been very disappointing to see this area be left unmaintained and in just a few more it has become an unsightly appearance once again. Moore Park is just one of the Ames treasures for our residence and guests to visit; however, this area has again changed to a negative appearance. PDF attached
 1. Are you aware there is a serious ADA issue at the dock access? There is at least a 4" drop in the concrete limiting access and this should be address ASAP to keep the city out of litigation with someone making a wrongful claim against the city.
 2. Just outside Northridge on George Washington Carver where the stormwater ravine is leading south and feeds into Moore Pond north settlement basen. This area had been cleaned of all trees along with this ravine graded to permit water flow during flooding. Several large culverts were installed along the route from the HOA to the east then south along this ravine to the Moore Pond settlement basen. There has been no maintenance to this area and this is now full of trees restricting the natural flow that was designed.

So I have capital questions and also maintenance questions that hopefully you can help me with. If these are not in your control I understand. Can you please pass these along to the correct department if these are not yours to address.

Thank you and I look forward to hearing back from you.

Sincerely,
Ron Frantzen
515-239-4455 office
515-460-6814 cell



Director Abraham

While visiting my son in the Tacoma, WA area I daily Walked in a public park in nearby Puyallup, WA. In that park was a well-built Group of outdoor exercise machines on a 'well drained rubberized platform. I used several of these machines while there.

I presently walk almost daily in Brookside Park and see the trails are well used by by bicyclist's and walkers of all ages. I believe a similar group of exercise machines would be well used in that park. Please consider the possibility of similar machines in the southern area of our Brookside Park. Thank you

Raymond A. Callahan
1214 North 4th St
Ames, IA 50010
515-232-1590

Hi Keith,

I am a parent of two young kids in Ames, the older of whom we took to the splash pad at Brookside park regularly in the summer when they were a toddler. The price of visiting the full waterpark was prohibitive on my grad student stipend at the time, and the small splash pad was the perfect balance for our sound-sensitive kiddo. Five years later, we have a second child, now a toddler, and I was devastated at the start of this summer to discover that the splash pad has been entirely removed!

This feature is so important for low-income families, for kids who can't tolerate the noise of the full waterpark, for babies and toddlers who don't need a whole waterpark experience but would benefit from building familiarity with water (as someone who was once a water safety instructor, that is a vital time for them to interact with water to build confidence with it).

I am alarmed to have not seen any plan in action to replace this vital feature for Ames families. If staffing is the concern, I recommend styling similar to, for example, Yankton, SD — where there is a splash pad (with less stationary water than the old Brookside splashpad) that is activated by a button to run for ten minutes and then turns off automatically. It is placed just off of downtown there and free to the public, and it is genuinely a huge positive of life there in the summers with children.

I hope Ames does something to fill this awful gap in water recreation for low-income families with young kids sooner than later. It would make a significant difference to these families in ways that simply updating existing playground equipment —which is valid but feels less pressing— does not.

Thank you,

Kirin Martin (Dr.)

Hi,

I would like to thank you for all the improvements to Christopher Gartner Park. We live two blocks east and have been utilizing it weekly. That said, our path takes us through the east entrance off of Harris Circle, which is difficult to get a stroller through. The sides are collapsing from dirt erosion and plant overgrowth. (This would be a great Eagle Scout project, by the way, if there is any interest.)

Thanks for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kathy McRoberts

Dear Keith Abraham,

I am excited to hear that the trails at Ada Hayden will be widened, but I'm highly concerned about the switch to concrete, particularly regarding pain and damage that runners' joints over time AND the likelihood that runners will wear paths in the grass alongside the paved trail, so as to avoid the notorious injuries. Rather than re-state my points, please see my brief email below that I sent on May 16th. (FYI, Tim Gartin was the only person I heard a response from.) I would add one additional but smaller point of concern: people wanting to rollerblade would prefer the smoother blacktop surface than the concrete with "lines" as well.

I appreciate your time reading my email and incorporating this concern into the plans moving forward.

Sincerely,

Erin Pederson

erinpederson@gmail.com

Ames resident

Hi Keith, I hope the public review went well last night. NPR is currently doing a series of articles on how people who grow food are adapting to climate change. They touch on food forests in the articles below:

People planting orchards in and around

cities: <https://www.npr.org/sections/thesalt/2015/05/21/408293431/urban-food-forests-make-fruit-free-for-the-picking>

Food scaping discusses growing food in very small suburban or urban spaces, such as balconies, lawns, and patios: <https://www.vpm.org/2024-08-07/zero-waste-highlights-sustainable-practices>

American hazelnuts are native and hardy, but most hazelnuts in the US are European and imported from Turkey. In the midwest, people are actively researching genetic varieties with a mix of desirable traits: <https://www.wuwm.com/environment/2024-09-12/how-hazelnuts-can-build-climate-resilience-in-the-upper-midwest>

Thought you might be interested, or inspired.

Reuben Peterson

Keith,

My husband and I attended the Ada Hayden Birthday party and we heard you speak that residents would be allowed to give input on the new park the city will be developing off of Ontario Street in west Ames. I don't know if last night's meeting at 6 pm at Homewood Golf Course clubhouse was that opportunity or not, but we had a schedule conflict and couldn't attend.

About a year ago we moved to 5610 Maryland St. in Birch Meadows subdivision essentially across the street from the proposed park. (we previously lived for 29 years at 1217 Garfield Avenue). We would like to see a loop multi-use paved (or asphalt) trail in the park. Several times a week we load up our bicycles and bike around Ada Hayden Lake and we like the loop aspect of it as well as the differing elevations (with the ridge trail and Dawes Drive bike path thrown in). We believe many people (including us) would utilize such a trail in west Ames. There are many people outside walking in our neighborhood who do the short loop around our tiny ponds in Birch Meadows that I am pretty sure would use such a trail. I don't know what the vision for the new park is, but I think you could certainly keep the natural aspects of the area while still providing a paved loop trail(s).

That's our two cents worth! If there are other opportunities to give input we would certainly welcome them!

P.S. We saw on the master plan that the Patio Homes West Park is scheduled for new playground equipment - our grandchildren would certainly appreciate that as well!

Thank you,
Becky Reger

Hi Keith!

Me again. 😊

We went and tried to play pickleball at Inis Grove but they were all filled with people waiting to get on.

I wanted to check in and see what the update is for the agility course and has any consideration been given to adding courts where the volleyball courts were removed in the same area?

Thank you and I look forward to hearing from you.

Karen Smidt

I was not able to attend the meeting yesterday for CIP, but I have a few things I'd like to put on the table. Firstly, Airport road is being repaved, and the sidewalks are done. As well as filling in cracks on Jewel St and surrounding roads. The sidewalks are uneven and POORLY done. There is clear runoff of asphalt, literally drying in clumps on the either side of the walkway on the corner of Duff and Airport. As a cyclist, this has a massive impact on the smooth ride that many take daily to the business areas off that road. The fill-ins off of Jewel and surrounding areas are also poorly done. I'm not one to complain about renovations, but again, on a bicycle, these fill-ins are NOT even with the ground, and feel horrible. Even in a vehicle, it's jostling. I've never seen this type of quick repair in Ames and since money was spent on these projects, they should be address accordingly. A small idea my husband and I had as well, was to seed wildflowers and perennial flowers around the base of park trees. Even with mowing, there's always big tufts of just grass. Why not add some beauty back in! The disc golfers of the community are interested in this idea as well for the 2 courses we have, especially since those course are supposed to be slightly overgrown.

Best,
Kayla Mack

I forgot my last note, I apologize, but for the CIP meeting yesterday (was not able to attend), the city has been taking down ash trees due to the infestations from beetles. In a 1 block radius behind my house, 11 were torn down last year, creating a MASSIVE heat wave for our house, electric bill, and the backyard, (HOA territory), was left by the tree company, in pieces. Wood shavings, and dry dirt. That's what's left of my backyard. I would ask to consider replanting trees in these same neighborhoods to bring nature back to our communities, and to give our animals homes again. We lost quite a few important little feathered and furry friends in our backyard. Plus THE HEAT WAVE! Have a lovely morning, and please consider our thoughts.

Best,
Kayla and Mike Mack

My husband and I moved here 17 years ago. We have enjoyed all the green space that Ames has to offer. However our favorite walking place was Ada Hayden. Last year we walked the southern portion of the park instead of the north section just for a change of scenery. This year we were appalled at what has happened to the area. Before walking around the path was relaxing with a beautiful view of the lake. Now there is no lake to see, just weeds and willows.

While I understand the need to be eco friendly you seem to have taken it a bit too far. If you must put plantings between the sidewalk and the lake, why not put short plants where you can still enjoy the beauty of the lake?

Will you ever allow the park to return to what it was...a beautiful place to walk and enjoy seeing the water?

Karen Fischer



Caring People ♦ Quality Programs ♦ Exceptional Service

TO: Keith Abraham, Director of Parks and Recreation

FROM: Staff

RE: Monthly Report September 2024

PARKS AND FACILITIES:

1. Staff prepared softball and soccer fields for fall sports leagues at North and South River Valley Park.
2. Staff started renovating two of the five mini-shelters at Ada Hayden Heritage Park. Staff installed concrete paths from the main trail to the shelters, increased the shelter pads, and will be installing new metal roofs in the coming weeks. Eventually all mini shelters at the park will be renovated.
3. The department hired four new Maintenance Workers and welcome Jesse Smith, Nicholas Lager, Emir Amidzic, and Brian Lewis to the Department.
4. Staff started the process of winterizing the Furman Aquatic Center by draining the basins, degreasing the sand filters, and disassembling pumps. The winterizing will be completed by mid-October.
5. Staff is in the process of completing annual playground inspections. Shawn Crain, Maintenance Worker, is a Certified Playground Safety Inspector (CPSI) and performs all inspections for the Department.

RECREATION PROGRAMS:

1. Staff are conducting interviews for the Ice Arena Coordinator and Recreation Coordinator – Programs and Facilities positions. The Ice Arena Coordinator is a new full-time position within the department and will assist the Ice Arena Manager. The Recreation Coordinator position will assist the Recreation Managers and Superintendent with program and facility operations.
2. In August, there were 20 public skating sessions held at the Ames/ISU Ice Arena with a total attendance of 274 skaters and 144 skate rentals. A total of 97 skaters attended 22 figure freestyle sessions and 151 skaters attended 27 stick and helmet session. A total of 18 pair of skates were sharpened for the public and the facility hosted 3 birthday parties in August.

3. Homewood Golf Course had 4,187 rounds played in August, compared to 3,730 rounds played in August 2023.
4. Staff held a public demonstration of a VertaCat inclusive golf cart at Homewood Golf Course on September 10. The Department is exploring the purchase of an inclusive golf cart to have available at Homewood to provide an opportunity for a demographic that may not be currently served to participate in the game of golf.
5. A six-week session of virtual, outdoor and in-person fitness classes began in August with 23, 25, and 440 participants, respectively.
6. Fall swim lessons are scheduled to begin September 29 at ISU State Pool.
7. A new session of Tae Kwon Do began at the Parks and Recreation Administrative Offices Activity Room on August 20 with 109 participants.
8. The gymnastics and tumbling program have moved to the Parks and Recreation Administrative Offices Activity Room in September due to the previous space at City Hall being converted to office space. Tae Kwon Do, Gymnastics, and Tumbling now share the newly renovated Activity Room space.
9. Furman Aquatic Center saw 21,022 swimmers during the month of August, compared to 28,985 swimmers in August 2023. Rental bookings totaled 21 hours in the 2024 season compared to the 14.5 hours in 2023.
10. Furman Aquatic Center ended the 2024 season on Monday, September 2. Total season attendance totals are shown below.

Furman Aquatic Center Total Season Attendance		
2022	2023	2024
78,918	89,129	84,916

11. End of Season Pool Passes, valid August 1-September 2, were offered again this year with 56 passes sold with a total of 106 people taking advantage of the promotion.
12. In the Auditorium:
 - a. The Senior Variety Show returned, holding four rehearsals and two performances.
 - b. The first Open Mic Night was held with local artists performing for three hours.
 - c. Lutheran Church of Hope held 4 services.
13. At the Bandshell:
 - a. The Central Iowa Symphony Performed their 2024 Pops Concert.
 - b. An Overdose Awareness event was held on August 31.
 - c. Parks and Recreation presented its annual movie night event on August 30, with the showing of "Honey I Shrank the Kids".

14. Registrations for youth programs for this fall are shown below:

Program	2024	2023	2022
Kiddie Kickers	36	37	43
Dance	40	30	44
Gymnastics	101	79	81
Soccer (Grades 1-6)	148	162	133
Miracle League	36	38	26

15. Registrations for fall adult programs, as of September 9, are shown below.

Program	2024	2023	2022
Indoor Volleyball	49 Teams	48 Teams	39 Teams
Pickleball	28 Teams	36 Teams	9 Teams

PROJECT UPDATE:

1. Staff has been working with Snyder & Associates, Ankeny, Iowa, to develop plans and specifications for the Agility Course at Carr Park. The most recent cost estimate to complete the project was \$200,000 over available funds. City Council recently approved the reallocation of funds from the Carr Park Shelter/Restroom Project to complete the Agility Course project with the addition of a shelter. A public meeting will be held in the near future so neighbors and residents can provide feedback on the plans and specifications one last time. In October, City Council will be asked to approve the plans and specifications prior to going out for bid. Construction will take place in the spring/summer of 2025. A restroom may be re-programmed at a later time if deemed necessary.