



CITYSIDE

FEBRUARY 2025

NEW TRANSPORTATION NETWORK IMPROVES TRAFFIC SIGNAL COORDINATION

Pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists who value efficiency when navigating Ames' streets will welcome the City's Intelligent Transportation System (ITS). Installation along Duff Avenue began in the fall and will continue along other major streets in Ames for several phases. The ITS project involves installing fiber optic interconnect between the traffic signals and key City of Ames buildings as well as upgrading traffic signal

equipment at certain intersections.

ITS is a traffic efficiency project that uses underground fiber optic interconnect to allow traffic signals to "talk" to each other and to

a central office. Traffic signals use adaptive signal technology, which detects traffic volume and adjusts signal timing to optimize traffic flow through busy streets. Look for cameras attached near the traffic signals for intersections that feature the new connections.

"ITS transforms the entire transportation network by enhancing traffic flow and reducing idling," said Traffic Engineer Damion Pregitzer. "We are harnessing technology to optimize our busiest streets, and all users in our community benefit through cleaner, more efficient travel in Ames."

ITS uses real-time data and algorithms to optimize traffic signals and reduce congestion. More efficient traffic means less fuel burned and lower greenhouse gas emissions. The project, funded by a grant from Iowa Clean Air Attainment Program (ICAAP), will be implemented over several years to connect more signals together.



DROP-OFF RECYCLING CENTER CELEBRATES 1 YEAR

Resource Recovery Plant's self-service recycling center celebrated its first year of operation at the end of December. The program offers 24/7 drop-off recycling for cardboard, mixed paper, glass, certain plastics, metals, and food. The facility is located on the north side of Resource Recovery, 420 E. Second St.

"We continue to be impressed by the community support for this program," said Superintendent Mark Peebler. "Since we began in January 2024, we have continued

to add more containers to match customer demand. Reducing waste and recycling are great ways to decrease your carbon footprint."



Drop-off Recycling Numbers for 2024*

Cardboard - **85** tons
Plastics - **9** tons
Mixed paper - **23** tons
Food waste - **29.5** tons
Glass - **222** tons

**Rounded numbers through Dec. 9, 2024*

CITY NEWS TO USE

IN THIS ISSUE:

Budget Activities Continue
Application Deadline for City Boards
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CITY OFFICES CLOSED:

City Hall and most City of Ames departments will be closed on Monday, Feb. 17, in recognition of Presidents' Day. For more information about the City of Ames, go to: www.CityOfAmes.org.





PUBLIC BUDGET MEETINGS SCHEDULED

The City of Ames began preparing for the Fiscal Year 2025-26 budget last fall with a series of internal staff meetings. Work continues throughout the winter months as each department's budget is reviewed internally prior to presentation to the Ames City Council. There are still plenty of opportunities to get involved.

In February, three meetings are planned for representatives of each of the City's departments to present an in-depth review of proposed budgets. All budget meetings will be held in the City Hall Council Chambers, 515 Clark Ave., and will be streamed on City of Ames Facebook and YouTube. A live stream is also available at www.CityOfAmes.org/AmesTV.

5:15 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 4

5:15 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 5

5:15 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 6

The budget wrap-up will be held at 5:15 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 11.

In a process that started last year, the Story County Auditor will send property taxpayer statements to all property owners on March 15. These statements will include the proposed property tax levy for the City, School District, and County, the reason for any increase or decrease in property tax collections, as well as the date and time of a public hearing. At this time, this public hearing is expected to take place at 6 p.m. on Thursday, March 20 and includes public comment.

The final budget hearing is scheduled for 6 p.m. on Tuesday, April 8. It will include a second opportunity for public comments. This hearing will occur during the regularly scheduled City Council meeting.

Like all Iowa cities, the City of Ames must submit its budget to the State of Iowa for certification by the end of April. Budget documents for the current fiscal year are posted on the City's website, and draft documents for 2025-26 will be posted by early February.

For more information, go to www.CityOfAmes.org/Finance.

VOLUNTEER FOR A BOARD OR COMMISSION

Volunteer in your community and make a difference by joining a City of Ames board or commission. Boards and commissions make recommendations to the Ames City Council and assist the Council in carrying out various functions of local government.

There are 21 different boards and commissions, and 19 of those have vacancies occurring in the first part of 2024. While some current volunteers may seek reappointment, there are always vacancies that need to be filled.

More information about each board and commission, its



purpose, when it meets, and an application to be considered are available at www.CityOfAmes.org/BoardsAndCommissions.

Applications are also available in the City Clerk's Office. Deadline to apply is **5 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 31, 2025.**

RECYCLE YOUR CHRISTMAS TREE

Don't let your Christmas tree end up in the landfill! The City of Ames provides free disposal of Christmas trees at the Parks & Recreation Maintenance Shop, 700 E. 13th St. Trees can be deposited during daylight hours and will be recycled into wood chips, which will be used in Ames parks.

The Parks & Recreation Maintenance driveway will be marked with a sign. The tree stand, tinsel, and all ornaments should be removed before leaving the tree for disposal.

CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

City Council meetings are held in the City Hall Council Chambers, 515 Clark Ave., and streamed via the City website, Facebook, and YouTube.

Meetings: 5:15 p.m. Feb. 11

6 p.m. Feb. 25

Budget hearings:

5:15 p.m. Feb. 4, 5, 6

MORE INFORMATION AVAILABLE AT WWW.CITYOFAMES.ORG/CCMEETINGS

NOW HIRING!

PARKS AND RECREATION HIRING TAILGATE

Parks and Recreation is hiring! Learn about seasonal & part-time job opportunities, *Saturday, Feb. 22, 10 a.m.-noon, Homewood Golf Course & Clubhouse (401 E. 20th St).*
Refreshments, games, prizes, & more!

YOUTH & ADULT SPORTS

YOUTH TUMBLING: Tumble Bugs (ages 2-3, Parent/Child), Tumbling Tykes (ages 3-4), Tumbling Tots (ages 4-5). Classes offered throughout the week, March 1-April 19. Register by Feb. 20.

PARENT/CHILD DANCE (AGES 2-3): Learn the basics of dance every Thurs. or Sat., March 1-April 19. Register by Feb. 20.

LITTLE TENNIS (AGES 3-5, PARENT/CHILD): Learn the basics of tennis every Tues., Feb. 11-March 11. Register by Feb. 4.

ADULT & YOUTH TENNIS LESSONS (ADULT 17+ / YOUTH GRADES 1-6): Offered every Sat. morning, Feb. 15-March 8. Register by Feb. 8.

AQUATICS

FURMAN AQUATIC CENTER IS HIRING! APPLY TODAY AT WWW.CITYOFAMES.ORG/JOBS

NEW SESSION OF SWIM LESSONS (YOUTH, ADULT, TEEN, PRIVATE): Session begins Feb. 12. View classes at www.AmesParkRec.org or call 515.239.5350 for additional information.

LIFEGUARD INSTRUCTOR RECERTIFICATION CLASS: Class offered March 2-9, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Register by Feb. 23.

FIRST AID/CPR/AED (AGES 10+): Class offered on March 8, 8:30 a.m.-11 a.m. Register by March 1.

BABYSITTING CLASS (AGES 11-16): Class offered on Feb. 8, 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. This class will provide youth planning to babysit with the knowledge & skills necessary to care for children & infants safely & responsibly. Register by Feb. 1.

FITNESS & WELLNESS

NEW SESSION OF FITNESS, YOGA, & SMALL GROUP TRAINING CLASSES: Go online to www.AmesParkRec.org to view all classes. New session begins Feb. 17. In-person & virtual options are available!

SIXTY FORWARD FITNESS CLASSES: Classes include Balance, Strength & Stretch, Chair Yoga, Zumba Gold, and more! New session begins Feb. 17.

HEALTHY FOOT: This class will help alleviate or prevent pain. Class begins Feb. 4.

PERSONAL TRAINING SESSIONS: Certified trainers are available to help you reach your goals and accommodate your busy schedule!

For more information on Public Wellness offerings or to schedule private sessions, contact Nancy Shaw, Public Wellness Manager, nancy.shaw@cityofames.org, 515.239.5353.

TAI CHI (BEGINNER & INTERMEDIATE): Meets every Sunday beginning Feb. 23.

IN-BODY SCAN: Measure your body composition with the In-body Scan! Fee is \$30.

STRENGTH & CARDIO TRAINING: Come reap the benefits of strength training at the Community Center Weight Room or Sixty Forward Center. Orientation fee for each facility is \$15.

PILATES REFORMER TRAINING: Private reformer lessons. The Pilates method focuses on improving posture, increasing muscle flexibility and strength as well as enhancing core stability and endurance.

HOMWOOD GOLF COURSE

PAINT WITH A TWIST AT HOMEWOOD: Instructor led, canvas painting event, Saturday, Feb. 15, 7 p.m. All materials will be provided. Fee is \$42 per person. Register in advance to secure your spot, <https://www.paintingwithatwist.com/studio/des-moines-urbandale/event/3787514/>

AMES/ISU ICE ARENA

VALENTINE'S DAY SKATE (ALL AGES): Join us on Valentine's Day, Feb. 14, at the Ames/ISU Ice Arena for public skate from 7:15 to 9:15 p.m.

AMES CITY AUDITORIUM

AMES CITY AUDITORIUM CONCERTS: "Fifth & Clark Fridays" concert series continues Jan. 31 & Feb. 28. Concerts begin at 7 p.m. Admission is \$5. All students can get 2-for-1 admission by showing their student ID at time of purchase.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO REGISTER, VISIT WWW.AMESPARKREC.ORG OR CALL 515.239.5350.

ENERGY Q&A

Q: Is the SunSmart solar project still producing energy? Can customers still sign up to support renewable energy?

A: Ames Electric's SunSmart community solar project celebrated its fourth anniversary in December 2024, and we're excited to have a full four years of clean, green energy production. Over these four years, the project produced 12.5 million kilowatt hours (kWh) of energy – enough to power close to 1,200 homes for a year.

This summer saw the addition of Sheep on the Go as partners in the “mowing” of the project with 50 ewes and their lambs living most of the summer on the site. In addition, Iowa State University honeybee hives were located near the project site to take advantage of the pollinator friendly plantings underneath the solar panels. We're excited to continue these agricultural partnerships into the next year.

SunSmart is about 75% subscribed, so there is still opportunity for Ames Electric customers to buy one (or several) “Power Packs” from the project. Each Power Pack represents the output of half of a solar module from the solar farm. Participants receive an on-bill credit each month based on the amount of energy produced.

The cost of each Power Pack is \$240. Since its inception,

solar farm participants have received a credit that has averaged about \$1 per month per Power Pack. The credit is higher in the summer and lower in the winter due

to the amount of solar energy produced. By purchasing shares or blocks of the solar farm's energy, customers directly support the generation of clean, renewable energy, reducing reliance on fossil fuels.

Even renters can consider investing in SunSmart. If you move, the utility will buy back your Power Pack (at the current market rate).

To learn more about SunSmart, including a link to real-time and historical energy production from the project, go to www.CityOfAmes.org/Solar.

Joel Zook, Energy Services Coordinator
515.239.5177 | Joel.Zook@cityofames.org



AT-A-GLANCE ENERGY NUMBERS FOR NOVEMBER 2024

25 LED STREETLIGHTS INSTALLED FOR A
TOTAL OF **6,377**

49,062 MILES OF VEHICLE CHARGING AT
PUBLIC ELECTRIC CHARGING STATIONS

157,522 KILOWATT HOURS OF ENERGY
PRODUCED BY SUNSMART AMES
SOLAR FARM

RESOURCE RECOVERY PLANT

• REFUSE-DERIVED FUEL: **1,772 TONS**

RECYCLING:

- GLASS: **18 TONS**
- METALS: **91 TONS**
- FOOD WASTE DIVERSION: **2.5 TONS**
- PLASTIC: **1 TON**
- CARDBOARD: **8 TONS**
- MIXED PAPER: **3 TONS**

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Power Out	515.239.5240
Street Light Out.....	515.239.5500
Utility Bills.....	515.239.5120
Energy Questions	515.239.5177
Tree Too Close to Electric Line?	515.239.5500
Digging? Contact Iowa One Call.....	811
Storm Water Concern.....	515.239.5160
Rusty Water.....	515.239.5551

CitySide is a publication of the City of Ames, Iowa.
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