



To: Story County Board of Supervisors

From: Mayor John A. Haila – City of Ames

Date: January 30, 2026

Subject: George Washington Carver/Cameron School Road Roundabout Partnership

The City of Ames has been working closely with area developers adjacent to the George Washington Carver/Cameron School Road intersection to navigate a path forward for housing and commercial developments in the area. Traffic improvements to the intersection of George Washington Carver and Cameron School Road have been identified as needed. The Ames City Council discussed potential road projects as part of its December 16, 2026 meeting. At this meeting, City Council determined that we wanted to reach out to the Board of Supervisors regarding your willingness to partner with the City on a roundabout project for the intersection of Cameron School Road and GW Carver.

As the Board of Supervisors may recall at the time of annexation of the Dankbar Farms property, there was a discussion of improvements for GW Carver/Cameron School Road partially in the City and partially in the County. A traffic signal was initially proposed for the intersection to address the necessary traffic infrastructure improvements to allow for incremental improvements as development occurs.

As development plans have been refined, the Ames Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (AAMPO), of which Story County is a member, has recently finalized the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) that indicates a roundabout is the preferred option at this location in the mid-term planning timeline when compared to a traffic signal. While the MTP does not dictate project types, timing, or funding, it does attempt to identify projects that can attain multiple benefits. The benefit of the roundabout includes management of speed with improved safety and multi-modal access. Additionally, roundabouts have a lower operating cost because there is not any traffic signal infrastructure requiring periodic maintenance.

Despite the MTP preference for a roundabout project for this area, its timing and financial viability are unknown because of timing of adjacent pending development. City staff estimates corridor improvements with a roundabout to be upwards of \$3 million. In order to move the potential roundabout project

forward as an immediate opportunity, preliminary engineering needs to be completed to refine the project scope and provide a more accurate cost estimate. If there is no interest in pursuing the project at this time, the opportunity may be lost due to development phasing and the use of a traffic signal system that would then be the default option.

Currently the north half of the George Washington Carver/Cameron School Road intersection is located within Story County, a quarter of the intersection is likely always planned to be within the County. Because of this, the City of Ames is requesting the Board of Supervisors partner with the City to determine the feasibility of the project and to construct the project as early as 2027, with the following steps:

- Preliminary Design: 50% shared cost with the City of Ames – request up to \$50,000 for Story County’s share of the preliminary design cost. Preliminary design to occur as soon as possible to refine project costs. The County Engineer has been in contact with the City’s Public Works staff and has discussed support for a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to partner in these costs. City staff have begun the process of preparing a MOU for Ames City Council and Board of Supervisors for review and approval, planned for February 2026 with Board support to move ahead.
- State Safety Grant Application: With a preliminary design and a refined cost estimate completed by the summer of 2026, the City and Story County can apply for a State DOT safety grant in the fall of 2026 for up to \$500,000 of funding. City staff would prepare the application in coordination with County staff.
- Roundabout Construction: Shared cost with the City of Ames – **request 25% of the cost of the roundabout related improvements (estimated at \$400,000), if the project receives a safety grant. Construction would be anticipated in FY 2027/28.**

If the Board of Supervisors believes that a roundabout is preferred solution for this intersection and is interested in being a funding partner, there is an urgency to address this option now. City staff believe there is a narrow window of time to determine feasibility and to leverage funding resources to make this project a reality in coordination with adjacent development.

With each step outlined above, there would be check in on whether to continue with development of the project. If financial support for a roundabout does not fit with the Supervisor’s goals and priorities, we would want to know this as soon as possible to avoid using everyone’s resources trying to implement an unrealistic project.

We thank you for your consideration of the City's request and look forward to a response. Staff is also available to answer any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John A. Haila". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "John" being the most prominent.

John A. Haila
Mayor

Cc:
Ames City Council
Steve Schainker, City Manager
Justin Clausen, Public Works Director
Kelly Diekmann, Planning and Housing Director
Renee Hall, City Clerk