



## QUESTIONS FOR AMES CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATES

*All answers are posted verbatim; the Chamber did not edit responses, nor correct typos or grammatical errors.*

*The following responses are from Jeremy Davis:*

**1. What do you see as the top three issues facing the City of Ames?**

1. The Global Recession and its impact on jobs and the people of Ames.
2. Declining public sector dollars indicate the need for a strong private sector to maintain our quality of life.
3. Land Use Policy Plan and related zoning requirements are not perceived as welcoming to entities desiring to expand or locate in Ames.

**2. What ideas do you have for growth and economic development in Ames?**

We need to encourage development of a business and industrial park and be proactive in encouraging businesses to locate in Ames. Additionally, we also need to support policies which provide developers and business owners the opportunity to create a strong Campustown and Main Street area, along with other areas identified as desired development locations. And, we also need to support new business growth (entrepreneurial, corporate, retail, industrial) in an effort to help strengthen the overall tax-base.

**3. What has been your personal involvement in economic development and growth for Ames?**

I have been a proponent and supporter of efforts for job growth and economic enhancement. Additionally, I have also supported building and enhancing partnerships between public and private entities.

**4. What are your views on the City's rental assistance program?**

The city's rental assistance program fills a void to ensure that individuals who reside in Ames are able to live in affordable, attainable, and desirable housing.

**5. What are your views on the Land Use Policy Plan?**

I believe our current land use policy plan and related zoning regulations need to be revisited to ensure they are clear and concise, yet flexible enough to make modifications as necessary. Revisiting the current policies and modifying them as necessary, will help to promote a welcoming environment for entities desiring to expand or develop in Ames.

**6. What image do you think Ames has for potential developers or new businesses? What would you do to change or improve this image?**

Currently, it often appears that Ames is not welcoming to potential developers or new business. When someone desires to expand or create new ventures within Ames, often he or she must invest significant amounts of time and financial resources prior to receiving a recommendation from Planning and Zoning and city staff and then As a community, we need to encourage partnerships between the private and public entities to support business growth and development, creating job opportunities, and ultimately increasing the tax-base which allows for a stronger school system and overall community enhancement for our citizens. Additionally, we should also work to obtain economic enhancement grants, through sources such as the Iowa Department of Economic Development, to provide resources to existing businesses and help those entities strengthen their overall business model.

The city should serve as a catalyst to determine the needs for conference space and its location/utilization. Through the City's leadership, key partnerships for development of additional/renovated conference space can be identified.

Prior to proceeding with an Inter-modal Transportation Hub, the method of financing the Hub (currently anticipated through Federal Grant Dollars) should be secured. However, the commitment for utilization should also be identified along with how it would be managed and maintained in the long-run. While the proposed transportation hub has a number of positive benefits, we need to ensure that it will be utilized in the area for which it is proposed.

In order for the Main Street Cultural District to be a residential center and commercial/entertainment center, there must first be a demand for housing options in the area as well as business entities which fulfill the needs/desires/wants of the individuals who may choose to reside in the area.

the City Council to approve or deny such request. This process needs to be evaluated. Entities who desire to expand or locate in Ames should know upfront the requirements to abide by City land-use and zoning priorities and standards. If elected to the City Council, I will work collaboratively with fellow Council members and staff to ensure our policies are welcoming.

With a new water treatment plant authorized and anticipated increase in peak electrical demand capacity, these projects will need to be paid for and the way to do so with minimal impact to utility rates is to increase the tax-base through new business growth in our community.

In terms of major non-utility projects, the long-term financing of these projects will typically be through the use of municipal bonds. Fortunately, the City of Ames' bond rating is Aaa which will provide for better terms. Ultimately, however, it will be necessary for the city to maintain a conservative approach to its overall finances to ensure the city maintains its current high bond rating.

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**7. What are your thoughts on financing needs of the City of Ames, including water, electricity, library and parking?**

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**8. What challenges do you think there are in developing the Main Street Cultural District as a residential center as well as a commercial/entertainment center?**

In order for the Main Street Cultural District to be a residential center and commercial/entertainment center, there must first be a demand for housing options in the area as well as business entities which fulfill the needs/desires/wants of the individuals who may choose to reside in the area.

**9. What processes would you like to see in place to proceed with an Inter-modal Transportation Hub?**

Prior to proceeding with an Inter-modal Transportation Hub, the method of financing the Hub (currently anticipated through Federal Grant Dollars) should be secured. However, the commitment for utilization should also be identified along with how it would be managed and maintained in the long-run. While the proposed transportation hub has a number of positive benefits, we need to ensure that it will be utilized in the area for which it is proposed.

**10. How can the City be involved in encouraging the development of additional/renovated conference space?**

The city should serve as a catalyst to determine the needs for conference space and its location/utilization. Through the City's leadership, key partnerships for development of additional/renovated conference space can be identified.

**11. What would you do to support the existing business community in Ames?**

As a community, we need to encourage partnerships between the private and public entities to support business growth and development, creating job opportunities, and ultimately increasing the tax-base which allows for a stronger school system and overall community enhancement for our citizens. Additionally, we should also work to obtain economic enhancement grants, through sources such as the Iowa Department of Economic Development, to provide resources to existing businesses and help those entities strengthen their overall business model.