



Ames, IA



Ames, Iowa, is located in the central part of the state and was founded in 1864 as a station stop on the Cedar Rapids and Missouri Railroad. Railroad president John Blair named the town for Massachusetts Congressman Oakes Ames, who was influential in the building of the transcontinental railroad. Ames was incorporated in 1870, the same year that the Iowa Agricultural College and Model Farm, which later became Iowa State University, was established as one of the first land-grant colleges.

Museums in Ames include the Octagon Center for the Arts, which hosts rotating exhibits of artwork from around central Iowa and the world. The Ames Historical Society presents programs and exhibits at the Ames History Center; operates Hoggatt School, which is an 1860s one-room schoolhouse museum; and cares for an artifact collection.

Iowa State University has several museums. Built in 1860, The Farm House was the first building on campus. Now a museum, it sits in the center of the university and is a National Historic Landmark. The Brunner Art Museum, which is located in the Iowa State Center, focuses on decorative arts; the museum is currently closed for renovations with a completion date of mid-September 2019. The university's historic Morrill Hall is home to the Christian Petersen Art Museum, which stores and displays the works of Christian Petersen, who sculpted and taught at the university, and exhibits other works of contemporary art. Also located within Morrill Hall is the Mary Alice Gallery (Textile and Clothing Museum). Outside Morrill Hall, the Elizabeth and Byron Anderson Sculpture Garden contains sculptures placed in a landscaped setting. Iowa State University's Art on Campus Program is one of the largest campus public art programs in the country and features more than 2,000 works located throughout the campus.

Ames has an active performing arts scene. Ames Community Theater (ACTORS, Inc.) offers a variety of live theatrical presentations and educational opportunities. The Central Iowa Symphony performs concerts at the Ames City Auditorium, which is also the performance venue for Co'Motion Dance Theater, Ames' professional modern dance company. The Ames Municipal Band performs summer evening concerts at the Durham Bandshell in Bandshell Park. Ames Town & Gown Chamber Music Association presents 5 chamber music concerts per season featuring renowned ensembles and emerging artists.

The Iowa State Center's three performance halls (Stephens Auditorium, Scheman Building, and Fisher Theater) present student theatrical performances, arts series, youth programs, and special engagements. The Maintenance Shop, or "M-Shop," located in ISU's Memorial Union holds concerts, comedy shows, and theater performances. Hilton Coliseum hosts Iowa State University men's and women's basketball, wrestling, gymnastics, and volleyball, as well as large-scale concerts.

Neighborhoods

Downtown Ames is a traditional commercial district with minimal housing options currently available. The nearby Old Town Historic District features homes that were constructed between the 1870s and 1920s in styles that vary from elaborate Queen Anne and Italianate to simpler bungalows and vernacular. Beginning in the 1950s, the need for rental housing resulted in the division of some of the larger structures into several rental units, some of which have reverted to single-family homes. In other areas of the Old Town neighborhood and the adjacent Roosevelt neighborhood, houses date from the 1900s to the 1940s and were constructed in various styles.

Located near the Iowa State campus, the College Heights neighborhood, which was developed between 1910 and 1940, features two-story homes built on curvilinear streets in an assortment of sizes and styles. Oakland is a wooded neighborhood that abuts McCarthy Lee Park and features large homes on large lots.

The Park Ridge neighborhood was developed in the 1970s and 1980s and features ranch-style homes with many lots adjacent to the park.

Many newer neighborhoods are in the northern section of the city. Homes in Northridge Heights date from 1999 and include townhouse styles, as well as single-family homes. Construction of the Bloomington Heights neighborhood dates from the 1990s to 2005; homes are primarily two-story contemporary styles. The Village of Somerset offers a mix of single-family houses, townhouses, and apartments. The newly acquired Ada Hayden Heritage Park is the focus of newly planned residential developments.

Parks and Recreation

Ames boasts 36 parks and recreational facilities, including an indoor Municipal Pool, outdoor Furman Aquatic Center, Brookside Wading Pool, Ames Parks and Recreation Community Center, Carroll Marty Disc Golf Course, Georgie Tsushima Memorial Skate Park, Durham Bandshell, Ames Dog Park, and the 9-hole Homewood Golf Course. Inis Grove Park is a large recreation area with basketball courts, tennis courts, picnic pavilions, playgrounds, horseshoe pits, and trails. Disc golf, ice skating, a nature area, playground, and sand volleyball courts are available at Gateway Park. Ada Hayden Heritage Park features a fishing lake, hiking and biking trails, and wetlands for birdwatching. The Ames/ISU Ice Arena provides public ice skating and lessons and hosts hockey games and special events. Amenities at other municipal parks include walking paths; paved bike paths; playgrounds; tennis, sand volleyball, and basketball courts; ball fields; horseshoe pits; fishing; and open green spaces.

Iowa State University's Reiman Gardens feature 17 distinct garden spaces, including several rose gardens, an herb garden, a children's garden, a tropical conservatory, a trial and display garden showcasing the latest advances in annual and perennial plant breeding, and a butterfly wing with approximately 800 live butterflies. The Gardens are also home to the world's largest concrete gnome.

Education

Ames Community School District educates approximately 4,500 students in 5 elementary schools, a middle school, and a high school. The Gilbert School District serves students from Ames' northern neighborhoods.

Higher education is available at Iowa State University, which is composed of 8 colleges and 2 schools and offers bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degree programs. The university's College of Veterinary Medicine is the oldest operating veterinary college in the country.

Health Care

Mary Greeley Medical Center is a 220-bed regional hospital and Level III trauma center.

City Stats

2016

City Population	66,191
Metropolitan Statistical Area Population	97,090
Per Capita Personal Income, Ames, IA, MSA	\$38,469