



GUIDE TO **BUSINESS INVESTMENT**

AMES REGIONAL ECONOMIC
Alliance 

Alliance AMES REGIONAL ECONOMIC



The Ames region offers a rare combination of central U.S. access, a highly skilled **workforce**, research-driven **innovation**, and communities ready to support **business growth**. Located in the heart of Iowa and anchored by Iowa State University, the region provides companies with strong transportation connections, industrial-ready sites, and responsive local partners.

The Ames Regional Economic Alliance works across a four-county region to help companies identify sites and buildings, navigate local processes, assemble competitive incentive packages, and connect with workforce, utility, and community partners. For companies and site consultants alike, our goal is simple: make complex projects easier.

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WHY THE AMES REGION



 Only 30 miles from the Des Moines International Airport

691,016
Ages 18-64

30.2 Ames MSA media age

The employed are currently driving

13.5

miles one-way for employment or

19

minutes

AMES MSA EDUCATION

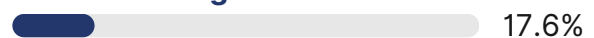
HS Graduation +



Bachelors +



Advanced Degree +



2020-2024 American Community Survey Published Jan 29, 2026

To learn more about the counties and communities in the AREA, visit the Data Hub page on our website:

AmesAlliance.com

INFRASTRUCTURE & MARKET ACCESS

The Ames region offers a wide range of community and site options across **four counties**, giving companies and site consultants flexibility to find the right fit. Some locations offer near-term readiness with existing utility and transportation advantages, while others provide room for long-term growth supported by future infrastructure investment.

Whether a project prioritizes speed to market, land availability, rail potential, utility capacity, or expansion room, the Ames Regional Economic Alliance helps identify best-fit locations and connect prospects with the right community, utility, and project partners.

Highway Access

The region benefits from strong roadway connectivity, including access to **Interstate 35** and major east-west corridors such as **U.S. 20 & U.S. 30**, allowing businesses to efficiently reach suppliers, customers, workforce, and distribution channels throughout Iowa and the broader Midwest.

Rail Options

The Ames region is served by **Union Pacific** and **Canadian National** railroads, with rail access and rail-served potential varying by community and site. For companies where rail is a priority, the Alliance can help identify appropriate locations and coordinate early conversations around service feasibility, infrastructure needs, and site fit.

Utilities

Electric, natural gas, water, and wastewater conditions differ across the region, allowing businesses to evaluate multiple community options based on operational profile, timing, and scale. In some locations, industrial scale infrastructure is already positioned for near-term development. In others, utility extensions or upgrades may support larger or more specialized projects.

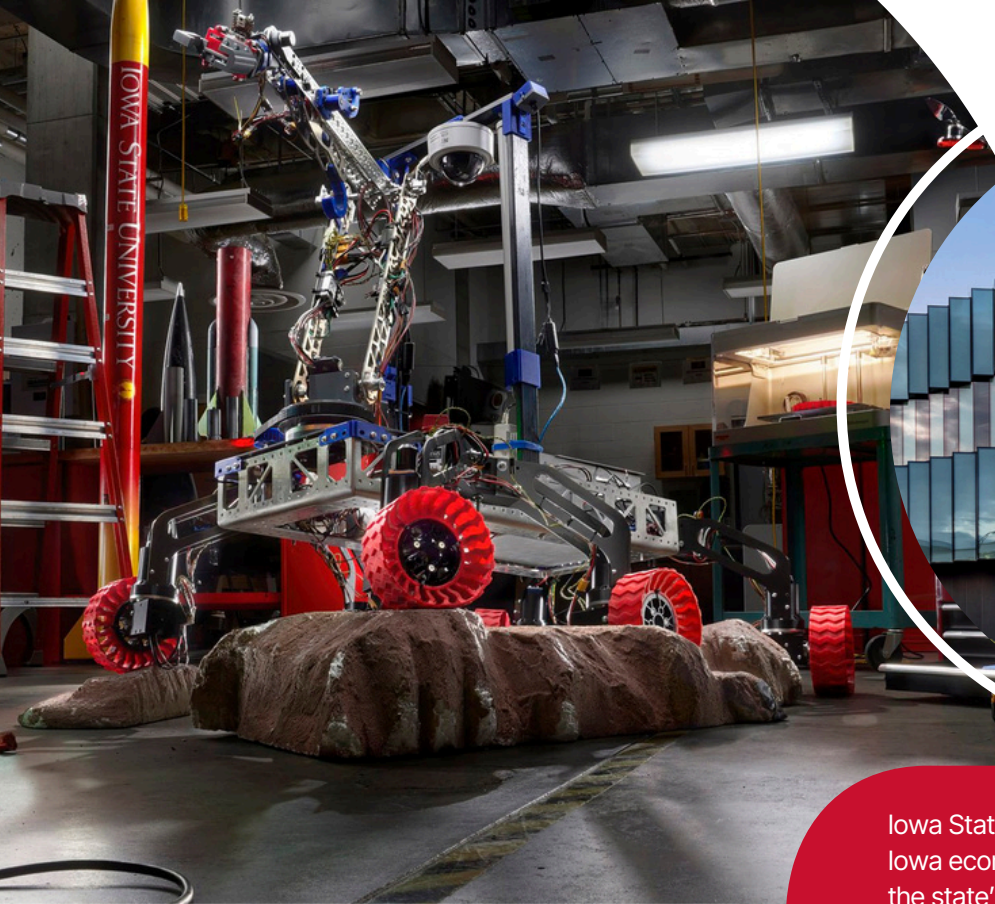
Air Access

The region is supported by **Des Moines International Airport (DSM)** for commercial service, along with regional and municipal airport access that supports business and corporate aviation needs.

Regional Coordination

Not every community is built for every project, but across the Ames region, companies can find communities that fit a wide range of operational, infrastructure, and growth needs. **The Alliance** helps companies and consultants quickly identify locations aligned with utility requirements, transportation needs, workforce access, project timeline, and long-term growth goals.





Iowa State University adds **\$5 billion** in income to the Iowa economy, a value approximately equal to **2.4%** of the state's total gross state product (GSP). Expressed in terms of jobs, ISU's impact supported **57,142 jobs**. For perspective, the activities of ISU and its students support one out of every 36 jobs in Iowa.

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

Tier 1 Research and Land-Grant University

A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE FOR BUSINESS

Iowa State strengthens the Ames region with a deep **talent pipeline**, industry-relevant **research**, and capabilities that align with growth sectors such as **advanced manufacturing, ag tech, food and ingredient processing, animal health, and biosciences**. Iowa State University is a global leader in advanced **biomanufacturing, digital and precision agriculture, biobased products, and vaccines and immunotherapeutics**.

31,105

Students enrolled

61%

Of students in STEM fields

\$462M

Annual research expenditures

7,418

Engineering students

3,720

Agriculture & Life Sciences students

643

Doctor of Veterinary Medicine students

WHERE INDUSTRY CONNECTS WITH IOWA STATE

Iowa State University is one of the region's greatest business assets. As a leading research university, it strengthens the Ames region through **talent development, industry collaboration, applied research, technology commercialization, and problem-solving partnerships.**

For companies in advanced manufacturing, ag tech, food and ingredient production, animal health, engineering, and biosciences, Iowa State enhances both workforce quality and long-term innovation capacity. The university helps create a business environment where new ideas move more quickly from research to application.



Industry Advantage

Iowa State helps businesses access the people, ideas, and partnerships that support long-term growth and competitiveness.

Talent Pipeline

A strong pipeline for technical and professional roles in engineering, agriculture, biosciences, veterinary medicine, data, and related fields.

Applied Research

Research strengths and real-world problem-solving capacity help connect university expertise to industry needs.

Industry Collaboration

Companies have opportunities to engage through internships, hiring, applied research, faculty connections, and other partnership pathways.

Innovation Ecosystem

A supportive environment for startups, scaleups, and established employers looking to innovate, commercialize, and grow.

Sector Strengths

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Ag Tech
- Food & Ingredient Production
- Animal Health
- Engineering
- Biosciences



IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
ResearchPARK

Iowa State University Research Park (ISURP) is a 550+ acre development serving upwards of 140+ tenant companies, with 1 million square feet of developed building space. The statewide impact from companies with ties to ISURP cannot be overstated; five companies that started at ISURP have gone public and multiple others have enjoyed successful liquidity events.

AREA STRENGTHS

BIOSCIENCES

The state of Iowa has solidified its standing as a leader in the biosciences field through a combination of favorable governmental policies for businesses, dynamic private industries, and top-tier research institutions.

Renewable Fuels and Biochemicals

- Iowa ranks 1st in the nation in the production of ethanol and biodiesel, 2nd in wind generation output.
- Abundant biomass feedstock for the production of high-value chemicals
- Nation's first Renewable Chemicals Production Tax Credit

AREA Companies:



Crop Genetics

Iowa's deep ties to crop genetics stem from George Washington Carver's studies at Iowa State University. This legacy has continued with global seed companies continuing to conduct advanced research in the Ames region. Remarkably, Iowa boasts the highest number of plant and soil scientists of any state.

In addition, Iowa State University is home to the Raymond F. Baker Center for Plant Breeding, renowned globally for its exceptional plant breeding programs. These programs are acknowledged for their substantial impact on enhancing the productivity and quality of crop cultivars.

AREA Companies:



Animal Health

The Ames region is a key hub for animal vaccine development, hosting top institutions like Iowa State University College of Veterinary Medicine and USDA National Animal Disease Center facilities. These global research institutions and additional private companies make the area to become a leading center for animal health research.

AREA Companies:



ADVANCED MANUFACTURING

Advanced manufacturing stands as the largest industry in Iowa, contributing to 18.2% of the state's total GDP. In addition to skilled manufacturing workforce, the Ames area is a great location for companies due to its infrastructure and logistics, and workforce pipeline from Iowa State University in the areas of engineering, computer science, and others.

AREA Companies



FOOD PROCESSING

Iowa's nutrient-rich land, low-cost of doing business, excellent transportation infrastructure and quality workforce attracts nearly every major food brand to set-up significant operations in the state. In fact, 29 of the largest 100 food manufacturers have Iowa operations, including global companies like Barilla, Hormel, and Daisy Brand are located here in the region.

AREA Companies



AG TECH

With the highest concentration of agricultural engineers of any state, Iowa is world-renowned for innovation in Agriculture Technology, with many of these highly skilled professionals coming from Iowa State University. The Ames region is the premier location for startups, research and development, and mature businesses in the Agriculture technology space.

AREA Companies



JOHN DEERE



PIVOT BIO

Ag Leader®



powerpollen



COMPETITIVE INCENTIVES

STRUCTURED AROUND YOUR PROJECT

The Ames Regional Economic Alliance works with local communities, utility partners, and the State of Iowa to help assemble competitive project support packages based on investment, job creation, wages, infrastructure needs, and strategic fit. Incentives are evaluated on a project-specific basis and coordinated to support both speed and long-term success.

State Programs

State-level assistance is available for qualifying projects involving job creation, capital investment, workforce training, and business expansion.

Local Incentives

Communities in the region offer local support tools such as tax abatement, infrastructure participation, or other performance-based assistance where appropriate.

Workforce Training Support

Training-related assistance is available to help employers onboard and develop employees for new and expanding operations.

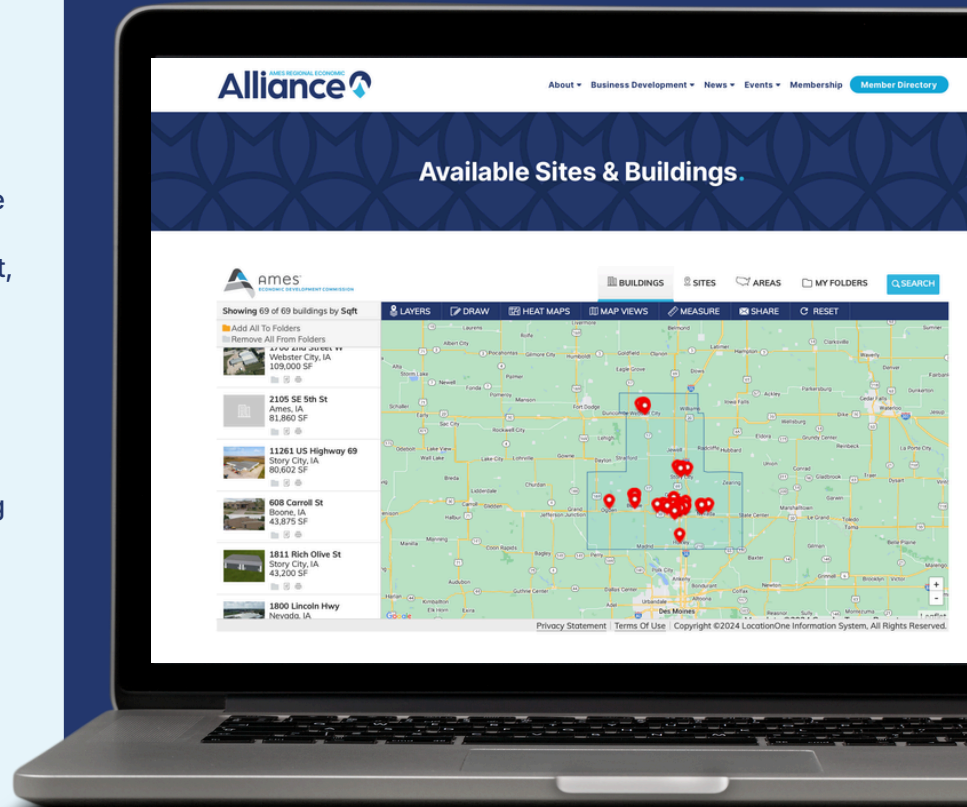
Infrastructure Assistance

In some cases, project-related infrastructure improvements may be supported through local, state, or transportation-related programs.

Alliance Coordination

The Alliance helps businesses and consultants understand what tools may apply, coordinate early conversations, and move efficiently through the evaluation process.

Available Sites & Buildings



The Ames region offers a range of business location options, including **greenfield industrial sites**, **development-ready properties**, **rail-adjacent opportunities**, and **existing buildings** in communities across the region. Whether a project requires visibility, logistics access, expansion capacity, rail potential, or utility readiness, the Alliance can help identify the best-fit options.

Because the region includes multiple communities with different assets and development patterns, prospects and consultants gain the benefit of broader choice without losing the convenience of a coordinated search process.

- Greenfield and industrial development sites
- Existing buildings for manufacturing, warehouse, office, and commercial uses
- Iowa Certified Sites
- Rail-adjacent and logistics-oriented options
- Live property database

Scan to view available sites and buildings in the Ames Region.

AmesAlliance.com





**ONE
POINT OF
CONTACT.**

**REGIONAL
COORDINATION.**

PROJECT SUPPORT.

The **Ames Regional Economic Alliance** helps companies and site consultants move from first inquiry to final decision with coordinated regional support. Our team works with local leadership across communities and with state, utility, workforce, and institutional partners to simplify the project process and provide reliable, timely information.

Whether a company is exploring a new location, comparing multiple communities, or planning an expansion, the Alliance serves as a strategic partner focused on responsiveness, clarity, and execution.

Services include:

- Site and building identification
- Project response coordination
- Community introductions
- Utility and infrastructure coordination
- Workforce and training connections
- Incentive evaluation support
- Business expansion and retention assistance
- Regional partner alignment

We understand that successful projects require more than a good site. They require alignment, responsiveness, and trusted local partners. That is where the Alliance excels.



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