



# **A Needs and Services Assessment of Ankeny**

## **Understanding Today, Preparing for Tomorrow**

Presented by AMOS - Our Lady's Immaculate Heart Church  
Ankeny, Iowa  
August 31, 2017





August 31, 2017

To our fellow residents of Ankeny:

In 2015, AMOS members at Our Lady's Immaculate Heart Church (OLIH) began holding small-group meetings with parishioners. We met with over 200 church members and asked them to tell us about pressures that Ankeny families face today. In these conversations we identified two primary issues: access to mental health care and poverty.

### **Mental Health Care**

Our AMOS-OLIH Core Team immediately set to work on mental health care. We partnered with other organizations to hold three educational sessions as well as a legislative candidate accountability session. During the 2017 state legislative session, we worked with a variety of stakeholders to lobby for state mental health funding. A three-year funding bill was passed.

### **Poverty**

When it came to poverty, our Core Team needed more information. OLIH parishioners raised a two-fold question: Is there poverty in Ankeny, and what does it look like? Our intuition was that those with low income lived among us but were largely hidden from the public eye.

To answer the question, we assembled an ecumenical group of volunteers who live in Ankeny and care about its future. This research team decided that a needs and services assessment of Ankeny was needed. The 18-month process began in early 2016. Our team studied nine aspects of the community, including everything from demographics to schools to mental health care. We "looked through the lens of poverty" as we interviewed dozens of city leaders, school district employees, civic leaders and service organization staff members. We performed hundreds of internet searches. In the process, we got to know each other and our community.

### **The Results**

We are pleased to present the results of our research in this document, titled "*A Needs and Services Assessment of Ankeny: Understanding Today, Preparing for Tomorrow.*"

We hope that its presentation will begin a frank conversation about where we are today and how best to proceed in the future. Our city's needs can only be addressed effectively if we all work together. We welcome your insights and input into making Ankeny a community where all can succeed.

Sincerely,

The AMOS-OLIH Core Team

*AMOS (A Mid-Iowa Organizing Strategy) is a broad-based, nonpartisan, interfaith community organization comprised of 34 diverse member institutions. We believe that ordinary people, working together, can accomplish great things in a democracy and have a say in the destiny of their community.*

## **A Needs and Services Assessment of Ankeny: Understanding Today, Preparing for Tomorrow**

We would like to thank all of those who contributed to the development and completion of this project. In particular, we are thankful to the many city and school employees, civic leaders and service organization members who shared their insights and expertise with us. Without the help of many talented and thoughtful members of this community, this final document would not have been possible.

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# Executive Summary

## Overview

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### Introduction

In 2016, a research team comprised of volunteer Ankeny residents began an 18-month assessment of needs and services within the city of Ankeny. The team's formation was requested by AMOS (A Mid-Iowa Organizing Strategy) members at Our Lady's Immaculate Heart Church (OLIH) and contained members of OLIH as well as other interested community members. The study was designed to answer the questions of 1) whether poverty exists in Ankeny, and 2) if so, what poverty in Ankeny looks like.

Team members chose to study nine aspects of the community: demographics, family economic security, affordable housing, public transportation, the Ankeny Community School District, mental health care, affordable substance abuse treatment, the senior population, and public safety. These areas were chosen because they were considered essential to building a strong community. A report was written on each area. Demographics and family economic security were combined into a single report due to similarity of material, leaving a total of eight reports.

This executive summary describes in brief form the research methods used, the study's limitations, and key findings and areas of concern for each of the aspects evaluated. It also discusses the inter-relationships noted between various aspects of the community. Finally, it concludes by giving the reader a challenge to look toward Ankeny's future.

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### Methods

Research methods and materials varied somewhat from report to report, but generally included the following:

- Personal interviews
  - Telephone interviews
  - Electronic mail exchanges
  - Internet research
  - Newspapers
  - Professional journals
  - Site visits
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## Overview, *Continued*

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### **Methods,** *continued*

Interviews were conducted with City of Ankeny employees and officials, current and former Ankeny Community School District employees, nonprofit organizations, church groups, businesses and community stakeholders.

Internet research was used to locate statistical data, general information on topics, and details on service providers. Federal, state and local government sources were used as well as commercial and non-profit sites.

Site visits were made to several service providers, including the Neveln Center and IMPACT's Ankeny facility. A ride-along was completed with officers from the Ankeny Police Department.

Data was collected between January 2016 and August 2017. All reports are fully referenced and include a Works Cited section.

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### **Limitations**

Ankeny is growing rapidly, and with that growth services are changing on a daily basis. In the roughly 18-month period in which this assessment was undertaken, new providers of service opened, older providers closed, and organizations changed their names or the services they provided. In some reports, not all providers of service may have been identified. Thus, the reports should not be seen as a comprehensive listing of services, but rather as a snapshot in time of the types of services available in Ankeny.

For the most part, the reports deal only with services available within the city of Ankeny's geographic boundaries. Some services not available in Ankeny may be found in a nearby community, thereby fulfilling residents' needs. Since the goal of this project was to define services available in Ankeny, detailed listings of services in other communities are not included.

Statistical data are not necessarily collected on a yearly basis. Some data reported here have not been collected since 2014. Researchers used the most recently reported data wherever possible.

Interviewees are generally listed by name. However, some interviewees requested that their names be withheld; their wishes have been respected.

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### **Reports**

The following pages contain a brief overview of the key findings and areas of concern identified by each report. See the full individual reports for detailed information and references.

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# Ankeny Demographics & Family Economic Security

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## Findings

Ankeny is growing faster than any other city in Iowa. In 2016, the estimated total population of Ankeny was 58,000, more than double the 27,117 residents counted in the 2000 census.

Census data indicate that 15.8% of Ankeny residents are living below 200% of the U.S. poverty level. It is estimated that a family of four needs to earn at least 237% of the poverty level in order to be financially stable on a very basic budget.

Households led by single females have nearly twice the rate of poverty as two-parent families in Ankeny, and households with unrelated members have more than three times the poverty rate.

Ankeny has a large amount of retail workers and 10.5% of the region's low-wage jobs. When Polk County approved a minimum wage hike, the Ankeny City Council voted not to participate in this wage increase.

The percentage of Ankeny schoolchildren eligible for free and reduced lunch is increasing in every school in the district. Demand for supplemental food programs such as the Ankeny Backpack Program, Love Lunches and A Helping Hand is growing.

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## Areas of Concern

- **Poverty is present in Ankeny** and disproportionately affects households run by single females or with unrelated members. Services for residents in these categories should therefore be a priority.
  - **Retail and service jobs are abundant in Ankeny but pay less than break-even wages.** If similar growth in jobs occurs without an increase in wages, an increased need for supplemental services will be seen.
  - **Increasing demand for supplemental food programs**, including free and reduced school lunch, is being seen. While the community is increasing services in this area, reasons for increasing hunger should be assessed and addressed.
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# Affordable Housing

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## Findings

Housing is considered affordable if the monthly payment (mortgage or rent) is less than 30% of a household's monthly gross income.

In Ankeny:

- The median household annual income is \$75,069.
- The median value of Ankeny's owner-occupied housing units is \$175,700.
- More than 20% of Ankeny jobs are in "retail trade," which pay on average \$22,000/year.
- More than 25% of Ankeny households lack affordable housing.

The average monthly rent in Ankeny ranges from \$535 for an efficiency apartment to \$1,255 for a three-bedroom apartment. Affordable housing for the retail trade wage-earner would need to cost \$550/month or less.

Ankeny needs:

- an additional 1,260 units for low-income residents who currently live in Ankeny and are rent burdened
- an additional 1,217 units for low-wage workers who are living outside the city but working in Ankeny

Ankeny is eligible for Community Development Block Grant funding, which could be used to build affordable housing. However, the Ankeny City Council has declined to participate in the program.

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## Areas of Concern

- **Ankeny does not have enough affordable housing.** A significant portion of Ankeny's work force must live outside the city because they cannot afford to live here, while nearly the same percentage of current residents cannot afford their housing. Community Development Block Grants could assist with building more affordable housing.
  - **Economic development may be hindered** if the lack of affordable housing continues. If all of Ankeny's low-wage workers lived in the city, the local economy would gain \$27 million per year.
  - **Lack of affordable housing could significantly impact Ankeny schools.** Families unable to find affordable housing may move children from school to school, hampering educational progress.
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# Public Transportation

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## Findings

Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority (DART) is the provider of public transportation for the Des Moines region. In Ankeny, DART's primary service is to provide two-way transit between Ankeny and downtown Des Moines on weekdays from approximately 6:00am to 6:00pm.

Intra-city transit is limited to:

- Paratransit (for elderly or disabled riders)
- DART On Call (a part-time reservation-only service)
- elderly congregate meal service

DART's long-range plan, called Forward 2035, includes expansion of services in Ankeny and the addition of an intra-city bus route. The planned route includes travel between First Street, Delaware Avenue, Oralabor Road and South Ankeny Boulevard, but ignores other major commercial and residential areas of the city.

Expansion of DART services would necessitate an increase in Ankeny's property taxes.

Currently, only 1% of Ankeny's population uses DART public transportation.

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## Areas of Concern

- Ankeny has a **lack of consistent intra-city public transportation**, which limits socioeconomic diversity within the city of Ankeny and is detrimental to an ever-needed expansion of the work force as the economy of Ankeny grows. Future DART expansion would help only part of the city.
  - **Current funding levels for public transportation are inadequate** to meet the community's expanding needs. Increasing funding in the face of low ridership presents a challenge. Development of successful alternative pilot programs may help to garner support for increased public funding.
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# The Ankeny Community School District

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## Findings

The Ankeny Community School District (ACSD) is widely viewed as highly successful in providing education. Ankeny students perform well across income levels and racial groups. ACSD has extensive services for at-risk students as well as support services for low-income students.

Separation of the district into north (Ankeny Centennial High School) and south (Ankeny High School) feeder systems has resulted in uneven distribution of low-income students. City demographics indicate that generally higher levels of poverty are found on Ankeny's south side, the primary location of ACSD's south feeder system. The result is that the percentage of students eligible for free/reduced (f/r) lunch is disproportionately higher in south feeder system schools vs. north feeder system schools.

School staff members report that issues related to poverty, including hunger, improper clothing, and inadequate readiness for the school day, are increasing. Lack of affordable housing and transportation contribute to these issues. Intra-city bus service is not available for students who are not eligible for district busing and parents may not have back-up transportation.

ACSD offers preschool for three and four-year-olds, but the program is voluntary and no transportation is available. Priority is given to four-year-olds. The district does not have developmental kindergarten.

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## Areas of Concern

- **Pockets of low-income students** are disproportionately present in the south feeder system. As the district grows, ACSD will be challenged to narrow the north-south gap in order to promote equality between schools within the district.
  - **Gaps in transportation availability exist**, particularly for children who don't qualify for district busing. No transportation is available for preschool students and there is no intra-city bus service. Complete correction of this problem will require efforts outside the school district.
  - **ACSD does not offer comprehensive early childhood education.** Families most in need of the long-term benefit of these services may not be able to attend due to age priorities for four-year-olds or lack of transportation. Developmental kindergarten is absent, but could be particularly beneficial for five-year-olds not yet ready for kindergarten.
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# Mental Health Care

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## Findings

Iowa currently ranks 44th in access to mental health care, and Ankeny exhibits some of that lack of access. Inpatient care, crisis care and emergency mental health services are not available within the city limits.

For the estimated 2,000 Ankeny residents with severe mental illness, there is no local psychiatrist. However, there is one Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner who practices in Ankeny. This provider is able to prescribe psychiatric medications.

Ankeny does have at least a dozen offices that provide mental health counseling. These are staffed by various types of providers who provide a wide array of services. Most of these services are available to patients on Medicaid or Medicare, and some free or sliding-scale services are available. Several mental health offices are expanding services, but their expansion plans do not include additional prescribers or crisis care.

Longstanding mental illness bears a cyclical relationship with poverty. Severe mental illness often prevents patients from obtaining employment or driver's licenses. Lack of transportation is therefore a common problem for this group.

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## Areas of Concern

- Ankeny has definite **gaps in mental health care access**. Only one specialist provider in the city is able to prescribe psychiatric medications. There is no crisis care. This places undue burden on families, caregivers and the city's first responders. Ways to bridge these gaps are needed.
  - **Lack of transportation** keeps those with mental illness from attending appointments, shopping or socializing. Intra-city bus service or other options could increase independence, decrease isolation and decrease caregiver stress.
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# Affordable Substance Abuse Treatment

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## Findings

There are three substance abuse centers in Ankeny: Life Works, Inc.; Cornerstone Recovery Center; and the Ankeny Substance Abuse Project (ASAP) run by United Community Services (UCS). All of these accept Medicaid, cash and private insurance, but only UCS offers sliding-scale fees for low-income clients.

There is no longer an operational inpatient substance abuse treatment program in the city. However, outpatient programs and therapy options are expanding.

The frequency of operating while intoxicated and other criminal charges in this population means that many clients in need of treatment do not have driver's licenses. Lack of intra-city public transportation places a barrier between clients and treatment program attendance.

Clients with substance abuse problems tend to be young and may lack life skills. They need significant support to transition to and continue in substance-free living. The federally-funded Access to Recovery program can provide these support systems, but is only available on a limited basis through UCS.

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## Areas of Concern

- Ankeny's growing population and the nation's substance abuse epidemic raise **questions of whether available treatment programs are adequate** in number and format to serve our city's needs. Careful surveillance will be necessary to see if program expansions will be sufficient.
  - **Lack of transportation** is a significant problem for those in substance abuse recovery programs. Better low-cost options such as intra-city bus service are needed to help clients get to the care they need.
  - **More extensive transitional care and life skills training are needed** to support former substance abusers in their long-term quest to return to normal lives. Development of such programs should be pursued.
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# Senior Population

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## Findings

People ages 65 and over comprise 9.25% of Ankeny's population. This percentage is rising, and with it comes concern regarding availability of services for seniors.

The number of seniors living in poverty and in need of food assistance in Ankeny is growing. As people live longer, there is more potential for them to outlive their savings.

Senior living options are expanding in Ankeny, but costs for these specialized residential facilities are substantial. Many seniors do not want to leave their homes, while others need more care but cannot afford to move.

Services necessary for seniors include transportation programs, health care, supplemental food programs and social programs. State services such as long term care ombudsman programs are essential for the safety of seniors who cannot care for themselves. The Neveln Center houses many of the city's senior programs. Both of these programs are in jeopardy.

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## Areas of Concern

- Seniors with limited financial means need **access to affordable housing**. Particular attention should be given to those who remain at home while it is unsafe for them to be there.
  - **Services for seniors are at risk both on the state and local level.** The long term care ombudsman program is greatly underfunded, and the Neveln Center facility is crumbling. Advocacy for continued services and increased funding is desperately needed.
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# Public Safety

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## Findings

Ankeny is a safe city. Its fire and police departments are expanding, although not quite as quickly as the city grows.

The majority of police officers' time is spent on matters not relating to law enforcement. In particular, officers may spend up to 25% of their time dealing with mental health issues. Fire department staff members likewise indicate repeat calls relating to patients with mental illness. Caregivers for the mentally ill often call 9-1-1 for assistance when they don't know what else to do.

The Ankeny Fire Department encounters residents who live in unsafe housing or without adequate care. Advocates for these residents, who tend to be elderly and mentally ill, are needed.

Ambulances are only able to transport patients to the hospital. Not infrequently, medical care could be provided by a physician's office or urgent care clinic but the patient ends up in the emergency room due to lack of transportation to a more appropriate location.

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## Areas of Concern

- Frequent involvement of public safety officers with mentally ill residents is indicative of **gaps in services for the mentally ill**. Improved support services as well as better access to mental health care could decrease undue burden on our first responders.
  - Ambulance transport services could be decreased if Ankeny had more **reliable intra-city public transportation**. This would free our first responders for other activities and decrease costs.
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## Summary and Conclusion

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### Inter-relationships

None of the above aspects of a community are completely independent of each other, and each of the parts necessarily contributes to the whole. Further, a change in one aspect can and will affect other aspects of the community. In other words, everything is related. This is certainly the case when one views a community through the lens of poverty.

In this case, the reports in this study are written as stand-alone entities, but when read as a whole certain relationships emerge. The low wages paid by many of Ankeny's jobs have a direct impact on affordability of housing and the ability to provide one's own transportation. Substance abuse often leads to failure to obtain job skills (and therefore low wages) and loss of a driver's license (and therefore lack of transportation). Inadequate treatment of mental illness leads to unemployment (and poverty), inability to adequately care for oneself, and increased burdens on first responders. Many similar examples exist.

The common threads noted in this report are primarily affordable housing, mental illness and transportation. While each of these was a subject of its own report, each also appears as an area of concern in other reports. It would appear that efforts to address these three areas would have the greatest impact on Ankeny as a whole.

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### Conclusion

This assessment revealed many positive things about the city of Ankeny. The local government, school district, churches, nonprofit organizations and businesses have all made significant efforts to improve the lives of *all* of Ankeny's residents. These efforts are to be applauded. For the sake of brevity, most of the "good things" about Ankeny are not listed in this executive summary. However, these efforts are noted within the full reports and readers are encouraged to review the full reports in detail.

It has never been the intent of this report to point fingers or to make accusations. Rather, the intent of this report is to identify areas in which Ankeny residents have unmet needs, particularly as they relate to poverty. The hope is that by identifying these unmet needs, our community can rally itself to identify and solve their root causes and truly make Ankeny a community where all can succeed.

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# Ankeny Demographics and Family Economic Security

## Overview

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### Introduction

Ankeny is a rapidly-growing city. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, for each of the past six years Ankeny has added more residents to its population than any other Iowa community (“About Ankeny”). In 2016, the estimated total population of Ankeny was 58,000, more than double the 27,117 residents counted in the 2000 census (“About Ankeny”).

Ankeny residents are proud of their community, their schools, their business community, their civic organizations, their churches, their friendliness and their compassion. What people tend to not see or deny are those in the community who may be struggling. Small-group discussions at Our Lady’s Immaculate Heart Church revealed that many parishioners wondered whether Ankeny had poverty or what the face of poverty in Ankeny looked like.

To begin to answer questions about poverty, one must first understand a community’s composition. This report investigates Ankeny’s demographics, the economic security of its population, and the services available for persons with incomes less than 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines.

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### Methods

Statistical data for this report was obtained from the following:

- U.S. Census Bureau
- United Way of Iowa
- City of Ankeny
- Ankeny Community School District
- Iowa Department of Education

IMPACT Community Action Partnership’s 2016 Community Data Study for the Polk County was reviewed, and their new facilities in Ankeny were visited.

Interviews were conducted with:

- Anne Bacon, Executive Director of IMPACT
  - Shannon Bills, IMPACT Site Coordinator
  - Karen Norton from Ankeny Community Education
  - Linda Franklin from A Helping Hand
  - Karen Bush, Mary Kohlsdorf and Jennifer Riedemann from Love Lunches
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## Findings: Population

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### Population

A special census in 2015 reported Ankeny's population at 54,598 ("About Ankeny"). A year later, the 2016 population was estimated at 58,000 ("About Ankeny"). However, the last detailed information about Ankeny's population was released by the U.S. Census Bureau in 2014. At that time, the following population was reported (U.S. Census Bureau "ACS" 1):

- 49,488 total population
- 25,101 males
- 24,387 females

Distribution of Ankeny residents by age, reported in percentage and number, was as follows (U.S. Census Bureau "ACS" 1):

- 0 to 19 years - 28.9% (14,325)
- 20 to 44 years - 40.7% (20,147)
- 45 to 64 years - 21% (10,434)
- 65 years and over - 9.25% (4,582)

Ankeny is a very young community, with 69% of the 2014 population being under 45 years of age and a median age of 32.9 years old (U.S. Census Bureau "ACS" 1).

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### Families with Children

There were 11,193 students enrolled in the Ankeny Community School District in the 2016-2017 school year. To accommodate this number of students, the district maintains 10 elementary schools, 4 middle schools, and 2 high schools ("Projected Enrollment" 1).

The vast majority of families with children in Ankeny are two-income households. Data indicated in 2014 that in 73.6 % of the families in Ankeny with children under 6 years of age, both parents were in the workforce (U.S. Census Bureau "Selected" 1). This percentage rose to 80.4% in families with children 6 to 17 years of age (U.S. Census Bureau "Selected" 1).

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## Findings: Income

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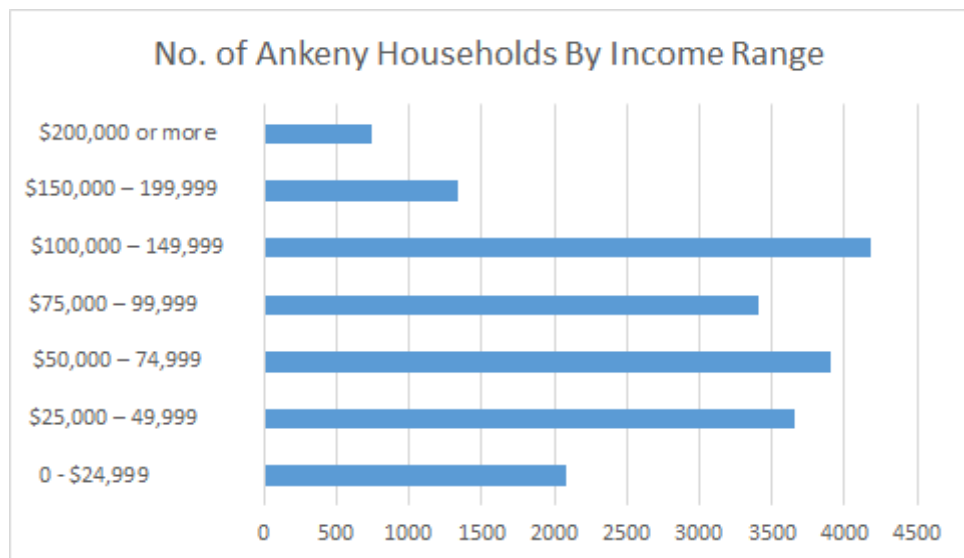
### Income

As of 2014, there were 19,324 households in Ankeny (U.S. Census Bureau “Selected” 2). Distribution of income is reported in Table 1 below.

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Table 1

### Income Distribution



(Ref: U.S. Census Bureau “Selected” 2)

The median household income was \$75,069.00, and the mean household income was \$85,268.00 (U.S. Census Bureau “Selected” 2).

As indicated above, the largest number of households made between \$100,000 and \$150,000 per year. However, household income varies significantly based on the composition of the household.

The 13,477 households comprised of families had a median family income of \$91,072 and a mean income of \$100,282 (U.S. Census Bureau “Selected” 3). In contrast, Ankeny’s 5,877 nonfamily households earned less than half as much, with a median income of \$39,501 and a mean household income of \$45,836 (U.S. Census Bureau “Selected” 3).

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### Social Security Beneficiaries

Census Bureau data reported the following information on retirees/Social Security recipients (U.S. Census Bureau “Selected” 2):

- A total of 3571 households received Social Security benefits.
  - Mean Social Security income was \$18,777.
  - Mean retirement income was \$23,191.
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## Findings: Poverty

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### Poverty

The following data report frequency of incomes in Ankeny below 100% of the U.S. poverty level (U.S. Census Bureau “Selected” 4):

- 3184 or 6.5% of residents (1743 females and 1441 males)
- 12.1% of families with a single female head of household
- 21.9% of households comprised of unrelated people ages 15 and older

Those living below 200% of the U.S. poverty guidelines are as follows (U.S. Census Bureau “Selected” 3):

- 7711 individuals or 15.8% of the population
- 2349 children

Overall, 5.9% of households received food stamps/SNAP benefits (U.S. Census Bureau “Selected” 3). As of the 2016-2017 school year, 15.39 % of school children received free or reduced lunch (Iowa Department of Education).

The Department of Health and Human Services Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG) are used to determine various types of assistance available for low income people. Table 2 reports the Federal Poverty Guidelines.

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## Findings: Poverty, *Continued*

**Table 2**                      **2017 Federal Poverty Guidelines**

Household Size	100%	133%	150%	200%	250%	300%	400%
1	\$12,060	\$16,040	\$18,090	\$24,120	\$30,015	\$36,180	\$48,240
2	16,240	21,599	24,360	32,480	40,600	48,720	64,960
3	20,420	27,159	30,630	40,840	51,050	61,260	81,680
4	24,600	32,718	36,900	49,200	61,500	73,800	98,400
5	28,780	38,277	43,170	57,560	71,950	86,340	115,120
6	32,960	43,837	49,440	65,920	82,400	98,880	131,840
7	37,140	49,396	55,710	74,280	92,850	111,420	148,560
8	41,320	54,956	61,980	82,640	103,300	123,960	165,280

(Ref: "Federal Poverty Guidelines")

### **Basic Family Budget**

As a way of understanding the cost of living in Iowa, a basic family budget is included in Table 3. The budget represents a very frugal living standard based on what is needed to “survive” rather than “thrive”.

This budget includes allowances for rent, utilities, food prepared at home, child care, health care, transportation, clothing, and other household necessities.

Note that child care costs are significant and may be more than reported in the basic budget. Ankeny daycare centers charge as much as \$297 per week for infants and \$226 per week for 4-year-olds (Steckelberg). This translates to \$1186 per month for an infant, and \$1004 per month for a 4-year-old. Subsidies for child care are very limited in scope.

Transportation is also a large component of the family budget. Assuming rent, child care and health care costs are fixed, transportation is the largest portion of the family budget that is variable. Families living on less than this survival budget would likely need to spend substantially less on transportation.

The basic budget does not include any unexpected costs such as car repair, nor does it include any savings, loan payments, or educational expenses. Entertainment or vacation, social or recreational travel, or meals outside the home would not be available.

*Continued on next page*

## Findings: Poverty, *Continued*

**Table 3 Basic Family Budget**

The Cost of Living in Iowa, 2016 Edition: Basic Family Budgets and Break-even Wages

### Polk County

	Single Individual	Single Parent		Married Couple, No Children		Two Working Parents		
		1 child	2 children	Young	Older	1 child	2 children	3 children
<b>Families without health insurance from employer</b>								
<u>Monthly expenses</u>								
Child care	\$0	\$597	\$710	\$0	\$0	\$597	\$933	\$355
Clothing & household expenses	205	271	335	271	271	332	413	483
Food	270	392	658	495	473	611	787	1,042
Health care	336	588	835	673	1,308	974	1,180	1,495
Rent and utilities	577	844	844	682	682	844	844	1,149
Transportation	504	566	566	832	832	883	883	883
Monthly total	\$1,892	\$3,259	\$3,949	\$2,953	\$3,567	\$4,241	\$5,041	\$5,407
<b>Annual Total Basic Expenses</b>	<b>\$22,702</b>	<b>\$39,111</b>	<b>\$47,383</b>	<b>\$35,436</b>	<b>\$42,801</b>	<b>\$50,888</b>	<b>\$60,488</b>	<b>\$64,879</b>
<u>Income and taxes in absence of public insurance</u>								
<b>Before-tax earnings needed</b>	<b>\$27,961</b>	<b>\$46,302</b>	<b>\$55,161</b>	<b>\$42,197</b>	<b>\$52,411</b>	<b>\$60,397</b>	<b>\$70,732</b>	<b>\$75,550</b>
Less: Income & payroll taxes	(5,259)	(7,371)	(7,778)	(6,761)	(9,610)	(9,509)	(10,244)	(10,671)
Plus: EITC & other credits	-	180	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net after-tax income	\$22,702	\$39,111	\$47,383	\$35,436	\$42,801	\$50,888	\$60,488	\$64,879
<b>Family supporting hourly wage</b>	<b>\$13.44</b>	<b>\$22.26</b>	<b>\$26.52</b>	<b>\$10.14</b>	<b>\$12.60</b>	<b>\$14.52</b>	<b>\$17.00</b>	<b>\$18.16</b>
<u>Income and taxes with public health insurance</u>								
<b>Before-tax earnings needed</b>	<b>\$26,353</b>	<b>\$43,067</b>	<b>\$47,684</b>	<b>\$37,705</b>	<b>\$40,972</b>	<b>\$54,607</b>	<b>\$62,694</b>	<b>\$59,961</b>
Less: Income & payroll taxes	(4,842)	(6,454)	(5,656)	(5,581)	(6,421)	(8,014)	(8,095)	(6,757)
Plus: EITC & other credits	-	240	360	-	-	-	-	418
Plus: Medicaid, Hawk-I and ACA	1,191	2,258	4,995	3,312	8,250	4,295	5,889	11,256
Net resources	\$22,702	\$39,111	\$47,383	\$35,436	\$42,801	\$50,888	\$60,488	\$64,879
<b>Family supporting hourly wage</b>	<b>\$12.67</b>	<b>\$20.71</b>	<b>\$22.93</b>	<b>\$9.06</b>	<b>\$9.85</b>	<b>\$13.13</b>	<b>\$15.07</b>	<b>\$14.41</b>
<b>Families with health insurance from employer</b>								
Monthly health care savings	\$192	\$328	\$417	\$402	\$956	\$538	\$718	\$992
<b>Annual Total Basic Expenses</b>	<b>\$20,402</b>	<b>\$35,180</b>	<b>\$42,383</b>	<b>\$30,619</b>	<b>\$31,335</b>	<b>\$44,440</b>	<b>\$51,876</b>	<b>\$52,977</b>
Before-tax earnings needed	\$24,781	\$40,731	\$47,671	\$35,663	\$36,595	\$51,548	\$58,957	\$59,082
<b>Family supporting hourly wage</b>	<b>\$11.91</b>	<b>\$19.58</b>	<b>\$22.92</b>	<b>\$8.57</b>	<b>\$8.80</b>	<b>\$12.39</b>	<b>\$14.17</b>	<b>\$14.20</b>

*The single individual and the young childless couple are age 25; the older childless couple are age 52. Parents are age 30, 35, or 40, with older parents having older children. When there is 1 child in the family, the age is 2-3. For the married couples with 2 children, one is age 4, the other age 6-11. For the single parent with two children, both are age 6-11. For the married couple with 3 children, 1 is age 6-11, the other 2 age 12-18.*

(Ref: "The Cost of Living")

*Continued on next page*

## Findings: Poverty, *Continued*

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### United Way of Iowa Data

United Way of Iowa recently published their ALICE Report, its study of financial hardship. “ALICE is an acronym to represent all those in our community who are Asset Limited, Income Constrained, and Employed. ALICE is not an individual but a conceptual blending of all those in our community who bring home a paycheck that doesn’t stretch to cover a household’s needs (*ALICE iii*).”

Rather than defining poverty purely by income, the “ALICE threshold” considers the local costs of housing, child care, transportation, food and health care to develop a subsistence family budget for Iowans (*ALICE 7*).

With these considerations, households may need to earn 150-200% of the Federal Poverty Level to maintain financial stability (*ALICE 7*). While federal poverty lines indicate that 12% of households are struggling, the ALICE report finds that 31% of the state’s households have difficulty meeting their needs (*ALICE 1*). Polk County’s ALICE threshold is slightly lower than the state’s, at 29% of households (*ALICE 1, 5*).

The reason there are so many ALICE households in Iowa are as follows (*ALICE 1*):

- The economy is dominated by low wage jobs.
  - The basic cost of living is higher than average wages.
  - There is a geographic disconnection between jobs and affordable housing.
- 

### Wages

Ankeny has a large amount of retail workers and 10.5% of the region’s low-wage jobs (*Busted*). (See Affordable Housing report for further details.) An increase in the minimum wage would increase the stability of a significant number of households within the city.

In October 2016, the Polk County Supervisors approved a graduated increase in the minimum wage to \$10.75/hour or \$22,360 per year (Ta “Ankeny Opts Out”). This wage increase was eventually denied by the Iowa State Legislature, but prior to that event, in March 2017, the Ankeny City Council suspended its rules for the required number of readings in order to vote 4-1 to opt out of the minimum wage increase prior to the April 1 deadline (Ta “Ankeny Opts Out”).

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## Findings: Free and Reduced Lunch

### Definitions

Children qualify for free school lunch if their family income is at 130% or less of FPG.

#### Free Lunch

For a family of four the family income would need to be \$31,980 annually (\$15.38/hour) or less to qualify for free lunch.

#### Reduced Price Lunch

Reduced price school lunch is provided for a family of four if the family income is at 185% or less, which is \$45,510 annually (\$21.88/hour).

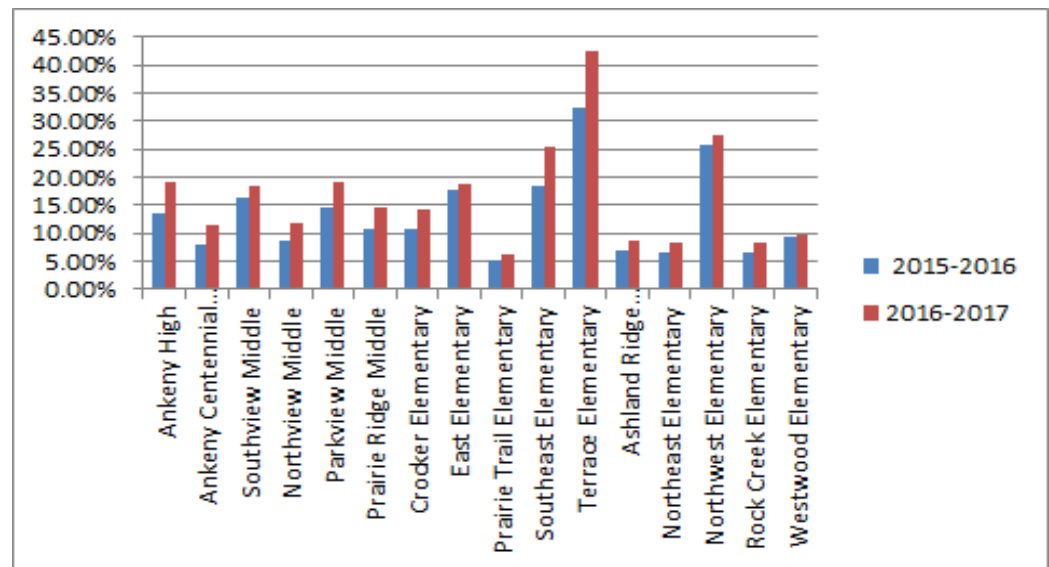
Most financial assistance is no longer available once the family income reaches 200% of guidelines. For a family of four, 200% of guidelines is a family income of \$49,200 or an hourly wage of \$23.65.

### In Ankeny

A comparison of the percentage of students eligible for free and reduced lunch in Ankeny during the academic school years of 2015- 2016 vs. 2016-2017 is listed in Table 4.

Table 4

### Percentage of Students Eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch



(Ref: Iowa Department of Education)

*Continued on next page*

## Findings: Free and Reduced Lunch, *Continued*

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**Recent Changes** Every school in the district noted an increase in recipients of free or reduced lunch over the last year.

The two high schools, Ankeny and Ankeny Centennial, experienced increases of over 40%, while six other schools saw rates increase by over 30% (Iowa Department of Education).

It appears that as Ankeny increases in size, so does the percentage of low income families. To add evidence to this supposition, the Ankeny Register & Press Citizen recently reported that students' school lunch debt has increased from \$5,000 to over \$43,000 in the past four years (Ta "Ankeny School Lunch Debt" 1). School nutrition director Scott Litchfield also reported that "There are a lot of people that are right on that borderline that don't qualify for free or reduced (lunch) (Ta "Ankeny School Lunch Debt" 4)."

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## Findings: Services Available for Households in Need

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### IMPACT

#### Impact Community Action Partnership

IMPACT serves five counties in central Iowa – Marion, Warren, Jasper, Boone and Polk. In Ankeny, IMPACT is located at 2701 SE Convenience Blvd, Suite 2. It provides programs to eliminate poverty through empowering vulnerable populations, building collaborations, and advocating for social change (Bacon and Bills).

IMPACT sponsors these programs (Bacon and Bills):

- **Low income home energy assistance** - This program provides protection from heating disconnection and repair or replacement of non-functioning furnaces. It also provides fans, some window air conditioners, and some funds for repair of central air and low-cost weatherization. This program is based on eligibility and funding.
- **Food pantry** - The food pantry assists families with a variety of nutritious food items. They also have some emergency food supplies.
- **Financial education classes** - These are designed to build financial literacy for individuals and families.
- **Rays** - This program gives some assistance towards registration fees for youth recreation activities.

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### Love Lunches

Love Lunches is a feeding program that provides free, nutritious lunches for Ankeny children during the summer. It is provided by a coalition of Ankeny area churches. The program has operated for at least five years and now serves meals at Sunset Park and Ankeny Presbyterian Church (Bush et al.).

Funding and food are provided by the sponsoring churches, private individuals and local businesses. Over 100 volunteers take care of shopping, meal preparation and serving, and activities (Bush et al.).

#### Sunset Park

This site provides a hot meal three days a week, followed by a short activity time and a snack. So far in the summer of 2017, this site is serving an average of 35 children and 10 adults per day (Bush et al.).

#### Ankeny Presbyterian Church

This site provides sack lunches Monday through Thursday and grilled sandwiches on Fridays. The daily average is 26 children and 7 adults (Bush et al.).

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*Continued on next page*

## Findings: Services Available for Households in Need, *Continued*

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**A Helping Hand** In August of 2016, Ankeny volunteers led by Linda Franklin and Desiray Walker formed a Facebook group called “A Helping Hand.” The group’s purpose is to help feed the hungry in Ankeny through small food pantries.

Called blessing boxes, the pantries are located in curbside pink and lime green boxes similar to Little Free Library boxes. They are stocked with food and supplies. The hope is that those who are hungry can help themselves to what they need, and those who can help will provide supplies for the boxes.

There are currently six blessing boxes in Ankeny, with plans to expand to 13 boxes (Franklin). The Facebook group’s 500-plus members use Facebook postings to identify boxes that need to be stocked. Group members can then restock the boxes. Individuals, community organizations, churches and school groups participate in the stocking process (Franklin).

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### **Other Food Sources**

#### **The Cupboard**

This resource is located at 520 NW 36<sup>th</sup> St. and is an emergency food pantry serving anyone in need of assistance. The Cupboard is operated by the Lutheran Church of Hope in Ankeny and is open on Tuesdays from 9:00 AM to 7:30 PM.

#### **Holy Trinity Church**

The church operates a food pantry which is open on Tuesdays from 12:00 to 6:00 PM at 517 SW Des Moines Street in Ankeny.

#### **Ankeny Backpack Program**

This program provides supplemental food for school-aged children during the school year. See the Ankeny Community School District report for further details.

#### **DMARC Food Pantries**

A number of food pantries are located throughout the metro area.

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## **Findings: Services Available for Households in Need,**

*Continued*

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**Neveln Center**      The Neveln Center houses several groups that provide assistance to residents who qualify (Norton):

**Head Start/Early Head Start**

This is a preschool program designed to promote the school readiness of children ages birth to five from low-income families by enhancing their cognitive and social/emotional competence.

**Ankeny Service Center (ASC)**

ASC is an umbrella office that provides human services and referrals for the residents of Ankeny and northern Polk County. Areas of emphasis are coordination of services, youth, families and seniors.

**The Ankeny Klothing Exchange (TAKE)**

TAKE is free clothing closet that serves northern Polk County.

**Ankeny Senior Citizen Center/Polk County Congregate Meal Site**

The senior center provides a free daily noon meal Monday through Friday and also sponsors wellness, exercise and social programing.

**Fresh Start**

This is a student assistance program that provides greater Ankeny area youth with school supplies, dental and health checks, haircuts and prom dresses.

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## Areas of Concern

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### Poverty in Ankeny

Nearly 16% of Ankeny's population subsists on income below 200% of the poverty level. This is significant, particularly considering that data indicate that a family of four needs to earn 237% of the FPG in order to meet its basic needs (*Community Data Study 2016 2*).

Poverty disproportionately affects nontraditional households:

- Single female-led households have nearly twice the rate of poverty as traditional families.
- Households with unrelated members have more than three times the poverty rate as traditional families.

Services for low income and single parent or unrelated households should be a priority within the city of Ankeny.

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### Wages

Clearly, the income of a significant portion of our city's residents is inadequate to meet their needs. The creation of more retail and service jobs likely contributes to poverty rates since these jobs pay less than break-even wages.

Failure of federal, state and local governments to increase the minimum wage relegates an increasing number of working families to "working poor" status.

Without an increase in wages, continued growth along the same trajectory will increase needs for supplemental services for low-income households.

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### Hunger

The number of children who are eligible for free and reduced lunch is increasing.

Increasing demand for programs such as Backpack Buddies, Love Lunches and A Helping Hand all demonstrate the added need for food assistance that the community is seeing.

While the community is doing a great job of providing supplemental food to residents, the reasons for increasing hunger need to be assessed and addressed.

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# Affordable Housing

## Overview

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### Introduction

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development defines housing as affordable if the monthly payment (mortgage or rent) is less than 30% of a household's monthly gross income.

For example, if the household's monthly income is \$5,000, the monthly housing payment should be less than \$1,500 for it to be considered affordable ( $\$5,000 \times .30 = \$1,500$ ). If a household is spending more than 30% of its monthly income on housing, the household is living in an unaffordable unit.

If families are living in unaffordable housing, they will struggle to maintain financial stability. The ability to pay for food, health care and transportation may be affected. Lack of affordable housing impacts the composition of the entire community. Therefore, it is important to evaluate the availability of affordable housing.

This report defines how much it costs to live in Ankeny. It also evaluates whether Ankeny has enough affordable housing units to meet the needs of those who live and work in Ankeny.

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### Methods

Statistical data was gathered from several internet sources including, but not limited to:

- U.S. Census Bureau
- U.S. Department of House and Urban Development (HUD)
- Iowa Department of Workforce Development
- Bureau of Labor Statistics
- American Planning Association of the U.S.
- U.S. Government Accountability Office

Personal interviews were conducted with Eric Burmeister (Executive Director) and Josh Hellyer from the Polk County Housing Trust Fund.

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## Findings: Housing

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### Housing Statistics

As of 2014:

- There were 19,324 households in Ankeny (U.S. Census Bureau “Selected” 2).
- The median household annual income was \$75,069 (U.S. Census Bureau “Selected” 2).
- The median value of Ankeny’s owner-occupied housing units was \$175,700 (“QuickFacts”).

A report issued by the Commercial Appraisers of Iowa indicates that in 2016, the average monthly rent in Ankeny was as follows (4):

- efficiency apartment: \$535
  - one bedroom apartment: \$767
  - two bedroom apartment: \$897
  - three bedroom apartment: \$1,255
- 

### Lack of Affordable Housing

Ankeny has 10.5% of the region’s low wage jobs, but only 4.7% of its low-wage renter workers (*Busted*). The average monthly income for an Ankeny worker is \$2,897, which affords \$848/month in rent (Hellyer 7). Minimum wage workers can afford only \$348/month in rent.

The Polk County Housing Trust Fund indicates that Ankeny needs (*Busted*):

- an additional 1,260 units for low income city residents who currently live in Ankeny and are rent burdened
  - an additional 1,217 units for low-wage workers who are living outside the city but working in Ankeny
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## Findings: Wages and Jobs

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### Wages

The federal minimum wage is \$7.25 per hour, which is \$1,160 a month or approximately \$15,000 per year.

This level of income is approximately 125% of the poverty level for a single person household (“Federal Poverty Guidelines”).

As of 2014, Ankeny had (“Work Area Profile Report”):

- 7,371 jobs paying less than \$15,000 per year
  - 5,504 of these were primary jobs (the primary source of income for the worker, not a second job).
- 6,548 jobs paying between \$15,000 and \$40,000 per year
  - All but 211 of those were listed as primary jobs.

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### Jobs

The U.S. Census Bureau reports that 21% of Ankeny jobs are in “retail trade” (“Means of Transportation” 2).

Only half of these workers make \$10.68 or more per hour, which is just over \$22,000 per year (Hardy 9).

Single people working in any of the following jobs make less than 80% of the area median income (*Busted*):

hairdresser	<b>customer service rep</b>	loan officer
<b>receptionist</b>	welder	<b>janitor</b>
firefighter	housekeeper	nurse (LPN)
dental assistant	security guard	assembly line worker
bank teller	<b>truck driver</b>	<b>waiter</b>
paramedic	<b>home health aide</b>	<b>cashier</b>

Many low-wage jobs are among those predicted to have the fastest growth rates for the next decade in Central Iowa. Examples of these jobs are presented in bold type above (Polk County Housing Trust).

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## Findings: Community Development

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### **Community Development Block Grants**

Cities with a population over 50,000 are eligible for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Entitlement Program administered by the Iowa Economic Development Authority.

The CDBG program provides annual grants to cities and counties for a wide range of community development activities directed toward revitalizing neighborhoods, economic development and providing improved community facilities and services.

Grantees must give maximum priority to activities which benefit low and moderate income persons. Grants could be used for such projects as affordable housing, sidewalk repair, street lights, or improvements to community centers that provide services to moderate and low income persons (“Community Development Block Grants”).

Participating in the CDBG program requires extensive reporting by the city on how much affordable housing is available, the demographics of the city, diversity of the city, etc.

In September 2014, the Ankeny City Council unanimously voted to defer its entitlement to the CDBG program (Minutes).

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## Areas of Concern

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### **Inadequate Affordable Housing**

A significant portion of Ankeny's work force must live outside the city because they cannot afford to live here. The income of an average Ankeny worker allows him/her to afford only an efficiency or one bedroom apartment within the city limits; minimum wage workers are priced out of Ankeny's housing market entirely. Further, more than a quarter of those who *do* live in Ankeny can't afford to live here.

One way to assist with funding construction for low income housing is the federal Community Development Block Grant Program. The City of Ankeny has declined to participate in this program; however, this is a definite source of revenue that could be used at the city's discretion to improve housing availability.

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### **Impact on Economic Development**

Businesses that may be attracted to Ankeny need housing for their employees. Without housing that their employees can afford, they will have trouble hiring an adequate work force.

According to the Polk County Housing Trust Fund, seven of 10 of the fastest-growing jobs for the next ten years will pay below the median income (11). Ankeny will have difficulty sustaining its growth if the gap between wages earned and available affordable housing continues.

Studies indicate that attracting 1,217 additional low-income households to Ankeny would add up to \$27,823,054 in annual spending to the city's economy (*Busted*).

---

### **Impact on the Ankeny Community School District**

Ankeny is extremely proud of its education system. It is touted as one of the best in the state for large schools and is the reason many people choose to live in Ankeny. However, lack of affordable housing can impact the ability of families to take advantage of educational opportunities in Ankeny.

At Ankeny schools, staff members report seeing families move to Ankeny and enroll students, only to move out of the city a few months later because they are unable to find affordable housing.

This can have long-term adverse effects on children. According to educational studies, children who move four times by the 8th grade are four times more likely to drop out of school (U.S. Government Accountability Office). Every move can cost a student half a year of progress (Temple and Reynolds). If the trend for multiple moves continues, Ankeny schools could be inundated with more students facing greater educational challenges.

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# Public Transportation

## Overview

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### Introduction

When public transportation is discussed, it is most often through the lens of high-density, largely-populated cities. Suburbs like Ankeny are often described as “car” dependent, and public transportation, if available at all, is often underused or nonexistent.

Ankeny’s population is growing at a rapid rate and is sprawling in all four directions, with the majority of people living in single-family detached homes. With the city’s growth, there is a growing population of residents that would benefit from public transportation, particularly low-income, disabled, youth and senior inhabitants.

This report addresses the current availability of public and private transportation for Ankeny residents and considers what transportation needs have yet to be met.

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### Methods

Numerous methods were used to evaluate and understand the role of public and private transportation within the city of Ankeny.

Interviews were conducted with the following:

- Amanda Wanke and Carl Saxon, DART
- Becky McKim, Ankeny Service Center
- Maureen Schaeffer, Polk County Senior Services
- Gary Lorenz, mayor of Ankeny

Data from the following were reviewed:

- Ankeny Service Center volunteer driving program
- DART passenger activity reports

Information was gathered from the websites of these organizations:

- DART
- city of Ankeny
- Polk County Network of Care
- Ankeny Economic Development Corporation
- private transportation services

Articles from the Des Moines Register were also used for information on tax levies and funding for DART.

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## Findings: DART Services

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**DART Services** The Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority (DART) is the provider of public transportation for the Des Moines region and connects Ankeny directly with downtown Des Moines. DART is the major provider of public transportation for Ankeny residents and non-residents, including Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) students.

DART's primary service is to provide two-way transit between Ankeny and downtown Des Moines. Intra-city transportation in Ankeny is also provided by DART on a limited basis.

DART has recently added new features to enhance the public transportation experience. The Ride Time smartphone application allows riders to know when their bus will be at their stop, thus decreasing waiting times. Wi-Fi is also now available on buses.

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**Forward 2035 Plan** In 2011, DART adopted a long-term development plan called Forward 2035. This plan intends to address the sustainability and governance of DART and as well as the needs of riders for the fast-paced growth of Des Moines and its surrounding communities.

Implementation of Forward 2035 began in 2012 and was updated in 2015.

Forward 2035 includes three potential expansion plans for DART services in the next 20 years. All three levels of service enhancement listed in the Forward 2035 plan would expand services in Ankeny by adding the following (*Moving* 13,15,17):

- a new route to travel between First Street, Delaware Avenue, Oralabor Road and South Ankeny Boulevard
- an additional express route for commuters from Mercy North in Ankeny to downtown, with emphasis on morning and late afternoon commuters
- weekend services on the DMACC-Des Moines route

The plan also includes potential for adding two car and bike-sharing hubs at Delaware Ave./Oralabor Rd., and First St./Ankeny Blvd (*Moving* 15).

The extent of service expansion would vary based on the amount of service enhancement chosen (minimal, moderate or expanded) and the amount of additional funding that Ankeny is willing and able to provide.

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*Continued on next page*

## Findings: DART Services, *Continued*

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### **Forward 2035 Survey, *continued***

The updated Forward 2035 plan included a survey of non-riders in Ankeny, of whom (*Des Moines Area Rapid Transit* 63, 68, 83, 84, 87):

- 95% agreed that public transportation is important
- 80% believed it vital to a thriving community
- 83% believed funding of transportation is important
- 70.5% thought that the level of funding should be somewhat to much greater than it is now
- 29% said they would be willing to pay up to \$80 more per year to expand regional public transportation

Opinions on how to increase funding were mixed, with (*Des Moines Area Rapid Transit* 88):

- 38% believing increased funding should come from vehicle registration fees
  - 17% preferring the increase come from property tax increases
- 

### **Funding for Services**

DART's current financing comes from (Ta):

- 53% property taxes
- 17% state and federal funding (through the Federal Transit Administration)
- 26% bus fares

Currently, Ankeny residents pay just over 1.7 million dollars per year to help fund DART. These funds come from a property tax levy on homeowners of 64 cents/\$1000 assessed value (Fitzgerald 2). For Ankeny homeowners, this translates to \$64/year for every \$100,000 of taxable home value.

With a ridership of less than 1% of the population, Ankeny Mayor Gary Lorenz expressed hesitation at expanding DART services within the city at this time because of the increase in property taxes necessary to do so (Lorenz).

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*Continued on next page*

## Findings: DART Services, *Continued*

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### **Express Route 98 for Ankeny**

Express Route 98 runs on Monday through Friday between three Park & Ride locations in Ankeny and a loop in downtown Des Moines (“DART Express Route 98”). The three lots in Ankeny for Park & Ride are DMACC Lot L, Hawkeye Park and Mercy North.

Buses run on intervals from 20 minutes to 70 minutes throughout the day, with more frequent buses during the morning and evening “rush hour” periods (“DART Express Route 98”). Transfer connections to other metro routes are available through a stop at the DART Central Station.

Forward 2035 changes have made travel for Ankeny residents easier and more efficient:

- Route 98 now runs more frequently during peak hours and also during the middle of the day.
- Ankeny commuters connecting to other routes have seen their travel time decreased.

A one-way standard fare for express routes is \$2.00 with free local transfers (“DART Bus Fares”).

The route map and schedule for Express Route 98 is at the end of this report.

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### **Ankeny Riders**

Reasons for ridership on Route 98 may differ between sites of origin. The majority of riders boarding in Ankeny are described as “choice” riders (Lorenz).

Choice riders have the option to drive or ride in private transportation, but choose to use the DART system. Many of them are workers whose employers use DART’s Unlimited Access program, which allows companies to provide their employees with free or reduced cost services.

In contrast, many of the passengers coming from Des Moines to Ankeny are “need” riders (Lorenz). They most likely live in Des Moines and have no other form of transportation to get to work and/or school.

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### **Ankeny Ridership Statistics**

Passenger Activity Reports indicate the following average peak morning ridership (*DART Passenger*):

- 89 people are picked up at Mercy North
  - 26 are picked up at Hawkeye Park
  - 8 are picked up at DMACC lot L
- 

*Continued on next page*

## Findings: DART Services, *Continued*

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**DART On Call** DART On Call operates within the city of Ankeny. Two types of services are provided, On Call Service and specialized transportation to the Congregate Meal Site.

DART On Call Service (“Ankeny On Call”):

- Riders request service by calling Dart On Call up to 7 days in advance.
- The shuttle will pick up riders close to home or workplace and drop them off by a transit stop or destination within the service area.
- A one-way fare is \$1.75 (“DART Bus Fares”).

DART On Call hours of operation (“Ankeny On Call”):

- Tuesdays from 9:00am-1:30pm
- Wednesdays from 9:00am-3:00pm
- Fridays from 9:00am-3:00pm

On Call also provides free transportation to the Congregate Meal Services at the Ankeny Senior Citizen Center (“Ankeny On Call”). Approximately 10-15 seniors use this service daily with additional numbers in the winter (Schaeffer).

Pick-up for congregate meal transportation begins at 9:30am and return begins at 12:30pm with first on, first off service (Schaeffer). Lunch is served at 11:30am, and some riders find the extended length of time on the bus and early departures to be problematic (Schaeffer).

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### **Paratransit**

Paratransit provides specific services for riders meeting the following qualifications (“Paratransit/DART”):

- senior citizen or disabled low-income age 18 and older
- Polk County resident
- unable to independently use the regular DART bus services

This service is door-to-door, wheelchair accessible, and free for those meeting eligibility requirements. Eligibility can be temporary or permanent, and applications for services can be made through Polk County or DART Paratransit.

The DART Bus Plus Eligibility program allows those who are disabled but ineligible for agency-funded transportation to apply for rides at regular rates.

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*Continued on next page*

## Findings: Other Transportation

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### **Ankeny Service Center Volunteer Driver Program**

In the past, the Ankeny Service Center had a transportation program. Volunteer drivers provided free transportation for senior citizens to and from doctor's appointments throughout the greater Des Moines area.

Services began when the Ankeny Service Center was under the leadership of the United Way. Drivers were part of the United Way's Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) and well-known within the United Way community. The volunteers were able to get extra insurance through United Way. However, as the drivers aged out of the program and the Service Center separated from the United Way, the program activity declined and was eventually suspended (McKim).

Reports obtained by the Ankeny Service Center indicated (*Volunteer Driver Data*):

- During the fiscal year 2010-2011, 177 clients were served by the volunteer driver program.
- In the fiscal years from 2011-2014, an average of 22 drivers per year transported on average 37 clients per year.
- By 2014-2015, the program was shutting down and 8 drivers served 8 clients.

During fiscal year 2016-2017, the Ankeny Service Center Board of Directors has been working with United Way RSVP to get the program back up and running (Peterson).

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### **Private Transportation Services**

Private transportation services are available in Ankeny and serve the needs of young families, senior citizens and those with disabilities. New services are becoming available as Ankeny's population grows. However, such services are costly.

**Kids Zoom** (*Kids Zoom Transportation*): This family-owned business provides transportation for children ages 3-16 within Ankeny and surrounding areas. Transportation is offered Monday through Friday with weekends by request. Cost varies and is established by several factors including time, location, availability and the number of riders.

**Legs on Lease** ("Mental Health and Disability Services"): This is a concierge-type service in Ankeny and surrounding communities that helps with many needs, including transportation to doctor's appointments, errands and shopping. It runs 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Cost \$35 per hour.

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*Continued on next page*



## Findings: Other Transportation, *Continued*

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### **Private Transportation Services, *continued***

**Joy Ride** (*Joy Ride Transport*): This company provides non-emergency transportation for wheelchair-bound and special needs elderly and disabled clients in Central Iowa. They have flexible transportation hours and will work in tandem with families, health care providers, social workers, hospitals etc. Services include transportation to appointments as well as social outings. Medicaid is accepted.

**Uber** (*Uber Fare Estimator*): This taxi-like service uses a smartphone application to order a driver to a specified location. Patrons can track arrival and view the driver's photo and vehicle. Some vehicles have accessibility for wheelchairs and/or car seats.

**Lyft** (*Lyft Fare Estimator*): This is another taxi-like service that matches passengers requesting rides with drivers through Lyft's smartphone application. Passengers pay through the application.

**Freedom Taxi** (*Freedom Taxi Cab*): This taxi service has been in operation since 2000. It offers cab service to and around the Des Moines area.

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## Areas of Concern

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### **Limitations of Services Provided**

The city of Ankeny's population is expected to continue to grow, and with it the city boundaries will further expand. There will be increasing needs for greater public transportation as the senior population, youth and low income sectors increase. Ankeny has a lack of consistent intra-city public transportation, which limits socioeconomic diversity within the city of Ankeny and is detrimental to an ever-needed expansion of the work force as the economy of Ankeny grows.

Although DART service has been expanded to allow greater frequency during weekdays, later evening and weekend service is nonexistent at this time. This makes it difficult for employees needing public transportation to get to their place of work if they do not work standard weekday business hours.

DART has proposed a new intra-city route as part of its Forward 2035 plan. However, this route would leave out the growing commercial area in and around Prairie Trail, new medical areas on North Ankeny Boulevard, and the potential commercial growth in the northwest and northeast areas of the city.

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### **Funding Concerns**

Adding any additional services from DART at this point would mean an increase in the property tax levy (Lorenz). With a low percentage of residents using the system and other cities withdrawing funding from DART, it may be difficult to achieve increased funding from Ankeny residents.

Mayor Lorenz has suggested that additional intra-city transportation services could first be developed in tandem with faith-based groups, whereby a trial service throughout Ankeny could be provided. If the demand for such a service is great enough to justify the cost, then the city and the service providers could coordinate with DART to implement new services more fully.

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# DART Ankeny Express 98 Schedule

## Fares

### Local Routes

Adult .....	\$ 1.75
Half-Fare* .....	\$ .75
Children 6 – 10 .....	\$ .75
Children 5 and under .....	FREE
<i>(Must be accompanied by an adult)</i>	

### Express Routes

Cash .....	\$ 2.00
Half-Fare* .....	\$ .75

### Transfers

*Request when boarding. Valid two hours after issued.*

Local to Local .....	FREE
Local to Express .....	\$ .25
Local to Flex/On Call .....	\$ 1.75
Express to Flex/On Call .....	\$ 1.50
Half-Fare* .....	FREE

### Tokens

*Tokens must be purchased in packages of 10.*

Full Fare .....	10/\$ 17.50
Half-Fare (Reduced Fare ID*) .....	10/\$ 7.50

### Passes

Weekly (Local) .....	\$ 16.00
Half-Fare Weekly* ^ .....	\$ 7.00
<i>(Local, Express &amp; Flex/On Call)</i>	
Monthly (Local) .....	\$ 48.00
Half-Fare Monthly* ^ .....	\$ 24.00
<i>(Local, Express &amp; Flex/On Call)</i>	
Monthly Express Plus .....	\$ 58.00
<i>(Local, Express &amp; Flex/On Call)</i>	

### Flex/On Call Service

Cash .....	\$ 3.50
Half-Fare* .....	\$ .75

### Zone Fares

Downtown Loop (Cash only, No transfers issued) .... \$ .75  
Applies to all routes going through downtown. You must begin and end your ride within the zone. Boundaries are: South of I-235 to Cherry/Court Ave. (including DART Central Station), East of W. 15th St. to E. 14th St.

### Please Remember

DART requires exact fares and all special IDs upon boarding.  
All DART locations are smokefree pursuant to the Iowa Smokefree Air Act.  
Transfer times are not guaranteed.

### CUSTOMER SERVICE ..... 515-283-8100

\* Applies to elderly (65+), persons with disabilities, Medicare card holders and veterans with a Service Connected ID.

^ Applies to middle and high school students with current school year ID. Student discount not valid with cash or tokens and valid only on Local, Express and Flex Routes.

May be asked for additional identification to validate use/sale of half-fares or passes. Additional forms of identification include a driver's license, Veterans Service Connected ID, or a photo ID presented with a Medicare Card, SSI Disability Card, and DART Half-Fare/Reduced Fare ID.

**Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority**  
620 Cherry Street, Des Moines, Iowa 50309  
515-283-8100 ► [ridedart.com](http://ridedart.com)

## Pass Sales Outlets

### Price Chopper

3425 Ingersoll Ave.: Rt. 11, 60  
1819 Beaver Ave.: Rt. 5  
4343 Merle Hay Rd.: Rt. 14, 91  
5440 NW 86th St., Johnston: Rt. 93

### Cash Saver

4121 Fleur Dr.: Rt. 8  
1320 E. Euclid Ave.: Rt. 4

### DART Administrative Offices

620 Cherry St.: All Local Routes

### E-Z Money Check Cashing

2910 E. University Ave.: Rt. 1  
1238 E. 14th St.: Rt. 4, 17  
904 Army Post Rd.: Rt. 7

### Hy-Vee Drugstore

42nd & University Ave.: Rt. 3, 60

### Hy-Vee Food Stores

3330 Martin Luther King Jr. Pkwy.: Rt. 16  
2540 E. Euclid Ave.: Rt. 17  
3221 SE 14th St.: Rt. 6  
4707 Fleur Dr.: Rt. 8  
1107 E. Army Post Rd.: Rt. 6, 7  
8601 Douglas Ave., Urbandale: Rt. 93, 73  
1700 Valley West Dr., West Des Moines:  
Rt. 3, 52, 72, 94  
1990 Grand Ave., West Des Moines: Rt. 96  
555 S. 51st St., West Des Moines: Rt. 52, 96  
1725 Jordan Creek Pkwy., West Des Moines\*:  
Rt. 52, 94, 95, 72  
7101 University Ave., Windsor Heights: Rt. 3  
100 8th St. SW, Altoona: Rt. 99  
4815 Maple Dr., Pleasant Hill\*: Rt. 1  
410 N. Ankeny Blvd., Ankeny: Rt. 98  
2510 SW State St., Ankeny: Rt. 98

### Walmart

1002 SE National Dr., Ankeny\*: Rt. 98  
1001 73rd St., Windsor Heights\*: Rt. 3

Routes are listed next to the Pass Sales Outlet locations they service. Next nearest route(s) are also listed.

\* Locations where tokens are not available.

^ Only Express Plus passes.

+ Passes only for Monthly, Half-Fare Monthly, and Monthly Express Plus (no tokens or weekly).

## EXPRESS

EFFECTIVE 6/5/16

## Ankeny

# 98

Service Monday – Friday

No holiday service

BUSES WILL RUN SATURDAY SERVICE  
THE DAY AFTER THANKSGIVING.

### Route Destinations ▼

- Ankeny ▼
- DMACC Ankeny Campus ▼
- Downtown ▼
- DMACC Urban Campus ▼



Ride for a Reason

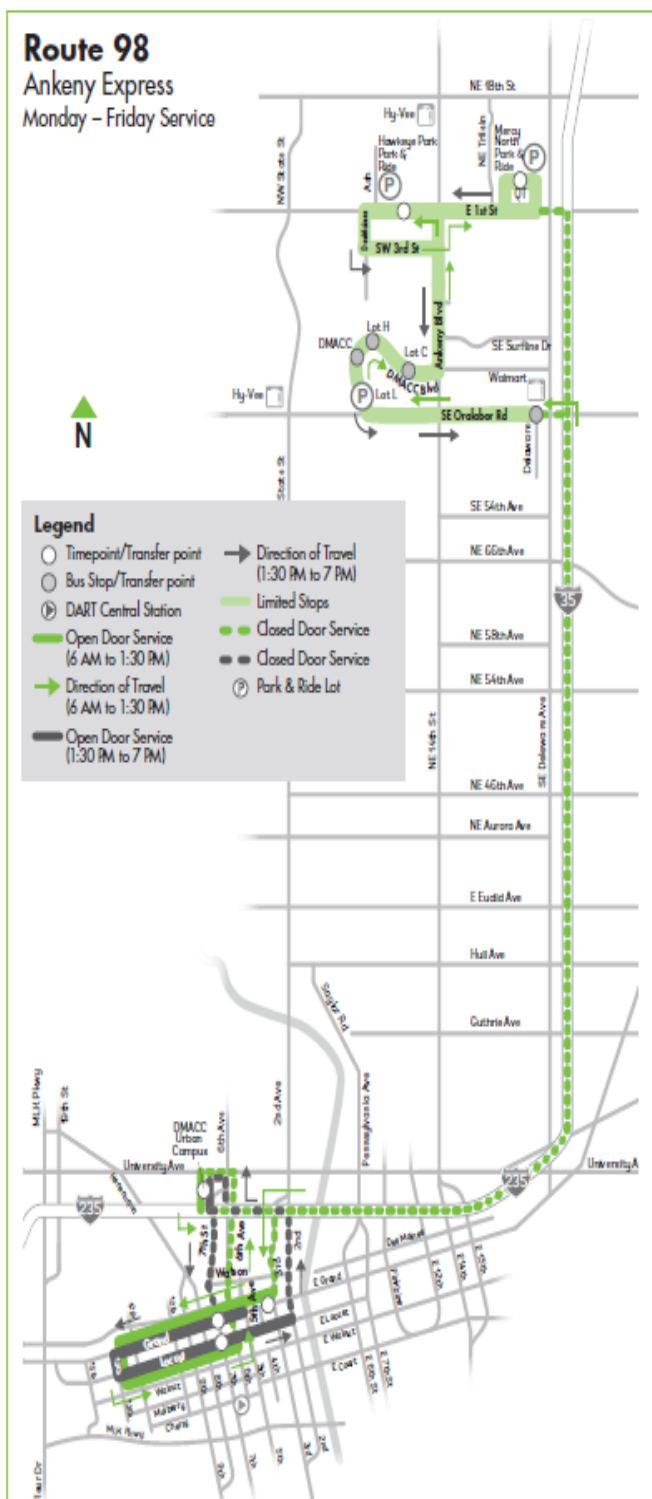
All Trips



Accessible

DES MOINES AREA REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY  
515-283-8100 ► [ridedart.com](http://ridedart.com)

## DART Ankeny Express 98 Schedule, *continued*



**MORNING**

Monday-Friday

	Southbound-Inbound			Arrive DSM			Northbound-Outbound	
	Ankeny DMACC Park & Ride (Lot L)	Hawkeye Park & Ride	Mercy North Park & Ride	3rd St & Grand Ave	Grand Ave & 7th St	Locust Ave & 7th St	DMACC Urban Campus (7th & Laurel)	Arr/Lv Ankeny DMACC Park & Ride (Lot L)
AM	----	----	----	----	----	6:00	6:05	6:22/6:23
	----	----	----	----	----	6:17	6:23	6:42/6:43
	5:43	5:52	6:00	6:18	6:20	6:27	6:33	6:52/7:07
	6:03	6:12	6:20	6:38	6:40	6:47	6:53	7:12/7:22
	6:23	6:32	6:40	6:58	7:00	7:07	7:13	7:32/7:43
	6:43	6:52	7:00	7:18	7:20	7:27	7:33	7:53/8:03
	7:07	7:16	7:24	7:43	7:45	7:52	To Garage	----
	7:22	7:31	7:39	7:58	8:00	8:07	8:14	8:32/8:43
	7:43	7:52	8:00	8:18	8:20	8:25	To Garage	----
	8:03	8:12	8:22	8:37	8:40	8:45	8:52	9:10/9:28
	8:43	8:52	9:02	9:17	9:20	9:25	To Garage	----
	9:28	9:37	9:47	10:02	10:05	10:10	10:17	10:35/10:48
	10:48	10:57	11:07	11:22	11:25	11:30	11:37	11:55/12:03
PM	12:03	12:12	12:22	12:37	12:40	12:45	To Mercy North via 2nd Ave	

## AFTERNOON

Monday-Friday

	Southbound-Inbound		Arrive DSM		Northbound-Outbound		
	Ankeny DMACC Park & Ride (Lot L)	DMACC Urban Campus (7th & Laurel)	Grand Ave & 7th St	Locust Ave & 7th St	Arr/Lv Mercy North Park & Ride	Hawkeye Park & Ride	Arr/Lv Ankeny DMACC Park & Ride (Lot L)
PM	----	----	12:40	12:45	1:03	1:07	1:18/1:22
	1:22	1:42	1:45	1:50	2:08	2:13	2:24/2:47
	2:47	3:07	3:10	3:18	3:37	3:42	3:53/4:06
	----	3:27	3:30	3:38	3:57	4:02	4:13/4:21
	----	3:42	3:45	3:53	4:13	4:19	4:30/4:41
	----	4:07	4:10	4:18	4:38	4:44	4:55/5:01
	4:06	4:26	4:30	4:39	5:00	5:06	5:17/5:27
	4:21	4:41	4:45	4:55	5:16	5:22	5:33/5:43
	4:41	5:01	5:05	5:15	5:36	5:42	5:53/5:58
	5:01	5:21	5:25	5:33	5:53	5:58	6:09/6:13
	5:27	5:47	5:50	5:57	6:15	6:20	6:31/6:34
	5:43	6:02	6:05	To Garage	----	----	----
	5:58	6:17	6:20	To Garage	----	----	----
	6:13	6:32	6:35	To Garage	----	----	----
	6:34	6:52	6:55	To Garage	----	----	----

Passengers traveling to/from the State Capitol area may transfer to/from the D-Line on Locust (EB) or Grand (WB). Routes 1 and 4 also serve stops east of 2nd Ave. ▶ Weather, special events and traffic conditions may alter service.

# The Ankeny Community School District

## Overview

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### Introduction

The Ankeny Community School District (ACSD) is the sixth largest district in Iowa, with over 11,000 students attending one of its schools in the 2016-2017 academic year (“Projected Enrollment”). Its growth parallels that of the city’s and is accompanied by the challenges of not only increasing student numbers but increasing student needs.

Ankeny is well-known for its good schools. One of the reasons that families are attracted to Ankeny is the reputation of ACSD.

The ACSD mission states that the district “is unified in its commitment, passion, and vision so every learner is prepared to achieve a lifetime of personal success (“Projected Enrollment”).” This report will discuss how the ACSD approaches achievement of its mission, particularly with respect to students coming from low-income families.

---

### Methods

Extensive internet research was used, including the following websites or topics:

- Ankeny Community School District
- current research on at-risk students
- population demographics
- poverty in Ankeny
- local organizations (including Life Works, Cornerstone Recovery, and Food Bank of Iowa)

Members of community organizations were interviewed.

A wide representation of school staff members, including administrators, teachers, nurses, and social workers were also interviewed. The names and identities of school staff members have been withheld from the report because current and former staff members expressed concerns about possible reprisals from the school district. Therefore, in this report all the material gathered from school employees is cited as “staff,” “staff reports,” etc.

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## Findings: Poverty

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### Overview

The Ankeny Community School District is widely viewed as a highly successful district based on multiple measures including sports teams, music programs, test scores, and a graduation rate (93.5%) above the state average (“Quick Facts”).

Recently, *The Des Moines Register* published achievement statistics from the Iowa Department of Education that show Ankeny at or near the top of a list of the largest school districts in the state for student achievement in reading, based on proficiency and benchmark statistics for students across both race and income levels (Ryan “Iowa’s” 8A; Ryan, “Minority” 9A).

The fact that the Ankeny School District is outscoring other districts in the state suggests an institution that is not only aware of its students’ progress and the political realities connected to standards and assessment, but it is committed to keeping pace with other districts in the state. In addition, the fact Ankeny students perform well across income levels and racial groups may suggest that the school district is making a statistically discernible effort to be inclusive.

---

### Poverty Levels by Location

Like any other community of its size and demographic composition, the city of Ankeny has poverty and a significant percentage of struggling individuals and families.

Areas of the city that contains the greatest density of lower-cost housing tend to have the highest frequency of poverty. Areas with higher populations below the poverty level are as follows (“Ankeny, Iowa”):

- 20.4% of residents living in an area roughly south of West First Street, west of Ankeny Boulevard, north of Oralabor Road, and east of Irvinedale Drive
- 14.6% and 9.64% in other contiguous areas south and southeast of West First Street

In contrast, contiguous areas north of West First Street have poverty levels of 4.4%, 4.46%, and 1.21% (“Ankeny, Iowa”).

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*Continued on next page*



## Findings: Poverty, *Continued*

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### **Schools Boundaries Align with Poverty**

Locations with higher concentrations of poverty tend to align with the north-south orientation of the school district's attendance boundaries (*Elementary Attendance Areas*). The areas with the lowest incomes are located south of First Street, which is the approximate boundary line that separates the district's two feeder systems. North of First Street the elementary and middle schools channel students to Centennial High School; south of First Street the elementary and middle schools channel students to Ankeny High School. See attached boundaries map at the end of this document for details.

There are two exceptions to the above:

- Northwest Elementary draws students from areas both north and south of First Street, including large complexes of older, lower income apartments in the Northwest College Avenue area. It is part of the Centennial feeder system.
- Terrace Elementary and Parkview Middle School, which are contiguous to each other and located directly on the north side of First Street, are part of the Ankeny High School feeder system and draw students from both north and south of First Street.

The overall effect of this north-south configuration is a concentration of lower income students in the southern part of the district.

---

### **Correlation with Free and Reduced Lunch**

The statistics showing higher levels of poverty on Ankeny's south side are reflected in the number of students eligible for free/reduced (f/r) lunch in schools that are part of the district's feeder system on the south side of the city. City-wide, there are increasing numbers of students eligible for f/r lunch.

For example, from the 2015-2016 school year to the 2016-2017 school year, the following changes in percentage of students who qualified for f/r lunch were seen (Iowa Department of Education "2016-2017", Iowa Department of Education "2015-2016"):

- Southeast Elementary increased from 18.3% to 25.3%.
- Terrace Elementary increased from 32.4% to 42.6%.
- Ankeny High School increased from 13.4% to 19.2%.

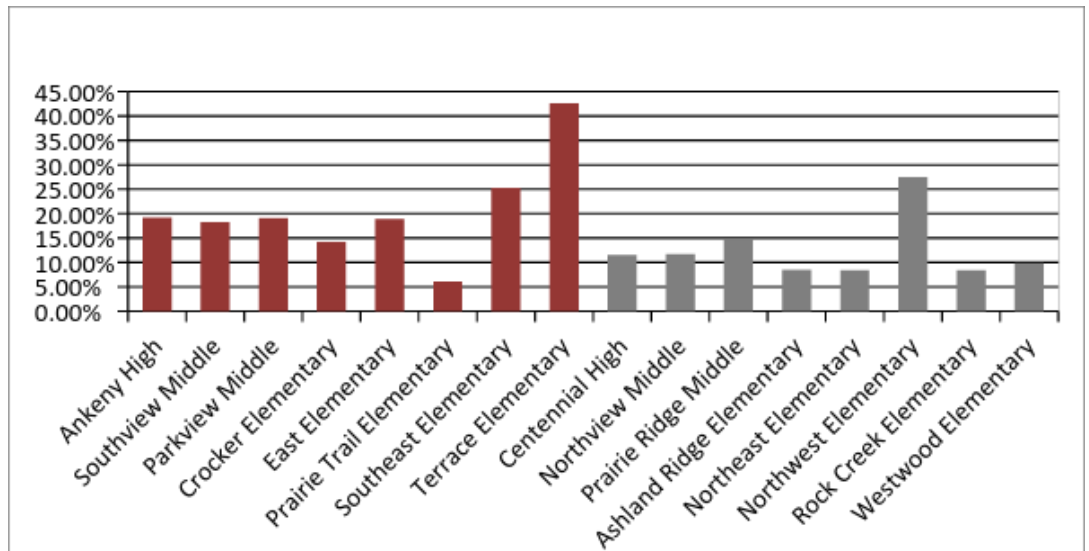
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## Findings: Poverty, *Continued*

### Table of Feeder System Schools

This table shows south feeder system schools in maroon and north feeder system schools in gray. As shown, six of the eight south feeder system schools have f/r rates of over 15%, while only one of eight north feeder schools has a rate over 15%.



(Ref: Iowa Department of Education "2016-2017")

## Findings: Increasing Needs

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### **Staff Reports of Changes**

According to staff reports, historically students from low income families were more-or-less evenly distributed across the attendance centers in the district, and rural students were assigned to buildings throughout the entire district.

The move to a two high school feeder system and the current method of assigning students to specific buildings on the basis of the present attendance boundaries has resulted in a greater concentration of low income students from low-cost housing attending fewer schools.

Schools in the south part of the city, which are part of the Ankeny High School feeder system, enroll a disproportionately high percentage of lower income students. A leading example noted by staff is Southeast Elementary, with an attendance boundary that includes a 400 unit mobile home park.

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### **Staff Reports of Visible Indicators of Poverty**

School staff members also report that the concentration of lower income students in attendance centers in the southern part of the district has been coincident with an overall increase in the number of lower income students enrolling in the district.

Ankeny residents and school staff members identified areas with lower cost housing (such as the mobile home park on the southeast side and the College Avenue area apartments) as home to a population of students with needs related to low income.

School staff members reported seeing more students, particularly in the south feeder system, who are dealing with poverty. This includes, for example, students arriving at school with soiled clothes and inadequate hygiene. Various, staff report that students show signs of being hungry, not getting enough sleep, and expressing concerns about their families.

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### **Effects on Families**

The picture that is emerging from staff reports includes:

- exhausted parents struggling to provide food, housing, and health care for their families
  - children often left at home alone after school until their parents get home from work
  - parents not having back-up plans for their children when something unexpected occurs during the day
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## Findings: Increasing Needs, *Continued*

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### **Housing and Transportation Factors**

One key factor that is contributing to these problems is that housing is expensive in Ankeny. Staff report that multiple families may occupy a single apartment in order to increase its affordability. It is not uncommon for the cost of living in Ankeny to become so unsustainable that families move to Des Moines, thereby disrupting students' academic progress.

Another key factor is transportation. Many families are only able to afford one car; thus, if there are any unexpected repairs needed, many families can't financially deal with them. Occasionally, school social workers help get children to school.

When asked to identify the biggest unaddressed problem facing students, staff identified transportation. Even though there is a district bus system, availability is constrained by distance requirements; students and families living outside the areas of service sometimes have trouble using the district's bus system.

Families without free bus service can take advantage of a pay-to-ride program ("Pay-to-Ride"):

- Payment is per semester.
- There are a limited number of stops.
- Riders may only use existing routes.
- Families eligible for f/r lunch use an alternative fee structure.

The fact that Ankeny has neither a city bus system nor other public means of intra-city transportation complicates the circumstances of students and their families.

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### **Identifying Issues**

Various staff also report that social workers are seeing more students with mental health needs, including mood disorders, depression, attention deficit disorder, and attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder. In addition, social workers are also assisting with other facets of children's lives, including behavioral and academic problems and life-building skills.

School staff members report observing parents who lack basic parenting skills. This includes getting students to school on time, rested, emotionally and physically healthy, and ready to learn.

In many instances, social workers serve as case managers for children and families, and help them access assistance with such organizations as Children and Families of Iowa and Life Works School-Based Therapy.

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## Findings: Increasing Needs, *Continued*

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### **Social Worker Staffing**

In 2013 the Ankeny Schools recognized the changing needs in the community and added five new masters level social workers to the two who were previously working in the district. Currently, according to a staff report, each social worker is assigned to two buildings. Thus, if a social worker is needed at one school, the shared school may be without a social worker on a particular day.

Overall, according to staff reports, there is an increase in the amount of time that social workers are working with students and their families. As the need for resources has increased and the stigma of seeking help has dissipated, lower income parents as well as children are seeking out the social workers, becoming familiar with available services, and accessing them.

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## Findings: Other Programs

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### Resources and Programs

When basic needs are noted by children, parents, or school staff, the district does have programs in place to help provide needed resources such as clothing, shoes, eye exams and glasses, and food.

The district also sponsors a before and after school program to support students and families. Tuition assistance for the before and after school program is available to eligible families through the Iowa Department of Human Services and the Operation Military - Child Care Assistance of America programs (ACSD *Before and After* 12).

In addition, staff reports indicate that many businesses provide food for the food pantry. For example, Hy-Vee donates bread and local churches have helped out with gift cards. This suggests that the community is starting to become aware of the poverty in Ankeny and the significant needs of lower-income people.

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### Early Childhood Education

ACSD maintains a voluntary preschool program for three and four-year-olds. Classes are mixed age group and include four half-day sessions each week. Preschool locations currently vary from year to year. For the 2017-2018 academic year, preschool will be offered at Ashland Ridge, Crocker, East, Northeast, and Terrace Elementary Schools (“Preschool Program”).

Effective in 2020, all ACSD preschool programs will be housed at the current Terrace Elementary School building (ASCD “A New Purpose”).

Pertinent information on the preschool program is as follows (“Preschool Program”):

- Programming is provided at no charge for four-year-olds.
- Financial assistance is available for three-year-olds.
- No transportation is provided.

ACSD does not offer developmental or transitional kindergarten programs for children who are five years old but not yet ready for all day kindergarten.

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## Findings: At-Risk Students

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### **At-Risk Students and Poverty**

As the above statistics suggest, one important guide to understanding the needs of low income students in a school district is an analysis of the district's f/r lunch eligibility rates. Another important guide is a district's program for at-risk students. Not all at-risk students are from low income families or families living in poverty, but many low income students do become at-risk, and research indicates that there is a link between poverty and at-risk students.

According to a synthesis of research in this area, the category, "at-risk students," is generally defined as students who are not making progress in school, are in danger of dropping out and not graduating, and, even more generally, who are having difficulty making the transition to adulthood and achieving economic self-sufficiency (Koball et al. 3).

In their synthesis of research, Koball et al. feature poverty as the first item in their list of risk factors, a list which they note contains items that display "significant overlap" (3). Clearly poverty is prominently linked as a factor in identifying and understanding at-risk students and their needs.

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### **At-Risk Criteria**

It is important to note that the Ankeny School District, quite appropriately, does not take poverty into account in developing its list of criteria for identifying at-risk students. Unlike researchers studying the broad implications of risk factors for students, a school district must focus on student performance in the classroom and student behaviors in the school community.

In an interview, staff listed the following criteria for classifying students as being at risk:

- Less than 89% attendance
- Lack of "connectivity" (e.g. lack of school involvement, suspensions, negative comments about school, etc.)
- Inadequate progression/credits
- Poor performance in math and English
- Low test scores

While staff reports do not indicate a correlation between poverty and students' likelihood of becoming at-risk, they do explicitly indicate, as one staff member put it, a "connection."

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## Findings: At-Risk Students, *Continued*

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### **Poverty and the At-Risk Population**

Staff noted that schools in the south feeder system, which serves the lowest income areas in the district, have twice as many at-risk students as schools in the north. Staff also noted that despite this uneven distribution of at-risk students, failure rates in both the north and south feeder systems are about same. In addition, staff further noted that resources for responding to at-risk students are allocated to schools according to building-level need.

These last two points suggest that the Ankeny Community School District is aware of the role poverty plays in students' success in schools, is attuned to the needs of students from low income families, and is endeavoring to structure their at-risk programs in order to serve students where the need is greatest.

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### **Programs for At-Risk Students**

In response to the challenges that at-risk students both face and present, the district is developing vigorous and wide-ranging programs for at-risk students. Listed below are some of the programs that are affiliated with at-risk programs ("At-Risk Programs"):

#### **Supporting Our Students**

This is a building-based program for those who need extra academic support or who are in danger of failing a course.

#### **Four Oaks**

This contractor is a "non-profit child welfare, juvenile justice, and behavioral health agency that offers services to children and families in Iowa."

#### **Cornerstone Recovery**

This facility provides family-based treatment for teens struggling with mental illness and addiction. This program is part of Children and Families of Iowa.

#### **Life Works School-Based Therapy Services**

School-based therapy services provided by Life Works are available at each Ankeny school building through which licensed mental health therapists provide counseling at the building during the school day. Referrals are made by parents for this service since parents are responsible for the cost of counseling, but school guidance counselors may recommend that parents seek services. In the case of students whose parents do not have the financial means or insurance to pay for services, Life Works assists with obtaining Medicaid, for which nearly all low income children will qualify (McNeese).

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## Findings: At-Risk Students, *Continued*

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### **Programs, *continued***

#### **Juvenile Court Liaison Workers**

ACSD maintains one liaison each for the north and south feeder systems to “help reduce student truancy, drop-out rates, and delinquent behaviors. The workers address and reduce student inappropriate behavior in school” (“Juvenile Court”).

#### **Social Workers**

These are district employees who “help coordinate services which reduce factors impeding student success in the education program and life” (“Social Workers”).

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## Findings: Additional Services for Students

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### **Additional Services**

ACDS offers a number of other programs, some of which are specifically designed for students from low income families.

#### **Alternative Education Program**

For students who are unable to function in a regular high school environment, ACSD offers an alternative education program designed to “help students reach the goal of high school graduation (“Alternative Education”).” The program is known as the Neveln Alternative High School Program and is housed at the Ankeny’s Neveln Center.

Educators at Neveln work in conjunction with teachers from Ankeny or Centennial High Schools to develop individual instruction for their students. Staff report that instructional space is expanding to include an area for teaching life skills. A food pantry is also maintained at the Neveln Center for students’ access.

#### **Employee and Family Resources (EFR)**

Employee and Family Resources (EFR) is a central clearing house organization offering support services for staff, families, and students. Services include employee assistance, wellness, leadership coaching, crisis response, substance abuse services, and counseling (*Employee and Family Resources*). According to staff reports, the district contracts with EFR to provide these services.

#### **Instrument in Every Hand**

An Instrument in Every Hand is a program run by the 5<sup>th</sup> grade band directors to provide band instruments for elementary students whose families do not have the means to pay for an instrument. Eligibility for the program is based on eligibility for f/r lunch.

Instruments are donated by staff and community members and additional funding comes from donations and grants obtained by the band directors. No district money is used to pay for instruments, although the district does pay to fix broken instruments.

Staff reports that out of 670 students participating in elementary band, 12% use instruments provided by the Instrument in Every Hand program. A staff member notes that there are “many more” students being served by the Instrument in Every Hand program in the south feeder system than in the north.

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## Findings: Additional Services for Students, *continued*

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### **Additional Services,** *continued*

#### **Project Fresh Start**

Project Fresh Start is a collection of services designed to meet a variety of needs for students who lack resources. Project Fresh Start is sponsored and funded through donation from community members and organizations.

The program provides students with items like backpacks and other school supplies, prom dresses, and winter clothing.

#### **Ankeny Backpack Program**

The Ankeny Backpack Program, commonly known as “backpack buddies,” is a joint effort with the Food Bank of Iowa to provide supplemental food for students in grades 1-5 and their families (“Community Education”). Eligibility for this program is based on qualifying for f/r lunch. Referrals come from teachers, nurses, and other staff, and the district works with parents who want to be part of the program.

The district hands out 170 bags of food per week, including such items as cereal, dried milk, granola bars, macaroni and cheese, and ravioli. Its purpose is to provide food for students on weekends. Staff report that in 2016-2017, in one building alone, the percentage of students who qualified for the program increased to 40%.

Staff reports that the food distribution program is expanding to include food pantries (including the one at the Neveln Center) for older students and that the district is taking a proactive stance to meet students’ needs.

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## Areas of Concern

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### **Pockets of Low Income Students**

There are significant areas within the attendance boundaries of the Ankeny Schools that are home to low income families and families living below the poverty line. While such areas exist in both north and south feeder systems, the south feeder system schools are disproportionately affected.

As Ankeny continues to grow and more schools are constructed, school leadership needs to consider potential socioeconomic disparities between schools as attendance boundaries are drawn. ACSD works hard to promote equality of education and programs between schools. If the socioeconomic gaps between north and south continue to grow, this may become increasingly difficult and could negatively affect the entire community.

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### **Gaps in Transportation**

Students in the Ankeny Schools who come from low-income families may lack transportation not only to school but to extra-curricular activities. This may lead to attendance problems or lack of involvement in school culture, which in turn place students in the at-risk category.

While ACSD does offer regular bus service and some assistance with pay-to-ride busing, gaps in transportation availability are present. This is evidenced by the need for staff to transport children to school if families cannot provide transportation.

Further, the preschool program provides no transportation at all. As preschool transitions to a single building within the district, some form of transportation to the site may be necessary, particularly for low-income families who can benefit greatly from free or low-cost early childhood education programs.

Some of the transportation issues faced by Ankeny families are beyond the scope of ACSD and will need to be addressed by a more comprehensive approach to public transportation undertaken by city leadership.

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## Areas of Concern, *Continued*

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### **Gaps in Early Childhood Education**

ACSD offers preschool programming, but it has several limitations:

- Priority is given to four-year-olds, and space and funding assistance for three-year-olds may be lacking.
- No program is available for five-year-olds who are not ready for full day kindergarten.
- No transportation is provided.

Early childhood education is considered foundational for both long term educational and lifelong success (“States Embracing PreK”). School staff have expressed increasing concerns about children not reporting to school ready to learn.

Expansion of preschool, particularly institution of developmental kindergarten, could reap significant long term benefits in Ankeny.

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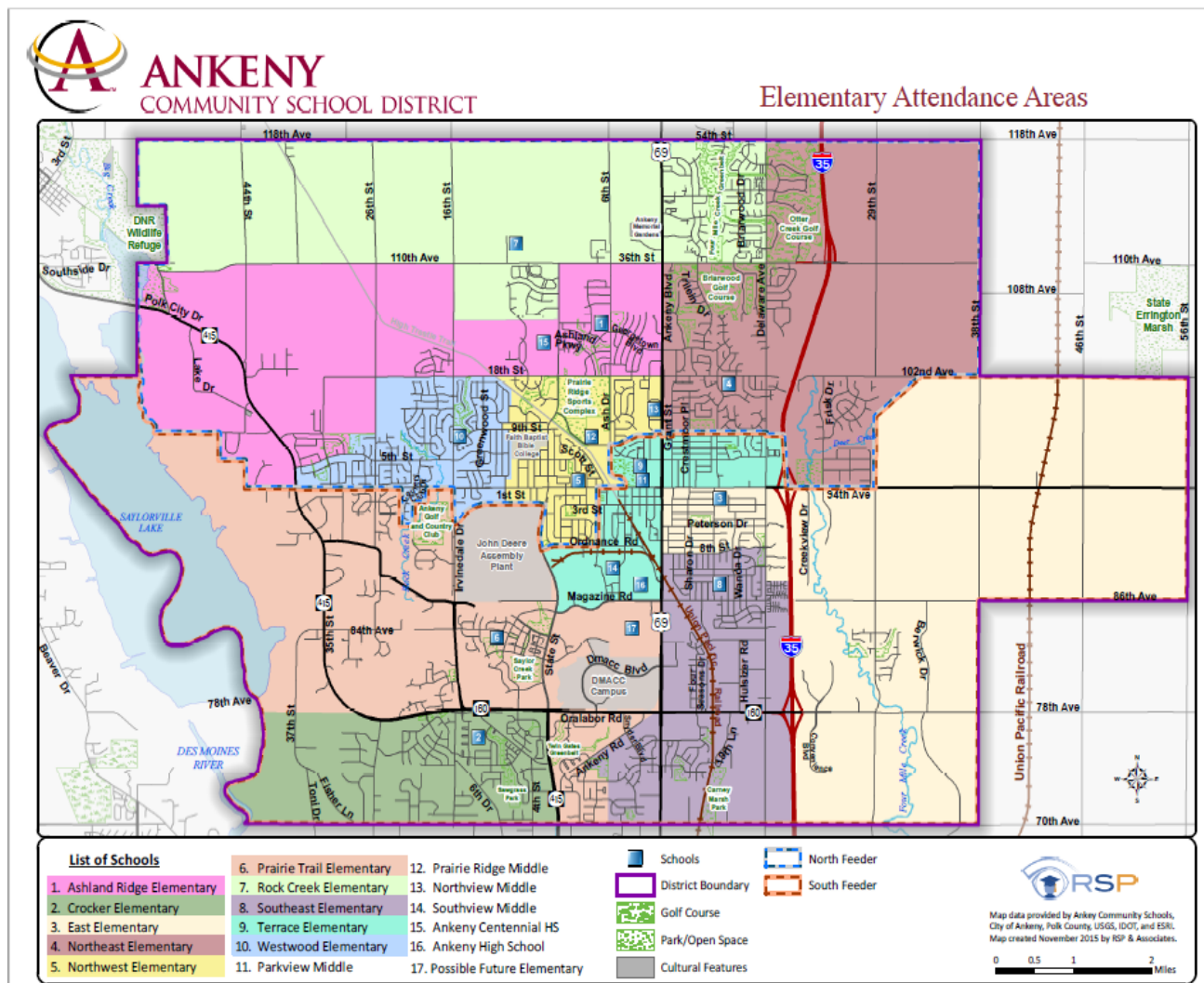
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# Ankeny Schools Boundary Map





# Mental Health Care

## Overview

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### Introduction

In order for a community to be healthy, its members need access to adequate physical and mental health care.

As a state, Iowa currently ranks 44th in access to mental health care, with less than 300 mental health prescribers in the state (Bomhoff 22).

National suicide rates are increasing, with a doubling of suicide rates for 10 to 14-year-olds between 2007 and 2014 (O'Neill 1). With estimates that one in five Americans will suffer from a mental health or substance abuse disorder in their lifetime, over 11,000 Ankeny residents will at some point require mental health care (Bomhoff 11).

Further, the World Health Organization reports that there is a cyclical relationship between poverty and mental illness, meaning that those with mental illness are disproportionately poor (*Mental Health, Poverty and Development*). Small group meetings in 2015 at Our Lady's Immaculate Heart Catholic Church in Ankeny consistently revealed concerns about access to mental health care. Therefore, mental health services available within the city of Ankeny were evaluated.

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### Methods

Several methods were used to complete this evaluation.

Statistics from the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) and the World Health Organization (WHO) were reviewed.

Internet searches, telephone books, e-mails and telephone calls were used to identify availability of service providers and their array of services.

Personal interviews were also conducted with:

- Pat Rogness and Ashley Bolsem of Children and Families of Iowa
  - Heidi Geisler from Life Works, Inc.
  - Krystyna Thompson from Full Heart Family Therapy and Renewal Center
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## Findings: Access to Care

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### Access to Care

Ankeny residents have access to mental health care within the city limits, but this care is limited in scope:

- Therapists and counselors that provide outpatient mental health and substance abuse treatment are readily available for residents of all ages. However, there are no practicing psychiatrists with offices in Ankeny (Brown).
- In the past, inpatient substance abuse treatment was offered through Cornerstone Recovery. Recently, the service provider converted its facility to an outpatient treatment center (Rogness and Bolsem).
- There is no facility in Ankeny that provides inpatient mental health treatment, and there is no hospital in Ankeny, so there is no access to emergency mental health care.

Thus, residents in need of care may receive some services in Ankeny, but would have to travel to other locations for emergency, inpatient or psychiatrist services.

In Ankeny, approximately a dozen offices were identified that provide therapy or counseling for mental health patients (Breniman). A summary of characteristics of these offices is found in the Appendix of this report as Table 1.

Combined, these offices have 45 providers of service. However, only 15 of these providers maintain a full time practice in Ankeny. The remaining providers either work part time or share their time between multiple offices. Six practices offer evening appointments, and three have weekend appointment availability.

New patient wait time for an appointment ranges from 1-8 weeks.

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## Findings: Description of Services

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### Payment

Fees for private pay sessions can be as much as \$120-150 (Thompson “Re”, *Matthew T. Hiveley*). It is typical for providers to charge fees (up to the full session fee) if appointments are not cancelled with at least 24 hours’ notice; such fees are not covered by insurance or Medicaid.

Ankeny’s mental health offices have the following approaches to payment:

- Eight accept various types of private insurance plans.
- Eight accept Medicaid.
- For offices that do not accept insurance, generally patients may submit their own claims for reimbursement.
- The Des Moines Pastoral Counseling Center offers sliding-scale fees (*Des Moines Pastoral*).
- Life Works has some free services provided by counselors in training (Geisler).

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### Characteristics of Service

All of the mental health practices in Ankeny treat adults and adolescents, while eleven of them accept children of various ages. All have the ability to treat couples or families. A wide array of services are available including mental health counseling, substance abuse/addiction treatment, trauma or abuse treatment, play therapy and art therapy. Every practice is different, and some offer more unique specialty services. Here are just a few examples:

- therapy dog (*SS Therapy and Consulting*)
- massage therapy and hypnotherapy (*Clear Brook Counseling Professionals*)
- sexual and pornography addiction services (Full Heart Family Therapy and Renewal Center) (Thompson Personal)
- therapy for students of the Ankeny Community School District with appointments during the school day (*Life Works*)
- complementary and alternative medicine (*Birchwood Wellness*)
- family safety risk and permanency (Children and Families of Iowa) (Rogness and Bolsem)

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## Findings: Description of Services, *Continued*

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**Characteristics  
of Service,  
*continued***

Four practices offer classes dealing with various topics such as co-parenting and substance abuse. Three practices offer support groups, including sexual addiction and sexual abuse groups. Careful review of services available from providers should help to assist the patient in finding the type of service that best meets his/her needs.

See Table 1 in the Appendix for a more specific list of services and information on Ankeny's mental health offices.

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## Findings: Mental Health Providers

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### **Provider Disciplines**

Mental health care may be provided for various reasons by different types of providers. Often, the same mental health problem could be treated by providers from several different educational backgrounds. This makes navigation of the mental health system confusing for patients seeking care.

In Ankeny, these providers include mental health therapists or counselors with a wide range of qualifications. All of these professional designations indicate that specific levels of training have been achieved by the provider of mental health care and would be considered highly trained.

See Table 2 in the Appendix of this report for descriptions of the types of credentialing and licensing or certification requirements for providers in Ankeny.

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### **Psychiatric Medication Accessibility**

Therapists can do much to assist patients with mental health issues, but patients with psychiatric illnesses such as depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder and schizophrenia commonly need psychiatric medications as part of their treatment plan.

In Iowa, psychiatric medications can be prescribed by physicians, whether they are psychiatrists or not. Physician's assistants and nurse practitioners may also prescribe psychiatric medications if these medications are considered to be within their normal scope of practice.

Many primary care practitioners are comfortable ordering antidepressants or antianxiety agents for patients, but they may not be comfortable prescribing medications for more complex disorders such as schizophrenia.

Further, psychiatrists and psychiatric nurse practitioners have a greater level of expertise and thus are better able to address the needs of patients with severe mental illness.

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## Findings: Mental Health Providers, *Continued*

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**Care in Ankeny** An estimated 4% of the U.S. population has severe mental illness (Bomhoff 11). For Ankeny, this translates into approximately 2,200 residents. Where can these 2,200 people go to receive care?

The vast majority of Ankeny residents with severe mental illness will need to leave the city in order to find adequate psychiatric care. The *Des Moines Yellowbook* lists Mercy Behavioral Health as having a psychiatrist in Ankeny, but this was unable to be confirmed by either the listed phone number or direct contact with Mercy Behavioral Health (438). None of the medical clinics in Ankeny offer psychiatric services, and there are no private psychiatric offices in the city (Brown).

Of the therapist's offices in Ankeny, only two have psychiatrists on staff: Children and Families of Iowa and Des Moines Pastoral Counseling Center (Rogness and Bolsem, *Des Moines Pastoral*). Unfortunately, their psychiatrists do not see patients in Ankeny, so travel to Des Moines or Urbandale is necessary for patients in these practices.

While a few offices have a formal referral process for patients needing medication, there is one office in Ankeny that can potentially meet the medication needs of patients without making an outside referral. Birchwood Wellness has a Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner on staff that is able to prescribe psychiatric medications (*Birchwood Wellness*).

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**Future Availability of Care** Several of the offices interviewed indicated that they were expanding services. This is good news for Ankeny residents. However, none of the offices indicated that adding a psychiatrist or other mental health prescriber in Ankeny was part of their expansion plans.

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## Findings: Additional Considerations

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### **Effects of Long Term Mental Illness**

Patients with longstanding severe mental illness may have difficulty maintaining employment or living independently. Often, they depend on Social Security Disability Insurance for income and Medicaid for insurance. Frequently, they are not able to obtain driver's licenses.

Consequences of long-term mental illness include:

- poverty
- frequent medical appointments
- lack of transportation
- need for extensive support systems including case managers

Lack of intra-city bus service places an added burden on support systems. Patients considered disabled may be eligible for DART's Paratransit services, which can provide some relief. See Public Transportation report for details.

Patients in this category may live in group housing. Investigation of group housing availability in Ankeny was not undertaken as part of this assessment.

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### **Emergency Care and Inpatient Care**

Mental illnesses can lead to various types of crises, including psychotic episodes and suicidal behaviors. Sadly, there is no medical facility in Ankeny that is equipped to address mental health crises.

Families in crisis must transport loved ones with critical needs to Des Moines (or farther) for care. This is often complicated by the patient's lack of insight into his/her illness, which may cause resistance to a hospital visit. When such situations occur, it is generally the police or fire department that is called upon for assistance.

Calling 911 is not an inappropriate response; however, a mental health crisis unit would be better-equipped to address these situations.

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## Areas of Concern

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### **Inadequate Access to Care**

Ankeny has a definite lack of mental health prescribers. Only one provider in town has the ability to prescribe medications, while the estimated population needing such treatment for severe mental illness is over 2,000 residents. While services at counseling offices are expanding in Ankeny, none of the offices interviewed indicated plans to add a mental health prescriber to their practice.

Further, the city lacks the ability to provide specific mental health crisis and inpatient care. These issues may place inappropriate and excessive burdens on primary care providers and first responders.

Both the Ankeny police and fire departments indicated that residents with mental illness present frequent, complex needs for which better care is needed. See Public Safety report for further details.

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### **Transportation**

Residents with severe mental illness are often unable to drive themselves. They may have limited funds for hiring transportation. This presents problems with everything from obtaining groceries and keeping medical appointments to attending school events or socializing.

Lack of intra-city public transportation places extra burdens on caregivers for this needy group. Improved availability of public transportation could increase independence, decrease isolation, and decrease caregiver stress.

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## Appendix: Table 1: Therapy/Counseling Services in Ankeny

Office	Birchwood Wellness	Center for Interpersonal Effectiveness	Children & Families of Iowa	Clear Brook Counseling	Des Moines Pastoral Counseling Center	Fein Therapy Services	Full Heart Therapy & Renewal Center	Dr. Matt Hiveley	Shawna Johansen	Life Works, Inc.	New Life Counseling	SS Therapy & Consulting
No. of Therapists	3 full time	6 part time	2 full time, 3 part time	3 part time	1 part time	1 full time	3 part time	1 full time	1 part time	5 full time, 7 part time	2 full time, 4 part time	1 full time, 2 part time
Prescriber Access	Onsite PMHNP	Makes referrals	In Des Moines	No	In Des Moines	No	No	No	No	No	No	Makes referrals
Accepts Medicaid	Some	Some	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
Accepts Insurance	Yes	Yes	Yes	Some, not Medicare	Yes, not Medicare	Yes, some	No	BC/BS only	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Wait Time	2 months	6-8 weeks	Within 1 week	Within 1 week	2 weeks	1-2 weeks	Less than 1 week	1-2 weeks	1-3 weeks	1-2 weeks	1-4 weeks	Within 1 week
Evening/Weekend Appointments	No	No	Evening	No	No	Both	Both	No	No	Evening	Both	Evening
Adult	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Adolescent	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Child	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Ages 6 & up	Ages 7 & up	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Family/Couples	Family	Both	Both	Both	Both	Both	Both	Both	Yes	Both	Yes	Yes
Substance Abuse/Addiction	Yes	Substance	Substance	Both	Both	Both	Yes	Both	No	Substance abuse	Substance abuse	Addiction
Classes	No	Children in the Middle	Substance abuse treatment & prevention	No	In Des Moines	No	No	No	No	Co - parenting	Many, including Children in the Middle	No
Groups	No	No	No	No	In Des Moines	No	Sexual addiction	No	No	No	Yes, including Mastermind	Teen sexual/physical abuse, more coming
Specialty Services	Alternative medicine, psychological testing	OWI & substance abuse evaluations	Family Safety & Risk Permanency, Behavioral Health Intervention	Faith-based, hypnotherapy and eating disorders	Sliding scale fee for uninsured	Nature sanctuary setting	Sexual & pornography addiction			School-based therapy, free services, therapy dog	Faith-based, premarital counseling	Therapy dog

(Ref: Birchwood Wellness, Birchwood Wellness Staff, Center for Interpersonal Effectiveness, Center for Interpersonal Effectiveness Staff, Children and Families of Iowa, Clear Brook Counseling Professionals, Clear Brook Counseling Professionals Staff, Des Moines Pastoral Counseling Center, Fein, Geisler, Goodman, Hiveley, Johansen, Leonard, Life Works, Matthew T. Hiveley, New Life Counseling, Rogness and Bolsem, Rogness, SS Therapy and Consulting, Thompson, Thompson “Re”)

## Appendix: Table 2: Provider Disciplines

<b>CADC</b>	<b>Certified Alcohol and Other Drugs of Addiction Counselor:</b> Certification is required in Iowa. CADC is the minimum standard.
<b>IADC</b>	<b>International Alcohol and Drug Counselor:</b> Certification is required in Iowa. IADC is a more rigorous standard than CADC. The most advanced credentialing for graduate level professionals is IAADC, or International Advanced Alcohol and Drug Counselor.
<b>LISW</b>	<b>Licensed Independent Social Worker:</b> Licensure is required by the Iowa Board of Social Work. Licensure requirements include graduation from an accredited program, licensure examination, and a minimum of two years of supervised postgraduate clinical training.
<b>LMFT</b>	<b>Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist:</b> Licensure is required in Iowa. Full licensure can be obtained only after completion of specific graduate level coursework, licensure examination, and a minimum of two years of postgraduate clinical experience.
<b>LMHC</b>	<b>Licensed Mental Health Counselor:</b> Licensure is required in Iowa. Full licensure can be obtained only after completion of specific graduate level coursework, licensure examination, and a minimum of two years of postgraduate clinical experience.
<b>LMSW</b>	<b>Licensed Master Social Worker:</b> Licensure is required by the Iowa Board of Social Work. Licensure requirements include graduation from an accredited program and licensure examination.
<b>LP</b>	<b>Licensed Psychologist:</b> Licensure is required for clinical practice. Applicants must obtain a doctoral degree in psychology, pass the appropriate national examination, and complete 1500 hours of supervised experiential training; individuals with a designation of “psychology associate” or “psychology resident” are those who are in the process of completing one or more steps to licensure.
<b>PMHNP</b>	<b>Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner:</b> The Iowa Board of Nursing requires this category of Licensed Registered Nurses to have additional certification. PMHNP’s may assess and treat patients with mental illness, including prescribing medication.

(Ref: *Addiction-Counselors.com*, State of Iowa 154C, State of Iowa 645-31, State of Iowa 645-240, “Advanced Registered Nurse”)

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# Affordable Substance Abuse Treatment

## Overview

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### Introduction

Addiction and substance abuse are mental illnesses that have a profound impact on the ability of a person to function fully in society. They cause problems with school or work attendance and can prohibit normal functioning within families.

One-third of those who complete suicide have drugs or alcohol in their system at the time of death (*A Public Health Crisis*).

Substance abusers are frequently plagued by legal problems ranging from operating while intoxicated (OWI) charges to long-term incarceration. Iowa's prisons are a prime example, where 70% of inmates have substance use disorders (*A Public Health Crisis*). Effective substance abuse treatment is therefore an important feature for helping the residents of a community to succeed.

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### Methods

A wide-ranging search of internet sources was conducted, including the following:

- Intervention America
- Alcoholics Anonymous
- Iowa Department of Public Health

Interviews were conducted with personnel from a number of organizations, including:

- Lila Stafford from Powell Chemical Dependency Center
  - Carmen Clavin from Prelude Iowa
  - Megan Misner from Cornerstone Recovery Center
  - Heidi Geisler and Paige Geisenhoff from Life Works, Inc.
  - Elie Hays from the Ankeny Substance Abuse Project
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## Findings: Treatment Options

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### **Inpatient Treatment Options**

Large, multi-layered substance abuse treatment centers operate in the Des Moines area but are not found in Ankeny.

These include:

- Powell Chemical Dependency Center (CDC)
- First Step Mercy Recovery Center
- Prelude Iowa

Faith-based and for-profit treatment centers in the Des Moines area include Adult and Teen Challenge of the Midlands and St. Gregory's Retreat Center.

In the past, Cornerstone Recovery Center had an inpatient substance abuse treatment program in Ankeny. However, this facility, while still licensed for inpatient care, has been converted to provide outpatient care. Thus, there is no place for inpatient substance abuse care in Ankeny.

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### **Outpatient Care**

In Ankeny itself there are three substance abuse centers:

- Life Works, Inc.
- Cornerstone Recovery Center
- Ankeny Substance Abuse Project (ASAP)

Other forms of outpatient help can be found in Ankeny through the following:

- most mental health therapists
- numerous and ongoing meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)

There is some debate in the recovery community over whether AA should be classified as substance abuse “treatment” or as “support” for persons who have completed treatment (Stafford).

For its part, AA does not participate in this discussion, but sees itself as a fully developed program for alcoholics trying to get sober and stay sober. AA is a stable organization, operating in much the same manner since it was founded in Akron, Ohio in 1935 by Bill Wilson and Dr. Bob Smith (*Alcoholics Anonymous*).

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## Findings: Cost of Care

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### Treatment Costs

#### **Hospital Based Programs**

Powell CDC (Unity Point) and First Step Mercy Recovery (Mercy Des Moines), both hospital-based treatment centers, list payment options that include:

- self-payment
- Medicaid
- Medicare
- state-financed insurance (other than Medicaid)
- private health insurance
- military insurance

#### **For-Profit and Faith-Based Treatment Centers**

*Adult and Teen Challenge of the Midlands* (Teen Challenge of the Midlands):

- accepts cash and private insurance
- requires a \$20 application fee and a \$750 entry fee for a year-long residency

*Prelude Iowa* (Clavin):

- accepts cash, Medicare and private insurance
- offers financial assistance using a structured fee schedule based on income, with funds coming from the Iowa Department of Health

#### **Outpatient Treatment Programs**

*AA (Alcoholics Anonymous)*:

- free and open to everyone wanting to get sober

*Lifeworks Inc. and Cornerstone Recovery Center* accept (Geisenhoff, Misner):

- cash payment
- Medicaid
- private insurance

*ASAP* (Hays):

- accepts cash, Medicaid and third-party insurance
- provides services based on income or those with neither insurance nor the ability to pay. This resource can lower treatment costs to \$5-\$10 a day and is made possible by a State Magellan grant.

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## Findings: Ankeny Treatment Options

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### **Cornerstone Recovery Center**

Operated by Children and Families of Iowa, Cornerstone Recovery Center offers several options for youth and adult substance abuse treatment in Ankeny (*Intervention America*, “Substance Abuse Services”):

- outpatient treatment
- partial hospitalization
- day treatment
- extended outpatient services - six hours of group and individual education on the nature of substance abuse
- continuing care - individualized support for clients who have completed day treatment, outpatient or inpatient programs
- OWI assessments

Cornerstone Recovery Center also offers Prime for Life programming, which is a substance abuse diversion education program for first-time offenders ages 18 and under (“Substance Abuse Services”).

Through its umbrella organization Children and Families of Iowa, clients are also able to access additional teen programs and more comprehensive mental health services for all ages (including psychiatry). Its mental health programs in Ankeny are expanding. Often, clients with both mental health and substance abuse disorders can be simultaneously treated for both conditions by the same provider (Rogness and Bolsem).

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### **Life Works, Inc.**

Life Works, Inc. is a Des Moines-based company that offers both mental health and substance abuse treatment for adults, adolescents and children.

Life Works has a number of services, including (Geisler, *Life Works*):

- three certified drug and alcohol abuse counselors
- school-based mental health therapy
- free mental health therapy with counselors in training

Life Works recently expanded its Ankeny operations as a commitment to providing improved service to the community. As Office Manager Heidi Geisler said, “We’re not trying to make a dollar; we’re trying to make a difference (Geisler).”

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## Findings: Ankeny Treatment Options, *Continued*

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### **ASAP/United Community Services (UCS)**

In Ankeny, the primary option for low income individuals without insurance or Medicaid is the ASAP/UCS (Ankeny Substance Abuse Project/United Community Services) program. This treatment program is located in the Neveln Center.

The treatment center is staffed by one counselor whose schedule has been reduced to two days of treatment services per week (Hays). On Mondays and Wednesdays the counselor conducts ten hours of group meetings and also offers individual sessions. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, the treatment center is open for walk-in assessments from 1:00 PM-4:00 PM.

In the past the Ankeny center was staffed by a mental health therapist, but because of a heavy case load in the Des Moines UCS center, all the available therapists were transferred there (Hays). However, UCS is planning to expand its services in Ankeny. Mental health counseling will again be offered and a methadone maintenance program will be available (McNeley).

At one time there was a probation office located in the Neveln Center. Since many of the UCS clients are on probation and have been court ordered to treatment (see below), having a probation office nearby was a significant benefit. Unfortunately, after an arrest took place at the probation office, the Ankeny School District, which owns the Neveln Center, declined to continue providing space for the probation office (Hays).

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### **Clients at UCS**

As of May 2016, the counselor in Ankeny was seeing 25 clients, most of who were in their late teens and twenties (Hays). Since then, the groups of clients she meets with have gotten larger (Hays “Re:”). Of that number, 99% percent were “on paper” (i.e. court-ordered to treatment), mostly due to OWI or marijuana charges (Hays).

It is widely understood in the recovery community that alcoholics and addicts in this age group are difficult to work with because few have reached the point where they are able to understand that they have a substance abuse problem and that the only real solution to that problem is to stop using drugs and/or alcohol.

Lila Stafford, a chemical dependency counselor and aftercare coordinator at Powell CDC in Des Moines, observed that with two contact days a week, 25 clients, and most of them twenty-year-olds on paper, the Ankeny center is understaffed and that the counselor faces a formidable challenge (Stafford).

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## Findings: United Community Services

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### Challenges Faced by UCS Clients

Elie Hays, counselor at UCS, cited three primary areas of need that are common in substance abuse clients. These are listed below.

#### **Transportation**

Because of the legal charges they face, only half of the UCS clients in Ankeny have a driver's license, and since Ankeny has no intra-city public transportation, getting to and from meetings at the treatment center is a constant challenge.

For the most part, clients either have to ask others for rides or cobble together some other kind of transportation plan. This situation highlights a common area of tension between the court and treatment systems. On the one hand, drug and alcohol abusers who are charged and convicted of OWI automatically lose their driver's licenses. On the other hand, this means that when they are ordered to treatment, they might easily have no means of getting there.

#### **Transitional Services**

Transitional services help clients adjust both before and after treatment.

Before treatment, when clients might be transitioning out of jail or prison, many need assistance adjusting to life outside the system, including help finding a job and a place to live.

After treatment, many clients need assistance in order to establish a solid basis for a sober lifestyle. Some assistance at the ASAP/UCS is currently provided through Access to Recovery (ATR), with financing based on a three-year federal grant ("Access").

The ATR program was designed to provide support services for clients in order to remove barriers to recovery from substance abuse ("Access"). Services are funded through vouchers and can include ("Access"):

care coordination	life skills coaching
child care	co-pays
drug testing	recovery calls
recovery peer coaching	sober living activities
spiritual counseling	supplemental needs
integrated therapy	transportation

UCS is the only provider of ATR services in Ankeny. Access to Recovery services currently offered by UCS include gas cards, clothing vouchers, bus passes (of limited use in Ankeny), and YMCA membership (Hays).

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## Findings: United Community Services, *Continued*

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### **Challenges Faced by UCS Clients, *continued***

#### **Life Skills**

Since most of the clients are young and have been abusing drugs and alcohol for years, many of them have never:

- applied for or held a job
- participated in community culture
- taken out a lease
- had a bank account
- organized a daily, weekly, or monthly schedule
- dressed appropriately for a range of what many people would understand to be normal social situations like going to work, church, or the grocery store

Some of these needs could effectively be met by volunteers who have no other specialized knowledge than having developed these life skills in the course of living a sober life that includes a residence, a family, and a job (Hays).

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## Areas of Concern

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### **Availability of Care**

Outpatient substance abuse treatment is available in Ankeny, and services are being expanded by a number of organizations. The need for expansion of care is supported both by the client caseload at United Community Services (UCS) and the growth of the city of Ankeny. However, it is unclear whether the current expansion plans will be enough to serve the needs of Ankeny's population.

Further, Ankeny has lost the availability of local inpatient substance treatment. Since this is a recent development, the impact of this change is difficult to assess.

As time goes by, careful attention should be paid to whether levels of service and substance abuse care in Ankeny are sufficient to meet the needs in Ankeny.

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### **Transportation**

Lack of transportation commonly prevents clients from attending treatment sessions, particularly in cases complicated by OWI charges. Because of the nature of substance abuse disorders, lack of a driver's license will remain a common problem in this population.

The Access to Recovery program offers bus passes, but these are of limited utility. Clients going to appointments within the city of Ankeny don't have intra-city bus service for which these passes may be used.

Lack of public transportation within Ankeny places a barrier between substance abusers and access to treatment.

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### **Transitional Care/Life Skills**

Recovery from substance abuse entails much more than staying clean and sober. It presents the challenge of major changes in lifestyle and behavior. Clients need a variety of support systems to make these changes in order to have long-term success. These include transitional care and life skills training.

The Access to Recovery program acknowledges the needs of those in recovery and has the ability to provide for that services are needed. However, Ankeny only has one participating provider in this program, and this provider does not offer a full complement of services.

Additional support services for substance abuse clients in Ankeny should be identified and pursued.

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# Senior Population

## Overview

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### Introduction

Older people in a community both contribute to and need the support of the community. The elderly have many skills and experiences that are useful to the community.

Many are still working. Many make a substantial contribution by being very active in volunteer work during retirement. However, as people grow older, they may have medical, mobility, or financial challenges and need the support of the community. Therefore, the needs of the elderly in Ankeny were evaluated.

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### Methods

The evaluation was completed using several methods.

Statistical data from the 2010 census, the 2014 special census, and SeniorCare.com were reviewed and utilized.

Interviews were conducted with the following:

- Vickie Engh, Executive Director of the New Horizons Adult Day Center
- Mary Scaglione, Site Coordinator for the Polk County Senior Services and Supplemental Meal Program
- Maureen Schaeffer, Ankeny Site Coordinator of the Polk County Senior Services and Supplemental Meal Program
- Joyce Webb at Senior Services of Polk County

Websites and reviews of Ankeny senior living residences were investigated.

Information from articles authored by the Hale Group, an advocacy firm that supports aging and caregiving issues in Iowa, is included.

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## Findings: Demographics

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### Statistics

Iowa ranks seventh in the nation in the percent of our population ages 65 and over. People 85 and over are one of the fastest growing segments of the population (Hale “If You’re an Older Iowan”).

At the last census in 2010, Ankeny had a population of 45,582. According to SeniorCare.com, 8% of that population were seniors over age 65 (“Ankeny, IA Senior Guide”).

Thirteen percent of this Ankeny senior population received food stamps/SNAP benefits (“Ankeny, IA Population”). Two percent of this population had an income of less than \$10,000 per year (“Ankeny, IA Population”).

At the time of the special census in 2014, the population of Ankeny was 54,598, with 9.25% seniors (“City News”). With continued rapid growth, Ankeny’s population is projected to be close to 60,000 by 2017 (“Ankeny, IA Population”).

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### Table 1

To give an idea of the scope of these percentages and the implications for the elderly population, Table 1 interpolates the percentages to numbers for the population according to the 2010, 2014, and 2017 projections:

Demographics	2010	2014	2017
Number of seniors	3,646	5,050	5,550
Number receiving food stamps	475	656	721
Number living on less than \$10,000	72	101	111

Consistently with these projections, the Polk County Senior Supplemental Meal Program has gone from serving 50- 60 meals per day to 70-85 meals per day in the last 3 years (Scaglione).

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## Findings: Government Services

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### **Ankeny City Services**

A volunteer Ankeny Senior Services Committee organizes the annual Ankeny Senior Services Fair. Ankeny Community Education sponsors one low-cost senior meal with socialization per month, and sponsors several senior field trips per year (Engh).

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### **Polk County Services**

The Polk County Senior Services Center in Ankeny is located in the Neveln Center and does the following (Schaeffer):

- serves a free daily noon meal (Mon-Fri) to 70-85 people per day
- sponsors free wellness, exercise, and social programming
- provides professionals who come once a month to provide free blood pressure checks and low-cost foot care
- provides a free counselor once a month to talk with people and assist with mental health referrals
- disseminates a monthly senior bulletin with information of interest for older adults

They are 90% funded by Polk County and get some federal dollars for meals (Webb).

The Ankeny Community School district has an agreement that provides space for the program at Neveln Center (Webb).

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### **State Services**

Aging Resources of Central Iowa is an agency that serves an 8-county area including Polk County. It provides (Schaeffer):

- two caseworkers to provide information, assistance and case management
  - Ankeny-based services via the Polk County Senior Services Center
  - a family caregiver program
-

## Findings: Senior Living Facilities

### Senior Living Facilities

An increasing number of options for Ankeny senior living have become available in the past several years. An overview of senior living options is reported in Table 2 below.

**Table 2**      **Ankeny Senior Living Units**

Facility	Nursing Home Beds	Memory Care Beds	Assisted Living Units	Independent Living Units
<b>Sunny View</b>	94	None	None	None
<b>Mill Pond</b>	60	18 opening fall 2017	Currently 40 with 20 more opening in fall 2017	Currently 60 with 64 more opening in fall 2017
<b>The Bridges</b>	70	30	30 units when phase 2 completed	18 units when phase 2 completed
<b>Journey Senior Living</b>	None	20	65	None
<b>Vintage Hills</b>	None	18	44	Currently 47 with 45 more when phase 2 completed
<b>Courtyards at Rock Creek</b>	None	None	None	83 when this development is completed
<b>Maple Wood Village Condominiums</b>	None	None	None	173
<b>Oakwood Terrace Apartments</b>	None	None	None	12

(Ref: Sunny View, Mill Pond “Re: Services Provided”, The Bridges, Journey Senior Living, Vintage Hills, Courtyards at Rock Creek, Maple Wood Village, Oakwood Terrace)

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## Findings: Senior Living Facilities, *Continued*

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**Facility Costs** To give an idea of costs involved with living in one of the above housing options, Table 3 gives the monthly base charges for the living units available at Mill Pond.

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**Table 3**      **Monthly Base Cost for Units at Mill Pond**

Nursing Care Center	Memory Care	Assisted Living	Independent Living
\$4650	\$4865	\$3475 (one bedroom)	\$1315 (one bedroom)

(Ref: Mill Pond “Re: Charges”)

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**Staying at Home** Many seniors continue to live in their own homes as they age. Approximately 29% of seniors live alone (“Ankeny, IA Population”).

There are significant costs involved with living your senior years in your own home. For example, there are costs for:

- utilities
- homeowners insurance
- property maintenance
- property taxes

Taxes for a \$150,000 home in Ankeny are \$923 per year (“Tax Rates”).

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**Life Expectancy and Costs** In February of 2017, CNBC news reported on life expectancy research done by the World Health Organization and the Imperial College of London.

The average life expectancy for the United States was assessed at 76.5 years for men and 81.2 years for women (Meredith).

Due to the significant cost of living in Ankeny, as seniors live longer there is an increasing risk of outliving their savings and ability to support themselves.

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## Findings: The Future

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### **Impact of Budget Cuts**

The results of the recent legislative session have adversely affected older Iowans with (Hale “If You’re an Older Iowan”):

- “significant cuts to the Area Agencies on Aging, the Department on Aging and the Office of Long Term Care Ombudsman” [for residents living in Iowa’s nursing homes]
- “failure to consider needed programs that would address the immense challenges in recruiting, training, and retaining the health and long-term care workforce needed to support aging Iowans”
- “failure to address the needs of 300,00 family caregivers supporting their aging loved ones”

The impacts of the cuts and lack of action are significant (Hale “If You’re an Older Iowan”):

- waiting lists for assistance with home-delivered meals and housekeeping
- denials or delays in obtaining financial help for prescription medications, rent or home remodeling for accessibility
- fewer or delayed investigations of elder abuse or poor nursing home care

Medicaid privatization in Iowa has also affected seniors. The private Medicaid companies pay providers less for services and have cut services for some seniors (Engl).

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## Findings: The Future, *Continued*

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### Consulting Group on Aging Report

John Hale, of the Hale Group, a consulting and advocacy firm that supports thought and action on aging and caregiving issues, has discussed several areas of concern for the elderly in Iowa:

- **Long term care concerns:**
    - a) In 2013 nine ombudsmen were responsible for 53,287 people in 844 care facilities in Iowa. This is such an overwhelming responsibility that a volunteer ombudsman program was started in an attempt to deal with the workload (Mills and Horihan).
    - b) In Iowa, nursing homes are only required to have enough staff to answer a call light for help within 15 minutes (Hale “How Long”).
    - c) Direct care staff in long-term care facilities is overworked (due to low staffing), underpaid, inadequately trained, and have high turnover rates (Hale “Paid Caregiver”).
    - d) It is a problem that nursing homes are reimbursed for volume not for outcomes (Mills and Horihan).
  - **Home care issues:** It is preferable for elderly to “age in place” rather than go to long-term care facilities (Mills and Horihan). Home health caregivers are also underpaid, inadequately trained, undervalued and have high turnover rates (Hale “Paid Caregiver”).
  - **Support for family caregivers:** Whether due to choice and/or financial necessity, there are over 300,000 family caregivers supporting their elderly loved ones (Hale “Paid Caregiver”). A report by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering & Family Medicine titled “Families Caring for an Aging America” called for efforts to provide caregivers of older adults with training and evidence-based programs to help support them (National).
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## Areas of Concern

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### Housing

There has been a significant increase in available specialized housing for seniors in Ankeny. It should be noted that these housing options require a serious financial commitment. Some seniors will not be able to afford these options. It is also possible for seniors to outlive their retirement savings, which significantly impacts their housing options.

Many seniors age in their homes. Some prefer to do this and some can't afford to do anything else. Some seniors stay in their homes even when it is no longer safe to do so because they cannot afford to live anywhere else. How do we bridge these gaps?

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### Services

Services for Ankeny seniors who are facing medical, mobility, or financial difficulties are sometimes challenging for them to access especially if they don't have a family member to assist them. They may have memory issues or physical disabilities that interfere with successfully navigating the procedures necessary to access services. They may have transportation issues interfering with access to needed services, including the inability to afford reliable transportation. They may not be able to afford in-home services.

The Neveln Center, which houses the Polk County Senior Services Center in Ankeny, has some serious, costly, infrastructure issues and may need to be closed. If this happens, it will be very difficult to find an affordable replacement option for this important program for income-challenged seniors (Peterson).

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# Public Safety

## Overview

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### Introduction

Public safety is a key element to building a community. Residents need to feel that they are adequately protected from crime and that emergency needs will be met competently and in a timely manner.

Public safety officers are uniquely placed to identify the needs of those in the community with low incomes. Therefore, we chose to evaluate public safety within Ankeny as experienced and viewed by the departments and service personnel who work in this capacity for the Ankeny Police Department and the Ankeny Fire Department.

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### Methods

The evaluation was completed using several methods.

Interviews were conducted with the following:

- Brian Kroska of the Ankeny Police Department
- Frank Prowant and Kathy Swanson from the Ankeny Fire Department

A police ride along was undertaken with Officers Tony Higgins and Brian Menke.

The following sources were reviewed:

- annual reports of the Ankeny Police Department for 2014 and 2015
  - statistical data from the Ankeny Fire Department covering the period of time from January 2015 through September 2016
  - the City of Ankeny's website for information on the police and fire departments
  - the Iowa State Fire Marshal Division's website
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## Findings: Ankeny Police Department

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### Staffing

The Ankeny Police Department (APD)'s Full Time Equivalents (FTEs) (Ankeny 2015):

- 55 officers
- 9.5 civilians
- 16 crossing guards

This is an increase of one FTE of officers from 2014 (Ankeny 2014). The number of sworn officers per 1,000 residents has not kept up with population growth, decreasing from 1.11 in 2011 to 0.97 in 2015 (Ankeny 2015).

Officers report that the department is doing a good job of increasing staffing as the city grows (Higgins and Menke). The Ankeny Police Department's long-term officer turnover rate is 4.4 per year (Ankeny 2015). In 2015, four officers left the APD (Ankeny 2015).

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### Crime Calls

Ankeny is a safe city. It ranks third for safety among all cities in the state of Iowa and is the safest city in the state with a population over 20,000 (Ankeny 2015).

Calls for service have increased steadily over the past 7 years and are considered to be consistent with population growth. According to the APD 2015 annual report (Ankeny 2015):

- In 2015, there were greater than 39,000 calls for service, with only 15% of these resulting in a criminal report.
- In the past five years, the annual number of cases of assault, rape, burglary, motor vehicle theft and arson has risen, but reports of theft from a motor vehicle, robbery and theft from a building have decreased.
- Traffic accidents have increased in Ankeny in the past five years, with 1481 crashes in 2015. This is thought to be due to distracted driving as well as increased traffic.

Officers feel that Ankeny's citizens would be less likely to be crime victims if they closed their garage doors and locked doors (Higgins and Menke).

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## Findings: Ankeny Police Department, *Continued*

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### Service Calls

Ankeny's service needs "are not always associated with an increase in crime but more social intervention such as the mental health and welfare calls (Ankeny 2015)." Officers estimate that 10-25% of calls relate to mental health issues (Higgins and Menke).

Calls for mental health issues and welfare checks continued to increase in 2015:

- 500 calls for welfare checks were reported (Ankeny 2015)
  - 40 service calls in 2015 related to suicide, increased from 33 in 2014 (Ankeny 2014, Ankeny 2015)
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### Identified Needs

The department reports that nearly 70% of officers' workload does not concern law enforcement (Ankeny 2015).

Police officers indicate that mental health services are lacking, and "it's something we deal with every day (Kroska)." Police may be called to assist citizens with mental health issues because their caregivers don't know where else to turn.

Medical and psychiatric training for staff has increased dramatically in an effort to adequately address mental health needs.

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## Findings: Ankeny Fire Department

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### Staffing

The Ankeny Fire Department has 40.25 FTEs, including 29.25 FTEs of emergency medical services staff (Financial Department).

The department has two ambulances available 24 hours a day, one additional ambulance available from 6am to 6pm each day, and one on-call ambulance that responds to emergencies as needed (“Emergency”). Each ambulance is staffed with two personnel (“Emergency”).

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### Services

The Ankeny Fire Department (AFD) provides fire protection and emergency and non-emergency ambulance services to the cities of Ankeny, Alleman, Elkhart and surrounding areas (“Emergency”).

Ambulance calls:

- include basic and advanced life support services (“Emergency”)
- comprise 74% of service calls (Prowant and Swanson)
- numbered 2833 in calendar year 2015 (Prowant)

The last fire-related death in Ankeny occurred in 2010, when an elderly woman died from a fire in a double-wide manufactured home (“2010”). There have been no other fire-related deaths in Ankeny in the past 10 years (“2010”).

A number of additional community services are provided by the Ankeny Fire Department, including:

- smoke alarm installation
- CPR/first aid training
- babysitting classes

The department is developing a program for assessing hazards in the home.

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## Findings: Ankeny Fire Department, *Continued*

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### **Common Denominators**

Those in need of services often include people with issues of alcohol, drug or tobacco use.

Public assistance calls generally include (Prowant and Swanson):

- falls in the home
- transport of patients from the home to a private vehicle (provided at no charge)
- treatment of diabetics in the home (a billed service due to frequent needs for medication administration)

Department representatives report an increase in Medicaid patients of all ages (Prowant and Swanson).

While data indicate that mental health calls comprise less than 5% of ambulance calls, anecdotal reports indicate that calls related to both mental health and the elderly are increasing (Prowant).

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## Findings: Ankeny Fire Department, *Continued*

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### Identified Needs

Ankeny Fire Department sources report that low income residents may be hesitant to call 911 for assistance because of inability to pay (Prowant and Swanson). The department does work with residents in need to develop payment plans, writing off claims if necessary (Prowant and Swanson).

EMS is allowed to transport patients only to the hospital. Some patients could be adequately treated in a clinic setting but end up in the emergency room due to lack of transportation. Patients have been known to call for ambulance transport to the hospital in order to obtain a ride to Des Moines for non-medical reasons (Prowant and Swanson). Staff note that a taxi voucher program would be helpful.

Fire department staff report that “people don’t know where to turn” (Prowant and Swanson), so the fire department is a common source for referrals to local assistance agencies.

Fire Department staff indicate a strong need for advocates or case managers for the elderly and mentally ill.

Another option would be provision of specialized community paramedicine programs to provide post-hospitalization or mental health evaluations. Such programs would require additional training and coordination with other disciplines, but could decrease repeat 9-1-1 calls and improve community health (Bronsky et al.). Fire department staff would like to develop a task force to address these issues.

It is quite possible that the intensity of services or time requirements in caring for the elderly or mentally ill make their frequency of ambulance calls a poor measure of their needs.

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## Areas of Concern

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### **Mental Health Care Access**

Both the Ankeny Fire Department and the Ankeny Police Department expressed concerns about the frequency of calls related to mental health issues. These calls seem to be reflective of gaps in care for patients with mental illness.

Caregivers for those with urgent mental health needs often don't know what services are available or how to access them. Support systems for mental health patients are inadequate, and there is a lack of crisis care within the city of Ankeny.

AFD and APD care for mental health patients as well as they are able, but cannot provide the ongoing care that these patients need.

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### **Transportation**

The AFD acknowledges that it receives calls from patients who really only need transportation but have no other means of transport. Most of these calls are related to medical care needs. These result in patients receiving expensive and unnecessary emergency room care in situations where a physician's office or urgent care clinic would suffice.

A few calls are simply from people who use medical needs as an excuse to obtain a ride. In either case, improved public transportation within the city of Ankeny would provide a much better and more cost-effective way to meet residents' needs.

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