

# In the Middle

JANUARY 2025 NEWSLETTER



# PEOSTA

Middle of everywhere



## **City Council Meeting**

**January 14 & January 28th**

City Council Chambers  
Visit the City of Peosta [website](#) for Agenda and Minutes.

## **Christmas Tree**

### **Pick-Up**

**January 9th**

**(Tags can be purchased at City Hall for \$3.00-cash or check only)**

Happy New Year!

*"You can get excited about the future. The past won't mind."*

### **Hillary DePiano**

I would like to start this column thanking each one of you who contributed to the Salvation Army Kettle campaign! I am proud to announce that Peosta won the Battle of the Cities and raised the most money! Final numbers have not been tallied but we raised over \$750 – over \$100 over second place Epworth!

As we embark on 2025, I am excited to see what the new year will bring! My last 1½ years have been filled with many weddings – all 4 of my children decided to get married beginning in July of 2023 through August of 2024! This filled much of our schedule and what our future had looked like! This year will bring a new grandchild, so we are excited to continue adding to our family!

Last year at this time I proposed everyone perhaps not make resolutions and just have a mindset to improve themselves in small ways each day. Ask yourself if you did that or not and wonder about whether you can improve on your effort for 2025.

For Peosta there are always new things happening. The new year is starting with a bang with Merit Development's announcement that a Mexican Restaurant will be added to the Peosta Square building!! Congratulations to Wes Schulte and his team for securing this new business and added amenity for Peosta! I believe the first thing I heard when I became mayor was that we need a Mexican Restaurant!

The council and I are going to be working with city administration on the budget for the coming fiscal year. Money continues to be tight so we will be making decisions about what can be done within the confines of said budget. Let us know what your priorities are so we can factor those into our decisions.

My belief is Peosta will continue to grow and prosper in the

new year and that will make for a better community.

"No matter how hard the past, you can always begin again."

### Buddha

Peosta is truly the Middle of Everywhere and always a hub of activity!

*Russ Pfab*  
City of Peosta Mayor

## Iowa Property Tax information for 2025



### Clear as Mud

*Mickey Shields, Deputy Director for the Iowa League of Cities. He can be reached at (515) 244-7282 or mickeyshields@iowaleague.org.*

Iowa's property tax system has long been the source of confusion and generates countless questions for those that serve in local government along with residents and business owners. It's impossible to capture all of those questions in an article, but the following covers a few of the more common questions that arise.

#### **Q: How are property values assessed?**

Like nearly everything with Iowa's property tax system, assessments are done in a fairly complicated way that is dictated by the *Code of Iowa*. However, the basic element is a fair market value – assessors largely make their determinations in accordance with market activity. City governments have no control over the assessment methods or the actual values.

Assessors must follow the prescribed method under the state code with properties broken into five categories:

- Agricultural
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Railroad/Utilities
- Residential

There are three approaches assessors use to determine values: Market Approach, Cost Approach and Income Approach. Each has an emphasis on a property's market value according to recent sales of comparable property, how much the property would cost if it had to be replaced and its earning capacity.

It's critical to understand that these are fair market values – they can increase, decrease or be stagnant. And, they are the starting point for local governments when it comes to property taxes, but the values are not used for taxation purposes.

Property Tax Assessment in Iowa

See the League's Property Tax Assessment report for more information.

#### **Q: What is the taxable value?**

A separate value, the taxable value, is what is used when local governments apply their property tax rate to properties. This is derived each year from the State of Iowa's Assessment Limitation System, better known as the "rollback". The state legislature adopted this system in the mid-1970s with 1978 the first year of implementation.

This is another element of the property tax system that is very complex, but the basic premise of the rollback system is to restrict the allowable growth of taxable values from year to year. For residential and agricultural property, this is done by calculating the statewide assessed valuations – if the growth exceeds 3%, the taxable value has to be rolled back to that cap. For commercial, industrial and railroad property, there is simply a 10% rollback (meaning 90% of the assessed value of those properties is the portion subject to taxation; however, recent legislation created an additional rollback for business properties that says the first \$150,000 of value is subject to the current residential rollback percentage with any remaining amount subject to the 90% rollback).

The taxable value, then, is the key number for local governments when it comes to figuring out property tax revenues. And, the rollback percentage for the residential class changes depending on market activity – it is currently

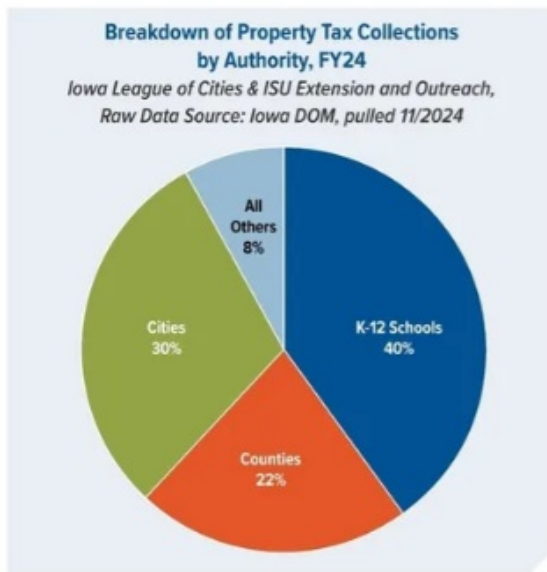
46.3428%. A home with an assessed value of \$200,000 currently has a taxable value of \$92,686 and that is the value that local property tax rates are applied to.

It is also important to note that property owners may be eligible for various tax credits, including credits for elderly homeowners, military veterans and the Homestead Credit. These reduce a recipient's property tax bill in different ways.

### Q: What is the consolidated tax rate?

This is the total tax rate that property owners pay for property taxes. Sounds simple, right? Once again, this is another element that can get fairly complicated. The consolidated tax rate is the individual rates each local taxing authority sets annually – this includes the city and county governments, school district, community college and others depending on local circumstances (such as a county hospital in some locations).

Each entity has separate and independent authority to adopt its tax rate and annual budget, which is critically important to understand. Most city residents, upon receiving their property tax bill, tend to believe the entire obligation is due to the city government. However, this is not true as cities, on average, are only about 30% of the property tax bill.



### Q: How are property tax bills calculated?

As detailed above, the consolidated tax rate is the total rate used when calculating a property's tax obligation. This rate is applied to a property's **taxable** value, which again, is not the assessed value due to the state's rollback system. The taxable value is always less than the full assessed value of a property.

The formula in the state code says the tax rate is applied to each \$1,000 of taxable value. This is done in aggregate with the consolidated tax rate and property owners submit their payments to their respective county government. Property taxes are due in March and September of each year and county treasurers then remit to each taxing authority their property tax revenues the following month.

### Q: If a property's assessed value increases by a certain percentage (say 10%) does that mean the property owner's property tax obligation goes up the same amount?

NO! This is a common fallacy, unfortunately, as most directly tie their property's assessed valuation to what their annual property tax obligation will be. As described above, assessed values are based on a fair market value as determined by local assessors. They can go up, but they also can go down.

Meanwhile, the rollback system along with other exemptions restricts the growth of taxable values. For residential properties, in particular, the 3% cap on taxable valuation growth ensures minimal increases even in years where residential assessed values increase on a statewide basis.

This was illustrated in an article the Des Moines Register published on September 5, 2024 where it was reported that Polk County saw a total assessment increase of 22%, which was a historical record. However, the average property tax obligation only increased by 2.9%. ⏪

Permission to post article from Mickey Shields, Deputy Director for the Iowa League of Cities  
[Article Link](#)



## City of Peosta Police Department

Snow season has arrived and will here for the next couple of months. The Peosta Police Department has a few reminders for residents to help make street cleanup safe and more efficient for our Public Works Department.

When possible, please remove vehicles from streets during snow falls. Parking is available for residents at the northeast corner of the Peosta Community Centre (upper lot). Stay tuned



to local media outlets, City Facebook page, and City website for announcements of "snow emergencies." There will be no parking allowed on streets during this time.

### **Sidewalks**

In order to provide a safe community, it is important to maintain clear and safe sidewalks during the winter months. Walkers/runners/and children walking to school or bus stops are still utilizing the sidewalks daily. Property owners are responsible for removal of snow and ice from all sidewalks that abut their private property within 24 hours after snowfall ends.

## **Snow Emergency Information**

During a Snow Emergency there will be no parking allowed on City streets to allow for snow removal. Parking on lawns is prohibited as well as shoveling/blowing snow into the street. Snow Emergencies will be posted on the City Website and Facebook. Utility Customers can sign up through FrontDesk for text messages.

### **Sign Up Instructions**

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### ***Did you Know?***

If you receive a citation from local law enforcement, do you know where the money to the citation goes? Well, here is a breakdown. For example: If you were to get a citation for speeding on Peosta Street for 10 mph over the speed limit {35 mph in a 25mph zone} the citation breaks down to:

Fine amount- \$55.00  
Surcharge- \$8.25  
Court Cost- \$55.00  
Total Fine Cost-\$135.50

The fine amount of \$55.00 goes back to the agency's city/county that wrote the citation.

The surcharge of \$8.25 according to the Iowa Legislature, in section 911.1 of the Iowa Code, requires the court to add a 15% crime services surcharge to fines imposed in all criminal cases, but not on parking violations under city or county ordinances. The crime services surcharge funds a wide variety of services across the state.

The court cost of \$55.00 is a standard fee for the clerk of court to process for either court proceedings or clerical disposition of the citation. Court costs are a separate fee that you pay if you go to court and plead guilty or are found guilty. You only pay court costs once, regardless of how many court dates you have or how many tickets you received.

The fine amount and surcharge differ in amounts for different citations {example- failure to wear seatbelt citation fine is \$70.00 and the surcharge is \$10.50 with the court cost of \$55.00 equals the total fine cost of \$135.50}. In Iowa, the cost of a citation depends on the type of violation and the circumstances. The commissioner of public safety, the director of transportation, and the director of the department of natural resources jointly adopt uniform citation and complaint forms for traffic violations in Iowa. These forms are used for all traffic violations that are charged under state law, local regulation, or ordinance.

Traffic fines and court fees in Iowa are generally uniform across the state, but may vary by violation. You can find the total fine amount on your ticket, unless it's marked as non-scheduled. If your ticket is non-scheduled, you'll need to appear in court, where you may be notified of your fine costs. You can also contact the court clerk or look up the fine on the court payment website. You can contest your traffic ticket in court in Iowa. Paying the ticket fine is usually considered an admission of guilt.

**What to Do When You Get a Traffic Ticket in Iowa?**

If you receive a traffic ticket in Iowa, you are required to respond to the ticket by the date indicated on the ticket, or risk added consequences. You can decide to either

- **Accept Guilt and pay off the ticket.**
- **Reject the charge and contest the ticket.**

To pay off the ticket, enter a plea of “Guilty” or “No Contest”. A guilty plea indicates acceptance of your guilt, regarding the charges. A no-contest plea informs that while you are not admitting guilt to the charges, you do not wish to contest them. Both pleas may result in the same actions. The ticket can be paid:

- **Online-** Using the Iowa Courts online payment system. You may require the citation number, full name and the county where the ticket was issued.
- **Mail-** A copy of the ticket with the total fine amount to the clerk of the court where the ticket was issued, and this is usually noted near the top of the ticket.
- **In-Person-** You can go to the county court listed on the ticket in person and make the payment.

**How Long Does a Traffic Ticket Stay on Your Record in Iowa?** In Iowa, traffic tickets from moving violations stay on the driver's record for 5–12 years, depending on the type and severity of the offense.

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# COURAGE IN BLUE. COMPASSION IN RED.

**BLUE BLOOD BLOOD DRIVE**

## Peosta Community BLOOD DRIVE



FREE shirt for all donors while supplies last!

**Friday,  
January 17th**

**10:00am - 1:00pm**

Community Center Meeting Room  
7896 Burds Road  
Peosta, IA 52068



TEXT lifeserve to 999-777 | CALL 800.287.4903 | VISIT [lifeservebloodcenter.org](http://lifeservebloodcenter.org)



**LifeServe**  
BLOOD CENTER

**YOUR BLOOD. YOUR HOSPITAL. YOUR NEIGHBORS.**

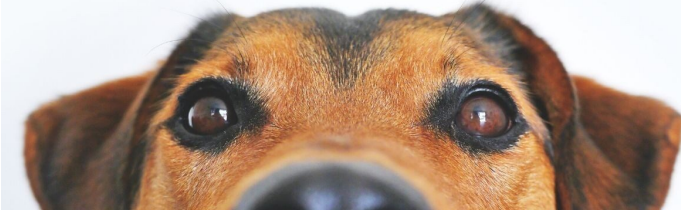
## Dog Licenses

### Front Desk Instructions for Paying for your Dog License

Click on the Link Below  
Home | [gWorks - FrontDesk](http://gWorks - FrontDesk)  
([frontdeskworks.com](http://frontdeskworks.com))

- Left side Click on "Forms"

# is your dog licensed?



- Right Side “Select a Form to Begin”
- Scroll down and choose Dog License
- We will approve your permit through

Dog license payments were due January 1st. If you have not paid for your dog license, please do so as soon as possible. You can pay online or by dropping your payment off at the payment box which is located in the upper parking lot of the Peosta Community Centre.

Licenses will be mailed to residents who pay online through FrontDesk, mail in their payment (PO Box 65), or drop off in the Utility payment box. Dog licenses are \$20 per dog.

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## Public Works

Royals Oaks Neighborhood Residences: The Comprehensive water meter replacement program to replace all of Peosta residents' water meters started in the spring of 2019. The Public Works Department is currently in the process of changing out all water meters in the Royal Oaks Neighborhood.

The new equipment will allow all meters to be read by Peosta Public Works employees as they drive through town. Public Works will be contacting residents with door tags when they are ready to switch out your water meter. There is no fee to the residents to change out the water meter. The City will incur the costs of cost of the new meter.

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## Community Heart and Soul



We've got some updates for you from your Peosta Community Heart and Soul team:

1. Many thanks to Gerry Hess who designed our logo (above). We wanted to be distinct but similar to the city's logo. The words Today. Tomorrow. Together signify the work we will do together in the upcoming months.
2. Our application for Seed Grant funding has been approved by the Community Heart and Soul folks in Vermont. Next steps include creating a community network map (formal and informal groups in Peosta), planning public activities and outreach to Peosta residents, and creating/filling volunteer roles for this process
3. Our core team consists of Lynn Randall, Judy Knowler, Robin Banyasz, Chelle Klootwyk, Denise Simms, Madison Randall and Luke Boyle. We continue to look



for additional core team members (core team members meet virtually weekly to keep the project on track, plan events, and strategize about the best ways to reach all Peosta residents with our messages).

4. If meetings aren't your thing, we will need help with:

- **Story gathering.** A big part of Heart & Soul is talking with our neighbors and doing short interviews about what they love about Peosta and what would make it even better. You'd be interviewing friends and neighbors, but we also have residents who are "missing voices" that we'd be seeking out to get their input. These would be done on your own schedule. It's a great way to get to know your community better and meet new people!
- **Data analysis.** Through interviews and surveys, we'll be collecting a LOT of data about what folks in Peosta care about and ideas for strengthening our town. We need help sorting and coding that data. This is a task that could be done at home on your own schedule.
- **Communications.** Consistent, clear, and fun messaging to the community through social media, videos, articles, press releases, etc. is an important way to keep our residents involved and engaged. If you are a good writer, enjoy using social media, or have graphic design skills, this could be a good fit. This can be done at home on your own schedule.
- **Events.** Over the next six months we'll be attending community events to connect with people and hosting a few of our own events to report back our results, get residents together to prioritize ideas for action, and celebrate all we've accomplished. If you'd like to help organize and staff these events, we can use your help.

5. A Peosta Community Heart and Soul Facebook page has been created, and our gmail address is [peostaheartandsoul@gmail.com](mailto:peostaheartandsoul@gmail.com). Please reach out if interested in helping with this project. Thank you

# Kelly Oaks Park

As we usher in the new year, we want to take a moment to reflect on our journey and express our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who has supported us with their generous donations. We eagerly anticipate completing Kelly Oaks Park and creating a wonderful space for our community.

#### Donors:

- Mi-T-M
- Dupaco
- Skul Family
- Kikendall Family (In memory of Betty and Gene Kelly.)
- Kelly Family
- Steffen Family
- Elsinger Family

#### Grants:

- Dubuque County SWAP Grant
- Wellmark Grant
- Resource Enhancement and Protection Grant



Scan the QR code to support your park!  
Or contact Stacey at [sbauer@cityofpeosta.org](mailto:sbauer@cityofpeosta.org)



Goal: \$1.3 Million





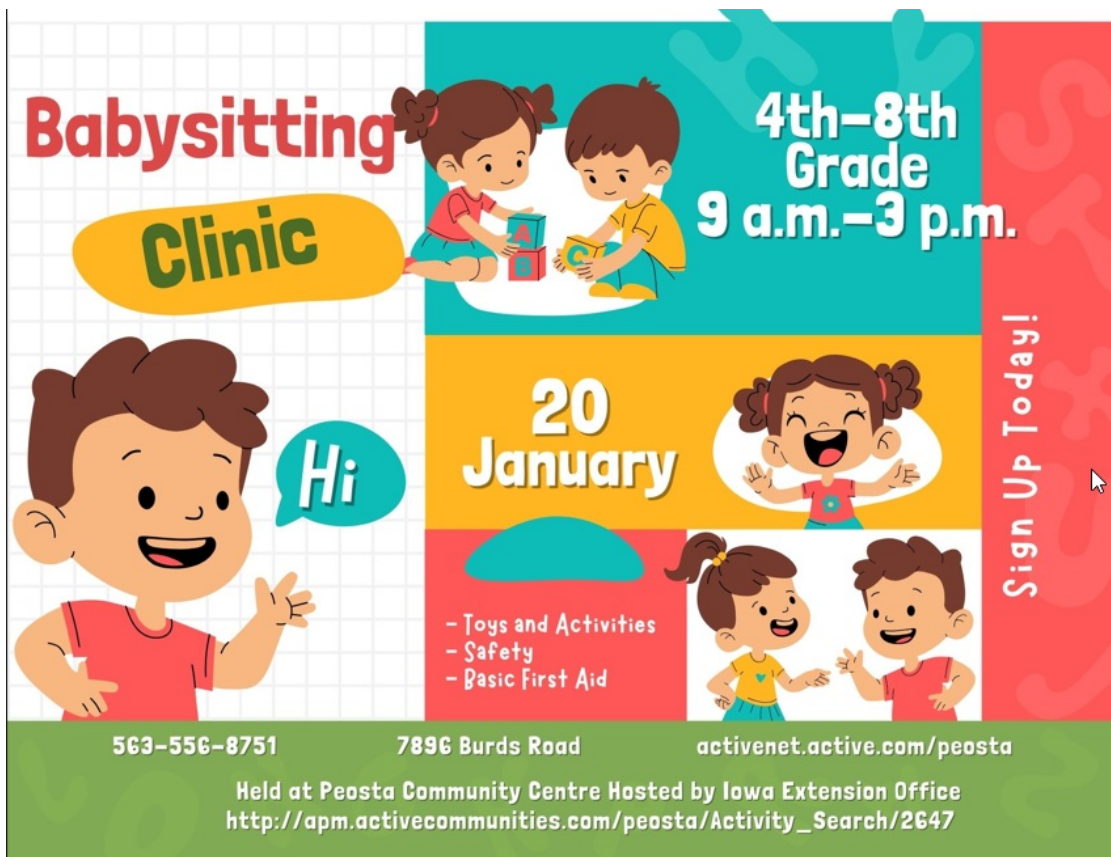
Registration is now open for  
Baseball and Softball

[Baseball](#)  
[Softball](#)

Gym Closures for  
basketball/volleyball/Tennis courts

January 11th  
January 18th  
January 25th  
January 26th

[City of Peosta January Newsletter](#)



**Babysitting Clinic**

4th-8th Grade  
9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Hi

20 January

- Toys and Activities
- Safety
- Basic First Aid

Sign Up Today!

563-556-8751      7896 Burds Road      [activenet.active.com/peosta](http://activenet.active.com/peosta)

Held at Peosta Community Centre Hosted by Iowa Extension Office  
[http://apm.activecommunities.com/peosta/Activity\\_Search/2647](http://apm.activecommunities.com/peosta/Activity_Search/2647)



**PICKLEBALL  
OPEN GYM**

**THURSDAYS**

FREE FOR MEMBERS  
\$10 FOR NONMEMBERS

6:00-8:00 P.M.

STARTING JANUARY 9TH



**EUCHRE**

3rd Tuesday of every month  
**FREE**  
 1:00pm  
 Meeting Room  
 (Lower Level)



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## Dubuque County Library

PEOSTA / NICC BRANCH 8342 NICC Drive Peosta, IA 52068 Phone | 563-556-5110 ext.2224

### Peosta Storytime

Tuesdays  
 9:00 am — 9:30 am  
 Join Ms. Teresa for a half hour with some reading, rhymes, and playing with friends. Designed for children 2.5 – 5, but younger and older siblings or friends are welcome.

### SNACKtivity: S'mores Cups

January 8, 2025  
 3:00 pm — 3:45 pm SNACKtivity, where creativity and fun come together through food! Join Ms. Julia to make S'mores Cups.

### Bill Mueller: Author Talk

Monday, January 13 @ 6:00 pm  
 Join Bill Mueller, retired teacher and author of *Time to Ship Another Steer*, as he shares heartfelt and humorous stories about growing up as one of 11 children on a farm in Kenosha, WI. His book highlights the joys and challenges of farm life and emphasizes the importance of preserving family stories and histories for future generations. Don't miss this inspiring talk about family, heritage, and the power of storytelling! RSVP recommended.

### Dubuque County Library Events

### Nature Squad: Pine Discovery Bottles

Wednesday, January 29 @ 3:00 pm - 3:45 pm  
 Nature Squad: Bringing the fun of the outdoors into the library with hands-on nature-themed activities that will spark kids' love for the natural world and encourage them to explore nature....

### Kids Craft Club: Snow Globes

Wednesday, January 29 @  
 3:00 pm - 3:45 pm  
 Join us for a monthly craft project for kids! In January we're making snow globes.



(563) 556-8755

[City of Peosta Website](#)



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