

Program Overview

The city of Morning Sun is one of 10 communities selected to participate in the 2017 Iowa’s Living Roadways Community Visioning Program. The program, which selects communities through a competitive application process, provides professional planning and design assistance along transportation corridors to small Iowa communities (populations of fewer than 10,000).

Goals for the Visioning Program include:

- Developing a conceptual plan and implementation strategies with local communities;
- Enhancing the natural, cultural, and visual resources of communities;
- Assisting local communities in using external funds as leverage for transportation corridor enhancement.

Each visioning community is represented by a steering committee of local residents and stakeholders who take part in a series of meetings that are facilitated by field coordinators from Trees Forever. Iowa State University organizes ISU faculty and staff as well as private sector design firms.



Community members write down what enhancements they would like incorporated into the parks.

Community Goals

The Morning Sun visioning committee identified a number of goals during the visioning process. The primary goals are listed below:

- 1) Improve pedestrian accessibility/connectivity throughout town.  
There is a need for accessible and complete sidewalk segments throughout town, especially to the downtown district, Morning Sun School/Lion’s Locust Grove Park, Hoover Nature Trail, the Morning Sun Care facility, and businesses along Highway 78.
- 2) Enhance the downtown streetscape.  
With few businesses left in the downtown area there is the need to improve its marketability and draw businesses and people back into the downtown area.
- 3) Integrate the Hoover Nature Trail into the community.  
The Hoover Nature Trail is an asset to the community but is not highly visible to visitors and it should be better identified and integrated into the community.
- 4) Create more play opportunities.  
There needs to be more opportunities for play, especially for the pre-K aged children and the physically disabled. The parks need to be sustainable and provide shade and parking. There should also be an attraction for the community such as a splash pad.

Addressing the Goals

In developing concepts to address the goals and concerns identified by community members, the design team followed the "Complete Streets" model which balances convenience with safety for everyone using the road. By definition, "Complete Streets" is the planning and design approach that requires street corridors to be planned, designed, operated and maintained to enable safe, convenient and comfortable travel and access for users of all ages and abilities regardless of their mode of transportation, including bicyclists and pedestrians.

Other guiding principles for the development of the concepts, most of which fall under the "Complete Streets" model or are an indirect result of it, were the following:

- 1) Creating a sense of place;
- 2) Strengthening the main transportation corridors;
- 3) Improving accessibility and connectivity;
- 4) Incorporating sustainability;
- 5) Enhancing community and public spaces;
- 6) Creating inclusive outdoor recreation activities for all ages and abilities;
- 7) Identifying and highlighting opportunities within the community.

Capturing the Morning Sun Vision

Based on the aforementioned, the design team developed a conceptual transportation enhancement plan which is illustrated in the following set of presentation boards.

1. Program Overview
2. Bioregional Assessments
3. Transportation Assets and Barriers Assessment (TAB)
4. Transportation Inventory
5. Concept Plan Overview
6. Pedestrian Connectivity Overview
7. Pedestrian Connectivity
8. Proposed Greenspace: South Park
9. Proposed Greenspace: City Park
10. Proposed Greenspace: Hoover Park
11. Gateways & Way-finding
12. Primary Corridors & Stormwater Management
13. Downtown Enhancements 1
14. Downtown Enhancements 2



Community members review the TAB boards at the design workshop.



Community members look over playground equipment books with one of the visioning committee members during the design workshop.



Community and committee members had the opportunity to work with the design team to develop concept plans that reflected their community needs and desires during the design workshop.