

# Iowa's Living Roadways Community Visioning 2016

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**Community: St. Ansgar**  
**Minutes by Trees Forever Field Coordinator: Meredith Borchardt**  
**Date and Time: Saturday, April 9, 2016, 9:00 am**  
**Meeting Length: 7 hours**  
**Location: St. Ansgar City Hall**  
**Meeting #4, Transportation Assets and Barriers**

**Number of committee members in attendance: 8**

**Names of committee members in attendance:** Bonnie Eustice, Barb Groth, Myrna Jorgensen, Daria Jorgensen, Karen Robertson, Devin Schwiesow, Brad Mayer, Bryan Mayer; plus ISU interns Anh, Amanda, and Eric, facilitator Abbie Gaffey, court reporter Erin, and Meredith Borchardt (Trees Forever)

## **Meeting Summary:**

The Transportation Assets and Barriers focus groups were held at the First Lutheran Church Parish Hall. We followed this schedule:

9:00 – 11:00– seniors  
10:00 – 12:00- active recreationists  
11:00-1:00– parents and youth  
1:00-3:00- steering committee  
3:30- wrap up

A total of 16 participants participated in the focus groups- 6 seniors, 1 active recreationist, 2 parents, 1 youth and 6 steering committee members. A number of common themes and new project ideas emerged throughout the day, in addition to some projects that have already been voiced by the committee. At the end of the day seven people (mostly committee members) gathered to hear a summary of the day's activity. Meredith gave brief context for how today's meeting fits into the Visioning process, told about upcoming Visioning meetings, and shared highlights from the day's discussions:

- There are a lot of walkers in St. Ansgar – across all demographic groups community members said they do a lot of walking. Most walk in the streets in residential areas where traffic is low. The new paved walking trail near the school is heavily used for walking, plus running.
- Biking is also a popular activity. The bike share program in town has been heavily used and has made biking more accessible. One popular route for biking (and jogging) is Old Mill Road, to get from town to the river and a fishing area.
- Desired pedestrian connections would be getting from the community to the Hamlin Garland Recreation area north of town and the golf course west of town.
- In terms of barriers, the railroad crossings were mentioned across all demographic groups. Crossing the railroad is challenging for parents with strollers, young kids riding bikes, bikes with training wheels, scooters, and small cars. The crossing on 4<sup>th</sup> Street will be improved in the near future.
- The most common amenity or asset mentioned was shade; people in the community value their shade trees. The DNR recently completed an inventory of all public trees

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in the community and management plan. Working on a plan to replant while removing aging and diseased trees is a top priority.

- Project ideas included adding lighting to the paved trail (maybe solar) so it could be used at night, enhancing Clausen Park (parking, new playground equipment, new base for it that doesn't wash away, different landscaping, address water issues), flags on 4<sup>th</sup> Street (make them more permanent or displayed more frequently), improve welcome sign on south and north sides of town, add landscaping to Angel Park, designate a crosswalk on Highway 105.

Amanda overviewed the Visioning website [www.communityvisioning.org](http://www.communityvisioning.org) which is hosted by Iowa State University and has with lots of information for current and past communities. We looked at several of the pictures of assets and barriers taken during the day, and read their descriptions. Amanda showed how to segment and just see photos of one group on the composite map. She also shared how to zoom in on a photo to see it in a larger size. The interns provided cards for people to take home to help navigate to the website and find the information gathered from today's workshop. We also saw how to find past participating communities and to see their project ideas.

The next Visioning meetings will be held on Tuesday, May 17. At 3:00 there will be a transportation meeting with a few committee members, Meredith, the design team, and staff from the Iowa D.O.T. district planning office, county engineer, and Council of Governments (NIACOG). At 6:30 the committee will meet with Meredith and the design team to review all of the assessment information gathered to date. The day wrapped up about 4:15.