

Program Overview

The City of Varina 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 (less than 10,000 residents).

Visioning Program Goals:

1. Develop a conceptual plan and implementation strategies alongside local community residents.
2. Enhance natural, cultural, and visual resources existing within communities.
3. Assist local communities in using external funds as leverage for transportation corridor enhancement.

Each visioning community works through a planning process consisting of four phases of concept development:

1. Program initiation
2. Needs assessment and goal setting
3. Development of a concept plan
4. Implementation and sustained action strategies

Each visioning community is represented by a steering committee of local residents and stakeholders who take part in a series of meetings and focus groups that are facilitated by field coordinators from Trees Forever. The Community Visioning Program, as part of Iowa State University's Landscape Architecture Extension, organizes initial focus groups as well as transportation needs and behaviors surveys with design interns. The program is sponsored by the Iowa Department of Transportation.

Community Goals

The Varina Steering Committee identified a number of goals and priority areas during the visioning process: an improved sidewalk system, safety, signage, and economic development.

Capturing the Varina Vision

Based on the needs and desires of the local residents, as well as a detailed inventory of community resources, the design team developed transportation-based community improvement project concepts, which are illustrated in the following set of presentation boards:

1. Program Overview
2. Bioregional Assessments
3. Transportation Assets and Barriers
4. Transportation Inventory and Analysis
5. Goal Setting
6. Concept Overview
7. Walking Trails
8. Recreational Amenities
9. Sidewalk System
10. Signage and Wayfinding
11. Visual Quality
12. Economic Development
- 13a. Timeline: Tracing the Possible Future
- 13b. Timeline: Tracing the Possible Future



Steering committee members Dick and Nancy provide feedback on design graphics.



Even the youngest visionaries got involved during the design workshop.



Preparations are being made for Grandpa's Barn to sow many seeds.



The steering committee highlights important areas for goal setting to the design team.