

2022 Annual Report



Contact Information

Community Visioning Program
Iowa State University Extension and Outreach
Community and Economic Development
2321 North Loop Drive, Suite 121
Ames, IA 50010
515-294-3007
jmb@iastate.edu
www.communityvisioning.org

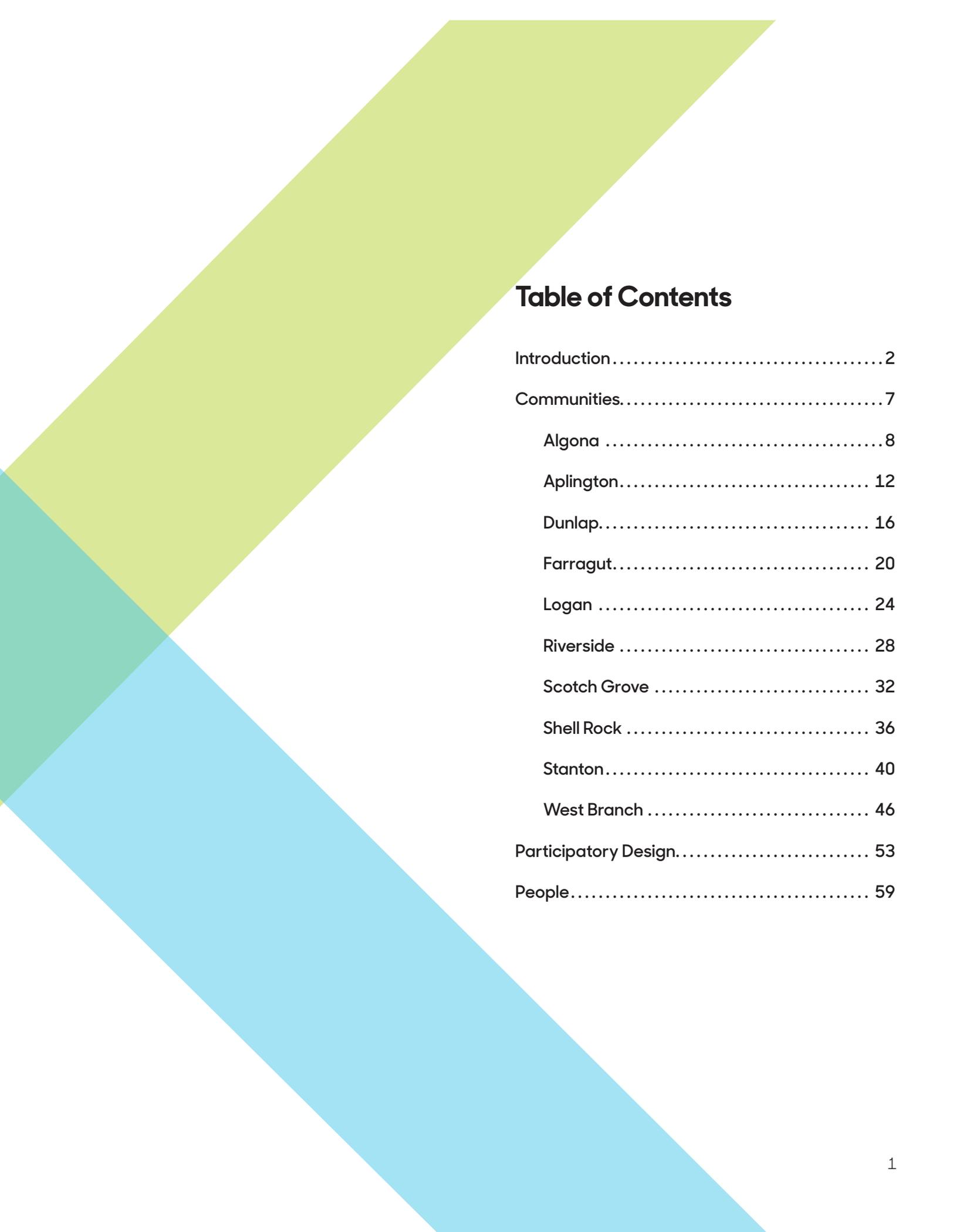


Table of Contents

Introduction.....	2
Communities.....	7
Algona	8
Aplington.....	12
Dunlap.....	16
Farragut.....	20
Logan	24
Riverside	28
Scotch Grove	32
Shell Rock	36
Stanton.....	40
West Branch	46
Participatory Design.....	53
People.....	59

Introduction

The Iowa's Living Roadways Community Visioning Program was born of an effort to provide design services to small Iowa communities. The program is a collaboration involving the Iowa Department of Transportation (Iowa DOT), the Living Roadway Trust Fund (LRTF), Iowa State University (ISU), and Trees Forever.

The Community Visioning Program integrates landscape planning and design with sustainable action to assist community leaders and volunteers in making sound and meaningful decisions about their local landscape. The program empowers local leaders through a planning process that results in a transportation enhancement plan reflecting the values and identity of the community.

A committee of local residents participates in a series of steps toward creating a conceptual plan, including:

- Identifying issues
- Investigating the physical and cultural dimensions of landscape issues

- Setting goals for change
- Developing strategies to meet those goals
- Creating an implementation plan

Throughout the process, the committee receives support from the technical experts at Trees Forever, a professional landscape architecture firm, and the Iowa State University Department of Landscape Architecture.

The sustainability and success of the program is evident by the number of communities with which it has collaborated. Since Iowa's Living Roadways was created in 1996, 255 communities have participated in Community Visioning, 32 of which have gone through the process more than once.

The results of ongoing evaluation show how the program has impacted Iowa communities (see impacts below). Furthermore, our case studies of successful visioning communities support our belief that engaging local residents generates the knowledge necessary to make changes that the community as a whole will embrace.



ABOUT 98% of visioning communities complete at least one project.



NEARLY 50% of visioning communities complete four or more projects.



NEARLY 75% of communities funded projects through local volunteers.



NEARLY 85% of visioning steering committees are still active in some way.



Representatives FROM 63% of communities reported that the program had a positive impact on their town.



MORE THAN 60% of those communities reported that the program positively affected aesthetics and the economy.



OF THOSE COMMUNITIES, 100% identified improved quality of life as a positive impact.

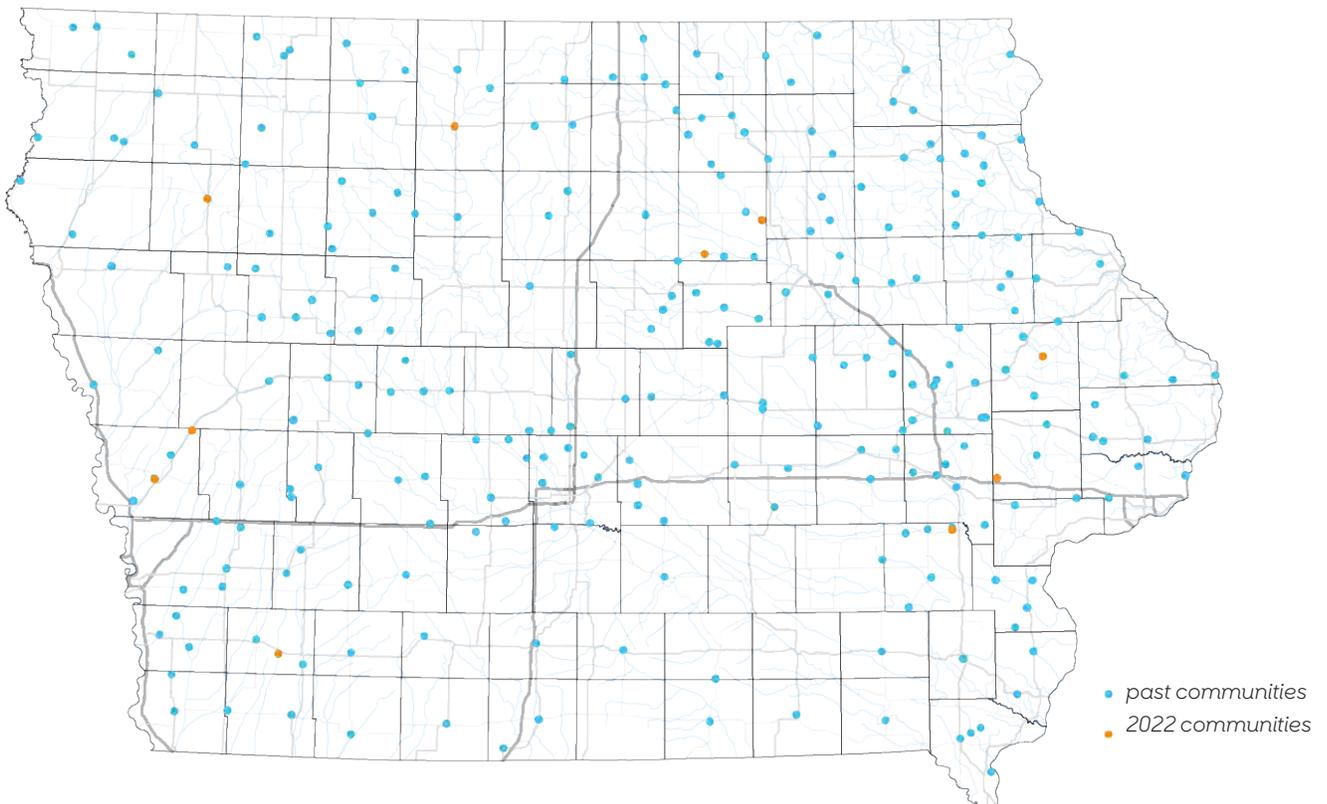
In addition to offering assistance to Iowa's small towns, the Community Visioning Program gives landscape architecture students the opportunity to work for a professional landscape architecture firm and to interact with real clients through our internship program. Since 1996, more than 250 students have interned with the program, and a number of them have gone on to work with the program as practitioners.

"This was a unique opportunity to live in another location in Iowa as well as experience the professional lifestyle of a landscape architect."
—Intern

The internship program also introduces practicing landscape architects to the best and brightest future practitioners, whom they spend a summer mentoring. Firms have often hired their interns as full-time designers once they have graduated because of the experience interns gain through the visioning program.



Iowa's Living Roadways Visioning Communities, 1996–2022



2022 Community Visioning Program

The 2022 visioning communities are Algona, Aplington, Dunlap, Farragut, Logan, Riverside, Scotch Grove, Shell Rock, Stanton, and West Branch. The annual report summarizes the essence of the year-long Community Visioning process and the main ideas developed by the design team for each town. In each community summary, we present images from the concept plan, as well as data collected from the focus groups as part of the transportation assets and barriers assessment. For four communities we also provide selected results from random-sample surveys.

Focus Groups

We invited residents with different transportation needs to participate in focus groups. In most communities, participants were separated into five user groups and the steering committee, which are defined below.

Each user group identified and mapped assets and barriers, as well as desired improvements. The ISU research team analyzed the focus-group maps and transcripts, giving the steering committees insight into how residents perceive the local transportation system.

Survey

With assistance from ISU's Center for Survey Statistics and Methodology, ISU visioning program staff conducted surveys to better understand the transportation patterns, behaviors, needs, and desires of residents in the communities of Algona, Dunlap, Logan, and West Branch. These towns were selected for surveys because of their population and/or unique transportation issues and needs.

Surveys were mailed to randomly selected residents living in and around each town. Response rates ranged from 33.1% to 41.9%. (A response rate of 20% is considered valid.)

Transportation User Types



Actives: This user group represents those in the community who engage in outdoor recreation, including cycling, walking, running, swimming, skiing, etc. The availability of multiple venues for outdoor recreation matters to this group.



Mobility Challenged: This user group is directly affected by accessibility barriers such as high curbing and uneven sidewalks that make it difficult to operate mobility-aiding equipment effectively. Handicapped parking, curb ramps, and smooth surfaces are critical transportation features.



Older Adults: Accessibility—both in terms of physical access and proximity—is a major concern for this user group. Because some people in this user group do not or are unable to drive, having goods and services within walking distance is important.



Youth: This group uses primarily non-motorized modes of transportation, so pedestrian- and bike-friendly streets and sidewalks are important. These users value the ability to get to destinations on foot or via bicycle and having goods and services within walking distance.



Parents: Safety of their children is a primary concern of this user group. Access to safe and easy routes to school activities is another significant factor to this group. Parents of young children desire smooth, wide surfaces for strollers.



Steering Committee: The common denominator for this user group is that their observations are influenced by special knowledge of the transportation system acquired during the Community Visioning assessment process. As a result, this group is more representative of decision makers.

The survey gives the visioning steering committee objective, representative information about residents' transportation behaviors and needs, such as the preferred biking routes for West Branch shown here. In addition to their preferred routes, respondents also provided information on what qualities and features of routes and trails are important to them. The quantitative data collected from survey responses complements the qualitative information gathered from the focus groups at the transportation assets and barriers workshop.

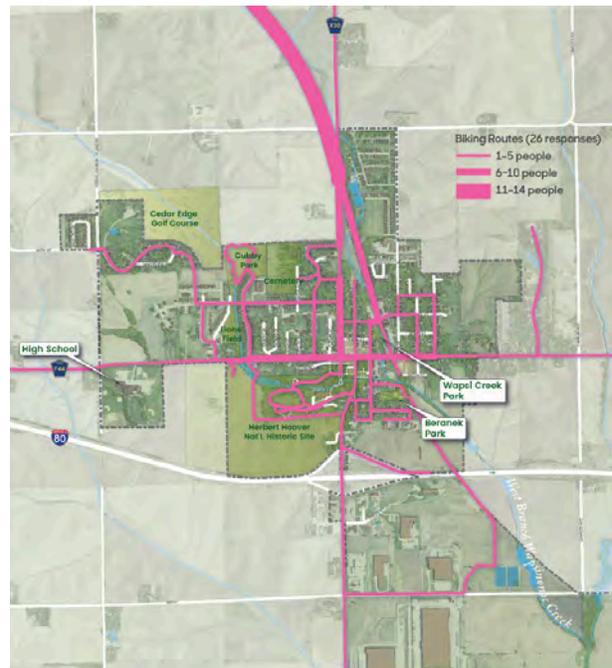
Bioregional Assessment & StoryMaps

In addition to facilitating public input through focus groups and the survey, visioning program staff provide visioning committees with an opportunity to explore their community and the surrounding region through a landscape architecture lens. Bioregional maps created by ISU program staff showcase relevant regional and localized features, both hidden and visible. Trees Forever field coordinators guide their committees through an exploratory process that provides a framework for discovering how landscape, transportation, and cultural patterns interact. This process focuses on how water, vegetation, and the shape of the landscape have influenced where and why people have settled here, how communities grew, and the correlative impacts between natural and built systems.

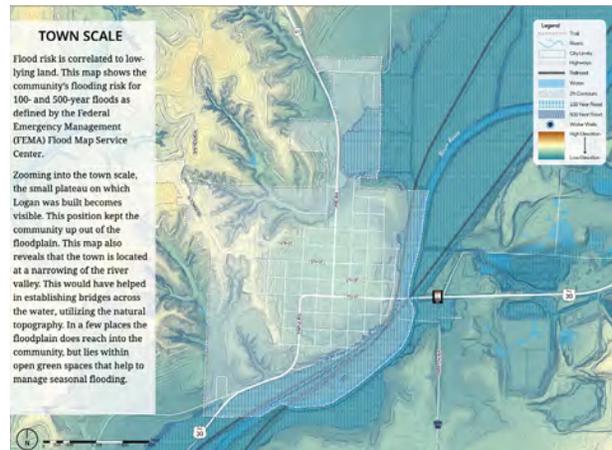
In 2020, the bioregional assessment became an online tool that could be shared with the broader community through StoryMaps. This tool also allows for a narrative to accompany the maps, which provides insight into what the maps reveal, but still allows the viewer to explore the content through the lens of their own experiences.

Design Proposals

Based on information gathered from the focus groups, a transportation inventory, an assessment of the local bioregion, and survey results (in four communities), the steering committees in each community identified and prioritized goals. The design team for each community developed a range of design proposals to address these goals. Together the design proposals work to highlight important community features, establish or strengthen city identity, and elevate aesthetics. The projects also aim to improve local transportation systems for all user types.



West Branch biking routes map.



Examples of an elevation map (top) and historical vegetation map (bottom) for Logan, Iowa.





Communities

Algona

Algona is the county seat of Kossuth County and is located where Highways 18 and 169 intersect. The East Fork Des Moines River winds along the west side of town and provides water recreation opportunities to the area. Algona was previously a visioning community in 2006. In 2010, the city began developing a recreational trail system. Three phases have been completed, spanning slightly more than two miles, but there are no plans for the next phase of trail development.

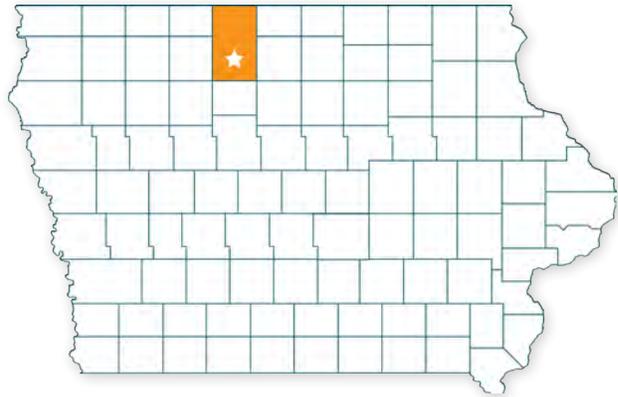
Community Assessments

Focus groups and a random-sample survey revealed that residents appreciate the outdoor recreation opportunities available to them but would like better pedestrian and cyclist connections to those spaces and throughout town. Highway 18, Highway 169, and McGregor Street are considered barriers to cyclist and pedestrian movement; residents would appreciate safe crossings along those critical corridors.

Planning and Design Summary

The Algona steering committee set priorities that addressed the concerns of residents. A concept plan was developed by the design team consisting of the following components:

- Trail Network – Upgrade the existing trail system by connecting popular destinations such as the schools and parks and improving the visibility at important crossings.
- Community Gateway/Roadside Park – Add native plantings and gateway features along Highways 18 and 169; update the Highway 169 roadside park to create a welcoming destination and connect more people to the river.
- Highway 169 Access – Increase pedestrian and cyclist access on the south side of town by incorporating both a bike trail, a pedestrian path, and a vegetated buffer along the corridor; and high-visibility crosswalks with pedestrian safety islands at intersections.
- Nebraska Street "Cultural" Corridor – Incorporate green infrastructure, trees, and artful updates to the streetscape and pedestrian environment.



Trees Forever Facilitator: *Jeff Jensen*

Landscape Architects: *Carl Rogers, Chad Hunter;*
Community Design Lab

Interns: *Britney Markhardt, Linus Larson, Trevor Smith, Jaelyn Waddle*



Design workshop.

Steering Committee:

Jacob Tjaden, chair

John Bilsten

Rodney Davis

Nick Diers

Tyler Gibney

Dr. Christian Grindberg

Connie Ludwig

Vicki Mallory

Julie Murphy

Rick Murphy

Kurt Nielsen

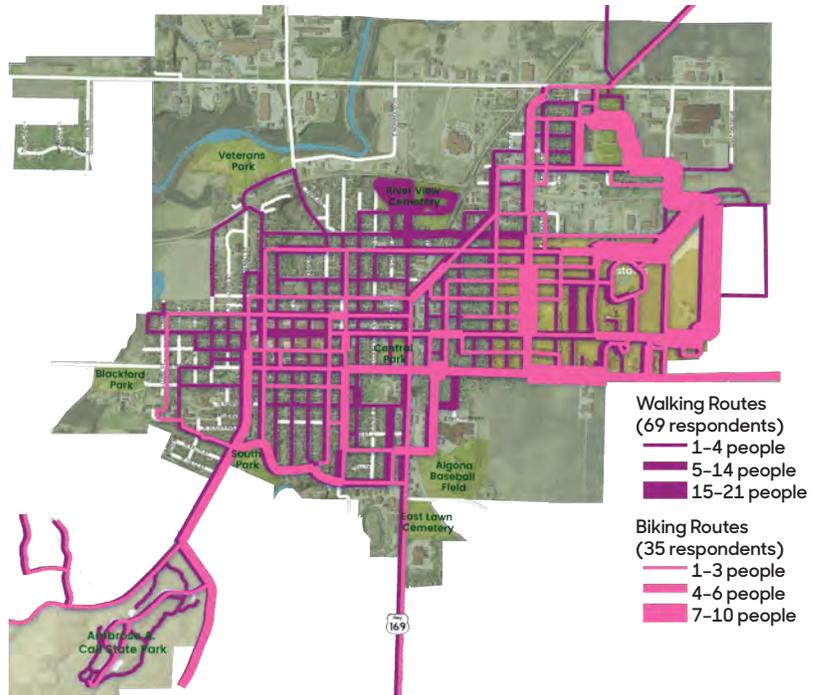
Joanne Ropke Bode

Jill Schutjer

Billie Willie

1

Results of the random-sample survey and the focus groups indicate that walker and bikers frequently use existing trail routes as well as McGregor Street and Orton Road from South Park to Ambrose A. Call State Park. However, residents don't feel safe in certain areas because of the lack of pedestrian- and bike-friendly connections. The design team developed a trail master plan that includes connections to Smith Lake, Ambrose A. Call State Park, and a Safe Route to School from the existing trail to the public middle and high school. A variety of trail typologies are proposed to best accommodate the existing conditions and user types.



Walking and biking routes identified by survey respondents.

"[An] ideal situation would be...if we had longer, connected paths in town, whether it be for walking or biking."



"I'm a runner and I use the bike trail a lot, but it's not very long. It would be really nice if we could extend that somehow..."

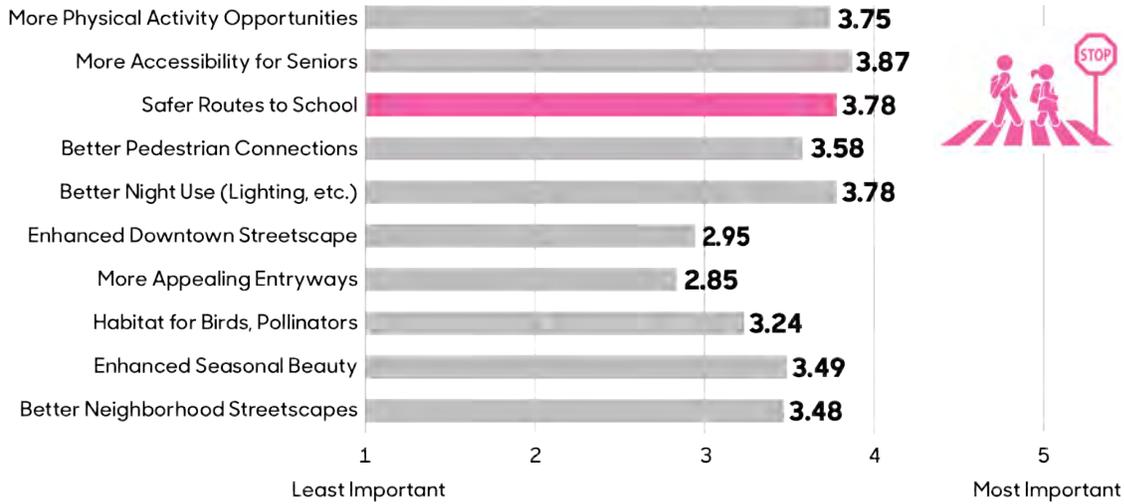


The proposed trail connects to the existing trail and incorporates already popular walking routes.

2

Focus-group participants from several demographic groups identified McGregor Street as intimidating for cycling and difficult to cross when accessing the public middle and high school. A trail on McGregor would create links to both the existing proposed trails. Survey respondents also indicated that creating safer routes to Algona’s schools is a priority. Linking the existing trail system to the public middle and high school and providing a highly visible crossing will make the trip to school safer and more accessible.

Transportation Enhancement Priorities



"[To get to school] you would have to be on roads the whole time."



"McGregor is a pass-through for agriculture, and so it's very difficult to find safe routes for young kids on bikes."



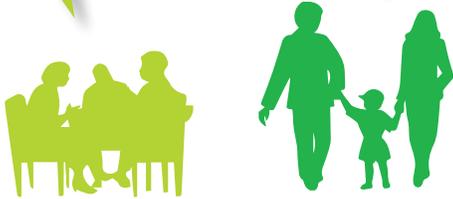
Proposed safe route to school on South Hale Street into the Algona public middle and high school.

3

Focus-group participants consider Highway 169 a significant barrier because they don't feel safe crossing it on foot or riding a bike, especially where it intersects with State and Chubb Streets. The design team proposed a highway pedestrian plan that addresses these issues with new sidewalks, an off-street trail, and enhanced intersection crossings.

"I think that [Highway 169 going through town does kind of divide the city in two."

"[An] area that concerns me is the Bryant School...there [are] a lot of kids [who] are getting at that age where they can start walking either home [or to] day care...but there is a major highway that divides [the school] from most of the town."

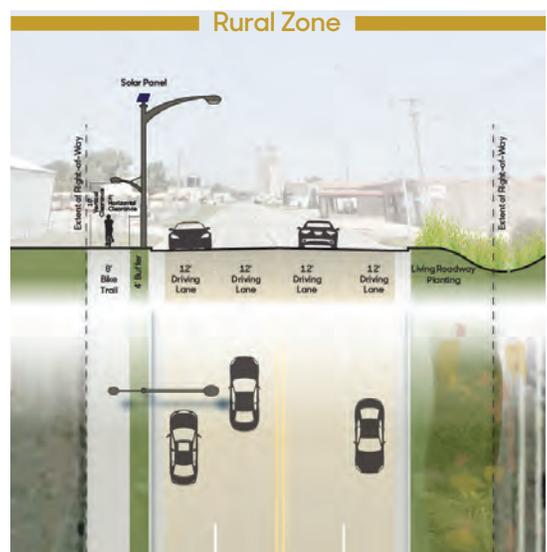
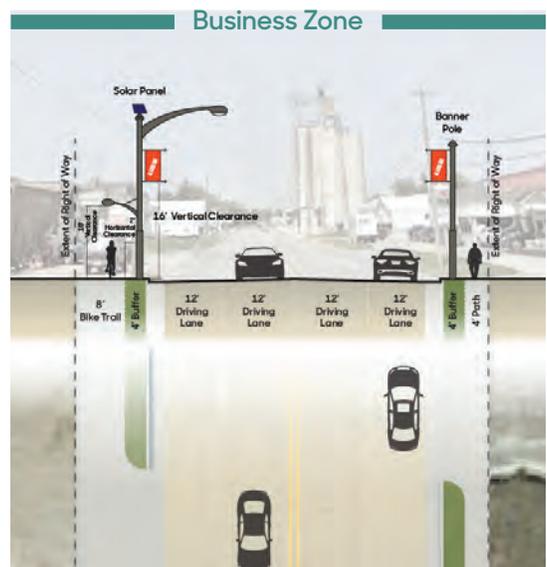
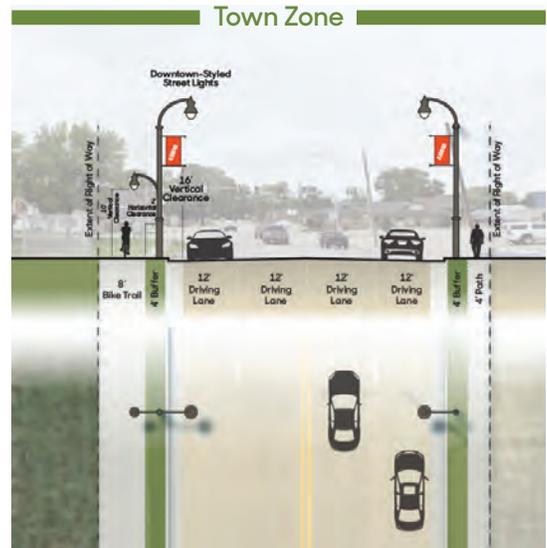


Left: Upgrades to Highway 169 and State Street include high-visibility crosswalks and a pedestrian safety island.



Middle: The intersection of Highway 169 and Chubb Street would feature high-visibility crosswalks over the highway and crosswalk murals over Chubb Street.

Right: A four-lane enhancement proposal for Highway 169 features buried utilities, an eight-foot-wide bike trail, a four-foot-wide walking path, and vegetated buffers. The town and business zones would also have pedestrian-friendly lighting with banners, while the rural zone would include a living roadway planting instead of a walking path.



Aplington

The small town of Aplington is located on State Highway 57, approximately 35 miles east of Interstate 35 and seven miles north of US Highway 20, nestled in the farm fields of rural Butler County. Aplington participated in Community Visioning in 2006, which resulted in the downtown streetscape pedestrian and aesthetic enhancements.

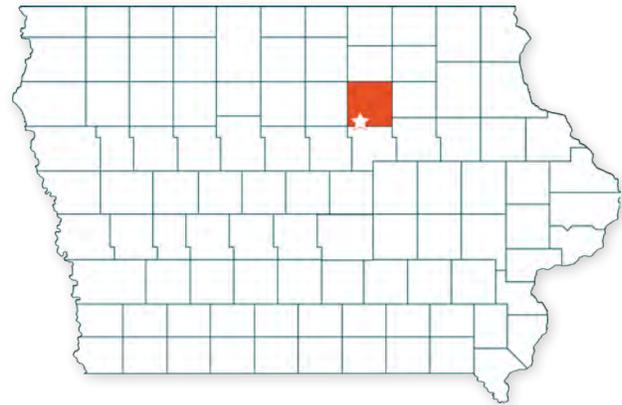
Community Assessments

The absence of connectivity and pedestrian access in town was a major issue among focus-group participants. Residents enjoy walking, but the sidewalk system is incomplete, in poor condition, and not well lit. People would like a dedicated walking path and pedestrian amenities such as benches, lighting, and crosswalks.

Planning and Design Summary

Based on resident input and steering committee goals, the design team proposed several concepts that will improve the pedestrian experience in town:

- Trail Master Plan – Create an east trail loop around Maple Manor Village and the practice soccer fields and a west trail loop around the Aplington Recreation Complex.
- Pedestrian Connections – Enhance key pedestrian routes through sidewalk updates and pedestrian-scale lighting; connect popular destinations, including downtown, the elementary and middle schools, city park, and the rec complex
- Way-finding – Update way-finding signage to create a modern, straightforward, and cohesive brand for the community.
- City Park – Improve access for those with limited mobility by making sidewalk connections throughout the park and adding ramps and accessible parking; reconfigure and update the playground; plant trees.
- 10th Street Intersection Enhancements – Alleviate confusion at 10th and Gray by better defining pavement areas; increase visibility at 10th and Parriott by removing parking stalls, adding high-visibility crosswalks, and posting a yield-for-pedestrians sign.



Trees Forever Facilitator: *Patty Reisinger, Molly Walkner*

Landscape Architect: *Craig Ritland, Samantha Price; RITLAND+KUIPER Landscape Architects*

Intern: *Amber Pearce*



Design workshop.

Steering Committee:

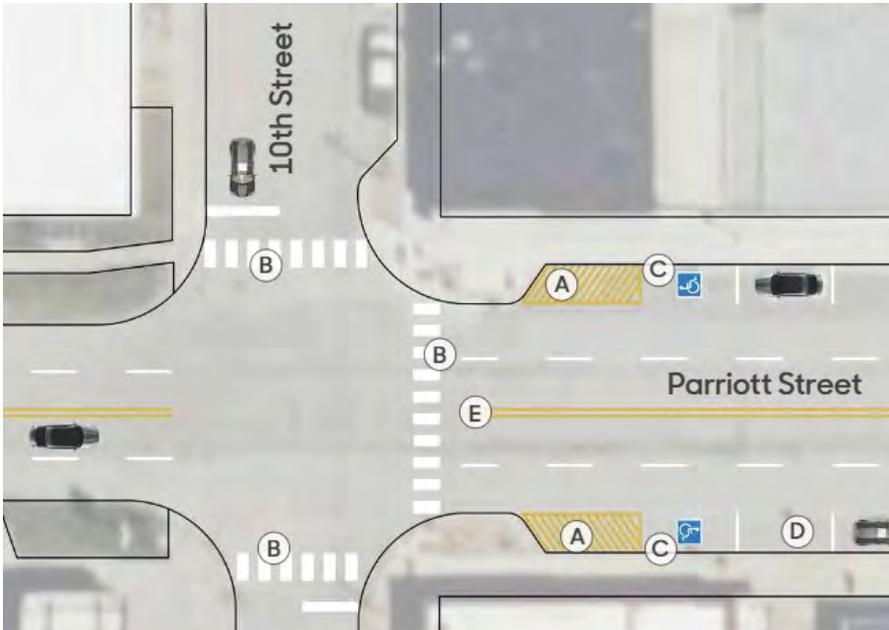
*Lindsay Wolff, chair
Alexis Karsjens
Jeff Kolb
Katie LaBree
Mary Meyer*

*Deb Prier
Jeff Ridder
Lori Uhlenhopp
Grace Varnum*

1

The intersection of Parriott Street (State Highway 57) and 10th Street (County Road T25) raised concerns from focus-group participants because it is a high-traffic area and visibility is inadequate. The design team is proposing highly visible crosswalks and a yield-for-pedestrians sign in the center of this intersection to alert motorists to watch for pedestrians. To increase visibility, the team recommends removing the first parking space to the east on both sides of Parriott Street.

"[When] I'm downtown [on Parriott Street], I've sat and watched...the cars just fly through there... the trucks and semis are the worst."



Legend

- (A) Proposed removal of parking stall
- (B) Proposed highly visible crosswalk
- (C) Proposed handicapped parking stall
- (D) Existing parallel parking
- (E) Proposed yield-to-pedestrian sign

Intersection safety enhancements at 10th and Parriott Streets.

"If you're coming from the north to the south on 10th Street to Parriott, you can't see a semi coming from the west. You pull up to the stop sign, all the sudden, here comes a semi..."



Proposed enhancements to the intersection of 10th and Parriott Streets.

"...we walk on the streets and not usually the sidewalks...[because] sidewalks are cracked and not good...and there [are] not sidewalks everywhere."



"I have to really watch where I walk since I have [had] both knees replaced...I'm always scared of tripping...I don't like to walk on the sidewalks because... not every street has sidewalks in town."

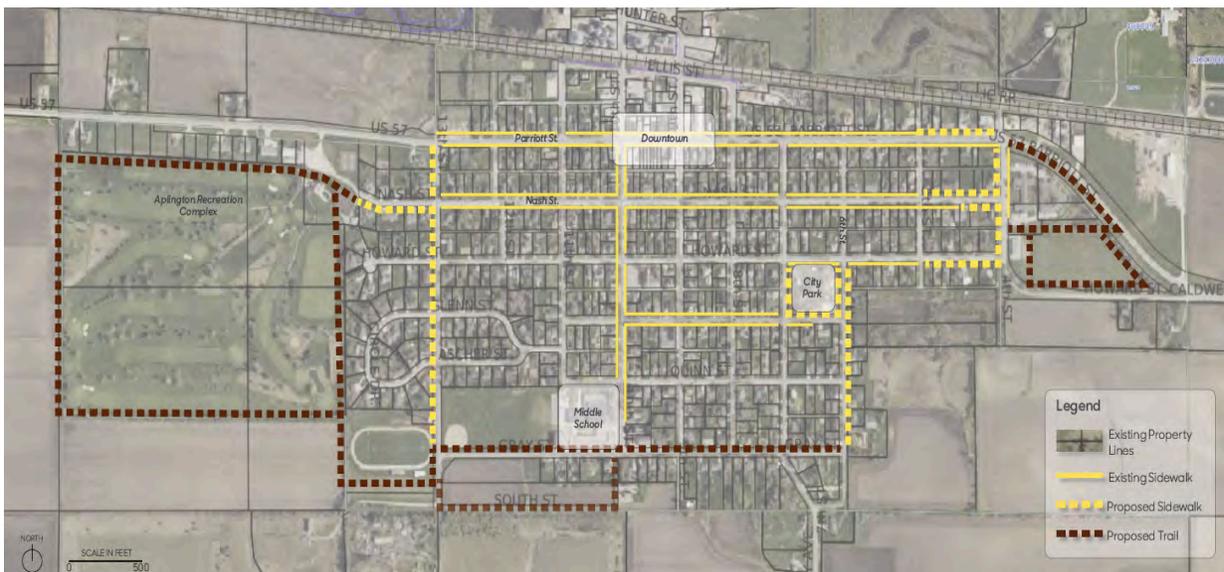


"... [the city] changed some sidewalks on Parriott along there to make it wider, but not all the way. So, [there are] inconsistent throughout the town, and cracky. The sidewalks are not utilized."



2

Results of the focus groups illustrate that poor sidewalk conditions and connections are an issue throughout Aplington. The beautiful and tree-lined Nash Street was identified as the main walking route, but many choose to walk in the street because of the inadequate sidewalk infrastructure. The design team's sidewalk connection and improvement plan would link popular destinations—including downtown, City Park, the elementary and middle schools, and the proposed east and west trail loops—by updating existing sidewalks, constructing new sidewalks, and creating designated trails. Nash, Gray, and 13th Streets are proposed to be the major pedestrian routes.



Proposed pedestrian network.

3

Focus-group participants in all user groups acknowledged the need for trail development within the city. The design team proposed both an east and west trail loop connected seamlessly with the sidewalk upgrades. The east loop (0.6 miles) wraps around Maple Manor Village and the soccer practice fields, while the west loop (1.3 miles) follows the outer boundary of the Aplington Recreation Center. The trail would provide amenities such as solar pedestrian lighting, benches, and a tree canopy to support activity for all ages and abilities.

"I would love to see trails. They're going to be smooth. They're going to be great."



Proposed east trail loop.



Proposed west trail loop.

"[I would like] a safe area where [my kids] can walk and I feel good about it... [where I feel like] I could [say], 'Okay, go ride your bike on whatever and come back,' because I don't feel that way yet."



Proposed trail on the west side of the Aplington Recreation Complex.

Dunlap

Dunlap is located in the northeast corner of Harrison County and extends into Crawford County, along the Lincoln Highway Heritage Byway (US Highway 30) in the Boyer River valley. State Highway 37 runs east-west through the downtown district of town, connecting with US 30 and exiting town in a northwest direction. Dunlap applied to the visioning program with the goals of enhancing the business and downtown districts and making the community more accessible to pedestrians and cyclists.

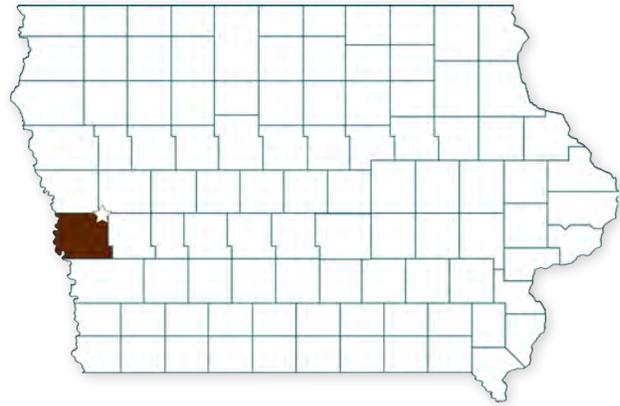
Community Assessments

Community focus groups and a random-sample survey results show that transportation enhancements that address pedestrian/cyclist mobility, safety, and health are important to Dunlap residents. People value the recreation opportunities provided by the trail at Pleasant View Park, but would like more such amenities. Of particular interest among residents are improved pedestrian/cyclist connectivity, more trails, and better lighting.

Planning and Design Summary

Resident input played an important role in the goal-setting process, through which the Dunlap visioning committee identified the following priorities:

- Community Identity – Provide a welcoming experience to residents and visitors to Dunlap through branded entryway, way-finding, and trailhead signage.
- Streetscape Design – Rework the Iowa Avenue/Highway 37 streetscape to make it more pedestrian friendly by including street trees, lighting, bump-outs, painted crosswalks, and street furniture.
- Trail Network – Create a trail network that connects and creates safe routes to important destinations, including Pleasant View Park, the schools, the fairgrounds, the sports complex, and the golf club; create a trail loop around the perimeter of town.
- Pedestrian Safety – Realign the intersection of Highways 30 and 37 and add bump-outs to shorten the pedestrian crossing distance; create a trail connection to and trailhead at the sports complex and at Pleasant View Park.



Trees Forever Facilitator: *Jeff Jensen*

Landscape Architect: *Bruce Niedermeyer; RDG Planning & Design*

Intern: *Olivia Bolton*



Design workshop.

Steering Committee:

Benjamin Schauer, chair

Margo Hanson

Jeni Martens

Jen Miller

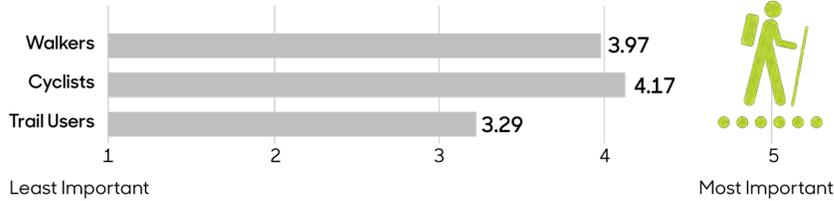
Meredith VanHouten

1

Focus-group participants and survey respondents expressed significant interest in developing a city trail system to give pedestrians and cyclists easier access to popular destinations. Residents are especially concerned that kids have to walk and on Highway 30 to get to the sports complex because there is no sidewalk or trail. To address the need for better connectivity, the design team proposed the "Dun-Loop" trail system to link local destinations such as the Pleasant View Park trail, sports complex, and the school.

"Our youth complex is out on the highway and there's no way to really walk to it."

Importance of trail access



"I've seen kids try and ride their bikes in the ditch along the highway or even along the highway, which is super [unsafe]; but if they've got practice or something, it's really difficult for them to get down to the [ball] fields."



Plan for the proposed "Dun-Loop" trail system.

2

The trail in Pleasant View Park was identified by both survey respondents and focus-group participants as a favorite venue for walking and biking. Residents enjoy the trail, as well as the other recreation opportunities in the park. However, accessing the trail from the gravel road and parking area is a challenge. Recognizing the importance of this popular amenity, the design team proposed creating an accessible trailhead in Pleasant View Park that features benches, lighting, trail signage, and a paved access road and parking area.



"...once you're on the trail, it's okay, but that [gravel] road leading up to the dam [at Pleasant View Park] is so bad."



Walking and biking routes identified by survey respondents.

"[The trail around the lake] is accessible. I've been around it many times and had no problems with it."



View of the proposed trailhead at Pleasant View Park.



Proposed streetscape enhancements at Highways 30 and 37.

"[The intersection of US 30 and Highway 37 is] hard for both driving and walking."



3

Residents consider the intersection of US Highway 30 and Highway 37 as an obstacle because of limited visibility for both motorists and pedestrians as well as high-speed traffic. Pedestrians and cyclists are also intimidated by the wide crossing distance. The design team proposed adjusting the road alignment and adding bump-outs and crosswalks to improve visibility and shorten crossing distances. Street trees, vegetation, and pedestrian amenities would also make the area more comfortable for pedestrians and aid in slowing traffic. Focus-group participants also think that Dunlap's "Main Street" (Iowa Avenue) could be more pedestrian friendly and accessible. The updates proposed for the Highway 30/37 intersection would be extended along Iowa Avenue.

"All of our curbs seem to need [be] repaired up along Main Street [Iowa Avenue]...there's either no curb or if there is a curb its crumbling... You have to lift your stroller up...to get anywhere."



Proposed streetscape upgrades to Iowa Avenue.

Farragut

Farragut is situated in the fertile East Nishnabotna River valley in rural Fremont County, one mile south of Highway 2. Named for Admiral David Farragut, the community is home to the Farragut Admiral Trail, a 2.5-mile historical railway-turned-trail that, when completed, will connect to the town of Shenandoah and the 64-mile Wabash Trace Nature Trail.

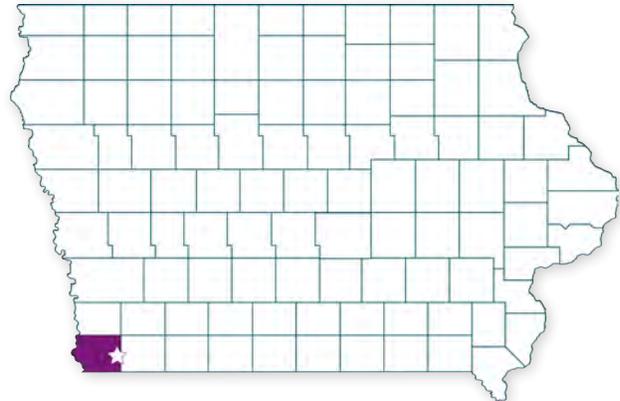
Community Assessments

Analysis of focus-group data indicates that residents appreciate the outdoor recreation opportunities available through the Farragut Admiral Trail and City Park, but would like to more amenities such as trees along the trail and more youth-oriented outdoor activities at the park. Safety and accessibility updates to the sidewalk infrastructure and the bus stop for Sidney are priorities among residents.

Planning and Design Summary

Based on assessment results and the visioning committee's identified goals, the design team proposed the following concepts:

- **Accessibility, Connectivity, & Safety**— Create a safer pedestrian circulation system to connect people with different mobility levels to destinations.
- **Trail Assets** — Provide easy and comfortable connections for users to access the trail by defining trailhead spaces; enhance the trail with design elements such as trees, gathering spaces, and parking for bikes and vehicles.
- **Downtown Streetscape** — Increase accessibility for all user types by adding corner and mid-block bump-outs; improve the pedestrian experience with street trees, crosswalks, and planted medians on Hartford Avenue.
- **Identity & Branding** — Create a cohesive theme that incorporates the history of Farragut and creates a sense of community.
- **Trees** — Increase density of tree plantings in City Park, along the trail corridor, and in the downtown streetscape to create a comfortable experience in the community.



Trees Forever Facilitator: *Brad Riphagen*

Landscape Architects: *David Stokes, Lara Guldenpfennig; Jefferey L. Bruce & Company*

Interns: *Abby Scott and Andrea Fager*



Community focus group.

Steering Committee:

Becca Laughlin, chair

Sarah Hall

Pat Hodges

Karoline Karnes

Darren Osborne

Cindy Shelton

Gene Shelton

Lisa Sonka

Ida Van Seyoe

Jane Wilson

Kay Wing



"[On New Orleans Avenue] everybody thinks it's okay to drive whatever [speed] they want."



"...when [the school bus drops the kids] off [at the bus stop on New Orleans Avenue], people are ripping by there...[and the bus is] dropping [the kids] off on the road...And there's not any place for them...to walk."



Plan view of the proposed school bus shelter.

1

Focus-group participants identified the need for a safe school bus stop on New Orleans Avenue for children who go to school in Sidney. The existing bus stop has no shelter, sidewalk connections, or crosswalks. School kids are forced to walk in the roadway, which carries heavy, high-speed traffic. The design team addressed these issues in a bus-stop proposal that includes a shelter with an overhang that would provide secure space to wait and would help protect students from inclement weather, painted crosswalks, paved sidewalks connecting to the shelter, and way-finding signage.



Section (top left), elevation (left), and perspective (right) of the proposed school bus shelter on New Orleans Avenue.

2

Farragut's City Park is a popular destination for residents of all ages. Focus-group participants value the accessible sidewalk and shelter, as well as the play equipment. However, they acknowledged the need for circulation and accessibility updates, along with venues for additional activities for youth. The design team proposed expanding the existing path system to provide paved access to existing play areas, proposed sports venues, the restroom, and around the perimeter of the park, as well as paved parking. The updated park would also provide venues for basketball, pickleball, and sand volleyball, as well as a food truck plaza.

"The park to get to the shelter has a very nice sidewalk... If they could have a sidewalk go on through the park...and then come all the way... from the shelter, you could get [to other areas]."



Perspective rendering of the proposed food truck plaza.

"I [think we should upgrade] the outdoor entertainment for kids... whether it's updating the park or giving them a little fun bike trail... giving them something else that they can do."



Proposed plan for Farragut City Park.

3

Downtown Farragut is an area of concern among residents because of speeding traffic, poor sidewalk infrastructure, and the absence of accessible crossings and crosswalks. Speeding traffic was seen as a major barrier through this area by most groups. The proposed a downtown streetscape plan addresses residents concerns, while also incorporating stormwater management practices. Corner and mid-block bump-outs paired with a planted median will help distinguish the road space and slow traffic. Painted crosswalks will define pedestrian space and ramps up to each smooth and wide sidewalk make it a fully accessible space. Trees and other vegetation are proposed to manage stormwater runoff in the area and provide a pleasant environment.

"...anybody [who's] just cutting through the town...they'll just speed going 35 or 40 down the main street [Hartford Avenue] and [there are] kids crossing onto the main street or going to the park...we have a speed issue."



Proposed plan of downtown streetscape improvements.

"...Farragut has a number of people who have mobility problems...[it would be nice] to make it so that they can get out in the community... just coming downtown here, they are in the street..."



Perspective of proposed crossing on Hartford Avenue.

Logan

Logan is the county seat of Harrison County, situated at the junction of The Loess Hills Scenic Byway, the Western Skies Scenic Byway, and the Lincoln Highway Heritage Byway. It is also intersected by Highways 30 and 127, which bring large numbers of travelers through town. Logan participated in Community Visioning in 2000, which resulted in design and implementation of community entrance signage. The community applied for the 2022 visioning program with the goals of capitalizing on its unique natural environment and history and making the town more pedestrian friendly.

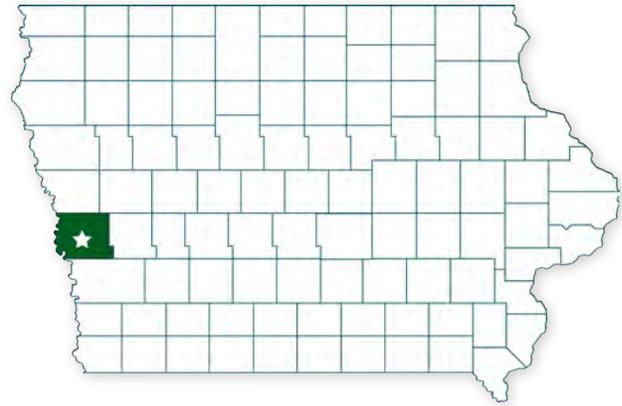
Community Assessments

Residents provided input through a random-sample mail survey and focus groups. These assessments confirmed the need for better pedestrian connectivity, particularly in terms of a safe route to school. Survey and focus-group participants would like a community trail to provide a safe venue for physical activity.

Planning and Design Summary

The concept plan for Logan is based on priorities identified by residents, as well as guidance from the visioning steering committee and includes the following proposals:

- Community Identity – Establish Logan’s brand through a complementary family of signage for entrances, way-finding, historical markers, destinations, and trailheads.
- Improved Business District – Redesign the Highway 30 streetscape through downtown through pedestrian-scale improvements, including intersection bump-outs, street trees, lighting, and vegetation; add gateway signage.
- Fourth Avenue – Create a "festive street" for use during community events by incorporating overhead festoon lighting attached to structural columns that emulate the Wagon Bridge, and amenities such as seating, bike racks, street trees, and bump-outs.
- Trail Development and Routes to School – Establish a trail network based on current walking/biking routes; support a safe route to school through pedestrian underpasses along Highway 127; create trailheads at the school, Wagon Bridge, and Milliman Park.



Trees Forever Facilitator: *Brad Riphagen*
Landscape Architect: *Bruce Niedermeyer; RDG Planning & Design*
Intern: *Olivia Bolton*



Public presentation.

Steering Committee:

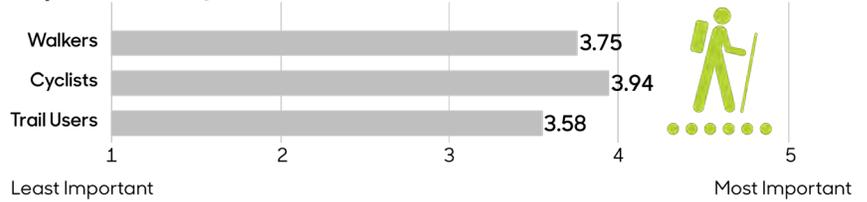
Tammy Hinkle, chair
Carley Cohn
Mat Gross
Avery Hinkle
Tyler Hinkel
Lindsey Kastner

Gavin Kiger
Maria Kiger
BobbiAnn Koenig
Bruce Niedermeyer
Lynn Valls
Angela Winther

1

Both focus-group participants and survey respondents see a designated trail as a necessary addition to the community because they don't feel comfortable using the city streets and sidewalks. Some residents would also want regional trail connections. The "Logan Heritage Trail" conceived by the design team would be a five-mile loop trail with shorter east and west loops. This system includes three trailheads at important destinations in the city—the Wagon Bridge, Milliman Park, and Logan-Magnolia School—and two trail underpasses. The Wagon Bridge, a historically significant landmark, allows access over the Boyer River and would be repurposed to provide a future connection to a county-wide trail.

Importance of trail access



"I walk, but you don't dare walk on the sidewalks... because they're in terrible shape..."



...it would be good if you had a bike trail going to the pool and...to the [city] park because a lot of people go there."



Proposed Logan Heritage Trail.

"We want a trail from Woodbine all the way through Logan to Missouri Valley."



Proposed trailhead and path leading to the Wagon Bridge.

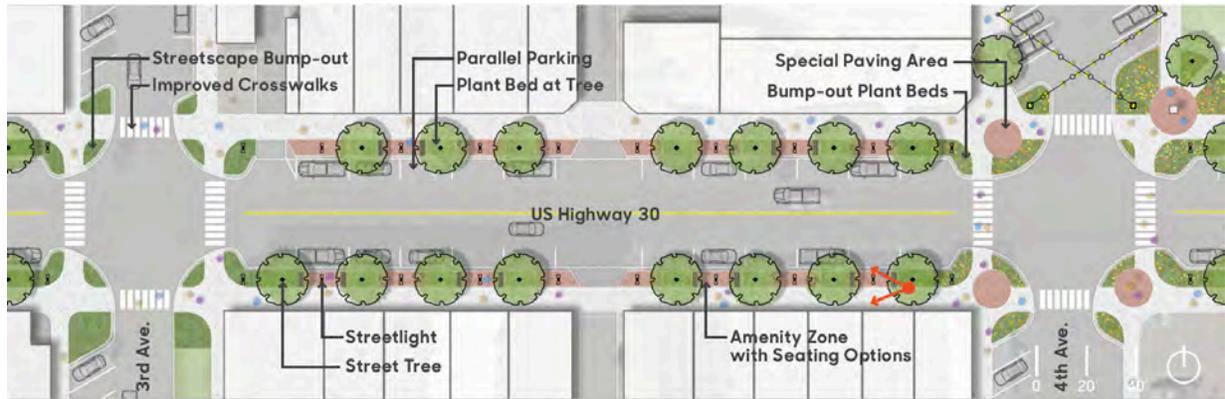
2

High-speed traffic on US 30 through town was a major concern among focus group participants. Groups pointed to the need for traffic-slowing measures in the downtown area and the desire for a more pedestrian-friendly space. With these concerns in mind, the design team proposed a downtown streetscape plan that includes streetlights, trees, and seating, along with bump-outs and improved crosswalks to make the space feel safer for pedestrians. Defining the space downtown and making it more pedestrian friendly will systematically slow traffic through this area.

"I think it would be really useful to have more crosswalks on the highway..."



"If there's a way that we could somehow slow the traffic down or make the sidewalks wider along Highway 30 [that would be great]."



US Highway 30 streetscape plan.

".. [the downtown] zone [could be] expanded from what we think of as Highway 30; that whole area [could] feel as one district that's all connected...a really civic core."

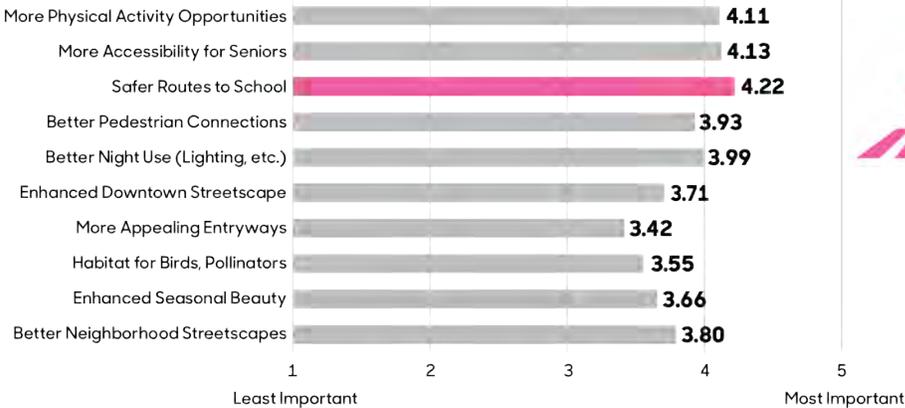


Rendered view of proposed enhancements to the US 30 corridor downtown.

3

Survey respondents and several user types in the focus groups identified the absence of a safe route to school as an issue. Focus-group participants described how students have difficulty walking or biking to the school because of its location on Highway 127. The design team’s solution features two underpasses along Highway 127 to link the two sides of town, paved trails that will connect to the existing school sidewalk system, and a trailhead at the school. This trail system would allow kids to get to and from the school safely without having to cross major roads.

Transportation Enhancement Priorities



"It would be nice to have a sidewalk [along 3rd Avenue]...to the school rather than just the road."



"It's hard to get from the school to anywhere else unless you drive... To get to the school, you either drive on the highway or you walk...[on N 3rd Avenue], but [it's] gravel and dirt."



Safe route to school solution with underpasses and school trailhead.

Riverside

The southeast Iowa town of Riverside is best known for designating itself the future birthplace of Captain Jame T. Kirk. Much of Riverside's identity has been influenced by the *Star Trek* TV series. The Riverside Casino and Golf Resort in the far northeast side of town brings many visitors to the area. Riverside participated in Community Visioning in 2009, which resulted in downtown streetscape enhancements, including intersection bump-outs and crosswalks.

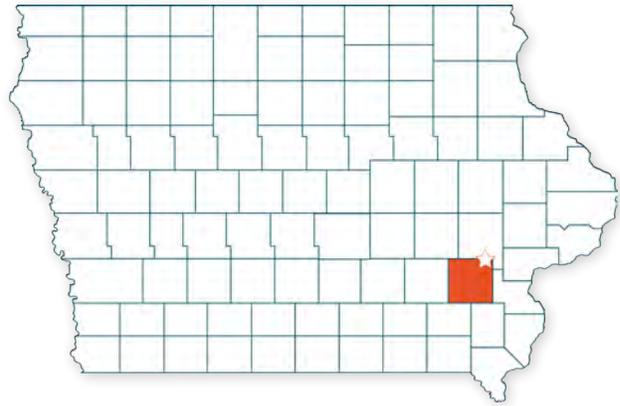
Community Assessments

During community focus groups, residents discussed the importance of pedestrian connectivity and trails. People value the river and community parks, and would like better access to these local assets. Highway 22 is considered a significant barrier to pedestrians and cyclists because it is difficult to cross.

Planning and Design Summary

Resident input played an important role in the goal-setting process, through which the visioning committee set the following performance objectives:

- Safety – Reconfigure pedestrian and vehicular circulation to improve visibility, slow traffic speeds, and reduce pedestrian-vehicle conflict along Highway 22 downtown, at the five-way Ella Street intersection, and at the school parking area.
- Streets – Improve neighborhood streetscapes by updating and adding sidewalk infrastructure and providing additional streetlights.
- Trails – Provide trail connections to important local destinations; create trail links to nearby communities and regional trails.
- Way-finding – Increase the use of the *Star Trek* branding to direct people to local destinations, including downtown, Conservation Park, Hall Park, and the English River boat ramp.
- Amenities – Develop venues for community activities, particularly on the north side of town; increase access to and use of the English River boat ramp by constructing a paved walkway, drive, and parking, and adding amenities such as seating.



Trees Forever Facilitators: *Leslie Berckes, Paige Shafer*

Designer: *Kyle Martin; Martin Gardner Architecture*

Landscape Architect: *Meg Flenker; Flenker Land Architecture Consultants*

Intern: *Zahra Salahshoor*



School focus group.

Steering Committee:

Christine Yancey, chair

Kara Batcheller

Jesi Cole

Robin Guy

Janene King

Christine Kirkwood

Kathy Lamping

Bryan Lenz

Maria Meller

Annie Nugent

Mary Beth Rozmus

Lexy Rozmus

Lois Schnieder

Allen Schnieder

Ellen Shroyer

Lexy Walgren

Kris Westfall

"It would be nice on the walking/bike path to circle the whole city...we need more walking and bike paths in the middle of town, around town, the whole town..."



"If there were a way... to extend that trail safely under, around, over the interstate and get it out to [the casino area], I know we would pull more people in to use our businesses..."

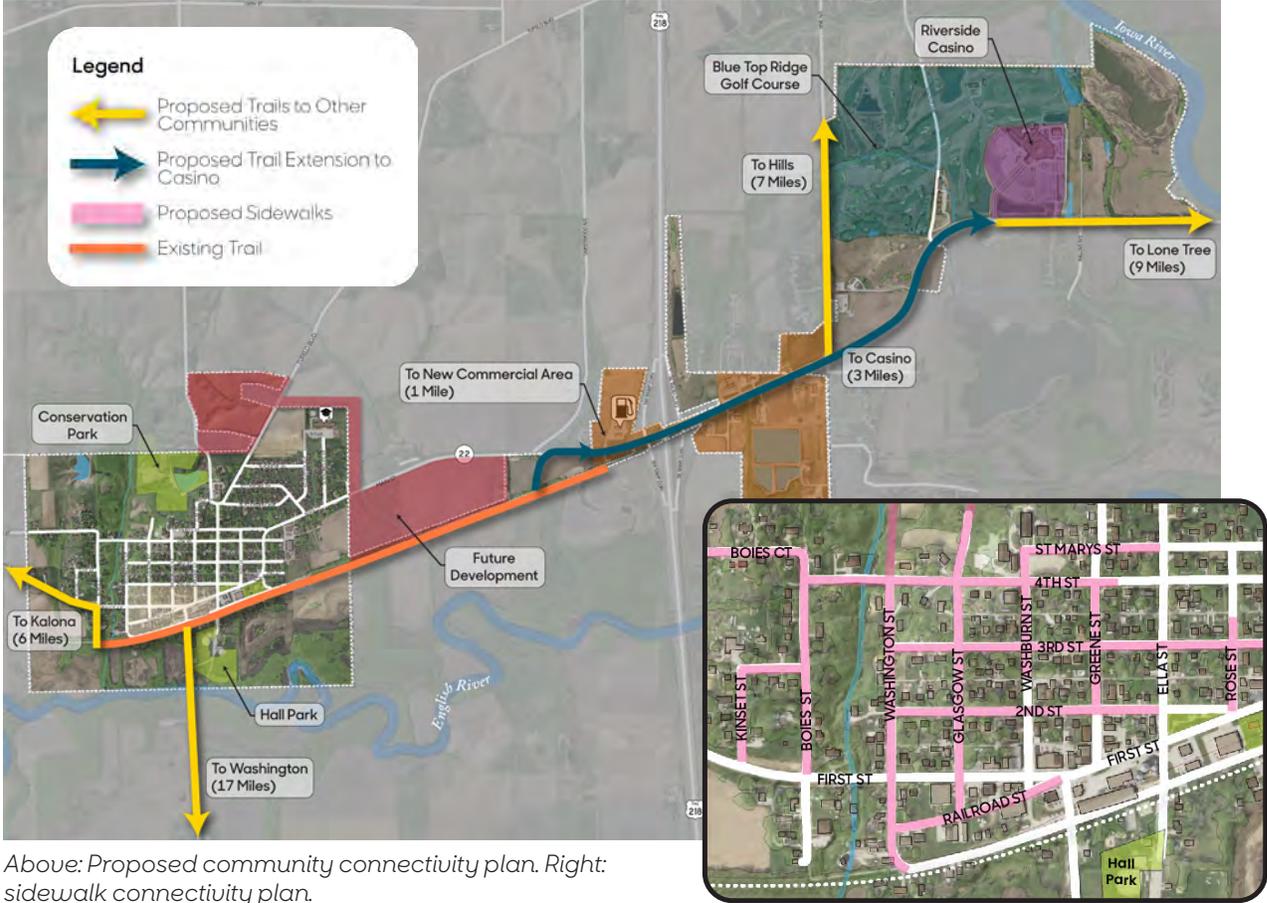


"...something else that would be nice...[is] if we could somehow connect Riverside to the bike trails even up to Hills..."



1

Residents value the existing trail, but would like it to be expanded both within Riverside and to neighboring communities. Focus-group participants pointed out that the sidewalk network in town is in poor condition and needs attention. The design team proposed a connectivity plan that would closing gaps in the sidewalk network and extend the existing trail east to the Riverside Casino. The plan also includes regional trail connections to Kalona, Washington, Hills, and Lone Tree.



Above: Proposed community connectivity plan. Right: sidewalk connectivity plan.

2

Highway 22 runs directly through Riverside’s downtown business district. The city has invested in pedestrian safety measures in recent years; however, challenges with the space are still present. Focus-group participants raised issues such as tricky pedestrian crossings, a lack of parking, and speeding traffic. To address these challenges the design team proposed traffic-calming measures to slow traffic and delineate the pedestrian space. The concept focuses on improving circulation in the area where Railroad and Pioneer Streets intersect with the highway by reconfiguring existing parking, adding green space, and creating a public plaza. The plan would involve closing the portion of Railroad Street between Pioneer and Washburn Streets and relocating the angled parking along that section of Railroad Street.

"The highway cutting through the middle of town I think has to be an issue. It is for us, trying to get to the walking trail or anything south of the highway..."



"...if they want to bring in more restaurants or businesses, they're going to have to find a place [where] people can park [downtown]."



Plan view of proposed plaza and reconfigured circulation.

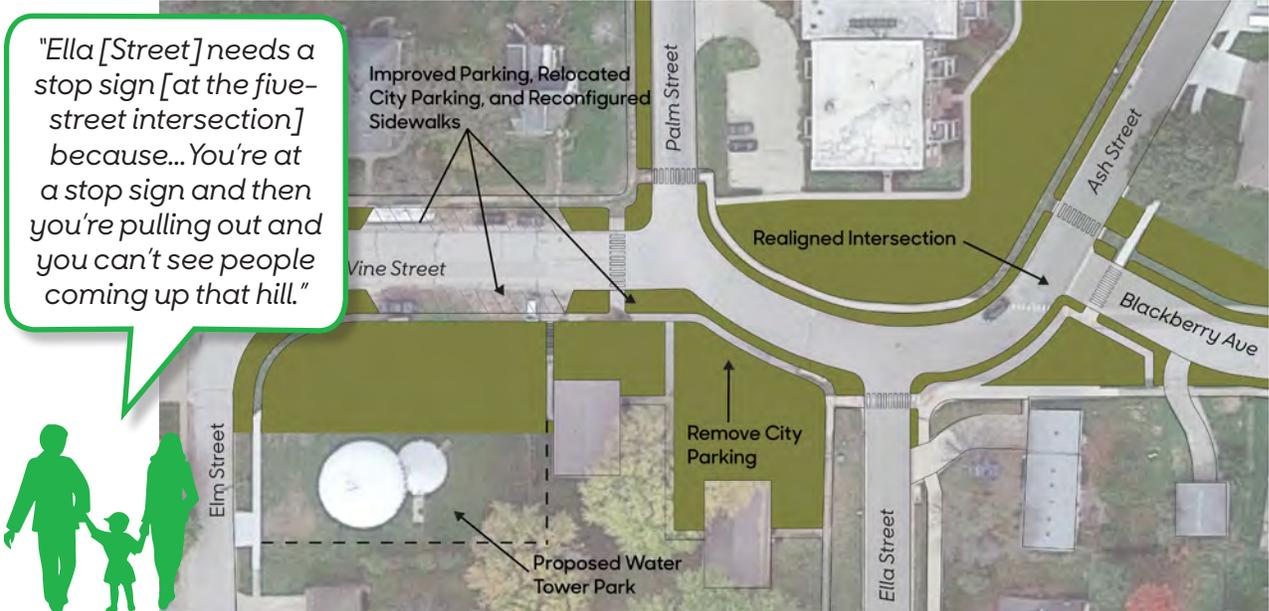
"I would say crossing [Highway 22] to get to the parks is kind of a safety issue for kids."



The public plaza would feature pedestrian amenities such as seating and vegetation and would house the community holiday tree.

3

Focus-group participants identified the five-way intersection at the north end of Ella Street as problematic because it poses circulation and visibility challenges for both motorized and non-motorized traffic. A school bus stop in this intersection makes safely crossing the road a priority for the community. The solution developed by the design team would add three pedestrian crosswalks in the space, update sidewalk infrastructure, and realign Blackberry Avenue to meet Ash Street at a right angle.



Proposed reconfiguration of the Ella Street five-way intersection.

4

Residents consider the English River access point at the south end of Hall Park an underused asset, not only because it is difficult to find, but also because the site is not particularly welcoming nor accessible. The design team created a plan that makes the boat ramp more of a destination, with amenities such as a pavilion with seating, an interactive water feature, a paved walkway, and a paved parking area.



View of the English River boat ramp enhancements from Riverside Road bridge.

Scotch Grove

Scotch Grove is an unincorporated village within the 22-acre Scotch Grove Township in the heart of Jones County. The Scotch Grove Township is defined by Center Junction to the south, Highway 136 to the east, and Camp Courageous to the north. The village of Scotch Grove is located at the crossroads of Highway 38 and County Road E17. Scotch Grove is unique in that it is the first community in the visioning program's 26-year history to approach the process from both the village and township scales.

Community Assessments

Focus-group participants appreciate the village of Scotch Grove for its rich history and unique character. Participants value the scenic views and many outdoor recreation venues throughout the township. Residents see much potential in the Scotch Grove Township and desire a regional trail system to connect major natural areas.

Planning and Design Summary

Based on review of the bioregional assessment, public input from the focus groups and the design workshop, and priorities of the Scotch Grove visioning committee, the design team proposed the following concepts:

- Regional Trail Connections – Improve regional connectivity through a proposed 28+ miles of trail stemming from the village of Scotch Grove. Trail connections throughout the township will create a convenient path to connect more than 2,000 acres of natural areas and six cities or villages using five connected eight-foot-wide trails:
 - Harvest Trail (1 mile)
 - Camp Trail (2 miles)
 - Scotch Grove Prairie Trail (3 miles)
 - Jones Co. Great Trail (10+ miles)
 - Wildlife Trail (12+ miles)
- Historic Depot Park – Update the site of the former depot on the west side of Highway 38, adjacent to the village of Scotch Grove, to create a destination that showcases local history and includes a trailhead, a natural playscape, a network of trails, and a pedestrian underpass for park visitors to safely cross Highway 38.
- The Village Crossroads – create a "complete street" plan that includes safe and ADA-accessible crossings, parking, bike lanes, sidewalks, street trees, and other pedestrian amenities.



Trees Forever Facilitator: Nick McGrath
Landscape Architects: Brett Seelman, Alex Priest;
Seelman Landscape Architecture
Intern: Lexi Banks



Community focus group.

Steering Committee:

Robert Helgens, chair
Kylie Alger
David Balster
Charlie Becker
Karen Dirks
Max Alan Dirks
Mary Beth Helgens
Paul Helgens
Roger Flom
Byron Freese

Jan Hoag
Alberto Lacayo III
Derek Lumsden
David Naylor
John Null
John Schlarmann
Brandon Schrader
Glenn Tobiason
John Waldorf
Lance Webber

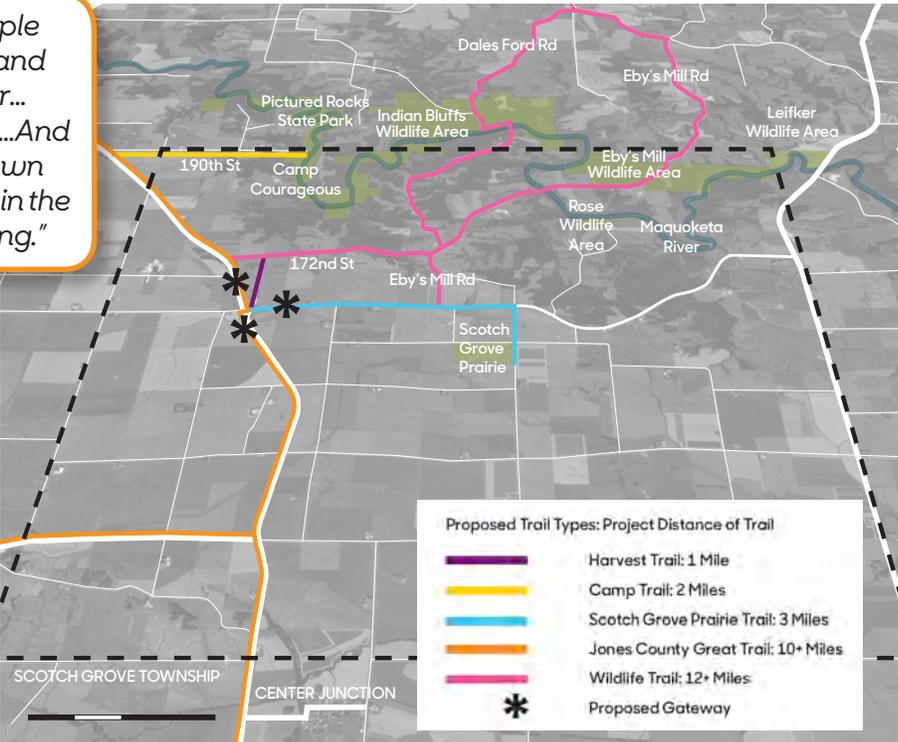
1

Residents expressed overwhelming interest in creating a series of trails throughout the Scotch Grove Township and providing a sense of connection that currently doesn't exist. The design team proposed a network of five trails that would connect the village of Scotch Grove to the larger region. Each of these trails accomplishes a different objective identified by focus-group and design-workshop participants, and the steering committee.

"...there [are] a lot of people walking on 190th Street and [doesn't feel] safe either... There's...a partial bike lane...And people speed up and down [that] road too...especially in the summer with the canoeing."



"Having some kind of trail, maybe in the Scotch Grove area...would be wonderful..."



Map of the proposed regional trail system for the Scotch Grove Township.

"I think...a trail system [is needed] into Monticello as well—Monticello to Pictured Rocks, Pictured Rocks onto Scotch Grove."



Section view of the Harvest Trail, located along 116th Avenue and featuring an edible landscape.



Proposed Historic Depot Park Plan.

2

Focus-group participants established the importance of Scotch Grove's history, specifically pointing to the site of the old railroad depot. The design team's proposed Historic Depot Park design provides a family- and visitor-friendly atmosphere curated to be a regional destination and a reference to local history. A series of trails connects park visitors to the village via a pedestrian underpass on Highway 38. The natural playscape, Hula-Hoop Tree sculpture, and great lawn provide spaces for play. A war memorial and the Scotch Grove Station Plaza complete this historical space.

"[The site of the old depot] is a potential area for development. One thing that could be done—we had a tree by Amber, a hula-hoop tree and, of course, it finally got destroyed because it was not safe anymore—so we could make a steel or a metal tree here."

"Where the depot is we had a fire...but there's still a pavilion over there and... that's a hot spot for geocaching... with geocaching, people tend to flock to parks, especially parks...and historical areas..."



Right: Rendering of the proposed Hula-Hoop sculpture. Left: Rendering of restored depot and pavilion.

3

Despite its small size, village of Scotch Grove is a popular destination because it is home to the Grove Bar & Grill and the Antique Fair and Flea Market. However, residents pointed out that the absence of sidewalks, bike lanes, and parking make it difficult to access. The "complete street" plan for the Village Crossroads" would provide multi-modal transportation options for the area. The pedestrian underpass is also included in this plan to further address the concerns with crossing Highway 38. Street trees, lighting, accessible parking, sidewalks on both sides of the street, and bike lanes to these corridors would make the village more accessible and safe for residents and visitors alike.

"I think for Scotch Grove to bring in people it's very important. The Grove is the only restaurant. The Grove brings a lot of people in, and when we bike, we bike to The Grove."

"...I used to walk [116th Avenue] and go across [E17] but that's super busy."



"If anything is going on in Scotch Grove and you want to go there, you have a devil of a time finding a place to park and walk."



Plan for restored historical road and additional parking.



- 1. ADA Crossing Point
- 2. Historic Brick Paving
- 3. Bike Lane
- 4. Delineated Crosswalk
- 5. Street Trees
- 6. Streetlights, Flags, Banners
- 7. Restored Buildings
- 8. Vegetated Buffer

Rendering of proposed "Complete Street" elements at the Village Crossroads.

Shell Rock

Shell Rock is a small community along State Highway 3 in Butler County. The Rolling Prairie Trail passes through town and provides regional connections to seven different communities using mainly off-road paved trails. Shell Rock is also part of the Waverly-Shell Rock Community School District with Shell Rock Elementary located in town. Shell Rock was a visioning community in 2001, which resulted in gateway entrance signage and landscaping along Highway 3.

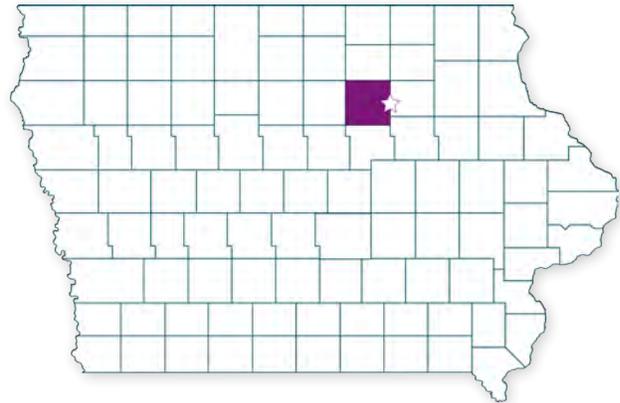
Community Assessments

Shell Rock residents enjoy the nearby natural areas and scenic views, including the Shell Rock River, Rolling Prairie Trail, and various parks throughout town. However, focus-group participants pointed to Highway 3 as a major barrier to accessing these assets, especially the Rolling Prairie Trail located just north of the highway. They also acknowledged that the city's sidewalk infrastructure is in poor condition and an upgraded network is highly desirable.

Planning and Design Summary

The Shell Rock steering committee set priorities that addressed the concerns of residents, and the design team developed a concept plan consisting of the following components:

- Sidewalks & Connectivity – Improve pedestrian and cyclist circulation in Shell Rock by expanding and upgrading the existing sidewalk and trail systems.
- Trail Master Plan – Create a safe connection from the city of Shell Rock to the Rolling Prairie Trailhead; provide opportunities to expand the existing regional trail and draw trail users into downtown Shell Rock.
- McCague Memorial Park Enhancements – Increase accessibility and circulation throughout the park by adding a system of paths to link the playground, shelter, and other park features.
- Downtown Gathering Space – Provide a community gathering space by permanently closing the portion of Washington Street adjacent to Holly Park and designing the space for a stage, outdoor lighting, and seating.



Trees Forever Facilitators: *Patty Reisinger, Molly Walkner*

Landscape Architects: *Craig Ritland, Samantha Price; RITLAND+KUIPER Landscape Architects*

Intern: *Amber Pearce*



Design workshop.

Steering Committee:

*Robyn Holden, chair
Jami Cooper
Cathi Dewitt
Marilyn Hardee
Craig Johnson
Beth Kay
Mike Klinefelter
Mollie Muntefering*

*Corrie Ramige
Stacey Reints
Micki Reints
Jeff Reints
Ted Scheidel
Nicole Schneider
Cheryl Willson,
Larry Young*

"Pushing a stroller [on the sidewalks] is super hard because if you're not watching, you're going to trip over the sidewalk."



"I'd like to see a trail [on] either side [of W Main Street to Shell Rock Park], preferably [on the east] side so you can go right to the campground, you don't have to cross the road at all..."



"We had to avoid a lot of places...for lack of sidewalks because [my child's] wheelchair does not go over grass very well..."



1

An inadequate sidewalk system is a significant barrier for pedestrians and cyclists in Shell Rock. To address this issue, the design team developed a sidewalk and connectivity plan that builds on the existing infrastructure to close connectivity gaps with a combination of new sidewalks, share-the-road trails, and off-road trails. The plan also proposes constructing a pedestrian underpass on Highway 3 and replacing the bridge on South Cherry Street.



Legend

- Existing Sidewalk
- - - Proposed Sidewalk
- . - . Share-the-Road Trail
- - - - Walking Trail
- Existing Trail
- - - Proposed Trail
- ☀ Proposed Pedestrian Enhancements

Shell Rock Destinations

- ① Existing Rolling Prairie Trailhead
- ② Shell Rock City Hall
- ③ Shell Rock Elementary
- ④ Downtown
- ⑤ Aquatic Center & McCague Memorial Park
- ⑥ Proposed Walking Trail Parking
- ⑦ Shell Rock Park Campground

Proposed Shell Rock pedestrian network.

2

Rolling Prairie Trail is a significant asset to Shell Rock because it offers a safe venue for physical activity and has the potential to draw visitors using the trail into town. However, as mentioned by focus-group participants, there is no comfortable connection between the trailhead north of Highway 3 and the community. To make it easier for pedestrians and cyclists to get to and from the trail, the design team proposed a combination of sharrows, an off-road trail, and an underpass along Highway 3.

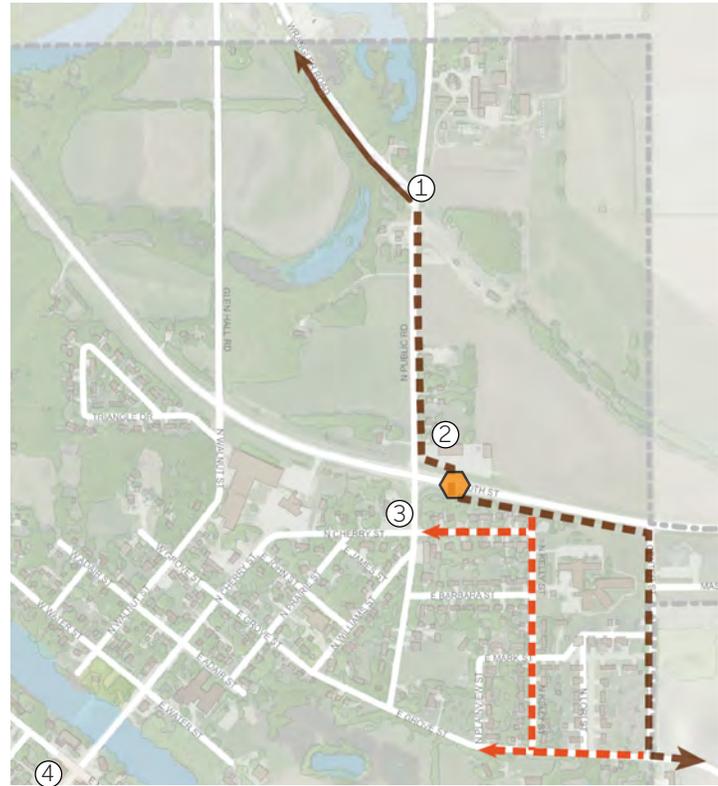
Legend

-  Existing Paved Trail
-  Proposed Off-Road-Trail
-  Proposed Sharrow
-  Proposed Way-finding signage
-  Proposed Pedestrian Underpass

Shell Rock Destinations

- ① Rolling Prairie Trailhead
- ② Bike Station
- ③ Kwik Star
- ④ Downtown

"You can park [at City Hall], but you have to ride out [to the bike trail]... Then, you're on the road and there are... hundreds of semis..."



Proposed routes to connect the Rolling Prairie Trail to Shell Rock.

"...my cause for concern [is] crossing Highway 3 [on the way] to the bike trail... [a] pedestrian overpass [would help]."



Proposed Highway 3 trail underpass.

3

McCague Memorial Park was identified as a local asset during the community focus groups, but participants acknowledged the lack of accessibility within the park. The design team proposed a plan to make the park more accessible by including a system of paved paths, accessible parking, and inclusive playground equipment. A new shelter was also requested by the community; this would provide additional gathering space at this popular destination.

"...there used to be a sidewalk from the pool area to the shelter thing and there isn't any more. I was at a birthday party and the people in wheelchairs...struggle to even get to [the shelter]."



"...when they did the pool, they took out the sidewalk [at McCague Park]... so it's really hard for handicapped, wheelchair [accessibility]."



Plan of proposed enhancements to McCague Memorial Park.

Stanton

The southwest Iowa community of Stanton is proud of its Swedish heritage and is home to the World's Largest Coffee Pot, a Swedish-style pot referencing its Scandinavian coffee roots. It is also the birthplace of Virginia Christine, aka Mrs. Olson, spokeswoman for Folgers Coffee. The town's active trail committee has been working on completing the Greenbelt Trail, which will eventually be a loop around the entire community. As a 2002 visioning community, Stanton added trail amenities including mile markers, benches, and trees.

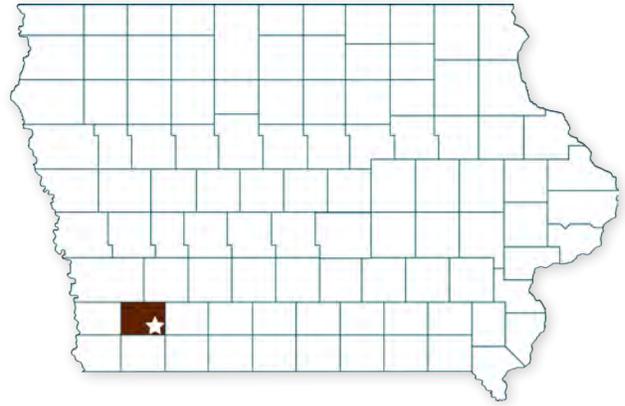
Community Assessments

The Greenbelt Trail is popular among all demographic groups in Stanton. However, people would like additional trailheads with accessible parking to make it more widely used. People in several focus groups identified inadequate accessibility downtown and at Anderson Park as a concern. The railroad underpass on Broad Avenue is an impediment to motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians because of the narrow width and limited visibility.

Planning and Design Summary

Based on input from focus groups and feedback during the design workshop, the visioning committee identified five priority areas:

- Accessibility, Connectivity, & Safety – Improve access to important destinations by adding paved trail segments at key locations.
- Trail Assets – Create defined and accessible trailheads; as the trail continues to be extended, add amenities such as bicycle racks and repair stations, seating, trees, and vehicular parking.
- Beautification – Improve aesthetics throughout downtown by installing bump-outs that include plantings and sculptures.
- Identity & Branding – Build on Stanton's Swedish heritage by carrying Swedish symbology throughout downtown and the trail; add amenities to the recently repurposed school playground next to the Swedish Cultural Center.
- Outdoor Activity Spaces & Entertainment – Create an outdoor entertainment venue south of downtown; make updates to existing parks and open spaces to promote health and well-being.



Trees Forever Facilitator: Brad Riphagen

Landscape Architects: David Stokes, Jeffrey L. Bruce & Company

Intern: Andrea Fager and Abby Scott



Public presentation planning meeting.

Steering Committee:

Jenna Ramsey, chair

Mickey Anderson

Kevin Cabbage

Cheryl Cass

Jeannine Gourley

Ellen Griffen

Sheila Mainquist

Justin Miller

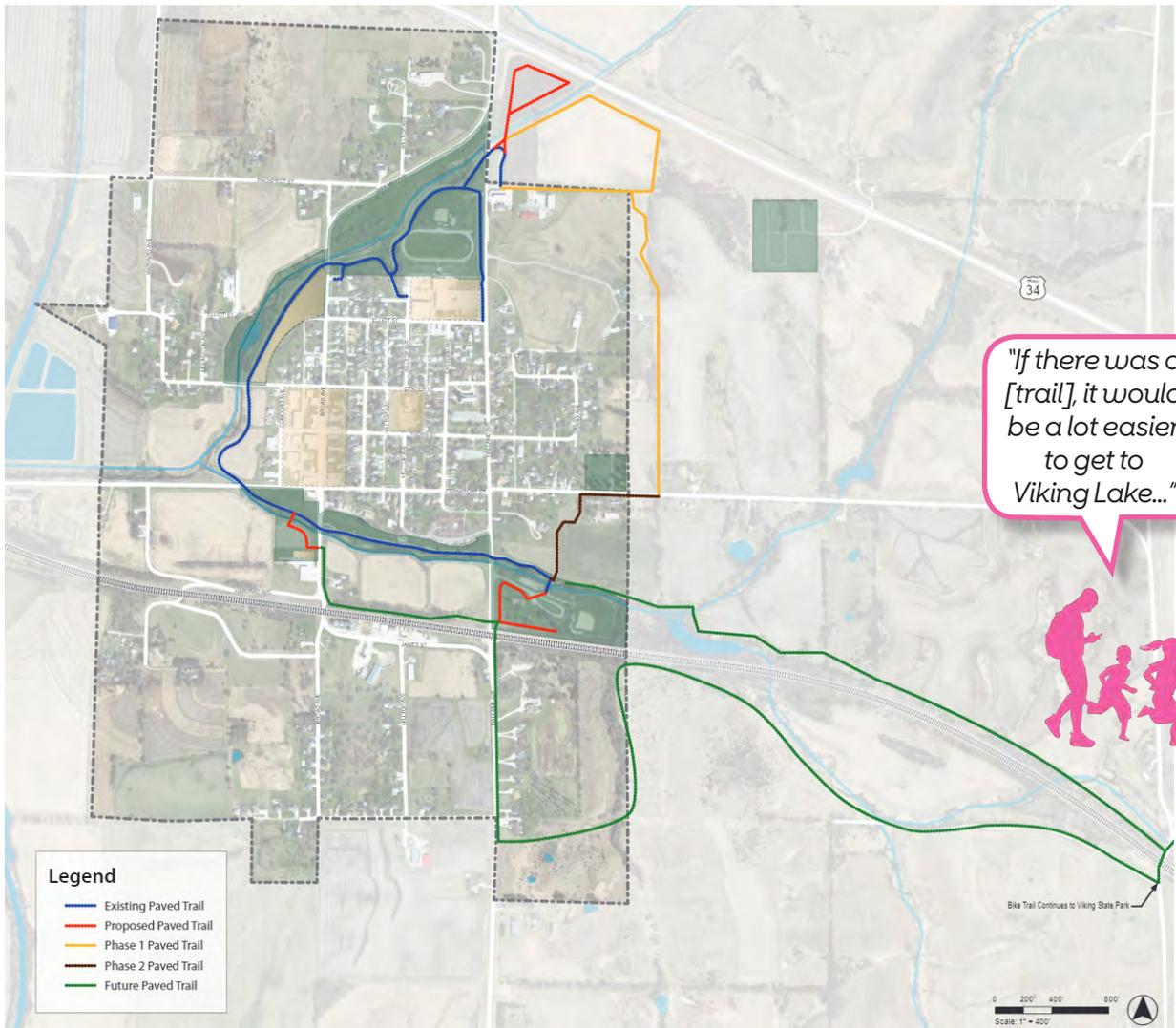
1

Participants in every focus group value the Greenbelt Trail as a major asset to the community; however, some groups acknowledged that the trail has some shortcomings. The city hopes to continue developing this important feature and fill in the existing system's gaps. The design team proposed a phased trail development plan that completes the loop around town and includes a trail to Viking Lake State Park, a roadside sculpture park, and connections to Anderson Park and the proposed outdoor entertainment complex. Trail amenities such as benches, defined trailhead locations, and bicycle repair stations are included in this proposal.

"[South Hill is] kind of isolated from the walking trails... you're actually driving to get to a location and then do your exercising."



"Coming from the east side of town, there really isn't a good spot to jump on the trail..."



"If there was a [trail], it would be a lot easier to get to Viking Lake..."

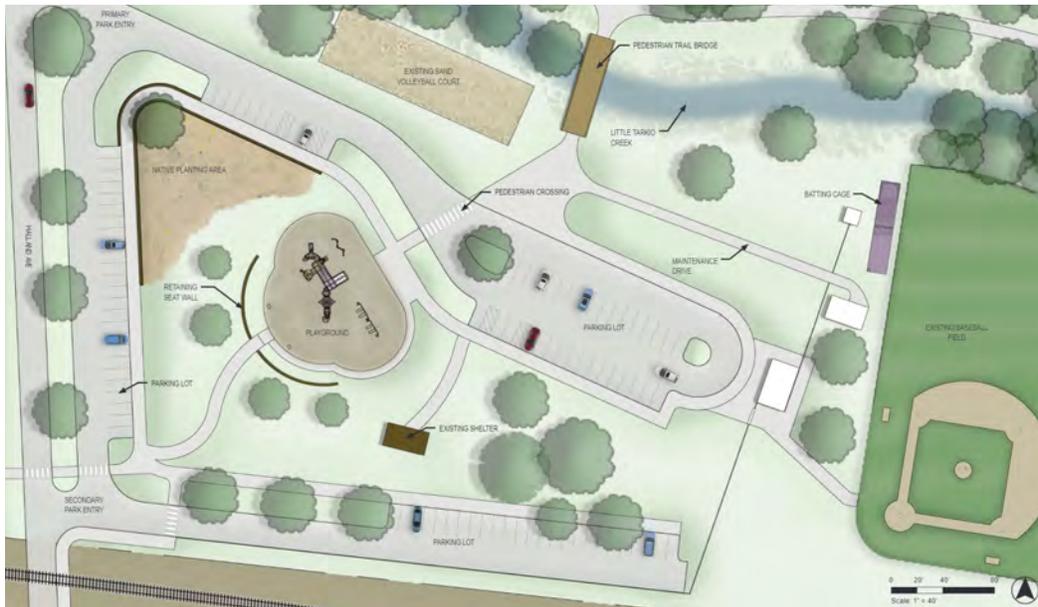


Proposed comprehensive trail plan, which would eventually connect to Viking Lake State Park.

2

Anderson Park is a popular outdoor space for both youth and adults. However, it is difficult to access because of confusing parking options and lack of handicapped-accessible surfaces. The design team proposed pedestrian circulation and accessibility improvements that include paved paths throughout the park, increased parking capacity, and a native planting area to manage flooding and stormwater runoff. Paved paths provide a convenient connection to the existing trail bridge and city trail system, park shelter, and baseball field.

"The one negative about [the trail] access [in Anderson Park] is...that [it's] not a great parking spot for trail access for [people with] limited mobility."



Plan view of Anderson Park enhancements.

"I think the entrance to Anderson [Park] is paved, but after that, it's just gravel...But there's people like my grandpa who are handicapped [who] want to go watch the games and he has a walker and it's a struggle to get there."



Proposed park amenities include new playground equipment.

"[They should improve] the parking for employees on Main Street so that there's more room... because there's no extended parking anywhere downtown so that people who work there can park somewhere else so that the Main Street [Broad Avenue] is clear."



"I would say the access from the street to the sidewalk [downtown] is a problem...this summer, we had an activity...and it was a nightmare to get people [who] had trouble walking...up the street... because of the steps."



"The only way you can get on that sidewalk [on the east side of Broad Avenue downtown] without going up steps is at either end [of the block]."



3

Accessibility issues downtown were identified by several user types during the focus groups. In addition, residents would like a more welcoming streetscape. A downtown streetscape plan developed by the design team addresses these desires. Bump-outs with ADA-accessible ramps and crosswalks are proposed at corners and mid-block along Broad Avenue to reduce crossing distances. Small-scale plantings and dala horse sculptures incorporated into the bump-outs make the area more attractive and highlight Stanton's Swedish heritage.



Section view (top) and rendering (bottom) of the downtown streetscape concept.

West Branch

West Branch is the birthplace of President Herbert Hoover and is home to the only National Park and Presidential Library and Museum in Iowa. The community is located along the Herbert Hoover Nature Trail, a developing rail-trail that will eventually connect 16 Iowa towns. Situated along Interstate 80, this growing city is just five miles east of the Iowa City Metro and less than 30 miles from Cedar Rapids. The national historic site and Interstate 80 bring thousands of visitors to the community each year, creating both opportunities and challenges.

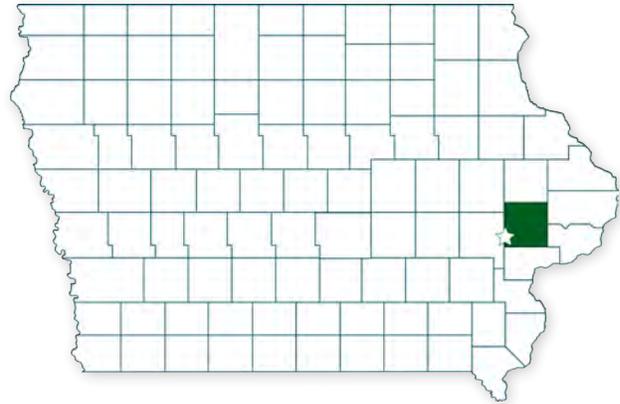
Community Assessments

Public input from focus groups and a random-sample survey revealed that residents want more trails in town, as well as regional trail connections. Walking is a popular activity among residents; however, the sidewalk system is incomplete and in poor condition, and in many areas not accessible because of high curbs or steps. A maintained safe route to the West Branch Schools and accessibility improvements to the historic downtown of West Branch are desired.

Planning and Design Summary

Based on the results of the assessments and feedback from the steering committee, the design team created a concept plan that addresses the following priorities:

- Community Connectivity – Close gaps in the sidewalk system and replace sidewalks that are in disrepair; extend existing trails to connect to destinations in town as well as to other nearby communities.
- Downtown Streetscape – Define the travelways for vehicles and pedestrians to improve circulation; add pedestrian amenities such as intersection bump-outs, street trees, and benches; address elevation changes along downtown sidewalks to improve access to businesses.
- Heritage Square – Enhance the usability and aesthetics of the square by removing the one-way street and adding amenities such as seating, trees, interactive play areas, and a water feature.
- Downtown Truck Route – Reroute the truck route to avoid conflict with pedestrians and on-street parking and to increase turning radii.



Trees Forever Facilitators: Nick McGrath; Paige Shafer

Designer: Kyle Martin; Martin Gardner Architecture

Landscape Architect: Meg Flenker; Flenker Land Architecture Consultants, LLC

Intern: Zahra Salahshoor



School focus group.

Steering Committee:

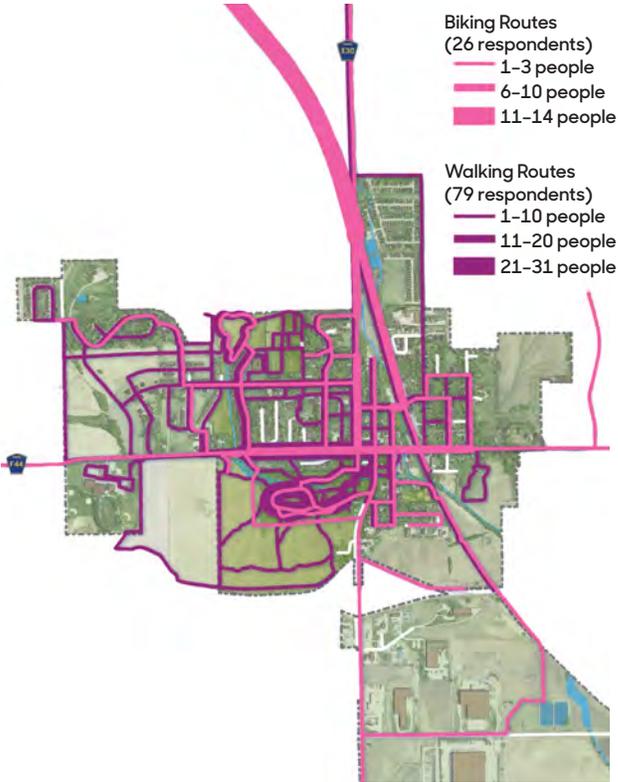
Melissa Russell, chair
Carolyn Anderson
Nicki Brick
John Fuller
Matt Goodale
Roger Laughlin
Tiffany Leschke-Frederick
Colton Miller
Rod Ness

Mike Quinlan
Tracy Schutte
Thomas Schwartz
Jessi Simon
Nick Shimmin
Jodee Stoolman
Pete Swisher
Renee Thompson
Jordan Waters
Addison Wehde

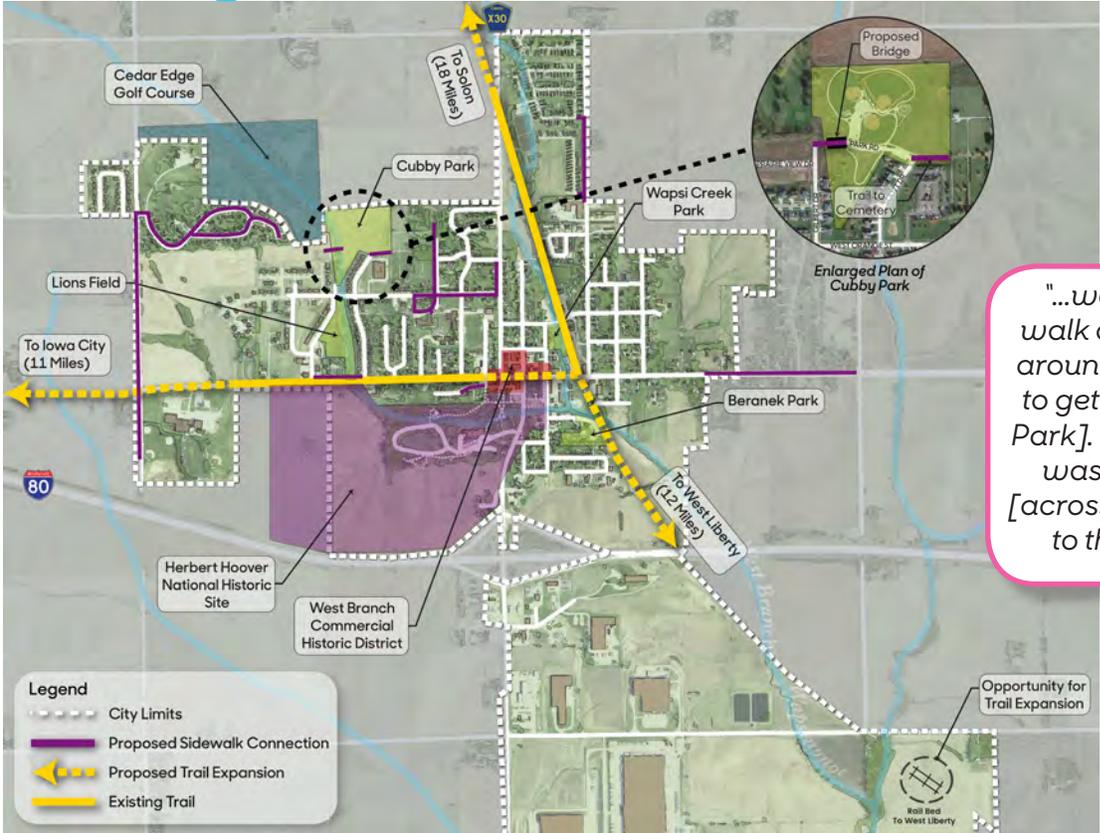
1

While the Hoover Trail and walkways and trails at the Herbert Hoover National Historic Site are appreciated and used by the community regularly, the focus groups and survey indicated that adding more trails in town and making regional connections are top priorities among residents. The design team's connectivity plan addresses trail access and linkages by closing gaps in the sidewalk system, replacing broken sidewalk sections, and adding off-street trails. A trail bridge to Cubby Park, a trail through the Historic District and to the schools are key components in the plan.

"When I bike, I will take my bike and go to another nearby community... and use the trails over there just because I like to bike on the trails and it's easier..."



Walking and biking routes identified by survey respondents.

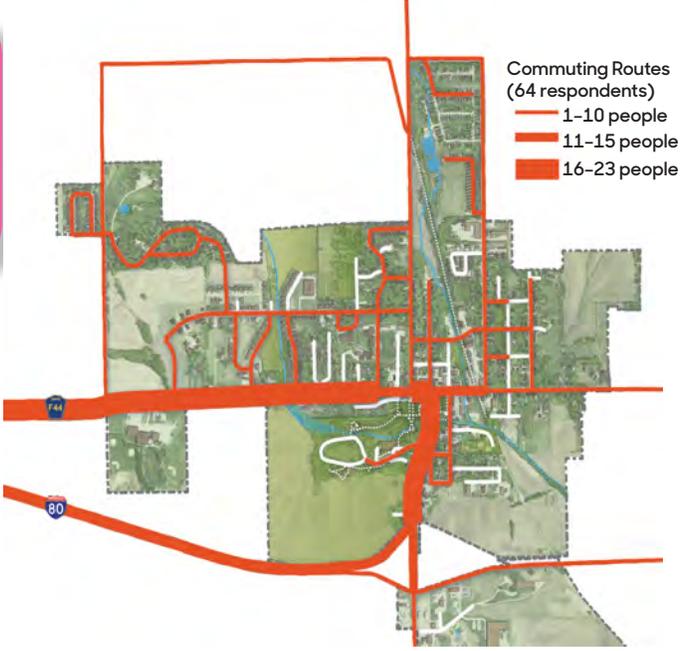


Proposed community connectivity plan.

2

Main Street is heavily traveled by commuters, trucks, shoppers, and kids going to and from school. Because of the high volume of traffic, safe pedestrian access is extremely important for this area. Both survey and focus-group participants reported poor accessibility along Main Street, particularly in the downtown district. The design team developed a streetscape plan that would make this space more pedestrian friendly by implementing traffic-calming measures such as landscaped bump-outs in combination with pedestrian amenities such as seating and well-defined crosswalks. Additionally, the plan addresses the drastic changes in sidewalk elevations and the steps at intersections downtown.

"[At the intersection of Main & Downey Street] there [are] stairs down and it's kind of annoying because if you want to ride your bike and you're on [the sidewalk], then you have to get off..."



Commuting routes identified by survey respondents

"If you try to walk up the sidewalk [on the west side of N Downey Street] you can't get to the street...it's an elevated sidewalk... People fall off it and need ambulance attention on a regular basis."



Edited image of proposed concept to raise the street level to the existing sidewalk level.

3

The existing truck route requires truck traffic to turn onto Main Street for one block before continuing through town. The radius of this turn is difficult for large trucks traveling to and from Interstate 80. Focus-group participants acknowledged that the combination of parked cars and tight turning radii causes problems for large trucks traveling on Main Street. The design team proposed three options to remedy this situation. The first option would be a slightly altered route that would provide a larger turn radius, the next option would require trucks to turn left on Main Street, away from city traffic, and continue north on 4th Street. The third option extends 1st Street and would accommodate the appropriate turning radius for large truck traffic.



Turn radius for Green Street onto North Downey Street.



Turn radius for North 1st Street onto Green Street.



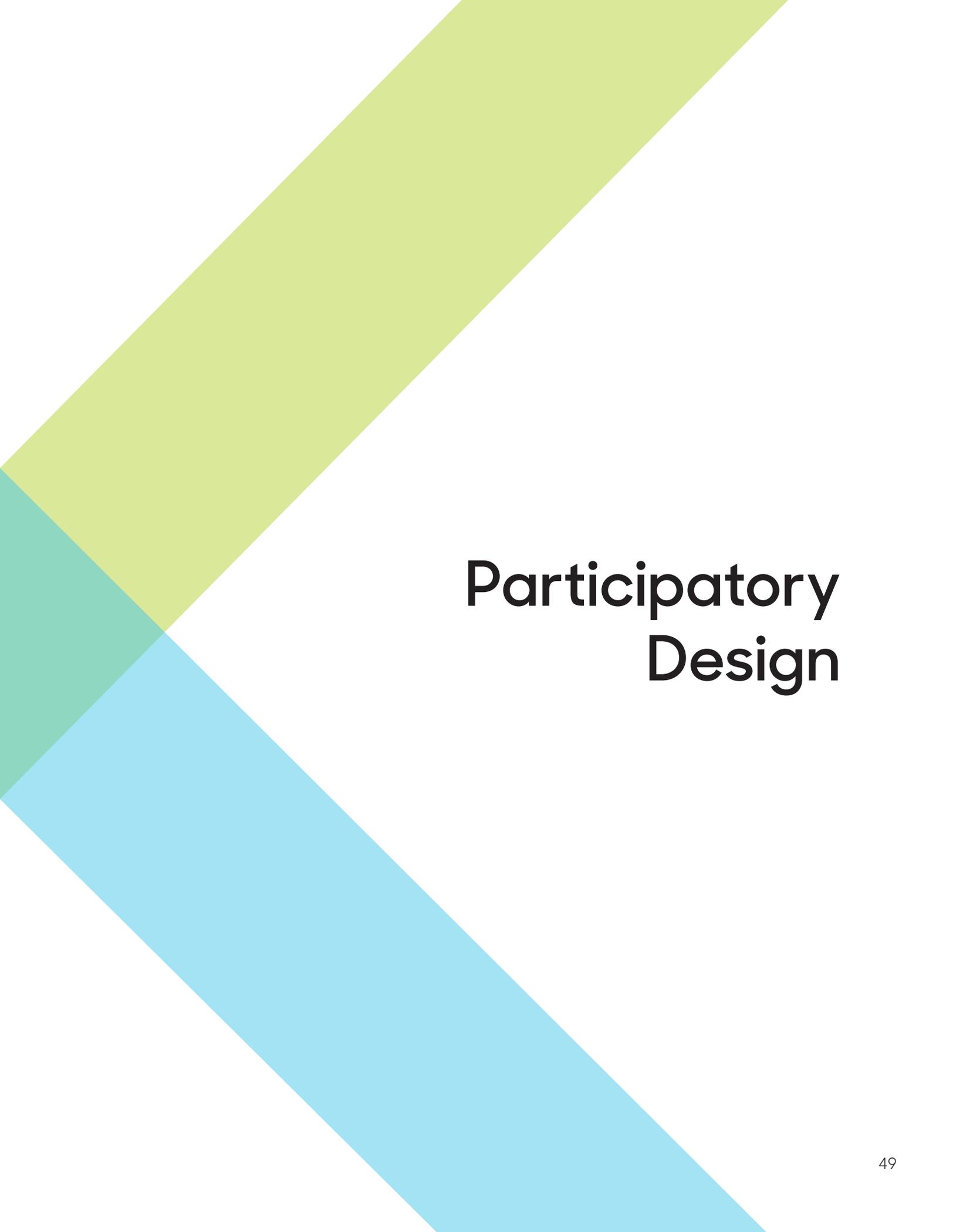
"We have a fair amount of large truck traffic through the center of town..."

"...our streets are small downtown but we're an agricultural community, so we have more than our share of semis [and] farm equipment that have to come right down through Main and Downey, and that can cause [problems]."



Plan views of reconfigured truck route concepts: option one (top), option two (middle), and option three (bottom).





Participatory Design

Inviting Community Members Into the Design Process



Algona's interactive design workshop event space created with milk crates.

The following highlights engagement methods and design-thinking strategies developed and used by our amazing landscape architecture consultants and the team at Iowa State University. This presentation of their work is just a glimpse of a much larger process that they lead. We would like to thank them for all of their hard work and for contributing their methods and experiences.

Strong public engagement has always been a key principle of the Community Visioning process. As a program we understand that local knowledge and experience of a community and its transportation network provides the greatest insight and directive toward future planning. Over the past 26 years, the strategies for engaging with communities has evolved and led to some of the program's most successful components, including the design workshops and public presentations. These components combine the planning and research of the ISU team and the design expertise of our landscape architecture consultants to provide an interactive and inclusive experience to build trust with the public, give them agency in the design process, and gather their local knowledge and input to create spaces that are supported by residents and reflect their vision and values.

Over the past few years, the Iowa State team, in collaboration with our landscape architecture consultants, has been focused on developing methods that create awareness of the process,

extend the reach of the engagement, further encourage participation, and foster richer stories from participants, as well as showcase and test potential design concepts. The design teams bring their experience and creativity to the workshops, dreaming up ways to connect with residents and invite them to share, create, and learn. Each town presents new and unique design challenges and opportunities, so the methods and materials have evolved to meet the needs of the community.

Key strategies in our participatory design include

- Creating awareness of the process and get people involved
- Extending the reach of engagement (more people longer time)
- Encouraging storytelling
- Fostering greater interaction and collaboration in the design process
- Testing design concepts

Creating awareness of the process and getting people involved

To ensure a successful event, we must first make people aware of the program and get them involved. This approach encompasses strategies such as advertising the process and milestones, making the events visible within the community, hosting program activities where residents are already gathering, or providing that extra something special such as free treats.

The Logan visioning committee created a branding campaign called "Speak Up!" to ensure good participation. It developed a graphic identity containing a megaphone for their fliers and social media posts and placed small megaphones throughout town at businesses with fliers, advertising the events. This "brand" was maintained with signage at the open house to connect graphically and provide consistency in messaging. The Logan design workshop had one of the largest turnouts yet.

It is also important to create an atmosphere that is fun and relaxing, so that the public feels more comfortable to share and interact in the design process. We recognize that people have busy lives and being asked to participate in one more meeting or event can be a big ask. Some of our design teams piggybacked on other community

events where the public was already gathered, or held their events in places such as the golf course clubhouse in Dunlap, where a steady stream of people are passing through who might not have made it to a separate meeting. In other communities we have created unique installations using milk crates that attract attention to the event or even provide the space for it.

Extending the reach of engagement

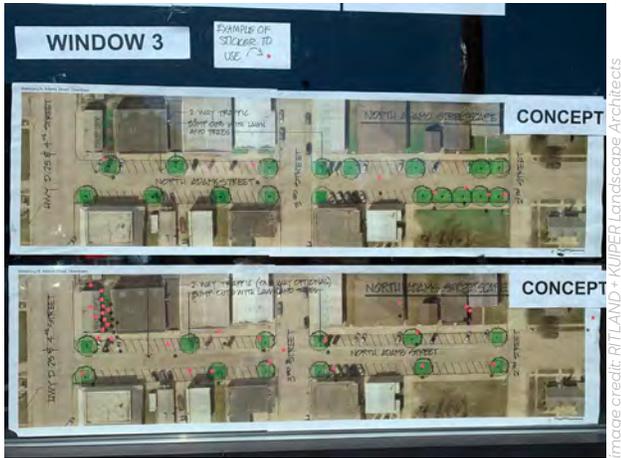
This strategy has two main goals: bring more community members to the table to direct the design, and provide a longer time for input and review. Restrictions created by the COVID-19 pandemic compelled us to rethink our engagement methods and materials. Because we were not able to meet in person, our teams sought out strategies for connecting with people and



Elements from Logan's "Speak Up!" branding campaign.



In Aplington, RITLAND + KUIPER Landscape Architects held their design presentation next to the popcorn stand on popcorn night, which always draws a crowd.



RITLAND + KUIPER design boards displayed in storefront windows in Wellsburg's downtown to gather feedback during 2020 COVID restrictions.

getting feedback through the use of installations set up outside throughout the community. This led to the discovery that we could share ideas and get input from more residents over a longer period of time than just the day of the workshop and the presentation. Though we are grateful to be back in-person with our communities, we have continued to utilize techniques developed during that time.

In Wellsburg and Reinbeck, community members were led through a tour of boards set up in storefront windows. RITLAND + KUIPER Landscape Architects provided participants with stickers to vote on design concepts that met their vision for their community that they applied to the glass. The display was up for three weeks and participants were given multiple routes to connect with the design team to provide additional feedback.

One of the installations that resulted from the pandemic was our Community Visioning-branded kiosks, serving more than a dozen communities to date. The kiosks are set up at events, and beforehand, as beacons to draw attention to the fact that something new is going on in the community. They are also used to display concepts and extend the time that residents get to see the design team's work.

Encouraging storytelling

The personal experiences and knowledge of residents about their community is invaluable. During design workshops as our teams engage with residents about transportation issues, they are often granted insight into a site's history and people's attachment to the places in which we are working. These stories reveal what is important in a community, and teaches us about a community's identity and spirit. This knowledge helps direct design decisions, prioritization of projects and the theme and identity for a project. Our design teams understand the value of these interactions and have developed engagement activities that seek out those personal stories and connections residents have with the places in which they live, work, and gather.

The design workshop in Scotch Grove was a forum for residents to gather, listen, and share ideas. The Seelman Landscape Architecture team used Time + Place Worksheets, which asked participants to respond to written prompts such as: "Where was your favorite childhood memory?" "Where do you spend most of your time?" "Where is the most improvement needed?" and "Other Scotch Grove memories." Participants then mapped their stories and were encouraged to share.



Scotch Grove residents participating in the Time + Place mapping exercise.

Fostering greater interaction and collaboration in the design process

As part of the evolution of our practices, the Iowa State team has taken a critical look at traditional engagement tools and methods, their successes, and the factors that limit participation and authentic collaboration in the process. The idea of designing, drawing, or even committing an idea to paper—especially in front of others—can be intimidating for non-designers. Through our work, we have explored how utilizing tangible elements that participants can manipulate encourages interaction in the design process, and provides them with a deeper connection to the project and allows them to see how their decisions will affect the spaces being designed. Additionally, we have experimented with strategies involving concepts of play to further entice interaction and create a more casual atmosphere for participants. This has included the use of toys, games, and simple materials to which participants are drawn and with which they feel comfortable interacting.



Algona residents collaborated with the ISU Community Design Lab design team to test road, sidewalk, and right-of-way reconfigurations with a simple, manipulatable model. The model is designed using Hot Wheels cars. The toys helped break the ice with participants and encourage interaction.



image credit: Seelman Landscape Architecture

Seelman Landscape Architecture provided design workshop participants with a wide range of materials for engaging maps of design areas. The use of game pieces, pins, flags, sticks and markers gave participants a chance to engage the designs in a way that was comfortable for them.



Algona residents marked desired trail routes and destinations on a map using bendable wax craft sticks and game pieces. These materials allow community members to rethink and manipulate the routes they are considering and remove them when they are done, alleviating pressure that they may feel with regard to having their ideas on display permanently.



Wheatland's temporary streetscape improvements.



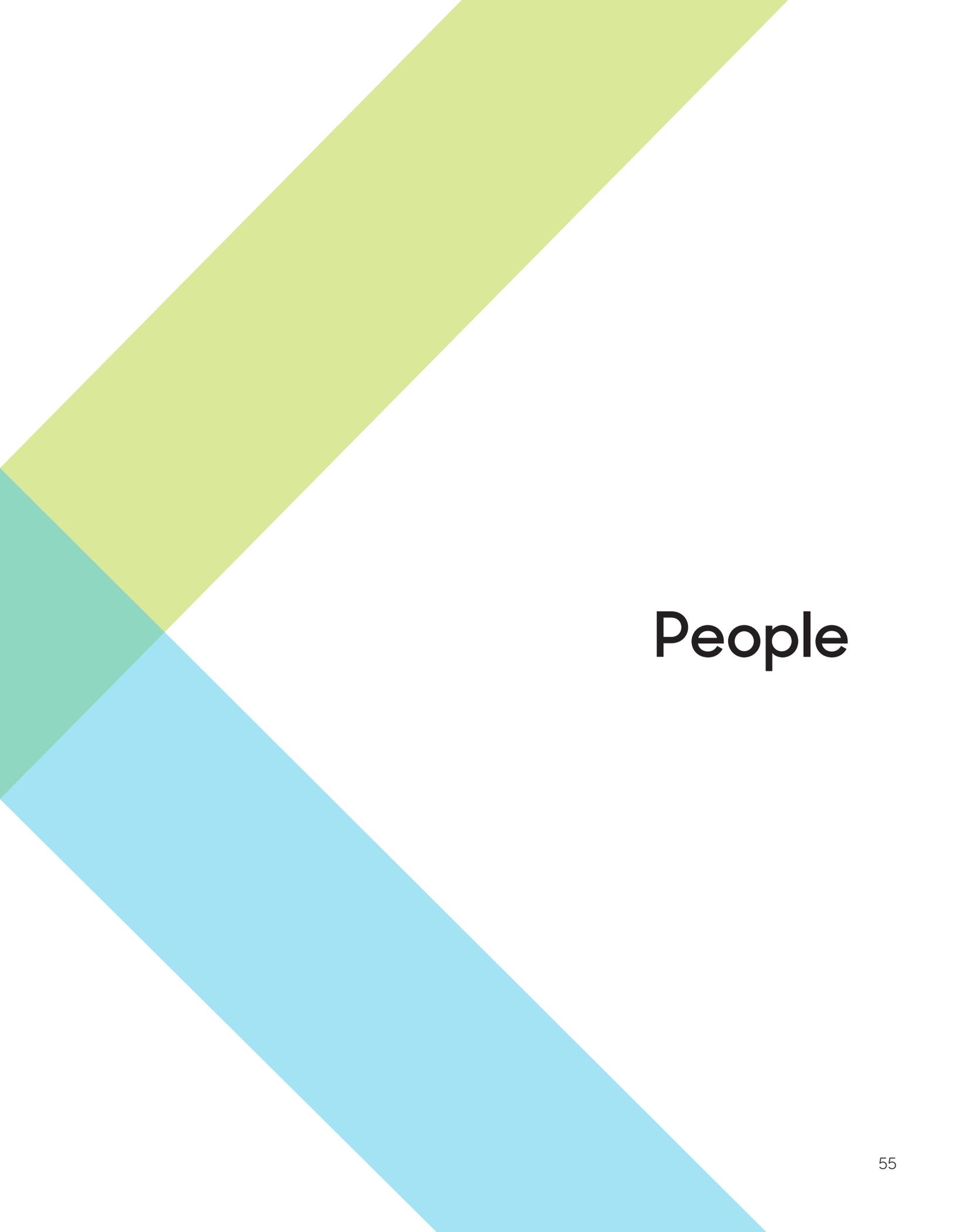
Testing a buffered bike lane along McGregor Street in Algona. This installation was implemented using duct tape and chalk by the ISU Community Design Lab.

Testing design concepts

Some design concepts are hard to grasp through maps and pictures. Showcasing and testing designs through small site installations allow for residents to physically engage with a design and understand its potential. To create the installations, our teams use inexpensive, temporary materials to give the idea of the finished project. For some installations the public can collaborate with the design team, manipulate and progress the design to best suit the transportation needs of the community. These projects can also be implemented with greater permanence and later in the visioning process as a catalyst toward a long-term goal. Our design teams have used milk crates, temporary paint, straw erosion tubes, tape, and plants to test streetscape updates such as curb bump-outs, crosswalks, streetscape furniture, and bike lanes.

In Wheatland, the Flenker Land Architecture Consultants team along with Iowa State used straw wattle, spray chalk, and milk crates to create and test temporary streetscape enhancements. These materials allowed the community to understand the scale, placement, and experience of these features from both pedestrian and motorist perspectives, and provided local input on the viability of these components as long-term improvements.

Community Visioning is an ever-evolving program that continues to strive to connect with community members. Our team at Iowa State University and our landscape architecture collaborators will continue to innovate our design engagement practices to better meet the needs of our communities and invite them to collaborate in the design process.



People

Community Visioning

Julia Badenhope, FASLA

*Director, Iowa's Living Roadways Community Visioning Program
Professor of Landscape Architecture*

Sandra Oberbroeckling

*Project Manager, Iowa's Living Roadways Community Visioning Program
Program Specialist, ISU Extension and Outreach Community and Economic Development*

Chad Hunter

Landscape Architecture Outreach Studio Manager, Iowa's Living Roadways Community Visioning Program

Britney Markhardt

Program Assistant, Iowa's Living Roadways Community Visioning Program

*Iowa State University
Community Visioning Program Interns*

Lexi Banks

Mona Kazemian

Parmiss Sazgar

Caleb Borrett

Aidan Kelly

Joslyn Schafer

Anupam Bose

Linus Larson

Emily Sibouheuang

Hossein Entezari

Qiyamah Muhammad

Trevor Smith

David Kasbeer

Lin Pizzo

Jaelyn Waddle

Trees Forever

Shannon Ramsay, *Founder & Trustee*

Kiley Miller, *President & CEO*

Jeff Jensen, *Director of Programs*

Brad Riphagen, *Community Visioning Program Manager*

Field Coordinators

Brad Riphagen

Jeff Jensen

Patty Reisinger

Molly Walkner

Leslie Berckes

Nick McGrath

Paige Shafer

Practitioners

David Stokes, PLA, ASLA, ASIC
Lara Guldenpfenning PLA, ASLA
Landscape Architects
Jeffrey L. Bruce & Company

Craig Ritland, PLA, ASLA, CPESC, CPSWQ
Samatha Price, ASLA
Landscape Architects
RITLAND+KUIPER Landscape Architects

Kyle Martin
Meg Flenker, PLA, ASLA, CPESC, CPSWQ
Architect, Landscape Architect
Martin Gardner Architecture

Carl Rodgers
Chad Hunter
Landscape Architects
Community Design Lab

Brett Seelman, PLA, ASLA
Alex Priest, PLA, ASLA
Landscape Architects
Seelman Landscape Architecture

Bruce Niedermyer, PLA, ASLA, LEED AP
Landscape Architect
RDG Planning & Design

Interns

Lexi Banks
Seelman Landscape Architecture

Zahra Salahshoor
Martin Gardner Architecture

Amber Pearce
RITLAND+KUIPER Landscape Architects

Andrea Fager, Abby Scott
Jeffrey L. Bruce & Company LLC

Olivia Bolton
RDG Planning & Design

Linus Larson, Trevor Smith, Jaelyn Waddle
Community Design Lab

Iowa State University

Christopher Seeger

Professor of Landscape Architecture, Extension Landscape Architect

Allison Anderson

Director of Survey Research Services, Center for Survey Statistics and Methodology

Mary Patterson

Program Assistant, Center for Survey Statistics and Methodology

Nora Ladjahasan

Assistant Scientist, Institute for Design Research and Outreach

Ellen McIntosh

Project Manager, Survey Research Services, Center for Survey Statistics and Methodology

Robin McNeely

Program Manager, Institute for Design Research and Outreach

Iowa DOT

Stuart Anderson

Director, Transportation Development Division

Craig Markley

Office Director, Modeling, Forecasting, and Telemetrics

Tara Van Waus

Living Roadway Trust Fund Coordinator

FHWA

Timothy C. Marshall

Division Administrator



Partners

- Iowa Department of Transportation
- Trees Forever
- Living Roadway Trust Fund
- Iowa State University Department of Landscape Architecture

... and justice for all
Iowa State University Extension and Outreach does not discriminate on the basis of age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, genetic information, marital status, national origin, pregnancy, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or status as a U.S. veteran. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.)
Inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies may be directed to the Diversity Officer, 2150 Beardshear Hall, 515 Morrill Road, Ames, Iowa 50011, 515-294-1482, extdiversity@iastate.edu. All other inquiries may be directed to 800-262-3804.

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
Extension and Outreach
Community and Economic Development