

Staff Report

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT - PHASE 2

August 24, 2021

BACKGROUND:

In January 2020, the City Council and Iowa State University's Department of Community and Regional Planning (CRP) agreed to collaborate on tasks that would help the City Council members accomplish one of their goals to "use the best communication engagement techniques and modern technologies to engage the community by reaching people in geographic areas using multiple channels."

The main emphasis of this collaboration is to identify, develop, test, and evaluate various community engagement methods with special emphasis on underrepresented and marginalized groups.

The first phase of this co-venture yielded two research reports: 1) Sustainable Mobility For Smart Cities and 2) Engaging Residents In Urban Planning. These reports were produced by the 2020 Fall semester and 2021 Spring semester Community and Regional Planning Studio classes.

The second phase will be accomplished by a 2021 Fall semester CRP independent study class who plan to organize and host a festival entitled, "Play Ames: Imagine Your City" on September 25, 2021. The objectives of this event are to:

- a) Develop engagement strategies that will attract underrepresented/marginalized communities to participate in the discussions about their city.
- b) Test the engagement methods in selected neighborhoods.
- c) Develop criteria to evaluate the engagement techniques implemented.
- d) Evaluate the strategies and provide feedback to the City Council about the most promising and successful methods.

The festival approach was selected to be tested based on the assumption that "through playfulness trust and connections are established, and one can discuss more serious topics after or during playful activities designed to engage all residents."

The class has designated four locations to hold the festival with different activities planned for each of the sites (See Attached Implementation Document). The locations are: Reliable Street (Lockwood Café), Franklin Park, East 7th Street, and Downtown.

STAFF COMMENTS:

While the ISU students will be responsible for all aspects of managing the festival at each of the four locations and no specific approvals are needed from the City Council, the students are seeking the City's assistance in the following two ways:

- 1) City Council (and City staff) presence is requested at all four sites in order to interact with the participants and answer questions about issues of interest to the participants, and
- 2) For the purpose of promoting the event, students are requesting to use the City Logo on the advertising material for the event indicating that the City Council is one of the sponsors of the festival.

Since the proposed festival represents an extension of the collaboration effort between the City and the ISU Department of Community and Regional Planning to assist in accomplishing the City Council's goal of improving public engagement, the staff would support the two requests listed above from the student organizers of the event.



IMPLEMENTATION DOCUMENT

PLAY AMES: IMAGINE YOUR CITY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

COLLABORATION: THE CITY OF AMES AND IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY (ISU)

In January 2020 The City of Ames and Iowa State University agreed on a collaboration which was summarized in the document titled Request for Assistance (RFA). It “describes a mutually beneficial relationship between the City of Ames and classes taught by the Iowa State University Department of Community and Regional Planning and the College of Design. The circumstances of the RFA will enable the City to enhance its community engagement strategies to better solicit the involvement of residents while the students and faculty of the College of Design participate in a living lab experience in the City of Ames that will enhance learning and research opportunities”. The City of Ames is represented by Steve Schainker, City Manager and Dr. Gloria Betcher, City Counselor. Iowa State University is represented by Dr. Alenka Poplin.

The main focus of this collaboration is on developing, implementing, testing and evaluating community engagement methods, strategies and technologies. The main goals of this collaboration can be summarized as follows:

- Explore methods, strategies and technologies of engagement with the community
- **Focus on underrepresented and marginalized groups**
- **Develop** novel methods, strategies and technologies of community engagement
- **Test and evaluate** methods, strategies and technologies of engagement
- Give feedback to the City of Ames about successful engagement methods, strategies and technologies

The work accomplished so far in two ISU studio courses was summarized in the following reports shared with the City of Ames:

- Spring 2020, DSN564 Interdisciplinary Option Studio. Report titled: Sustainable Mobility for Smart Cities: Studies of Ames, Iowa
- Fall 2020, CRP532/432 Community Planning Studio. Report titled: Engaging Residents in Urban Planning: Focus on Ames, Iowa

The work planned for the **Fall 2021 semester** will be accomplished within the **CRP 455/555 Smart Cities course** and three additional Independent Studies. The three Independent Studies will be accomplished by the following students in Community and Regional Planning:

- Vishnu Priya Sairamesh (graduate). Sensory urbanism and sensory path as an engagement method
- Fatema Nourin (graduate). Engaging residents with spatial thinking and mapping
- Natalie M. Jacobson (undergraduate). Engaging residents with creative painting and learning about painting techniques
- Additionally, we envision an active engagement of Stella Schroeder, a PhD candidate and specialist in place-making at the university in Chile.

This implementation document was prepared by: Alenka Poplin, Stella Schroeder, Vishnu Priya Sairamesh, Fatema Nourin and Natalie M. Jacobson in collaboration with Steve Schainker, city manager and Dr. Gloria Betcher, city counselor. First version: August 15, 2021.

PLAN FOR THE FALL SEMESTER 2021 | PLAY AMES: IMAGINE YOUR CITY FESTIVAL

The main idea for the Fall 2021 semester is to organize a city festival:

- The suggested title of the festival is PLAY AMES: IMAGINE YOUR CITY.
- The date for the festival: **September 25, 2021.**

The festival will target **underrepresented/marginalized populations** in the City of Ames. It will concentrate on a set of experimental activities at four selected locations. The locations and planned experiments are listed below and described more in detail in this document.

Location 1: RELIABLE STREET

- Guerilla gardens
- Origami
- Urban planning game

Location 2: FRANKLIN PARK

- Breathing game
- Sensory path

Location 3: EAST 7TH STREET

- Spatial thinking and mapping of benches
- Pop-up van with Virtual Reality equipment and online urban planning games

Location 4: DOWNTOWN AMES

- Art Alley

SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES AT ALL LOCATIONS

Supporting activities are planned at all four locations of the festival.

- **Smart City talks.** Residents can talk to the urban planners, city officials, experts. They can ask questions, communicate with them, get to know them and express their wishes for changes in the city. Two council members will be present at each of the four locations to support this activity.
- **Sidewalks of dreams.** Information boards are displayed on sidewalks and residents can express their wishes for changes in the city or just share their ideas, feelings and concerns.
- **Interviews with participants.** Participants are invited to respond to a paper or online survey.
- **Photovoice at all locations.** There will be a group of students dedicated to educate about the possibilities of using Photovoice. They will teach how to use it and encourage participants to do so.
- **Urban games and/or mapping activities.** At all locations depending on the capacity to supervise them properly.

DEDICATED TOPICS TO EXPLORE

Topic 1. The main topic of exploration will be sidewalks. Sidewalks can potentially be more than just sidewalks; they can turn into place to enjoy, play, walk and socialize. Places that may promote life between buildings. We will explore the attitude of the residents towards sidewalks and their untapped potential they represent for the City of Ames and its residents.

Topic 2. The secondary topic of the festival will be evocative places, places that evoke positive emotions, places at which residents feel at peace, relaxed and recharged. This is a continuation of the research in places that are well accepted and appreciated by the residents. Understanding of their characteristics will help create more “positive” places in our cities.

EVALUATION

An important part of the festival and the planned experiments will be the ability to test the presented engagement methods, strategies and technologies. We envision to develop a valuable evaluation method that can be applied across all engagement methods, strategies, and technologies. This will enable us to compare the implemented engagement methods and draw conclusions can then be used by the City of Ames in implementing some of these methods in the future. Additionally, we will develop clear criteria for the evaluation and talk individually with the festival participants/residents of the City of Ames.

ONE EVALUATING METHOD FOR ALL EXPERIMENTS

- Everybody uses the same method, questions. Formalized for all engagement methods
- It enables a comparison of the engagement methods

INDIVIDUAL FOR EVERY PARTICIPANT

- Take time with every kid/youth/parent to talk about engagement, sidewalks, their favorite places
- Formalized questionnaire, printed on a paper/offered online

DEVELOP CRITERIA AND THE FORM OF EVALUATION

- Establish criteria for the evaluation
- How can success be measured and defined?

DEVELOP PHOTOVOICE AS ONE OF THE METHODS OF ENGAGEMENT AND EVALUATION

- Count pics on social media, gather comments

BUDGET

Dr. Poplin additionally acquired \$ 5,000 which is coming from the ISU Collaborative Fund. There is approximately \$ 1,000 left over from the agreement (RFA) with the City of Ames. The money will be spend on advertising, materials, conferences and to finance the visit of Stella Schroeder.

ADVERTISING

Advertising is important. We will create a website, a dedicated Facebook and Instagram page, print flyers, let Iowa State Daily know about our activities, and organize festival T-Shirts and stickers.

PLAY AMES: IMAGINE YOUR CITY | COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FESTIVAL

OBJECTIVES AND GOALS

The main objectives are to:

1. Develop engagement methods, strategies and technologies which will attract and engage underrepresented/marginalized communities to participate in the discussions about their city and urban planning activities.
2. Test the developed and implemented engagement methods, strategies and technologies in the selected neighborhoods.
3. Develop criteria for the evaluation of the implemented engagement methods, strategies and technologies.
4. Evaluate them in order to be able to provide a feedback to the City of Ames about the most promising and successful engagement methods, strategies and technologies they can use in the future.

The goal is to specifically target the neighborhoods with underrepresented/marginalized groups of residents. In the previous work these groups were identified as follows:

- LGBTQ
- Senior citizens
- Racial and cultural minorities
- Gamblers and substance abusers
- Youth, kids
- Persons living in poverty
- Previously incarcerated people
- People with disabilities
- Rural communities
- Homeless
- College students
- Renters
- Domestic abuse survivors
- Indigenous

INNOVATION IN THE SUGGESTED APPROACH

The main idea is to engage residents in a playful way following the idea suggested by Poplin (2012) in her journal publication titled Playful Public Participation. The engagement strategies suggested for Play Ames community engagement festival aim to bring joy, fun and enjoyment to the residents. Through the playfulness a trust and connections are established and one can also talk and discuss more serious topics after or during the playful activities designed to engage all residents. We suggest organizing a festival and test and implement a set of engagement methods, strategies and technologies in the selected locations in the City of Ames. An important component in all the experiments is playful learning.

DATE RESERVED FOR THE FESTIVAL: September 25, 2021

HOW: Playful community engagement events across the City of Ames at the selected locations also include city counselors being present at all locations

WHY: PLAYING, EXPERIMENTING & LEARNING

- Connecting students (ISU) with residents of Ames
- Play-making, playful engagement, discussion of topics relevant to the residents and the city
- Making sidewalks alive. Playful and learning sidewalks

LOCATIONS | TARGETED:

- Low income neighborhoods
- African - American neighborhoods
- Low educational level neighborhoods

Selected: Reliable street, Franklin park, East 7th street, Downtown Ames

PROPOSED ENGAGEMENT METHODS, STRATEGIES, TECHNOLOGIES

Green sidewalks. Guerilla gardens

- -> Learn about gardening, seeds, plants, perennials

Sidewalks of dreams. For your wish related to your city

- -> Learn about engagement, planning and the city
- -> Express your wish for further development of the city

Urban planning game

- -> Learn about urban planning

Playful sidewalks/parks. Breathing game

- -> Learn how to breath, learn about yoga
- -> Learn about meditations and expressing emotions

Barefoot sensory path. Sensory exploration

- -> Learn about different senses
- -> Experiment with senses

Spatial thinking and mapping of benches.

- -> Learn about maps and how to map
- -> Learn how to think spatially

Pop-Up Van. Virtual reality and online urban planning games

- -> Learn about novel technologies

Art Ally. Paint by number mural

- -> Learn about colors and painting

Photovoice. A story captured through the lens

- Identify issues, experiences and pave the way to work for solutions

WORKING STEPS: ENGAGEMENT WITH PLAY-MAKING

1 Developing method



2 Testing method



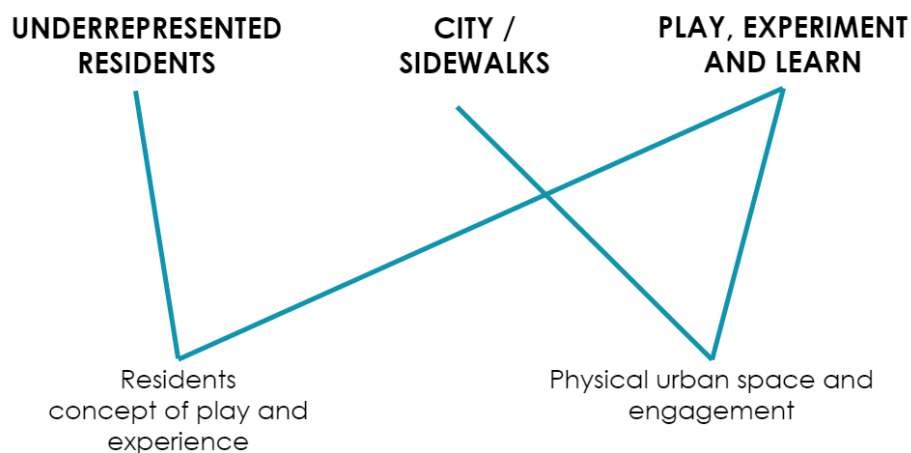
3 Evaluating method

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RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research concentrates around the following three main research questions:

- What is the most adequate method, strategy and/or technology for engaging underrepresented residents in urban planning?
- How well are the playful engagement methods, strategies and technologies accepted by the residents? Do they feel attracted to participate? Who participates? How long? Which activities are the most interesting for the residents?
- How important is the learning component?
- How can the implemented engagement methods, strategies and technologies be evaluated? According to which criteria? How can success be defined and measured? Can technologies, such as Photovoice, be used as an evaluation tool?



ORGANIZED IN COLLABORATION OF THE

- Community Engagement Living Lab
- City of Ames
- Iowa State University
- Additional possible partners: Game2Work project, Ignite Yoga studio.

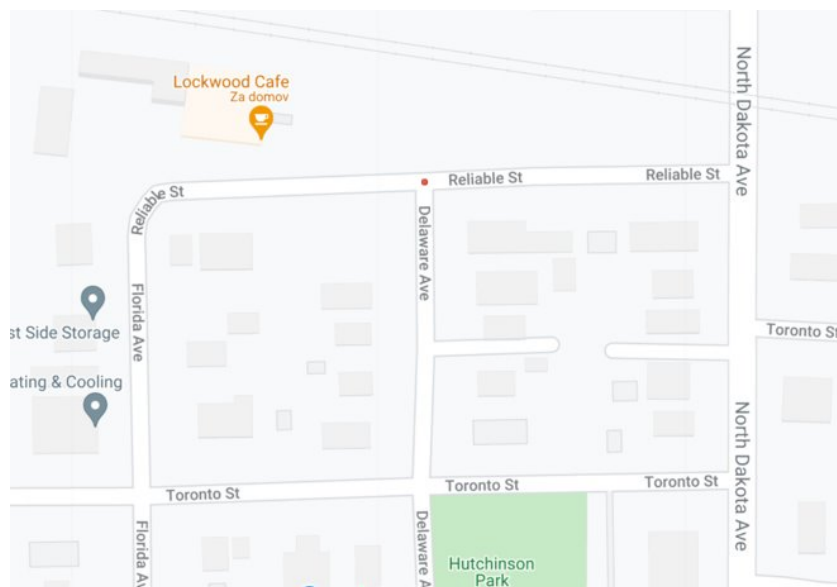
LOCATIONS: A MORE DETAILED PLAN FOR EACH OF THE SELECTED LOCATIONS

Four different locations in the City of Ames were selected for PLAY AMES: IMAGINE YOUR CITY festival. Different engagement techniques will be implemented, tested and evaluated at each of the location. They are described more in detail in the rest of this document. The four selected locations are: Reliable street, Franklin park, East 7th Street and Downtown Ames.

Location 1: RELIABLE STREET

Led by Stella Schroeder, PhD candidate at University del Bío-Bío, Concepción, Chile
email: stella.schroeder@gmx.de

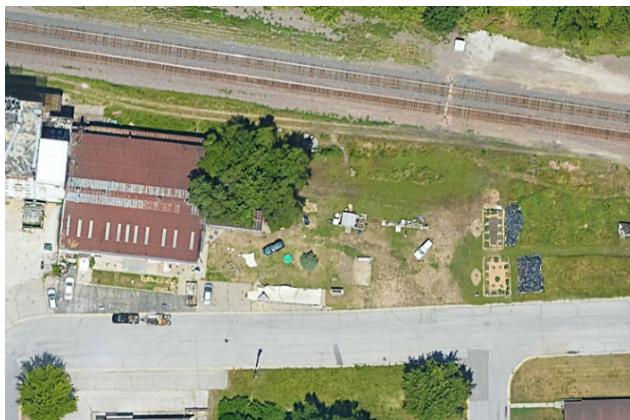
- Guerilla gardens
- Origami
- Urban planning games
- + Photovoice



GREEN SIDEWALKS. GUERRILLA GARDENS

OBJECTIVE

Guerrilla gardeners aim to green up drab spaces in local environment. Engaging neighbors and inhabitants of the city by improving urban environment. Sensibilization of importance of urban green.



LOCATION AND SPACE NEEDED

Location Reliable Street, Lockwood Café. Part of the neighborhood / sidewalk can be transformed into a community garden or a small area which improves the sidewalk. The existing gardens can be used or extended. Each urban garden could have a size of around 30-40 ft².



WHAT

Urban gardening with native and winter-resistant plants. Activity includes explanation on how to plant, what do native plants of the area grow, which are they, how to take care of them.

HOW

Participants/resident may sit together and talk about gardening. An expert explains different seeds/plants, how to plant them and how to take care of the plants. The residents may plant their tree or flower putting a name on it “adopted by...”. The expert explains all steps of planting. Additional decorative pieces can be included in the garden.

People can be involved before the activity by a short survey asking them about their favorite plants, or what kind of plants or flowers they would like to have in their neighborhood. Survey may include some questions about the vegetation at sidewalks, playgrounds and how important urban green is for them.

LEARNING COMPONENT

Residents learn about plants and trees of their area, they can adopt a plant which encourages them to take care of the plant after the activity. It is a group activity, and the residents share a certain space of a garden. It may also inspire them to make them feel being part of the city and take responsibilities for the urban green.

TIME NEEDED

The preparation time might take a bit longer because the ground has to be prepared. It would be optimal if this could be done in advance so that it is ready before the festival starts. The estimated time for the whole process is 4 hours which includes garden activities with different groups. The gardening task will be organized in groups. For each group of residents/participants around 30-45 minutes are estimated.

PREPARATION

Definition of urban gardening area and preparation of the area (little fence could be installed). Coordination with and involvement of neighbors. Contact experts in gardening/agriculture. Organization of materials and plants.

PERMISSIONS

No permission of city needed. Coordination with Lockwood Café and with neighbors.

MATERIAL

- Little fence (out of wood or recycled materials)
- Table, small plates (working space), bowls
- Plants, Seeds and clay
- Water
- Gardening tools
- Label “adopted tree or plant” und “name”

COMBINATION WITH CITY PLANNING

Activity can be combined with information about urban parks/urban green spaces organized by the city. This may include an information table, a desk with maps and an active presence of two city counselors. It can also be combined with a mapping activity asking about the places where they feel positive emotions, places they like in Ames, places they would visit more often, what are the characteristics of such places.

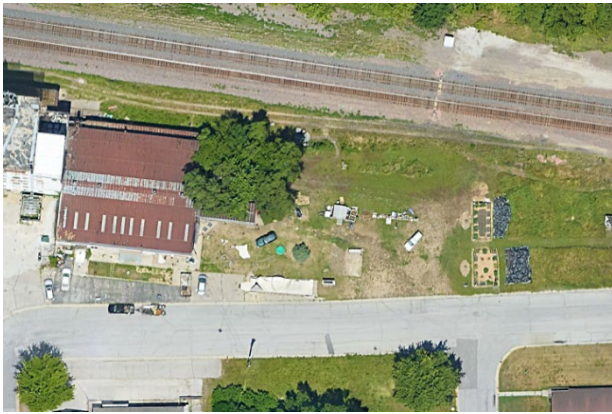
COMMENTS

Activity may be repeated in different spots of the city.

SIDEWALKS OF DREAMS. ORIGAMI FOR YOUR WISH RELATED TO YOUR CITY

OBJECTIVE

Engagement of neighbors and the resident of Ames by expressing the changes needed and the desired dreams for the city. Sensibilization of issues related to urban planning.



LOCATION AND SPACE NEEDED

Location Reliable Street, Lockwood Café.

For activity: small area needed with a table and some working space.

For installation: green area or an empty space which can be used (close to a sidewalk)



WHAT

Design of a couple of simple formats to write and visualize residents' ideas and proposals for the city of Ames. By using origami methods an installation of all ideas is proposed as a symbolic collection of wishes. The Sidewalk of Dreams allows to show the local community the work done throughout the process of workshops and activities, while temporarily transform a public space in the city, drawing attention to the need to revitalize this space.

HOW

1. Collection of testimonies: Design of a set of 2-4 questions, using paper in different colors to symbolize the changes needed and the desired dreams. At the end: Through an origami exercise, the colorful pages symbolizing the desired changes and dreams for the future, are converted into paper flowers or other figures.
 2. Origami sidewalk of dreams: Through an origami exercise, the colored pages with the testimonies are converted into paper flowers. The installation of a colorful paper flower garden, showcases all the ideas collected during the process.
- Before the event wishes and desires on colored paper can be collected, for example in the Café or in Schools.

LEARNING COMPONENT

Residents learn about urban planning, green spaces, planting. They reflect upon the places in their cities, what they need and how do they want to live in the city. The goal is to involve everyone - children, adolescents, and adults - in a collective reflection about the opportunities and possibilities in the City of Ames.

TIME NEEDED

Recommendation: 4-6 hours in the same place where the installation can be made
Time needed for task (write idea and origami): 30-45 minutes.

PREPARATION

1. Coordination with Lockwood café and identification of local institutions.
2. Prepare origami exercise: Learn about origami (shapes), Print colored paper with different themes.
3. If possible, visit schools (elementary school) and local institutions to inform them about the festival.

PERMISSIONS

No permission of the city needed. Coordination with Lockwood Café.

MATERIAL

- Paper (120g) different colors
- Pen / marker
- Wooden sticks
- Lights (with battery)
- Glue
- Table (working space)

COMBINATION WITH CITY PLANNING

"Meet your city planners". City planners of the City of Ames can be part of the process and can meet the residents, introduce themselves to them and encourage them to share their ideas and concerns about the city and its developments.

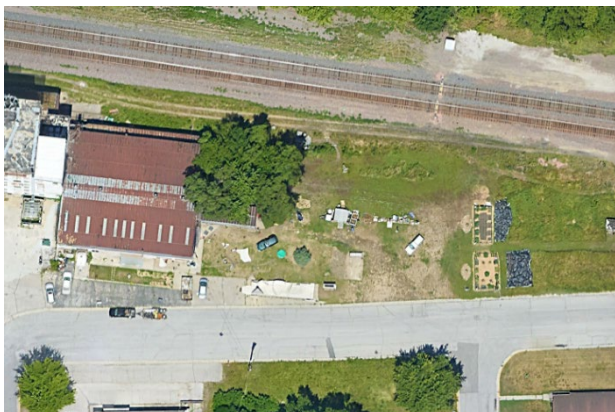
COMMENTS

Two city counselors will be present at the location. Organize a desk/table, chairs and the needed equipment for that.

CITIZENS EXPLORE CITIES. URBAN PLANNING GAMES

OBJECTIVE

Game that brings urban planning and development challenges together in a fun, interactive way.



LOCATION AND SPACE NEEDED

Area at Lockwood Café with tables and chairs.



Examples of Games | Inspirations about how this could look like

Kids Build Cities

<https://www.designlinesmagazine.com/kids-build-cities/>

Players must build urban blocks that contain a multitude of uses, including housing, libraries, parks, pools, offices and shops. Players traverse the board with the roll of two dice, collecting game pieces. Trips around the board are sped up by using subways and bike shares.



Quadropolis. A perplexing city planning puzzle

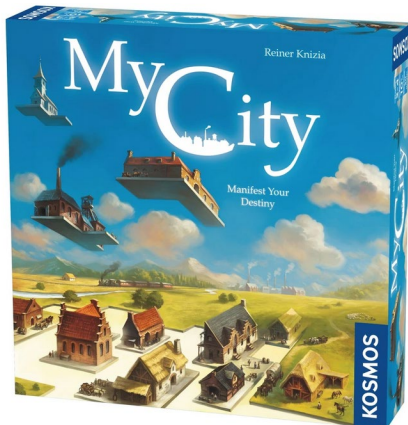
<http://www.space-ahead.com/2016/06/quadropolis-a-perplexing-city-planning-puzzle.html>

The puzzle of *Quadropolis* is a layered cake containing six different puzzles. you choose a tile (which is determined by the placement of the Urbanist, the number on your Architect, the placement of other player's Architects, and of course the balancing of your resources) and where you place your tile on your own mat (which is determined by the number on your Architect and the how that tile is scored.)

CitiesUP

<https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/spectacledbeargames/citiesup?ref=category>

A Kickstarter-funded board game that invites players to build their very own neighborhoods. Designed for two to four players, the immersive board game gives each participant the role of a traditional real estate investor, allowing them to purchase residential, commercial and industrial properties.



MyCity

https://boardsedgedgames.com/products/my-city?currency=USD&variant=37457767727297&utm_medium=cpc&utm_source=google&utm_campaign=Google%20Shopping&gclid=CjwKCAjw092IBhAwEiwAxR1IRi_zX9vMza7jCzrqHVqiXzFXafVMr8_bwln0PsDBfGCZBDncEjgFxoC9IIQAvD_BwE

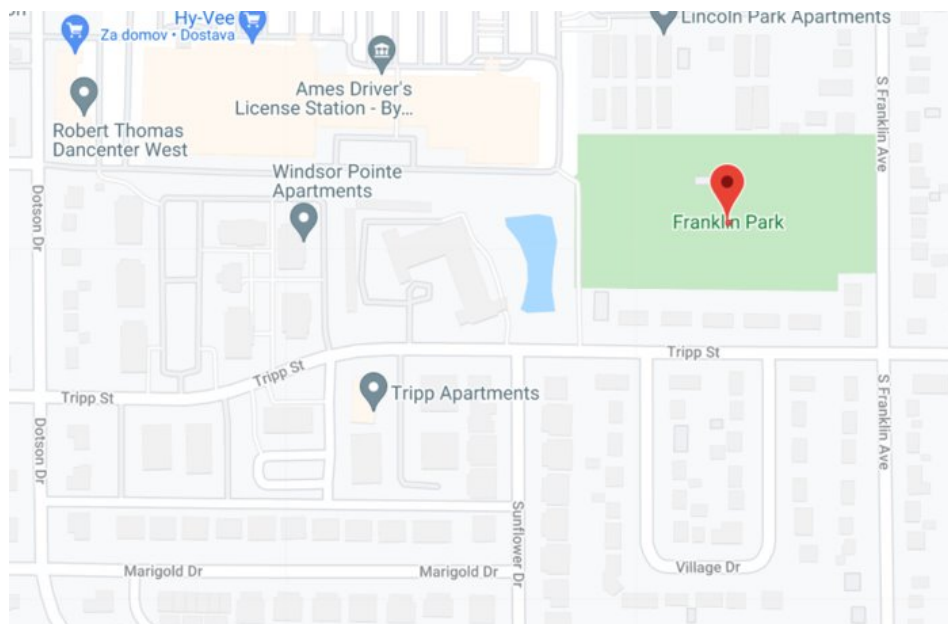
Cities Skylines

https://legacytoys.com/products/cities-skylines?variant=31814960709705¤cy=USD&utm_medium=product_sync&utm_source=google&utm_content=sag_organic&utm_campaign=sag_organic&gclid=CjwKCAjw092IBhAwEiwaXR1IRgFEIS28bo-7dKhemJzLcOu9LMVJBCpVrxADQNiRWJAYWCWqJvvHARoCd2sQAvD_BwE

Location 2: FRANKLIN PARK

Led by Vishnu Priya Sairamesh, ISU community and regional planning graduate student
email: svpa@iastate.edu

- Breathing and stretching games
- Sensory path
- + Photovoice
- If resources allow: Mapping places and emotions: evocative places



PLAYFUL SIDEWALKS/PARKS. BREATHING AND JUMPING GAMES

OBJECTIVE

Breathing and jumping games can be played in a park or on the sidewalk. They encourage interaction in the public space with simple games painted on the pavement (or marked on the grass in a park) and promote cooperation, empathy and solidarity. The game may include a small racetrack. Different stops on the path encourage participants to engage in activities like breathing, meditating, jumping, touching the ground, or exercising yoga positions. We will talk about emotions and how to express them. Where are your emotional places?



LOCATION AND SPACE NEEDED

Paintings on the sidewalk can be combined with a game marked in the grass of a park. Alternatively, the participants can create fun breathing “toy” (see the pic below) which makes the exercise creative and fun.

Space needed:

- A sidewalk where there is less or not traffic
- Place in the park next to the sidewalk
- Flat and smooth area
- Around 16x65 feet

Online examples of breathing games: <https://breathing-games.com/>.

More ideas: <https://earlyimpactlearning.com/mindful-breathing-for-kids-15-games/>

Fun: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IEY-7a-ltyw>

For adults: <https://www.throughthewoodstherapy.com/breathing-games/>

One breath at a time: <https://themindfulclassroom.wordpress.com/tag/breathing-games/>

More ideas: <https://www.healthline.com/health/mind-body/mindfulness-activities#for-kids>



WHAT

Participants are more motivated to learn, practice, and implement deep breathing if it is fun. These games include some important and fun activities to help participants learn this important life skill. fun breathing exercises, breathing exercises to empower, calm, calming breathing exercises, how to teach your child to breath and express emotions. Included some yoga practices and exercises. Involve a yoga teacher if possible.

Below just some possible examples for kids and adults that will inspire creation of these games.

Monkey see, monkey do

This is a great mindfulness game to help kids increase body awareness and think about how they move in space. As the adult, take on the role of the monkey, and lead the kids through different positions.

Try to shift your weight in unexpected ways, like standing on one foot, getting on all fours, or sticking one foot up in the air.

Ask the kids what it feels like to be in each position. Is it hard to balance, or does it give them a big stretch?

Let it be silly. When kids get moving, giggles will likely ensue. Just go with it. You can even ask the kids to pay attention to how their breath changes when they laugh.

Another example:

1. Instruct the kids to take a deep breath in, filling their belly and chest.
2. When they're ready, instruct them to "breath out their fire" with a long, slow exhale.
3. If you have paper available, it can be extra fun to watch the paper blow as the kids breathe out. Just instruct them to hold it about 6 inches away from their mouths and let go as they exhale.

One more:

Bubble blowing

Bubbles are a classic activity for kids, and they make for a great mindfulness practice.

1. First, ask the children to reflect on what they're thinking or feeling. You can prompt them by giving examples like, "I feel tired" or "I want to eat lunch."
2. Demonstrate blowing your bubbles and figuratively putting your thoughts and feelings inside them. For instance, "I feel nervous. I'm going to put that feeling in a bubble and let it float away."
3. Point out how our thoughts and feelings are just like bubbles: They come up, and they drift away in the breeze. Sometimes they even pop.

This exercise can be especially useful for kids who have uncomfortable thoughts or feelings that they need help letting go of.

Calm cards

Sometimes, having little reminders can help kids practice mindfulness in difficult moments. This is another basic craft that provides kids with a tool to take with them in their day to day.

Help the kids reflect on activities that help them feel calm, like drinking water, taking breaths, closing their eyes, reading a book, or hugging a friend.

Then, ask them to draw pictures of these activities on separate cards. You can also provide them with printed pictures to paste.

If the kids can write, have them label the cards (if not, you can label for them). Hole-punch the cards and bind them together with a bit of yarn or a [book ring](#).

Kids can use the cards whenever they're feeling upset, angry, scared, or sad to help them regulate their emotions and feel better.

You can make your own cards, or try this printable version from [Babies to Bookworms](#).

Source: <https://www.babiestobookworms.com/product/printable-mindfulness-cards-for-kids-2/>

HOW

The game can be chalked on a sidewalk or organized in a park. Chalking games on the sidewalk can use templates which can be prepared in advance. The chalking can also be prepared in advance. Different squares/paces encourage participants to get engaged in a breathing or yoga exercise. Participants can join the chalking activity or use the track for playing.

Two possibilities:

1. The residents can get involved in the painting
2. Engagement of all while using the track: “stops” on the track can be part of experiencing the city by breathing and jumping. Finishing the track questions can be ask, for example: Have your experience anything new? What do you think about having more games on the sidewalk? Do you think sidewalks of the city are in good conditions? Do you feel safe using the sidewalk?

LEARNING COMPONENT

Learn how to:

- breath, observe your breathing
- deal with emotions, how to express them
- relax and stretch your body

TIME NEEDED

The painting activity can be stretched over several hours. It depends on the size and design (4 hours). The breathing exercises and yoga exercises can be selected for the duration the participants wish to participate. To walk through the whole game can take 1 hour.

PREPARATION

- Design and sketch in CAD
- Preparation of templates
- Contact and engage a yoga teacher if possible, or a yoga practitioner

PERMISSIONS

Any permissions needed to chalk the sidewalk? Check with the City of Ames.

MATERIAL

- Color for painting (nontoxic colors)
- Tools for chalking
- Cardboard, cutter, cutter board
- Chalk, scotch, paperboard

COMBINATION WITH CITY PLANNING

Emotional places in the city? Places of positive emotions? Places at which you can recharge and feel at peace. We could have a big map of Ames available so the participants could pin their emotional places and share them with the students.

COMMENTS

Two city counselors will be present at the location. Organize a desk/table, chairs and the needed equipment for that.

BAREFOOT PATH. SENSORY EXPLORATIONS

OBJECTIVE

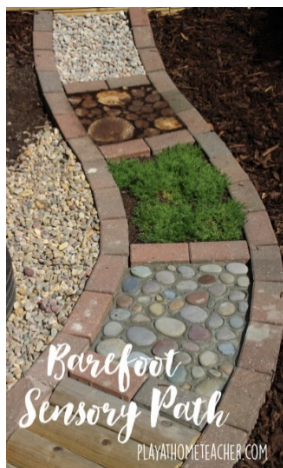
Sensory Urbanism calls for greater exposure to not only how our cities look, but also how they feel, smell, and sound by reviving an appreciation for the overlooked senses. In the end, sensory urbanism is about delving deeper into what makes up a “city's texture”. Different cities might look increasingly similar, but feel different as we walk, cycle or drive through them.

In this experiment residents are asked to walk through a sensory path filled with different materials and textures (from our city) for the touch, feel and sense - pictures, pebbles, water with varied temperatures, grass, pavement etc. and activities to be done separately or together with other participants.



LOCATION AND SPACE NEEDED

A neighborhood with underserved/marginalized community.
Franklin Park is the suggested place.



WHAT

In this activity the residents are engaged with the help of sensory experiments. They are able to experiment with their own senses, play with the possibilities and observe their own affective experience.

HOW

- Create a **Path 1** where participants can “**experience**” while moving - the starting and end encounters of path 1 would have a large box of water/grass/ art, where they can experiment with touch and feel of these materials.
- While **Path 2** would have activities that “**test**” the senses and their connection of their personal memory & connection of senses to the City of Ames. This also includes collecting any materials available in the locality and painting a picture, it could be a paint imprint using a leaf or a twig, or some of the random materials that would be displayed on the table.
- Materials will be available at each Path.

Another possible idea:

Five sense scavenger hunt

Most kids love a scavenger hunt, and this one is specifically designed to encourage mindfulness by engaging all the senses.

All you need to do is provide a safe environment for exploration. Here are the steps for kids to follow:

1. **Listen.** Name one thing that you hear when you listen with your ears.
2. **Look.** Name one thing that catches your attention when you look around.
3. **Smell.** Name a scent that you notice when you take a sniff with your nose.
4. **Touch.** Name an object that you enjoy feeling with your hands.

If you want to add in the sense of taste, simply supply a few kid-friendly snacks, and ask kids to name flavors they enjoy, like sweet, salty, or sour.

LEARNING COMPONENT

The experiments focus on exploring experience in city with many different senses. It concentrates on exploring these senses and expressing how different materials affect this experience. Residents are also asked questions about their experience in the City of Ames, what they like about Ames and what they would like to be improved.

TIME NEEDED

Time taken per individual is roughly 20 - 30 min. The entire experiment to reach its full capacity would be 3-4 hours.

PREPARATION

The Barefoot foot path and will be prepared before hand which would be installed very quick on the site. We also need to set up a table, few beverages.

PERMISSIONS

No city permissions needed.

MATERIAL

- Different Material Textures – grass, paper, sand, pebble, wood, stones, needles etc.
- Pizza boxes / any box can be recycled to fit in the textures
- Wooden boxes
- Paint
- Image printouts and large canvas A3 for participants to draw on and paint on

COMBINATION WITH CITY PLANNING

The activities can be used to inform people of the various public services in the city. To educate and attain views on how the city could be designed to be more efficient.

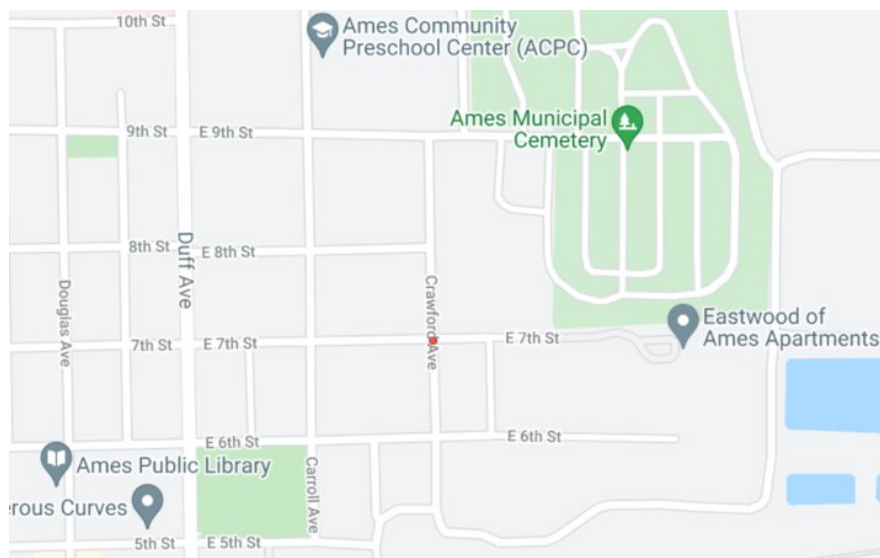
COMMENTS

Activity could be repeated in different spots of the city.

Location 3: EAST 7TH STREET

Led by Fatema Nourin, ISU community and regional planning graduate student
email: fnourin@iastate.edu

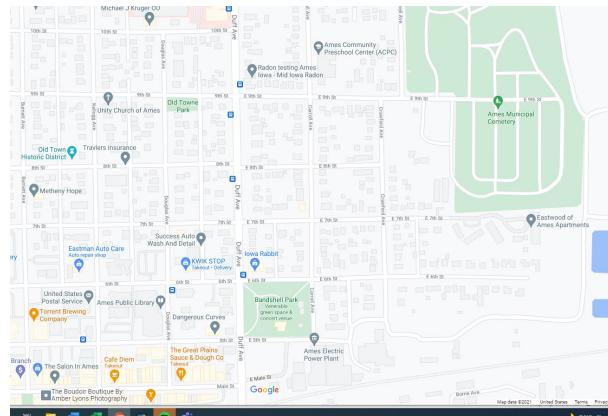
- Spatial thinking and mapping of benches
- Pop-up van with Virtual Reality equipment and online urban planning games
- + Photovoice



SPATIAL THINKING AND MAPPING OF BENCHES

OBJECTIVE

The objective is to create an inventory of benches for the city of Ames through the involvement of the city residents.



LOCATION AND SPACE NEEDED

The initial location is at east 7th street, Ames, Iowa. But the goal is to make more people involved in completing this inventory. So, eventually the coverage area would extend further.

The space requirement for the actual data collection is not much, as it only includes using the ArcGIS collector app. But gathering people and disseminating the information would be benefitted from the pop-up van.

1:41 68%

Collect ✓

Park Benches:
42.044729°N 93.643406°W

TAKE PHOTO **ATTACH**

Bench_ID

Record_Date

Size_ft

Height_ft

Name

Usage

III ○ <



WHAT

Showing off some paper maps and then lead the discussion towards scale, accuracy, and representation. Discussion about the basics of- 'how we represent the real world into maps can help to evoke critical spatial thinking into the participants. So that, the children can contribute to creating the bench inventory into ArcGIS collector app later at their own convenience. The participant children would be able to engage their minds into critical thing and should be spatially aware of their surroundings.

HOW

1. Explaining spatial scale: We would bring two paper maps. One with a scale of 1:100000 and another with a scale of 1:10000 to observe in which map the participants can observe more detail and why.
2. Explaining spatial accuracy: What is the meaning of accuracy and why it varies.
3. Teach them how just one tap can demarcate a bench location and how can they take a picture. So that, they can contribute to creating the inventory whenever they have time later.

LEARNING COMPONENT

The participants know their favorite places in the neighborhood, where they like to spend time with their friends and family and where they think that needs some repair. They could use their outdoor times in contributing to the neighborhood resource inventory using any free app. In this festival, they would learn about scale, spatial accuracy, how to capture images in the ArcGIS collector app. The target neighborhood resource for the festival is the benches.

TIME NEEDED

Recommendation: 2/3 hours in the festival location near the pop-up van to gather the kids.
Time needed for task (teaching about scale, accuracy and how to take picture of a bench): Around 30 minutes.

PREPARATION

Preparation of the map of City of Ames, is ready to be used and collect information through the ArcGIS collector App, even offline.

PERMISSIONS

No permission of city needed.

MATERIAL

- Paper map (printed) of two different scales (1:100000, & 1:10000) for example.
- Pen & colorful markers
- A tablet, smartphone with the ArcGIS Collector app
- A ready to edit map on ArcGIS Collector.

COMBINATION WITH CITY PLANNING

An inventory of benches can help planning decisions in several ways:

- A completed bench inventory can lead to a clearer picture of the condition of a community's sidewalk furniture facilities.
- Indication of which benches require maintenance.
- Observing the spatial distribution of the benches across the city of Ames, can lead to indicate the areas that need more attention.

COMMENTS

Activity could be repeated in different spots of the city.

POP-UP VAN. VIRTUAL REALITY AND ONLINE URBAN PLANNING GAMES

OBJECTIVE

- Demonstrate the new technologies; virtual reality technologies.
- Talk about planning and novel technologies.
- Enable the participants to play Skyline online urban planning game.



LOCATION AND SPACE NEEDED

The initial location is at east 7th street, Ames, Iowa. However, any location with a possibility to park a van enabling access to the van to the residents is appropriate.



WHAT

Flex Forward Learning Experience. FLEx is a mobile learning program for advanced design technology benefitting 3rd through 12th students and beyond in a 21st century paradigm. Structured around STEM, design thinking, 21st Century skills, and University Constructs (4 C's), this environment extends distant educational offerings by delivering full-scale augmented and virtual visualization, digital to real prototyping, circuit bending and visual programming. As an Iowa State design outreach program for Iowans, the FLEx can visit classrooms, schools, libraries, science and art centers, educational conferences and other community events throughout the state. Programs can be offered inside or outside, weather permitting, to best complement the learning environment and event.

HOW

By using the pop-up van with the equipment allowing the residents to test it, explore and learn about virtual- and augmented reality.

LEARNING COMPONENT

- Learn about novel technologies; virtual reality, urban planning computer games.
- Test virtual reality equipment
- Play an online game
- Learn about urban planning.

TIME NEEDED

Residents/participants can stay as long as they wish so, but give the opportunity to other participants to experiment.

PREPARATION

Contact Assist. Prof. Pete Evans: <https://www.design.iastate.edu/faculty/pmevans/>
Coordinator for FLEx (Forward Learning Experience) - a mobile design & STEM outreach program.

Reserve the van and engage Pete Evans or somebody else from ISU extension program.

Contact persons:

David Ringholz, Industrial Design, 404-797-0998, ringholz@iastate.edu

Pete Evans, Industrial Design, 515-491-2698, pmevans@iastate.edu

Teddi Barron, News Service, 515-294-4778, tbarron@iastate.edu

See more:

<https://www.design.iastate.edu/outreach/college-outreach-programs/flex-forward-learning-experience/>

<https://www.news.iastate.edu/news/2014/11/13/flexoutreach>

PERMISSIONS

Check the permissions to locate a van in the downtown Ames. Police?

MATERIAL

FLEx program opportunities:

- Interactive Virtual Reality
- 3D Printing
- Augmented Reality
- Immersive visualization with Oculus Rift
- Circuit Bending with Little Bits

COMBINATION WITH CITY PLANNING

Connect with mapping experience and talk about places in Ames. Combine with a questionnaire.

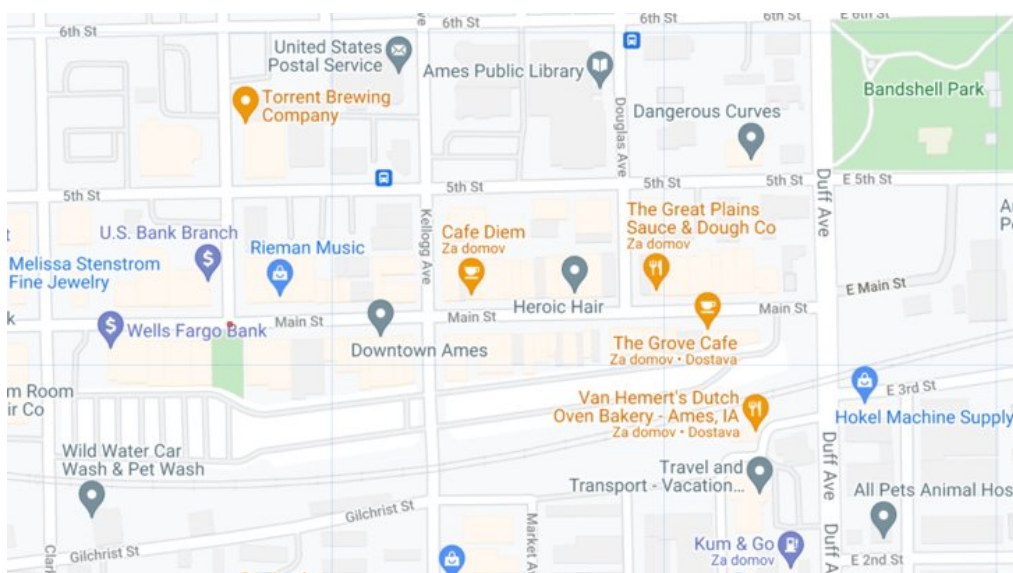
COMMENTS

Two city counselors will be present at the location. Organize the needed equipment for that.

Location 4: DOWNTOWN AMES

Led by Natalie M. Jacobson, ISU community and regional planning undergraduate student
email: nmjake@iastate.edu

- Art Ally
- + Photovoice
- + Survey and questionnaire (perhaps the mapping experiment as well, depends on the resources for the supervision)



ART ALLY. CITY MURAL

OBJECTIVE

The art alley is a mural based interactive art display so in order to encapsulate that in a project we will be doing a paint by number mural for the residents to participate in. The usage of collaborative art in this setting will give insight to the purpose of the art alley as well as provide an educational experience for anyone involved. Participants will be instructed to paint and fill in the squares with the corresponding number on the paint cups.



LOCATION AND SPACE NEEDED

The location will be in the downtown of the City of Ames. The needed agreement with the owners is not yet in place. Alternatively, a big canvas can be placed in the downtown area. For this option an agreement with the building owner is not needed.



WHAT

The main idea is to establish an arty ally concept for the City of Ames. Different locations around the city can be given to the artists students to organize collaborative paintings and engage residents in this exciting and creative endeavor.

Inspiring examples:

Rapid City: <https://www.artalleyrc.com/>

Kansas City: <https://www.kshb.com/news/local-news/art-alley-kansas-citys-street-art-museum>

South Dakota: <https://www.atlasobscura.com/places/art-alley>

San Francisco: <https://www.sftravel.com/article/guide-san-francisco%E2%80%99s-mission-district-murals>

HOW

For the first experiment in Ames:

1. The base coat will need to be painted ahead of the festival as well as the outlining and numbering of the design in sharpie.
2. A set number of cups will be filled with paint the morning of the events and labeled with the corresponding number.
3. Brushes will be set out for participants to use.

LEARNING COMPONENT

By actively participating in painting a mural the residents will get hands on experience in painting a mural. They will understand the process and skill level needed to paint and feel accomplished when they see the finished product. During this time students and artists will be available to answer questions and provide information about murals, paintings, colors and different art styles.

TIME NEEDED

The time it will take to complete will depend solely on the number of participants and their engagement in painting.

We estimate a minimum of 2 hours.

PREPARATION

Includes:

- Painting the first coat
- Preparing the outlining and numbering
- Buying the painting equipment

PERMISSIONS

Permission of the owner of the building needed. Alternatively, a big canvas can be used.

COMBINATION WITH CITY PLANNING

Talk about beauty, colors, things they like and enjoy.

What do the residents like? Which places do they like? Why? Where do they like going in Ames?

Where would they never go? How can we, together, create an Art Ally in the City of Ames.

Teach them how to use Photovoice and document the process.

COMMENTS

Two city councilors will be present at the location. Organize a desk and chairs for their involvement.

SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES AT ALL LOCATIONS

Supporting activities are planned at all four locations of the festival.

SMART CITY TALKS

Residents can talk to the urban planners, city officials, experts. They can ask questions, communicate with them, get to know them and express their wishes for changes in the city. Two council members will be present at each of the four locations to support this activity.

SIDEWALKS OF DREAMS

Information boards are displayed on sidewalks and residents can express their wishes for changes in the city or just share their ideas, feelings and concerns.

INTERVIEWS WITH PARTICIPANTS

Participants are invited to respond to a paper or online survey.

- The focus will be on places in Ames at which they can recharge and feel at peace. Places they like to visit. Why? What makes these places special for them? Which characteristics? Prepare a map of Ames. Prepare an online questionnaire/survey that can be used on a smart phone or tablets.
- Second focus is on sidewalks. A questionnaire on sidewalks. Design a paper and online questionnaire.

PHOTOVOICE

There will be a group of students dedicated to educate about the possibilities of using Photovoice. They will teach how to use it and encourage participants to do so.

PHOTOVOICE. A STORY CAPTURED THROUGH THE LENS

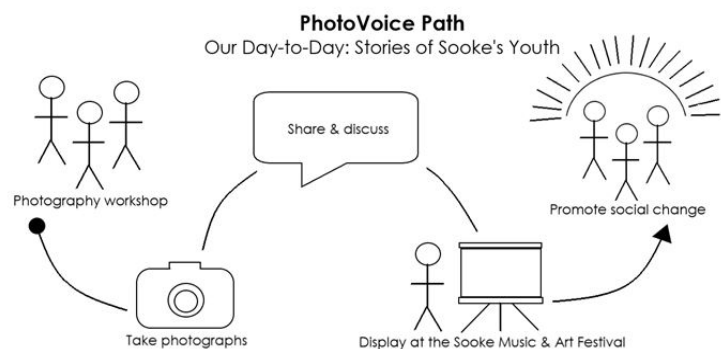
OBJECTIVE

Photovoice is a process by which people can identify, represent, enhance their community through a specific photographic technique. The visual images and accompanying stories are the tools used to reach policy- and decision-makers. The aim of this research method is to improve conditions by making changes at the community level. The method allows people to explore and helps the researchers/ the government to understand people's experiences.



LOCATION AND SPACE NEEDED

A team of two for Photovoice will be present at every location.



WHAT

The residences are asked to take pictures of what is best and worst about Ames. What do you like in Ames? What needs to be improved? Write a short comment when posting on Instagram.

HOW

In this experiment, we will be available at all locations selected for the festival Play Ames: Imagine your City. We first teach the participants about the possibilities of Photovoice. Participants will be asked to take pictures of what has affected them most in Ames in a positive and negative way. What do they like in Ames? What needs to be improved in Ames? The residents are instructed on how to upload the pictures on Instagram using # (Hashtag) or email them to the organizing team directly. Photovoice activity will be later used additionally for the evaluation of the implemented engagement methods.

LEARNING COMPONENT

- The tool allows to identify issues, experiences and pave the way to work for solutions.
- The experiment has no boundaries and would encourage anyone to express their views. Covering the experiment in different neighborhood characters is an attempt to hear from the participants through voicing or through the stories their pictures demonstrate.

TIME NEEDED

As long as the activity at that location is going on. There will be a team teaching how to use Photovoice at each of the selected locations.

PREPARATION

Photovoice will first be explained to the residents what it is. Then people are asked to take pictures of what affects them/influences them the most in Ames and share via social media or email. Pictures of places they really like and enjoy. Things that need to be improved in Ames (and they don't like). Cameras will also be available during the event. A volunteer/student will be photographing the authentic expressions of the participants during the activities.

PERMISSIONS

No permission necessary.

MATERIAL

- Students / volunteers
- Cameras and smart phones
- Fliers/or cards with instructions on how to use Photovoice

COMBINATION WITH CITY PLANNING

The photographs will be analyzed to study what affects the residents of the City of Ames in both positive and challenging ways.