



Play Ames 3.0 | Ames Korean Christian Church event and Rational Ignorance Survey Spring 2023 | FINAL REPORT




Course: CRP 455/555 Smart and Sustainable Cities, Spring 2023

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Lecturer: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Alenka Poplin **Funding:** City of Ames



Dear readers,

This report summarizes the work on **communities of faith** and **rational ignorance survey** accomplished in the Spring 2023. It represents the last activity planned within the project Play Ames: Imagine your City as agreed upon between the City of Ames and the Community and Regional Planning Department, College of Design at Iowa State University. The main goal of the project is to test different community engagement methods, strategies and technologies and report to the City of Ames about their usability for the engagement of marginalized and underrepresented residents of the City of Ames.

The activities accomplished in the Spring 2023 were as follows:


- Play Ames: Imagine your City event with **Ames Korean Christian Church**
- **Rational Ignorance Survey** with underrepresented and marginalized communities in Ames


An engagement event with Ames Korean Christian Church included engagement activities developed by the students in the CRP455/555 Smart and Sustainable Cities course under the leadership of their instructor Dr. Poplin and in collaboration with the City of Ames, represented by the city major Steve Schainker. The engagement the students developed and tested were:

- **Crafts Table!** included origami, painting rocks and ecological painting
- **Draw Your City – Youth Views of Ames** includes maps, pictures and paintings developed for kids and youth
- **Mobility map** concentrated on mapping and mobility
- **Semi-structured interviews** suggest a roundtable discussion with residents, urban planners and city official
- **Cornhole** is a physical game that is inter-generational and brings people of all ages tighter
- **Raffle for Play Ames** enables to explore which engagement activities are most liked by the residents

A **rational ignorance survey** was executed in the neighborhoods selected in the Fall 2022 for the pop-up moving community engagement. These were mostly low-income neighborhoods with lower educational levels. The surveys were conducted by the CRP graduate student Sandra Boateng and the CRP undergraduate student Linzeng Yu.

Ames Korean community was amazing! Thank you to **Yun Ahn** who helped coordinate the event at Ames Korean Christian Church. Our work would not be possible without her support and appreciation. Thank you also to **Son Hyunsik**, a graduate student in the Community and Regional Planning major and originally from Korea, who supported our project with his help translating some important documents and the questionnaire into Korean language.





Our immense thanks go to the representatives of the City of Ames. **Steve Schainker**, the city manager for his enthusiasm, interest in the topic and support of the project. Thank you also to **Prof. Dr. Francis Owusu**, the CRP department chair, for his continuing support and encouragement. Thank you also to all **city councilors** and the mayor of Ames, **John Haila**, for his enthusiasm about the project and genuine interest in its success. Thank you to **Julie Robison**, assistant director of the Institute for Design Research and Outreach (IDRO) for her encouragements along the way and administrative support.

Lastly, thank you to the residents of the City of Ames – and especially to the kids and youth, and to the whole Korean community - for their courage to participate and their interest in sharing their experience, visions, and ideas with us. You were our inspiration!

Thank you for the opportunity!



Assoc. Prof. Dr. Alenka Poplin

Community and Regional Planning Department, ISU
Ames, March 6, 2023

PS: *All pictures included in this report were taken by either Alenka Poplin or ISU students. They were taken at Play Ames: Imagine your City community engagement events. These pictures should not be shared or reproduced. They can only be used for the internal report and cannot be published in any other publication without the participants' consent.*







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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Play Ames 3.0: Imagine your City | Faith communities and Rational Ignorance Survey | Spring 2023


Play Ames 3.0: Imagine Your City project in Spring 2023 consisted of two parts: a. A playful engagement event organized at Ames Korean Christian Church to work specifically with Korean community and b. Rational Ignorance Survey with the focus of surveying marginalized and underrepresented communities in Ames to better understand if they participate in community engagement activities and their reasons for not participating. The main take-aways are summarized below.


Play Ames community engagement at Ames Korean Christian Church

- The event was a success, and the community very well accepted the possibility of getting engaged in a playful way.
- The event served as a multi-generational invitation to mingle, talk, exchange, have fun and participate.
- The range of activities from very playful and creative (painting stones, cornhole, origami), to more serious (mapping and semi-structured interviews) worked very well. It offered a great variety for the participants.
- Semi-structured interviews were offered for the first time and worked very well. The residents opened up about their wishes and issues and were able to communicate with the public officials. This is something that needs to be explored further and researched more in detail.
- Mapping activities are very well accepted by most participants. Working with a big paper map combined with a short questionnaire proved to be successful in the past as well.
- Language is important. It may prevent residents from participating. Quite a few participants only spoke Korean. Luckily the questionnaires were translated into Korean so that these participants could feel them out and provide their input.
- Building trust with communities takes time and investment. Positive experience has to be created first. Play Ames created this positive experience and participants thanked us for making their day so interesting, educational, and joyful. We feel we can return to this community anytime we want, and we are going to have a partner for further explorations and feedback.

Rational Ignorance Survey

The survey was answered by 112 participants/residents of the City of Ames. The only method that worked to get the questionnaires responded to was door-to-door visits in the targeted communities. Additionally, the survey was distributed among in the Korean and Chinese





community. Due to the positive history of the Korean community the team received about 20 surveys from this community. The main take-aways from the survey are:


- The majority of participants, 75 (69%), have never engaged in discussions with city officials about the future of the city, and 26 rarely (together 101, out of 112 interviewed residents), 6 quite often and 2 regularly.
- The main factors that prevent them from participation include not knowing how to participate, not being informed about engagement activities, and finding discussion topics irrelevant.
- Around 62% of participants do not know how to contact local officials to address their concerns.
- The main reasons that prevent them from participating: “not being informed about engagement activities (26 responses),” “I don’t know how to participate (24 responses),” and “discussion topics are irrelevant to me” (9 responses).

Other observations: Often, the residents this team wanted to engage the most, were the least willing to talk, respond to the survey or be in touch with the research team.

More details on the survey can be found at the end of this report.

The Network of Neighborhood Trustworthy Persons

The idea is to build on the ancient tradition of a wise man or woman, of a trustworthy person that can be identified in each of the neighborhood. These people would serve as a network and intermediate between the residents of the neighborhood and the city officials. Our survey asked about such people. Even though the list is not complete, the research team recognized that this would be a good idea that needs additional research and exploration. Often the residents could identify a person, but sometimes they would just know his or her first name. This is something the City of Ames could research further as a possibility.





1. BACKGROUND AND HISTORY OF THIS COLLABORATION

1.1. COLLABORATION: THE CITY OF AMES AND IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY


In January 2020 the City of Ames and Iowa State University (ISU) agreed on a collaboration which was summarized in the document titled Request for Assistance (RFA) as follows: this collaboration “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 of Ames 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

1.2. OBJECTIVES AND GOALS

The main objectives are to:

- Develop engagement methods, strategies, and technologies which may attract and engage underrepresented or marginalized communities to participate in the discussions about their city and urban planning activities
 - Test the developed and implemented engagement methods, strategies, and technologies in the selected neighborhoods
 - Develop criteria for the evaluation of the implemented engagement methods, strategies, and technologies
 - Evaluate the engagement methods in order to provide feedback to the City of Ames about the most promising and successful engagement methods, strategies, and technologies they can use in the future
- 



The main idea of this project is to engage residents in a playful way following the approach suggested by Poplin (2012) in her journal publication titled Playful Public Participation. The engagement strategies suggested for the Play Ames community engagement aim to bring joy, fun, and enjoyment to the residents. Through playfulness, trust and connections can be established, and one can also talk and discuss more serious topics after or during the playful activities which are designed to engage all residents. An important component in all the activities is playful learning. These activities can be implemented in a variety of ways. This Fall 2022 semester is dedicated to testing the idea of a pop-up movable engagement.

1.5. HISTORY OF THIS COLLABORATION AND THE MAIN ACCHEIVEMENTS


1.5.1. Background research | Spring and Fall 2020


The work on the project started with some background **research on successful engagement methods used across the country and on analyzing underrepresented and marginalized communities in Ames**. This work was accomplished 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

1.5.2. Community Engagement Festival | September 25, 2021

Fall 2021 semester was very exciting with the focus on organizing **Play Ames: Imagine your City community engagement festival**. It was organized on September 25, 2021. The festival targeted **underrepresented and marginalized populations** in the City of Ames. It concentrated on a set of experimental activities at four selected locations. The team leaders for the respective locations were:

- **Reliable street:** Stella Schroeder, a PhD candidate and specialist in place-making at the PhD candidate at University del Bío-Bío, Concepción, Chile
 - **Franklin park:** Vishnu Priya Sairamesh (graduate student). Sensory urbanism as an engagement method
 - **East 7th Street:** Fatema Nourin (graduate student). Engaging residents with spatial thinking and mapping
 - **5th Street and Burnett:** Natalie M. Jacobson (undergraduate student). Engaging residents with creative painting and learning about painting techniques
- 



The students enrolled in the Fall 2021 CRP455/555 course Smart and Sustainable Cities created activities presented at these locations. The festival included the following playful engagement activities: **Guerilla gardens**. Creating green cities, **Origami**. Wishes and ideas for your city, **Urban planning board games**. Playful learning, **Breathing game**. Sense the city, sense yourself, **Barefoot path**. Sensory exploration, **Yoga**. Practice mindfulness, **Digital mapping**. Benches, **Paper mapping**. Unsafe places, **Pop-Up van**. Virtual reality, **Art Alley**. Paint by number mural.

Smart City talks. City officials and urban planners were present at the first three locations which targeted underrepresented and marginalized populations. Residents were able to talk with them, ask questions, communicate with them, get to know them and express their wishes for future changes in the city. The report summarizing these activities and findings was submitted to the City of Ames. Additional collaborators included **Climate Change Action Theater**, **ISU FLEx learning**, and the **CRP Undergraduate Club**.


1.5.3. Play Ames 2.0: Pop-Up Moving Community Engagement | Fall 2022


The main idea behind pop-up moving community engagement follows research done in previous semesters. This research suggests bringing engagement into the neighborhoods and meeting residents where they are instead of inviting them to the city hall or any other public building in which public officials reside. Additionally, it aims to implement the idea of just pop-ing up in the neighborhood and engage residents on the spot.

Play Ames 2.0 Pop-up moving community engagement was executed in the Fall 2022. The engagement activities were developed by the students enrolled in the 3-credit course CRP455/555 Smart and Sustainable Cities taught by Dr. Alenka Poplin. Additionally, the project resources enabled us to hire four students **Keegan Haines, Kevin Paszko, Matthew Smith, Max Gula**, to support the project. Additionally, the CRP Undergrad and Grad Club were engaged and contributed many volunteers who managed to join the activities that were planned outside the time reserved for the course.

The main idea of this semester was to select locations in areas with low income, low educational level and mixed-race. Contact property managers and get an allowance to set-up community engagement activities as developed by the students in the course. Keegan Haines was responsible for the logistics of the pop-up events and communication with the property managers. Additionally, Matthew Smith and Max Gula were tasked with the research on effectiveness of the developed community engagement activities. Kevin Paszko was hired as an assistant to Dr. Poplin in everything related to the execution of Play Ames 2.0 activities.

The team in collaboration with the city officials with city manager Steve Schainker very present, identified the following locations: **South Meadow, E 7th St Cul-De-Sac, 215 S Sherman, Hutchison Park**. The community engagement activities presented at these locations were







developed by the students enrolled in the CRP455/555 course and included (more details can be found in this report):

- **Ames rocks!** included origami, painting rocks and ecological painting
- **Chutes and Ladders** with the game board and mini games
- **Mobility map** concentrated on mapping and mobility
- **Mural makers** were dedicated to recycling, recycling materials, creativity and art

The main findings of this experiment can be summarized as follows:

- Setting up a pop-up in the neighborhood can be a very positive experience. It enables deeper discussions with the residents, taking more time to talk with them and connect. It can be a great tool for building quality relationships, trust, and communication. They enable the engagement team to spend a lot of time with residents and dedicate their attention to them, their sharing, and issues.
 - However, if the goal is to attract many residents, this is not the best engagement method. Play Ames city festival organized at 4 locations in the city attracted over 250 residents, while Play Ames 2.0 pop-up moving community engagement activities attracted only 55 residents.
 - The main idea of these events was to set them up outside in the neighborhood. The disadvantage of this idea could be the weather. In cold and windy days this is not pleasant for anybody. In the next step, such activities can be planned in enclosed inside rooms and spaces.
 - Setting-up even just four locations required a lot of logistics. A huge effort needed to be dedicated to identifying the areas, checking them locally (visit them) and checking if they are appropriate for pop-up moving community engagement as the team envisioned. Additionally, all allowances need to be in place: by the property manager and by the city.
 - All events were advertised locally at the locations where it was allowed to do so. However, the residents do not seem to read the posters or cards. Most of them need to be specially invited to join the team. It is not obvious to them that they are invited to join.
 - Repeated events in the same neighborhoods enable to build trust, communication, and deeper discussion. A good example was E 7th Street where the event happened for the second time. There was a higher awareness of this event in the area and many residents, building on the previous positive experience, joined with great pleasure. Repeating events in the same neighborhoods is the first step towards building connection, truth and honest sharing of ideas and issues.
 - Kids have a special role to play. Events dedicated to kids can free parents to be available for discussions and do not have to worry about the safety and engagement of their kids.
 - Motivation for urban planners and city officials needs to be part of the city system so that they too are motivated in taking part in such activities. This is an important point to think about for the future.
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- Providing food was appreciated by everyone. Several times the team ordered pizza and shared it with participants. Eating together is also sharing common space of comfort and joy.

The question of how to measure the success of such activities remains an open question. It seems to us that we are learning what it means to build trust and connection. This does not happen by visiting once and not by designing specific engagement activities. It is like dating and marriage. Both involved partners have to be involved in this forever give and take process and both must meet often, listen to each other and share. Meeting often, getting to know your residents and their wishes and getting yourself known to them is the key to a successful relationship between government and residents. If they get the feeling that they have been heard, their wishes are recognized, and they can help co-create the city they may open and help the city when the city needs their input.



2. COMMUNITIES OF FAITH: SELECTED LOCATION FOR THE ENGAGEMENT EVENT

One group of the students in the CRP455/555 Smart and Sustainable Cities course was responsible for the contacts with the communities of faith. Their work is documented below. The group together with the leadership of the project e.g. Alenka Poplin also visited some services to talk with the leaders of these communities of faith. As with everything, time and effort is needed to establish trust and good working relationships with these institutions, people in charge and participating residents.

2.1. Communities of Faith contacted by the students

- Darul Arqum Islamic Center
 - Friday (Khutba) Prayers (12:15 PM and 1:15 PM)
 - Saturday lessons for women, children, men After Dhuhr and Maghrib Prayers
 - Sunday Prayer
 - Sent out an email asking for best time to come and discuss this event
- Korean Christian Reformed Church
 - Sunday Service at 11:30 AM
 - Called, left a voicemail and an email
- Ames Jewish Congregation
 - Called, left a voicemail
 - Seems like there are no other scheduled events in February
 - Will need to set up a time to meet
 - Rabbi Barbara Block
- House of Refuge
 - Sent out an email
 - March Revival event on March 5th and 6th
 - Sunday Service at 10:30 AM
 - Bishop Orlando W. McClain
- Friendship Baptist Church
 - Sunday Services at 8:30 AM and 10:15 AM
 - Call, no responses, sent an email
 - Reverend Moses A. Ward and First Lady Breanne Ward
- Body of Christ Church
 - Sunday Services at 10 AM
 - Call, no answer
 - Sent an Email

Play Ames - Communities of Faith Locations

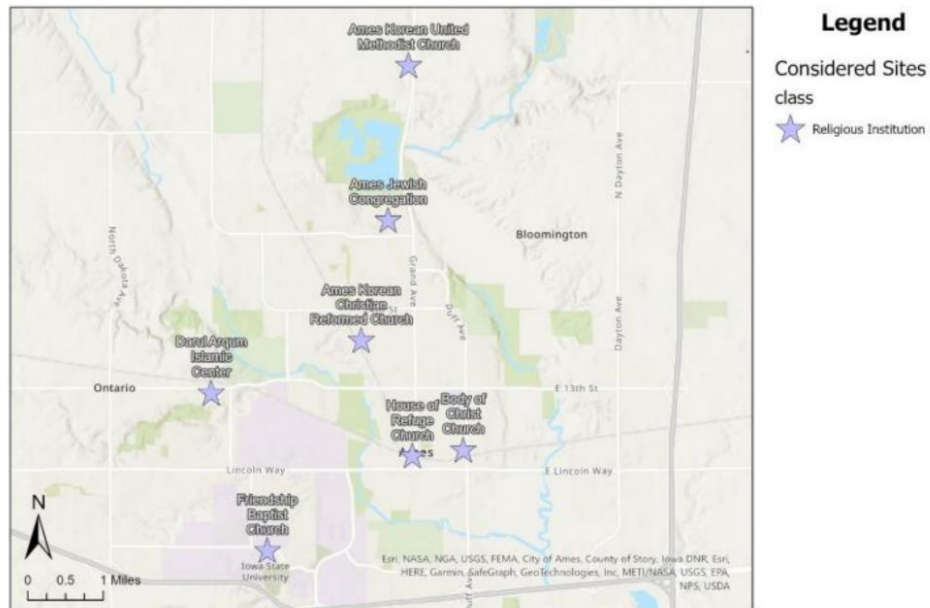



Figure 2-1. Locations of some communities of faith considered for Play Ames engagement event

2.2. Ames Korean Christian Reformed Church

Play Ames: Imagine your City team and some of the students visited the service of Ames Korean Christian Church at 1416 20th St, Ames, IA 50010 and established a relationship with the leadership that lead to a great semester collaboration with the community. Figure 2-2 shows the church and their internet page.




Figure 2-2. The website of Ames Korean Christian Church: <https://www.ames-kcrc.org/>



The main contact person for the church was **Yun Ahn** (cierayunahn@gmail.com). She helped coordinate the event, get the approval for the event by the leadership of the church and informed the Korean community about the intentions, goals, and planned activities.

Additional help to Play Ames team and the students was offered by two Korean students. **Son Hyunsik** is currently a graduate student majoring in Community and Regional Planning. He helped with translations of some documents and the questionnaire. Having them prepared in Korean language was crucial for the event. He also later participated in the event, was present at the church during Play Ames event and kept supporting the team after the event and when needed. **Soyoung Park** is currently a Ph.D. student at the Department of Human Development & Family Studies [HD FS]. She joined the event and supported the work of the group.



3. PLAY AMES 3.0: IMAGINE YOUR CITY ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Students enrolled in the CRP 455/555 Smart and Sustainable Cities course in Spring 2023 were tasked to study previous engagement activities developed within Play Ames: Imagine your City project by the students in previous semesters. They were then requested to develop their own ideas, building on the successful examples from the previous semesters. Two students were paired to form a small working team for each engagement activity. This chapter summarizes the activities they developed as part of their class work. The engagement activities included the following:

- **Crafts Table!** included origami, painting rocks and ecological painting
- **Draw Your City – Youth Views of Ames** includes maps, pictures and paintings developed for kids and youth
- **Mobility map** concentrated on mapping and mobility
- **Semi-structured interviews** suggest a roundtable discussion with residents, urban planners and city official
- **Cornhole** is a physical game that is inter-generational and brings people of all ages together
- **Raffle for Play Ames** enables to explore which engagement activities are most liked by the residents

Below are more detailed descriptions of these engagement activities described so that they can be used by others if they wish so. They were all implemented and tested at the Korean church event and include pictures from that event organized in the Spring 2023.

3.1. Crafts Table!

by Delenn Palmer and Linzeng Yu

OBJECTIVE

The craft table aims to engage participants with hands-on activities which produce take-home souvenirs as reminders of the Play Ames event and are tailored around cities, places, and services. The craft table allows participants to experience fun activities and enhances their participation and engagement in the form of making crafts. At the same time, this fun way of playing increases the overall attractiveness of the "Play Ames: Imagine your City" to potential participants.

By chatGPT: Alternate Activity Names - Ideas

"FoldCity" could be a good name for Origami activities in urban planning participation. It incorporates both the idea of origami (folding paper) and the concept of a city, which ties in nicely with urban planning.

"Brushstrokes of the City" has a nice ring to it for a Painting activity in urban planning participation. It suggests a creative and collaborative approach to urban planning, as well as the idea of leaving a mark on the city's landscape through art.

Pictures below show Korean community participants engaged in the Craft Table! activities.



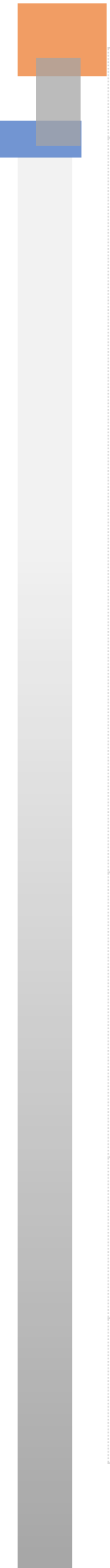
LOCATION AND SPACE NEEDED

Tables for displaying materials are needed for these activities, as well as nearby tables to keep people close by for conversations. Approximately two to three large tables and enough chairs for 1/4 of the people in attendance are needed.



WHAT

Included in these activities are painting stones, origami and using local materials that can be embedded in the paintings. Participants can learn some origami crafts as well as create



a painting of their favorite service of the city, favorite place in the city, or what they would like to see in the future. Origami can be displayed within the church or taken home.

HOW

These activities are performed using the table, chairs, and art materials. While participants create and paint they can also talk about issues in the city. The origami papers also contain three questions related to the participants' future visions of the city in which they live. The different colors of the paper used for origami and different stacks of canvases/stock paper can be used to indicate responses to the questions written on these pre-made papers.

Alternatively, one can create a QR code leading to an online survey based upon construction paper color; once a question is completed, the next page would be trivia about origami or development of local city buildings before another question is asked or origami instructions are given.

Questions to be discussed during these creative activities:

- Favorite place, activity, or service in the city?
- What would you change about it or the route to get there, or how accessible is public transportation?
- What would you like to see in the future, or what simple changes would improve community life?
- How could you communicate to the city those changes?
- Opinions on the allocation of urban education resources?

LEARNING COMPONENT

Through origami and painting, participants can develop certain craft skills while relaxing. At the same time, based on the survey questions and presentation interface, participants can have a greater sense of belonging and participation in local urban construction and planning. They can also learn about engaging with the city and what could be in the future. If city officials are present, they can engage in a conversation with them. Questions on origami papers stimulate and guide these conversations.

TIME NEEDED

Origami: can be anywhere between 15 and 30 minutes.

Painting: 20 - 30 minutes.

PREPARATION

The preparation of the site includes the following:

- Organizing tables, chairs and needed materials.
- 

- Setting up a paint-safe table with paints and materials as well as for people to paint.
- Preparing origami tips and design instructional pages.
- Preparing specific investigation questions.
- Preparing fun content for after the investigation page.
- Preparing QR codes that need to be printed.

PERMISSIONS

Permission to bring and have paint within their facilities and on their surfaces.

MATERIAL

Origami

- QR Code leading to survey
- Construction paper, with QR code printed on it (pre-cut to origami size)
- Stickers
- Glue
- Double-sided adhesive
- Wool ball
- Pens and markers
- Origami instruction page
- Investigation page
- Posters for instructions

Painting

- Tables and chairs
- Tablecloths (plastic)
- Canvases OR card stock paper
- Paint
- Watercolor works well on stock paper
- Paint brushes
- Cups (for rinsing brushes during event)
- Paper towels
- Plates for mixing and paint holding

COMBINATION WITH CITY PLANNING

City officials can join these activities or be somewhere nearby and accessible to the participants. They can provide answers to the questions related to engagement, current city Development projects or their visions for the future of the city which can be communicated to the participants. Example discussing questions such as “How would city officials like the population of Ames to communicate to them?” Or, if present at the engagement event, be painting or creating origami with those engaged at the event.

QUESTIONS RELATED TO ENGAGEMENT

Feedback is obtained mainly based on the QR code survey page and on-site communication or through recording their answers selected when using the pre-designed materials.

Questions:

- What is your favorite place, activity, or service in the city?
- What would you change about it or the route to get there?
- How accessible is public Transportation to you?
- What would you like to see in the future, or what simple changes would improve community life?
- How could you communicate your preferred changes to the City?
- Share your opinions and views related to the allocation of urban education resources

3.2. Draw Your City – Youth Views of Ames

by Ada Ellingworth and Alivia Hoodjer

OBJECTIVE

This concentrates on engaging youth and children. It uses a simplified city map of Ames to engage youth in thinking about how they interact with the City of Ames through their schools, parks, and favorite places in Ames. It offers the opportunity to identify youth perceptions of Ames and enables the youth and kids to talk about the activity and share their experience, issues, and ideas for the future.



LOCATION AND SPACE NEEDED

It requires a space for tables and chairs, and it is best suited for an indoor environment. Eventually it could also be done outside if it is warm and not windy.



WHAT

The goal of this activity is to engage youth and kids with identifying locations within the City of Ames that they visit often, as well as think about what they like and dislike about the city of Ames. Youth and kids are encouraged to draw pictures of their favorite places in Ames, which will then be added to a map to highlight their relation to the city.

HOW

This activity will need to have a map of the city on a bigger piece of paper on which the youth and the kids can then post stickers or mark their favorite places in the city on the map. The Play Ames students in charge of this activity will have to be engaged with the youth and kids, talk with them about their favorite places, and help them find their favorite places on the map of Ames. Eventually, the organizers will then be able to take the kids' drawings, scan them into a digital file, and create an online version of the map adding the drawings of their favorite places to the map in a multi-source GIS digital map that can be visualized on a computer.

LEARNING COMPONENT

This activity helps kids, youth as well as parents, identify where their favorite places are in Ames. It also helps them find new places that other people like as well. This aids in creating community by having similar interests in places as well as educating people of where some "hidden gems" are in Ames. It also helps connect residents with urban Planners and city officials.



TIME NEEDED

Time needed for this task will depend on how long it will take for kids and youth to draw and find their favorite places on the map with help from Play Ames volunteers and students.

PREPARATION

In order to conduct this activity, the organizing team needs to:

- Create youth-friendly, activity map of the City Ames
- Organize tables and chairs for kids, youth and their parents to draw their favorite places
- Set up paper and coloring utensils (crayons, colored pencils, or markers)
- Hang the map on the wall

PERMISSIONS

No permissions are needed.

MATERIAL


Materials needed:

- Youth-friendly map of Ames
- Colored pencils, markers, or crayons
- Paper
- Stickers
- Tables and chairs

COMBINATION WITH CITY PLANNING

This activity is designed in a way that encourages Collaboration, exchange and discussions about the City of Ames. Urban planners and city officials can be present and may interact with the kids, youth, or their parents. It is an inviting activity that uses a big map specially designed for the younger population.

The map resulting from this activity and created by kids and youth aims to show the city's officials where kids-friendly and family-oriented places are in Ames, based on the collective perception as contributed by the residents of the city. It also can provide insights of where people like to be in Ames. City officials can be involved by displaying this map on their website as a tool to engage more people in the community, they can take part in the phases of data collection and community engagement events that also help strengthen their connection with residents and promote the City Ames's goals and visions for the Sustainable and inclusive future of the city.






QUESTIONS RELATED TO ENGAGEMENT

Since this activity is geared towards kids and youth, it includes questions for both youth and their parents/guardians. These will be provided through a printed questionnaire and facilitated with conversation through the activity.

Suggested questions for parents:

- What is one thing you would like to tell the mayor, city council or city government about what they could do for you?
- What previous experiences have you had with the city government? Would you be willing to share?

Suggested questions for kids and youth:

- Where do you like to go in Ames? What is your favorite place?
 - Do you know where the library is? (Maybe some other public service buildings like city hall)
- 

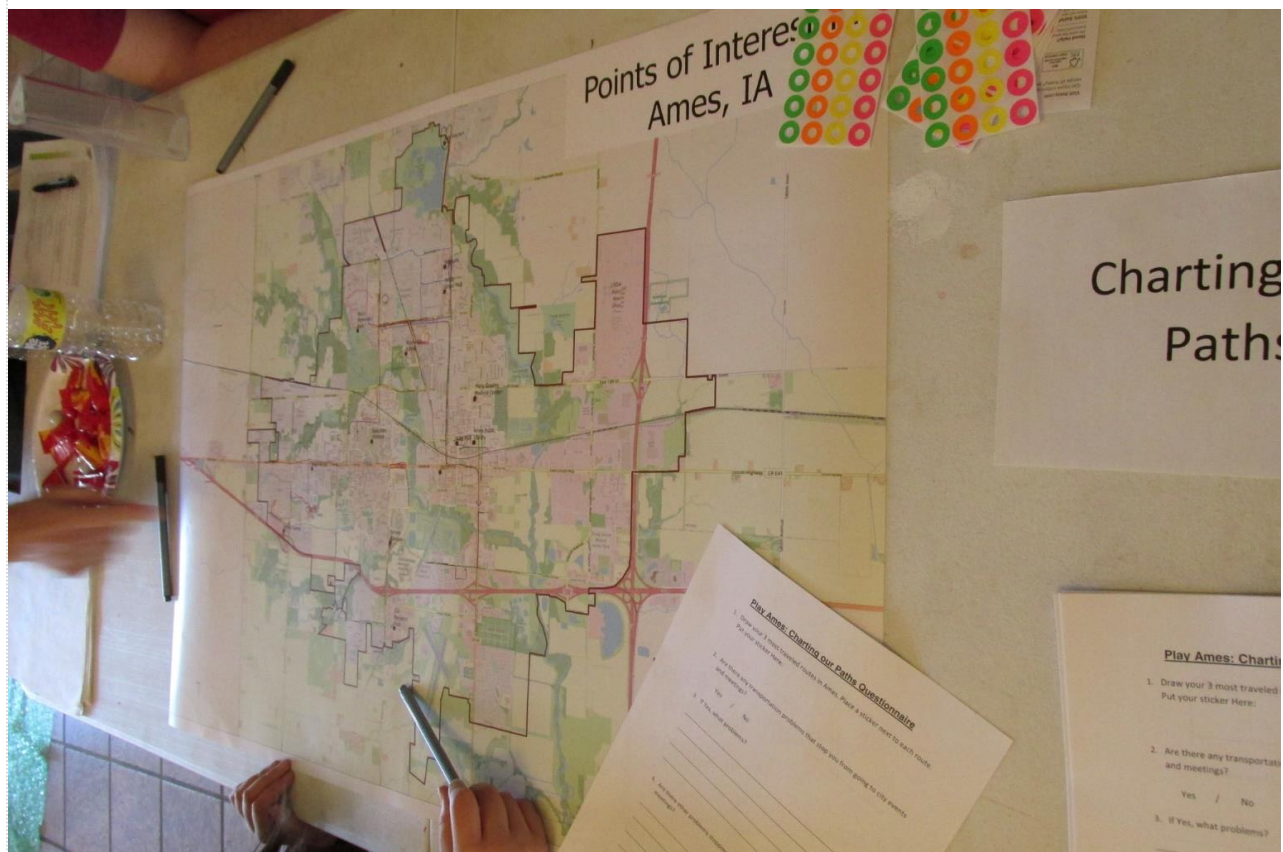
3.3. Mobility Map

by Jack Studier and Johnathon Waskow

OBJECTIVE

The main objective of this activity is to engage residents with the help of a big paper map associated with a questionnaire. Picture below shows the big, printed map used for this activity with the main points of interest indicated in the map for the main orientation and help to the participants by identifying different parts of the city.

An additional goal is to create a map of underrepresented and marginalized residents' routes they use most often. These include the routes from their neighborhoods to work. This activity is also associated with a simple, one-page long questionnaire (see Appendix of this report for the overview of the map and the questions used in the questionnaire). The main hypothesis that drives this Research and hypothesis is that some central locations like City Hall or the Library are out of the way of usual routes residents use to commute in the City of Ames.



LOCATION AND SPACE NEEDED

The location needed for this activity is a big table that enables the organizing team to place a big map on and gives enough space for markers and questionnaires to be placed around the map.

This is an indoor activity that can also be performed outside on a nice, warm, and not windy day.

The residents and organizers can sit round the table and interact via the map and questionnaire.

This activity can also stimulate discussions about transportation, issues with transportation and needs residents may have related to transportation. A big table may allow multiple people to interact at the same time. Below is the setting at the event organized in collaboration with the Korean church community.



WHAT


Residents are shown a map of the City Ames with some selected places of interest highlighted, including the City Hall. They are given markers to indicate their neighborhood, place of work, their route to work and their best route to the places of interest. They are also asked to fill out a short questionnaire which is the same for all involved residents.

HOW

Residents approach the table and are shown the map. They are invited to take a sit so they feel comfortable and can take time to interact with the map and with the organizers of the event. They are then given the markers and ask to mark their neighborhood. Then they are invited to draw the route they use to get to work.

LEARNING COMPONENT

The learning component of this activity is to test the hypothesis that places of interest where the city currently holds meetings, like City Hall, are out of the way of underrepresented residents' navigation routes. Surveyed people learn how their routes of navigation compare to the points of



interest across the city and are given the opportunity to provide their own input on what barriers stop them from interacting with the City of Ames and their officials.

TIME NEEDED

Estimated time: 10 - 20 minutes.

PREPARATION

Things needs to be done to prepare for this activity:

- Create a map layout that can be printed out for use in this activity
- Create a set of accompanying survey questions to be completed after the activity is complete.
- Print the map
- Print the questionnaires
- Organize markers
- Organize tables and chairs

PERMISSIONS

No special permission should be necessary.

MATERIAL


Printed map and questionnaires, tables and chairs, markers.

COMBINATION WITH CITY PLANNING

Public officials can get involved by identifying key locations that could be used for meetings and engagement along routes that the community has indicated as popular and well used. They can use this activity to engage residents in discussions about transportation, commuting and other topics relevant to the city. They may attend an event organized by others to use for their interaction with the residents of the city. Using maps proved so far to be an effective way of communicating with the residents.

QUESTIONS RELATED TO ENGAGEMENT

While working on their task, the organizing tea mor city officials may involve residents in a discussion about the city. Questions they may ask can be as follows:

- Are you aware of the services the city provides?
 - Have you ever expressed your opinion on the quality of the city service?
 - What services could be improved?
 - What barriers to attending city meetings do you think there are?
 - How could the city improve accessibility, and remove barriers to meetings?
- 

- What could the city do to show they care about their residents?
- How could the city and its officials communicate better?

3.4. Semi-structured interviews

By Karl Debruzzi and Andrew Hart

OBJECTIVE

The main goal of this activity is to engage participants personally and authentically in a dialogue, a roundtable discussion that enables the residents to talk about their issues and inspirations. Urban planners and/or city officials can be present and can lead these semi-structured interviews and discussions. They may prepare leading questions to be discussed. It also enables the organizing team to build connections with residents and to get to know each other better. The picture below shows the City of Ames major Mr. Steve Schainker in the discussion with the participants, Korean community members, and ISU students, organizers of this event and the round table discussion.



LOCATION AND SPACE NEEDED

A safe space is needed where participants feel heard, safe and respected. Physically it can be an indoor or outdoor place. City officials can kind of move and float around in the place reserved for the event and chat with participating residents.

The general idea is to be able to do this at all activities prepared for Play Ames: Imagine your City event. While some participants will be engaged with the activity, those that are by standing will be good candidates for these semi-structured interviews. Pictures below show Korean residents being engaged in a conversation with ISU students, organizers of Play Ames: Imagine your City event and the City of Ames manager Mr. Steve Schainker.



WHAT

The main goal of this activity is to engage residents personally and authentically and to establish an honest dialogue that can consequently build trust and connection between the local government, its officials and residents.

LEARNING COMPONENT

Through the dialogue there is a connection and trust established. The organizing team can learn about the positions, perceptions, ideas, and issues of the residents. It establishes the ground in which they can share and consequently enables the organizing team (students or city officials) to understand their situation better. What they need, what they dislike, and overall, how the city can help them best. The city will also get a lot of additional insights into these more marginalized and underrepresented communities and what is affecting them most in their daily lives.

For them (that being those surveyed), they'll learn more about the importance of political engagement and how the city wants to hear their input. Additionally, asking these questions might make them view their life from a different perspective, making them learn about aspects of themselves they might not think much about otherwise.

TIME NEEDED

Time needed for the task: Depends on how sociable the interviewee is. It could be just 5 mins, but it could go much longer depending on the person, connection, and others involved.



PREPARATION

What needs to be done to prepare for this activity: General questions need to be prepared. Also, it should be figured out who is going to record and how, without the interview losing its informality.

PERMISSIONS

No special permission should be necessary. In some cases, the organizing team may want the participants to sign their consent. Consent for taking pictures, using their opinions for publications is important for research.

MATERIAL


The materials needed: paper, a table with chairs, and pens.

COMBINATION WITH CITY PLANNING

Urban planners and city officials can, if they want, also join in the conversation. The organizing team could have questions prepared for the dialogue with them. Also, the residents may want to ask city officials and urban planners questions. Citizens addressing public officials themselves would make it clear that the city wants their input.

QUESTIONS RELATED TO ENGAGEMENT

Questions could include, for example, the following:

- Are you aware of the services the city provides?
 - Have you ever expressed opinion on the quality of the Service?
 - What services could be improved?
 - What barriers to attending city meetings do you think there are?
 - How could the city improve accessibility, and remove barriers to meetings?
 - What could the city do to show they care?
 - How could the city communicate better?
- 

3.5. Cornhole

by Riley Bass and David McGee

OBJECTIVE

Cornhole is traditionally a lawn game in which players take turns throwing small bags at a platform with a hole in it. The objective is to score points by tossing the bag through the hole or landing it on the platform. The game can be played individually or in teams of two, and the first player or team to reach 21 points is declared the winner. Play Ames team took this game inside and presented it to the Korean community as pictures below demonstrate.



LOCATION AND SPACE NEEDED

20-30 feet of space is needed to set out the boards and give players enough room to move around them freely. For adults the boards should be about 27 feet apart. The boards can be moved closer together to make the game easier as well as also available to children and youth. This game can be played on grass or pavement if the surface is even and flat. The space between the boards needs to be clear and no one can be in this area while a game is in session.

If the game is played inside, the boards can be moved closer to fit in the space available.



WHAT

The goal of this activity is to provide a physical and casual game at Play Ames: Imagine your City event. This game allows people to play it and interact socially with other participants. The setup and play of the game are easy and straightforward. It works well for adults, children, and youth and can serve as an inter-generational invitation to interact, participate, talk, get engaged and have fun.

HOW

This game can be played in teams of two or more. Teams stand at opposite boards and compete for the highest score. The opponents at one board will start the game by taking turns throwing their bags. The other side of players will then pick up the bags that were thrown by their partner and take their turn. The player or team that scored the highest in the previous round goes first in the next round.

Scoring system that can be communicated to the players: You score 3 points for landing your bag in the hole and 1 point for landing on the board. If your bag gets knocked off the board, you don't get a point for that. If your bag gets hit into the hole you get 3 points from that. You must reach 21 points to win but if you go over 21 points your score will be brought down to 11 and you must get to 21 again.

LEARNING COMPONENT

Players get the opportunity to play with new people and learn more about their peers. This game offers a playful time for kids, youth, and adults. It gives an opportunity for informal discussions, connections and building trust. Through playing people get to know each other, they spend time together and create positive memories.

PREPARATION

At least one set of cornhole boards need to be purchased for this event. A second set can be bought if we expect a large attendance at the event.



PERMISSIONS

If the game is going to be played inside, the organizing team needs to ask the building manager for permission to play cornhole.

MATERIAL


- 2 boards
- 8 bags

Materials source code: <https://www.amazon.com/GoSports-Wood-Design-Cornhole-Game/dp/B00UYWQRVK?source=ps-sl-shoppingads-lpcontext&ref=fplfs&smid=ATVPDKIKX0DER&th=1> = price (\$60.00)

COMBINATION WITH CITY PLANNING

City officials and urban planners can join in playing a game and interact with the residents through this game. This offers a casual and playful setting for citizens and the city government workers to talk and interact with each other. This would be a time for the residents to ask any questions and for the city workers to ask for any feedback. It is a great opportunity to connect through play, form informal relationships and connections, share moments of joy and competition, laugh together, have fun and also the opportunity to discuss more serious issues that are meaningful and important to all involved.

QUESTIONS RELATED TO ENGAGEMENT

- How long have you lived in Ames
 - What brought you to Ames
 - Why do you like Ames
 - What part of town do you live in
 - What brought you to this event
 - What resources would be helpful to improve your daily life
 - What improvements would you like to see around the city of Ames
- 

3.6. Raffle for Play Ames

By Jessica Olander & Hunter McCrea

OBJECTIVE

The main objective of the raffle table is to collect demographic data and the preferences of the participants regarding the introduced community engagement methods. Collecting information and feedback about the introduced engagement methods is a key aspect in the purpose of Play Ames. Everyone, including kids, will want to participate in the raffle, and in order to participate in the raffle, adults must fill out an engagement card for themselves, and their kids if applicable. Beside the raffle that invites everyone to participate, the card that collects demographics on one side also introduces the activities on the other side. A little smiley face is used for the participant to choose from and indicate how much they liked a particular activity. Presents are the main motivation to participate in the raffle. Below is the picture of the raffle setting at the event organize in the Korean church.





LOCATION AND SPACE NEEDED

An area in the room for a table is needed that can hold the raffle wheel and the prizes as well as a poster board to describe the activity. Just an area big enough for a folding table and some room for two people to stand or sit behind the raffle and lead the activity is needed.

WHAT

The goal of this activity is to get residents to participate in the demographic survey and to provide very useful and requested feedback on their Experience with the engagement methods introduced to them throughout Play Ames: Imagine your City event. The raffle provides an incentive for everyone to participate in this survey including adults, youth, and kids.

HOW

Residents who participate in the raffle need to fill out an engagement survey, provide valuable feedback on the engagement activities, turn in their survey at the raffle table to be eligible for spinning the wheel. Every place on the Wheel brings an award. The awards selected were mandarins, pens, writing blocks, color pencils, sticker books, and more.

Kids parents can fill out engagement surveys in the name of their kids and turn them in to win prizes.

LEARNING COMPONENT


There is not much of a learning component as this is just an incentive to participate in the activities that do provide learning components. A learning component could be to inform on how important it is to participate in the engagement survey, as the residents are not allowed to spin the wheel without a survey completed. If a participant comes up to the raffle table without wanting to complete an engagement survey, he/she can be informed about it along with the instructions on how to do that. Throughout this process they also learn about other engagement methods available to them and are encouraged to test them. The engagement surveys inform city officials which were the most preferred engagement methods and who participated at the event. It also collects demographics of the participants.

TIME NEEDED

Only a couple of minutes, unless engaged in a conversation. Participants just fill out the engagement survey and hand it in to spin the wheel.

PREPARATION

The table and chairs need to be set up. The prizes have to be written on the Wheel. The engagement cards have to be printed and placed on the table. The prizes need to be prepared to be handed out to the participants.



PERMISSIONS

Are any permissions needed? No.

MATERIAL

The materials needed: table, poster board, chairs, prizes, and a prize wheel.

COMBINATION WITH CITY PLANNING

City officials can be involved indirectly. Since the organizing team received the engagement surveys, they can be analyzed. The results of this analysis can be passed on to the city officials for their improved understanding of possible engagement methods and the demographics of the participants. City officials can then use them to better the City of Ames and see why the marginalized and underrepresented residents of the City of Ames do not participate in the City Hall meetings.

QUESTIONS RELATED TO ENGAGEMENT

Questions to be asked:

- Have you completed the surveys?
- If you haven't completed the surveys, why not?
- Do you think it's important to complete these surveys?

We can ask these kinds of questions when residents approach the raffle table to ensure they are completing the surveys and inform them why it's important if they haven't completed them.

3.7. CONCLUSIONS


The Play Ames: Imagine your City event organized at **Ames Korean Christian Church** was a success in many ways.

1. Underrepresented and marginalized community

It attracted a community that is very specific and would otherwise be unlikely to participate in the activities organized by the City of Ames. The participants were the members of the Korean community, more specifically those that usually gather at church events. Some families with children joined. Noticeably many of the women did not speak English. They were eager to fill out the survey that was translated to Korean language but were too shy to participate in the semi-structured interview due to their lack of language skills and knowledge.

2. Playful engagement activities

Playful engagement activities served as a multi-generational bonding of all involved. The parents were happy to see their kids engaged and safe. They could then participate in other activities more tailored for them. A combination of creative activities such as painting stones, map-based



activities combined with a short questionnaire and semi-structured interviews covered the whole spectrum from very playful activities to focused and serious. Everybody could find an activity that worked for them. All participants seemed to enjoy the engagement activities.

3. Semi-structured interviews


Semi-structured interviews were organized like a round-table discussion. They were led by the students who prepared this activity. It was the first time at this event that this activity was introduced. It seemed to work very well. Mostly men that can speak English joined this serious and focused discussion about the future of the city. These discussions were recorded and later transcribed. They were semi-formal and served as a platform for expressing opinions, asking questions, sharing, and getting to know each other.

4. Involvement of city officials

Semi-structured interviews provided an inviting platform for exchange and sharing. The City of Ames City Manager, Mr. Steve Schainker, joined these discussions and was impressed how well they went. Everyone was engaged and willing to share. This idea can become a model for future events at which city officials and urban planners want to be present. The semi-structured nature of the roundtable is inviting, provides focus to the topics selected for the discussion and enough flexibility to express other wishes and possible concerns.

Two other aspects were noticed. One of them was the **language**. It cannot be assumed that multi-cultural communities and their members speak good English. It is therefore good to think about translations of the main document into the language these specific, selected communities speak. It was surprising to observe how the knowledge of the language determined participation of the residents in the presented engagement activities and the semi-structured interviews. The second aspect is the aspect of Play Ames, and the role of the word **PLAY** plays in the perception of the potential participants. All too often play is associated with kids and youth. In the way the event was advertised, many potential participants concluded it may be particularly focused on kids and youth.

Play Ames: Imagine your City team thanks the Korean community in Ames and everyone that participated at the event organized for Ames Korean Christian Church in Spring 2023.





4. RATIONAL IGNORANCE SURVEY

by Sandra Boateng and Alenka Poplin

4.1. Rational ignorance: background

One of the most important goals of planning is to improve citizen's participation in the planning processes. Does this really happen? While public engagement may be organized by public officials in their traditional ways calling meetings in the city hall or similar. Residents often decide not to attend these meetings. There may have specific reasons that compel them to deliberately distance themselves or choose to remain ignorant about political and planning processes. Rational ignorance is a choice theory, where individuals deliberately choose to remain uninformed or ignorant about certain political or economic issues. This decision is based on the understanding that the cost of acquiring information invested as time, effort, or resources may outweigh the potential benefits of being well-informed. Residents may therefore choose not to invest significant effort in learning about complex policy matters because they believe their individual vote or influence is unlikely to significantly impact the outcome of this process.

4.2. Research focus

This study specifically investigates reasons for the residents to decide to ignore community engagement processes. The main focus is on the residents of the City of Ames and in particular on marginalized and underrepresented residents. The research team selected neighborhoods with low income and low educational level as the focus of this survey. In fact, the same neighborhoods were selected as well for Play Ames 2.0 pop-up moving community engagement.


The main questions to be asked can be summarized as follows:

- How often do you engage in discussions with public officials about the future of the city?
- What prevents you from engaging in discussions about the future of the city?

The survey developed for the purpose of this research can be found in the Appendix of this report. It is provided in English and was translated into Korean and Chinese to be able to share it with these communities in their native language.

4.3. Research methodology

The survey sought to target non-native Americans, minority groups, and economically disadvantaged people. Three major approaches were adopted to reach the identified groups. They included church visitations to reach racial groups, house to house visitation to reach economically disadvantaged groups and printing of QR Codes to facilitate survey response at respondents' convenience.





1st Phase of the Survey: Visiting Communities of Faith

The first idea was to visit communities of faith and talk to the attendees of the services. The research team concentrated on African-American population, and churches that attract African, Chinese, Spanish-speaking and Korean residents. The selected churches were specifically targeted by the emails sent to their leaders in which the team invited everyone to participate in the rational ignorance survey. The questionnaires were also translated into Korean and Chinese for easy comprehension (see appendices). With a targeted audience in mind, a visitation schedule (see appendices), which was rotational in nature and developed to guide the distribution of the survey.

Communities of Faith visited:

- Body of Christ Church
- Bethesda Lutheran Church
- House of Refuge Church
- Ames Korean Christian Reformed Church
- Chinese Evangelical Free Church of Ames

The first phrase (church visitations) was not all that successful. Firstly, most of the emails and calls to the churches for approval for visitation went unanswered. Two churches did not allow the research team to engage their members. The project team distributed the survey in these churches and attended some services as well to connect with the community. These visits did not lead to many surveys being filled out. This prompted a change in approach to distributing QR codes at convenience shops.

2nd Phase of the Survey


The research team created QR code cards (see the Appendix) with an invitation to the residents to participate in the survey. Additionally, these cards were dropped at the following two locations:

- May House
- Asian Grocery Market

The research team did not manage to collect many surveys from this participation effort. Residents would not just click on the QR code and fill out the survey if it is given to them in the form of a survey card. The research team needed a new and better strategy that would enable to get sincere, high quality and honest responses by the targeted residents which were marginalized and underrepresented groups as defined by the project previously. Here the concentration was mostly on low-income and low-educational level for residents.

3rd Phase of the Survey: House-to-house personal visits of households

Based on the low responsiveness of the targeted churches and the low response rates from the online surveys, the house-to-house distribution of surveys was initiated. Still hinging on the objective of reaching out to the economically disadvantaged, low-educational level and minority



groups, the next step sought to identify neighborhoods in Ames that meet these criteria. The research team decided to focus on the streets that were also identified in the previous research reports by Play Ames: Imagine your City project. Visiting locations included:

- Tripp Street (Area 9 on the map)
- East 7th Street (Area 2 on the map)
- Ontario Street (Area 5 on the map)
- Northwestern Avenue. (Area 11 on the map)

Alongside the printed questionnaire, QR designed codes were also carried along for people to fill at their convenience.

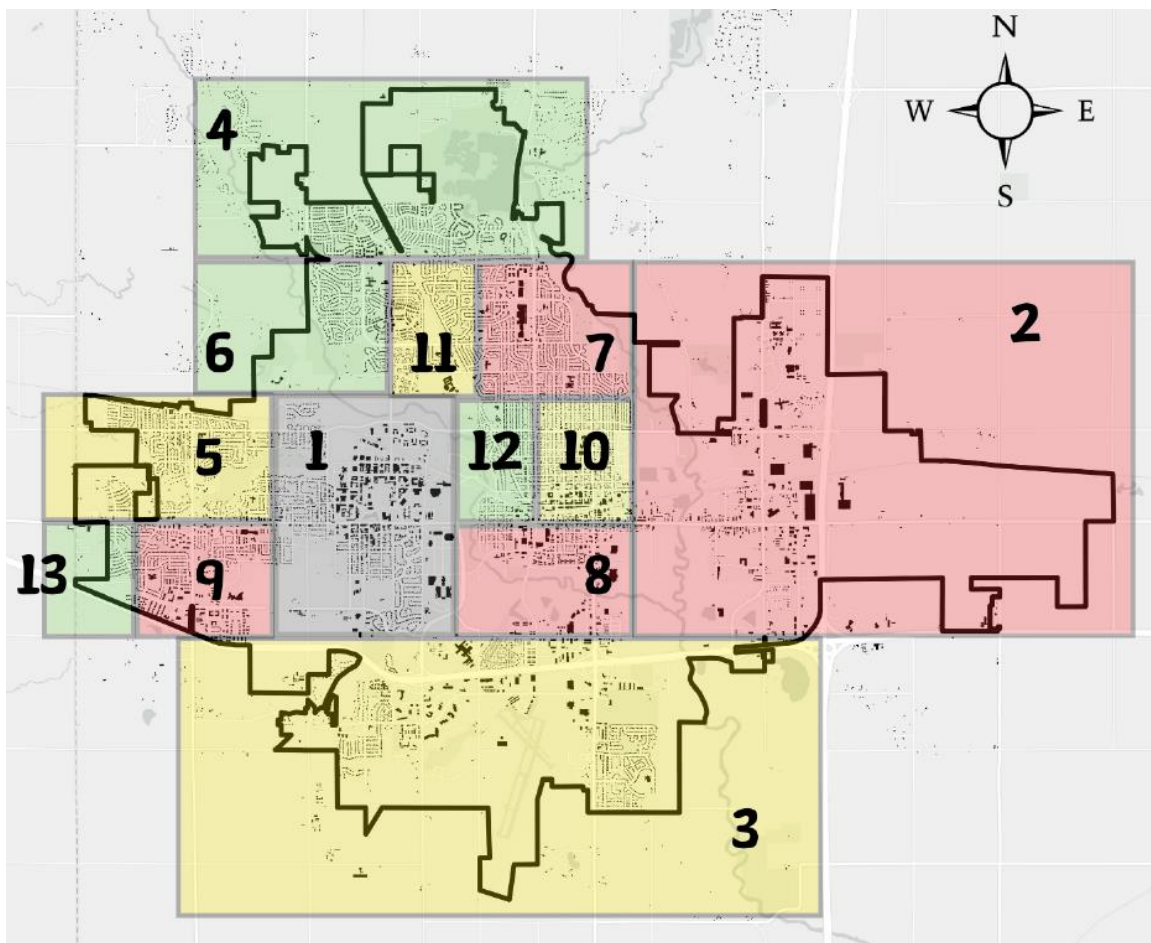


Figure 5-1. City of Ames area map

4.4. Materials

The material used in this research included survey questionnaire printed on a paper, an online version of the survey implemented in Qualtrics and a QR code flyer.

Questionnaire. The questionnaire comprised 17 questions and was offered to the participants/residents of the City of Ames in three different languages including English, Korean and Chinese. See the Appendix of this report for the complete version of the questionnaire.

The link to the Qualtrics survey/an online version of the questionnaire can be seen following the link:

https://iastate.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_a8G1YXajSljLIDs

QR code flyer. Alongside the distribution of the questionnaire in prints, nicely designed QR code flyers were passed along to people who wanted to fill the survey at their own convenience and on their own smart phone or other electronic device.

4.5. Research team



The survey team comprised three people, Dr. Alenka Poplin and two students from the Department of Community and Regional Planning, Sandra Serwaa Boateng and Yu Linzheng (Figure 5-2). All three coming from the Department of Community and Regional Planning at Iowa State University, Dr. Alenka Poplin is an Associate Professor in Geoinformation Sciences, Sandra is a first-year master's student and graduate research assistant while Linzheng is an undergraduate student. Prof. Poplin had oversight responsibility of the team, while the two students assisted in the distribution of the surveys and filling of online surveys. Additionally, Linzheng designed the area map and translated survey into Chinese, while Sandra coordinated the survey in the absence of the professor, including tasks like scheduling visitations, sending out emails to the groups to be visited, collecting survey responses, and assisting in report writing. The team also solicited the help of Son Hyungsik, a second-year master's student in the department, to assist in the translation of the questionnaire to Korean language.

Figure 5-2. Research team distributing surveys at Ontario Street on 4th November 2023

Pre-survey Meetings

The pre-survey meetings were held on Tuesdays at 2 pm. Activities undertaken included going through the questionnaire for finalization, selection of the study area and preparation of fields visitation schedule.

Post-survey Meetings

The team met at the end of every survey to provide updates of what transpired on the field. These meetings were essential in talking about the challenges encountered and addressing them in the subsequent field day to achieve the best results.



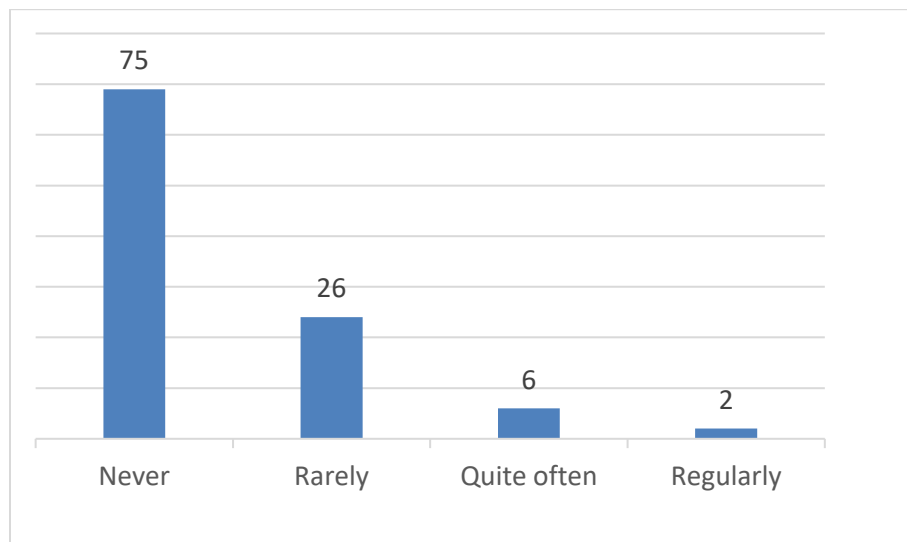
Figure 5-3. Research team at a debriefing meeting on December 19, 2023

4.6. Research results

This section presents the results of the seventeen questions in the survey. Most of the participants the research team acquired with the help of door-to-door survey. The best methodology that worked with this survey was to ask questions in person and have one of the research team members write the answers on the paper survey. This was the fastest and the most efficient way of gathering data and receiving responses from the residents. Altogether we collected responses from 112 residents of the City of Ames. The key findings are presented in this section.

Question 1 : How often do you engage in discussions about the future of the City of Ames with city officials?

Respondents were asked about the frequency of their engagements with City Officials to discuss the future of the City of Ames. The majority of the respondents (75), constituting 69%, responded that they had never engaged with City Officials, 26 rarely, 6 quite often and 2 respondents, (representing 2%) regularly engaged in discussions with the City Officials.

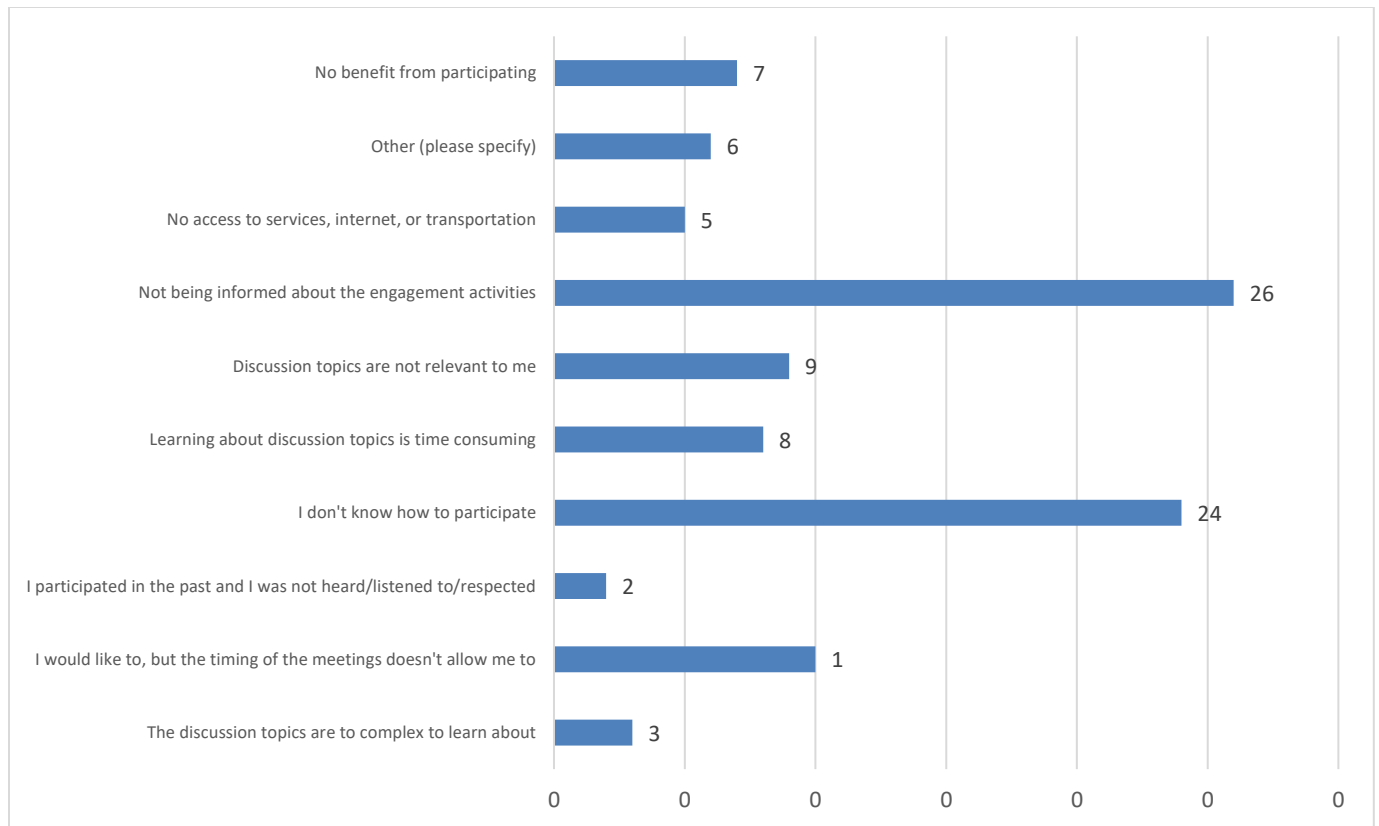


Question 2: What prevents you from engaging in discussions about the future of the City of Ames? Choose up to 3 of the following:

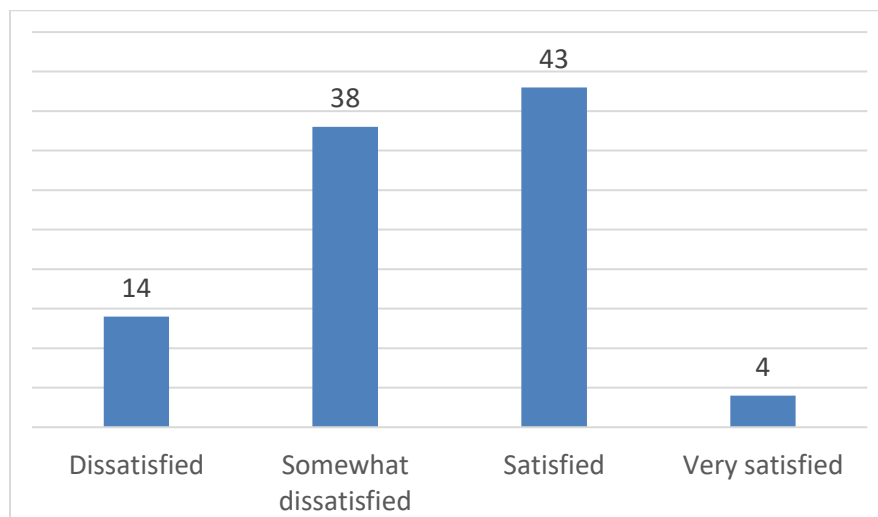
Respondents were asked to select three factors that personally prohibit them from participating in city discussions. Amongst the options provided, the top three factors selected were, “not being informed about engagement activities (26 responses),” “I don’t know how to participate (24 responses),” and “discussion topics are irrelevant to me (9 responses).”

Answers that indicate relation to rational ignorance include the following: “learning about discussion topics is time consuming” (8 responses), “no benefit from participating” (7 responses), “the discussion topics are too complex to learn about” (3 responses), and “I participated in the past and I was not heard/listened to/respected” (2 responses).

Other responses, not visible in the figure below (provided as additional comments by the participants) include “I cannot understand the topics”, “I am new to town”, “I have no plans to stay here”, “I am busy” and “I don’t really know what people are discussing, “I have no feelings about it and I am not interested.”



Question 3: How satisfied are you with the opportunities to get engaged in the discussions about further development of your city/your neighborhood? Please choose.

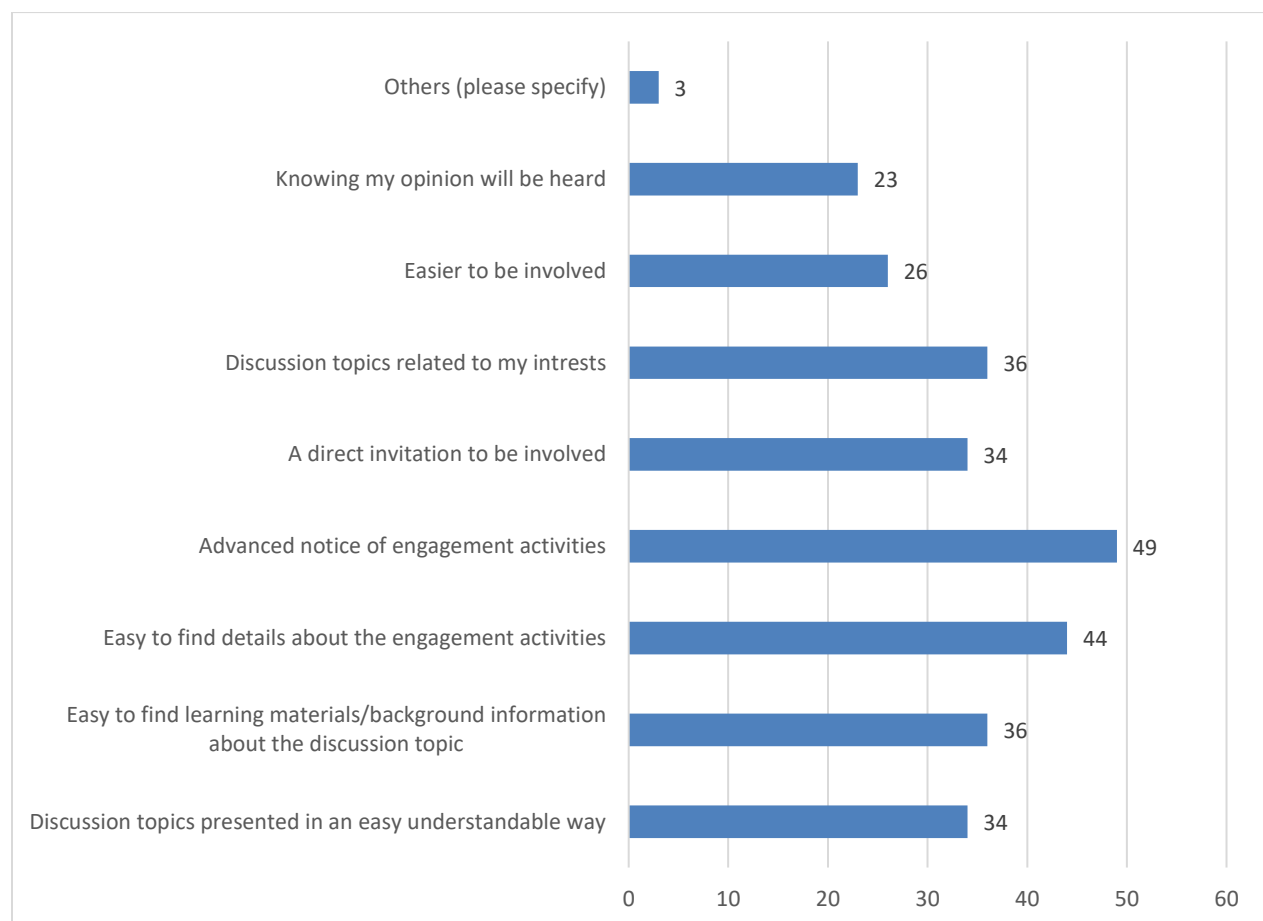


Answers to this question offer some really interesting insights. The residents of the City of Ames were asked to rate their satisfaction of the opportunities available to them to engage in discussions about the city/neighborhood. Four are very satisfied and 43 are satisfied. This means

that about half of the participants does not feel there is a major need for change. Truly dissatisfied were only 14 and somehow dissatisfied 38.

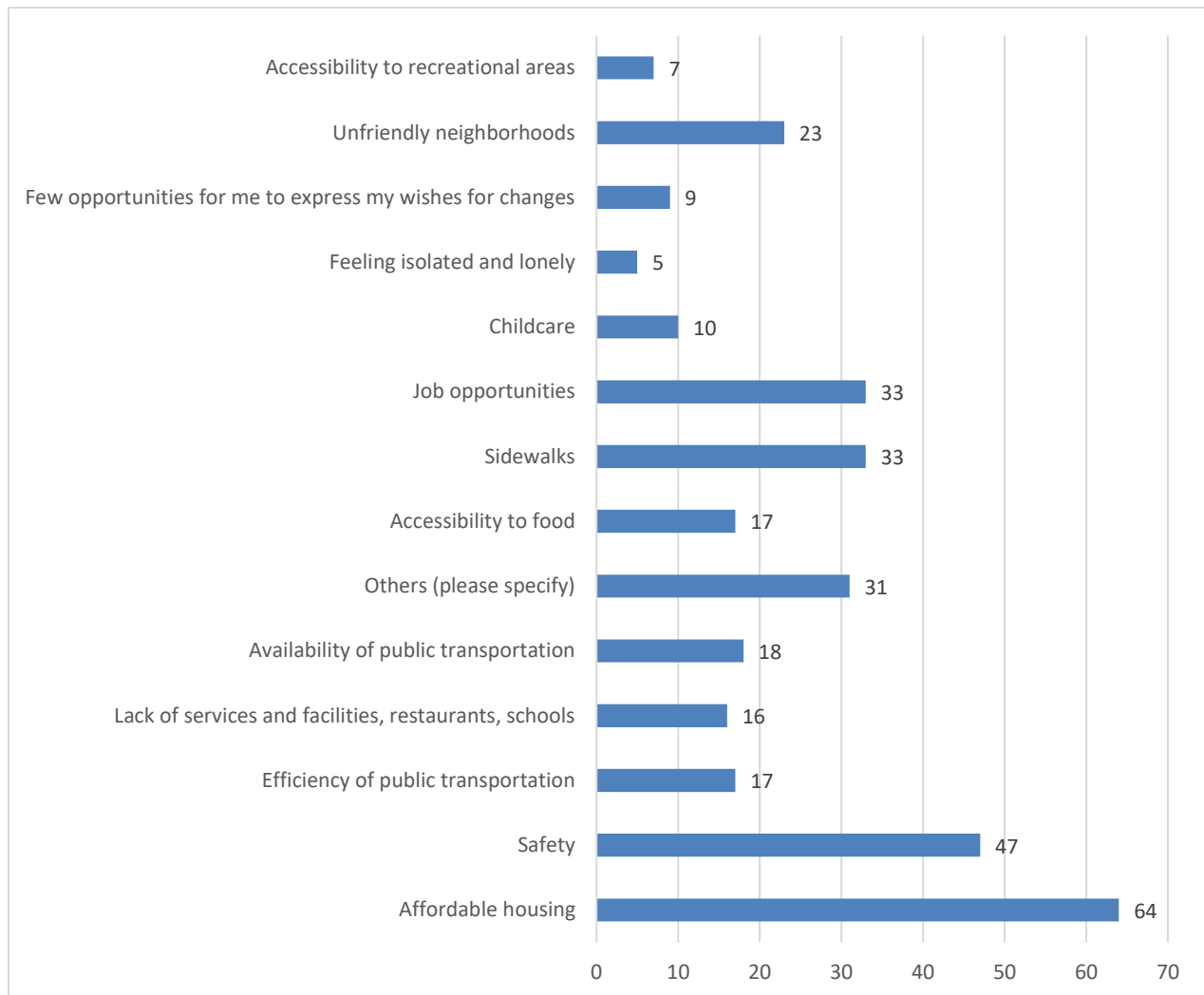
Question 4: What would motivate you to become more engaged in the discussions about the future of the City of Ames? Choose up to 3 of the following:

The residents were asked to choose up to three factors that would personally motivate them to engage in discussions about the future of the City of Ames. The top three selected by the residents included: the sending of advanced notice of engagement activities (49 respondents), easy to find details about engagement activities (44 respondents), discussion topic related to my interest (36), and easy to find learning materials that provide details about discussion topics (36 respondents). Other suggestions from respondents included a direct invitation to be involved (34), discussion topics presented in an easily understandable way (34), easier to be involved (26) and knowing my opinion will be heard (23). In conclusion, the residents of the City of Ames needs to be better informed, directly invited with details of how to be engaged presented to them in a way that they can easily find them. However, the research team (based on the experience in this project) learned that engaging residents represents a more complex issue than summarized as a response to this question.



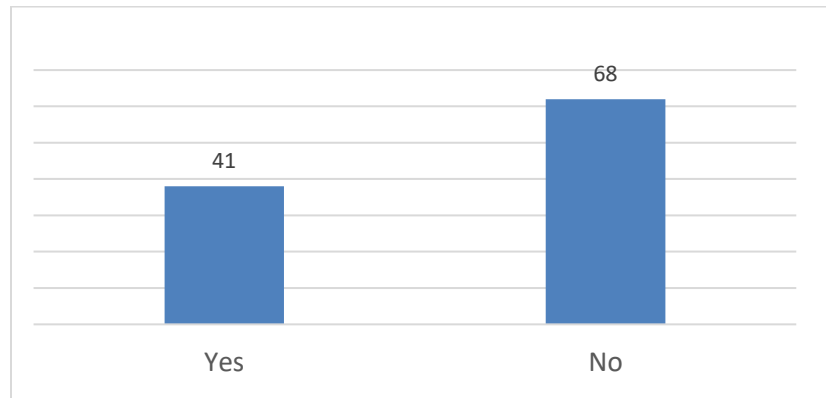
Question 5: Which of the following issues are the most important to you? Choose 3.

The residents were asked to select the most important issues for them. A list of topics was given to them and is represented in the graph below. The top three issues that the majority of the respondents selected were affordable housing (64 participants), safety (47 participants), sidewalks (33 participants) and job opportunities (33 participants). High on the list are also unfriendly neighborhoods (23), accessibility to food (17) and efficiency of public transportation (17). Other suggestions from the respondents (31 responded to add to the list), not included in the options were accessibility to education and innovative energy.



Question 6: Do you know how to contact your local officials to address your concerns?


In case the residents of Ames need to contact local officials, would they know how to do that. It is a simple and straightforward question. Sixty-eight participants, constituting 62% that does not know how to contact local officials to address their concerns, while 41 of them, constituting 38% have knowledge on how to contact officials.



Question 7: Do you have any suggestions about how the City could encourage you to participate in the discussions about the future of the City of Ames?

This question encourages residents to think of the ways in which the City of Ames could encourage them to get engaged. The list was compiled from the responses in the questionnaire. It gives a few ideas about what would possibly work from the perspective of the residents.


- Facebook engagements
- More frequent open forums for those with jobs outside the 9-5 norm
- Provision of snacks at meetings
- Family friendly activities at the library
- Sending out notices by mails, and accessibility to discussions at residents' comfort
- More accessible and neurodivergent friendly information outreach
- The City should have more internet presence
- More advertisements about City programs
- Ensuring that residents' opinions or suggestions are not overlooked
- Sending mail updates to invite the public to council meetings
- Creating an Ames newsletter
- Planning more neighborhood activities and making use of local parks
- Broadcast messages, open house events, public events calendars
- Regular direct emails
- Adding information about listening session to magazines to be sent every month
- A quarterly heads up to all residents about the major upcoming meetings

- 
- Making it easier for photographers to take pictures at festivals
 - Getting involved with students on campus
 - Provision of incentives for people to attend meetings
 - Invite people from subgroups of the community like churches, social groups and neighborhoods
 - Sending out information in several languages
 - Create a website or an email address to collect suggestions easily and provide related information

Question 8: We are working on establishing a network of neighborhood representatives. Please name a neighbor (it can also be you) that is trustworthy and respected in your neighborhood. This nomination will serve for internal purposes of research and will not be published anywhere.

The idea of neighborhood representatives stems from the old tradition of an elderly, healer, or a wise man/woman. These are potentially people, residents of Ames, that could serve as an intermediary between the city and the neighborhood residents. They are trustworthy people with high values and emotional intelligence. They are willing to help their neighbors, can connect well with people and can serve as the main neighborhood contact for the city officials. The city officials can rely on them, communicate ideas and plans to them and ask them to help organize neighborhood events and engagement activities. This is one of the routes for a successful engagement research team of this project would suggest exploring further.

The table below summarizes responses given by the residents. Some people are listed twice which means that were nominated twice. The list is incomplete. Sometimes the neighbors knew only the first name of their trusted neighbor which led to somehow incomplete dataset. This list is seen as an attempt to get such data from the residents and to start thinking about the innovative possibilities of this concept. The research team believes this is a very promising idea worthwhile exploring further in the next steps of the project e.g. exploration of possibly interesting, innovative and efficient engagement methods, strategies and technologies.



The following people were nominated as neighborhood representatives:

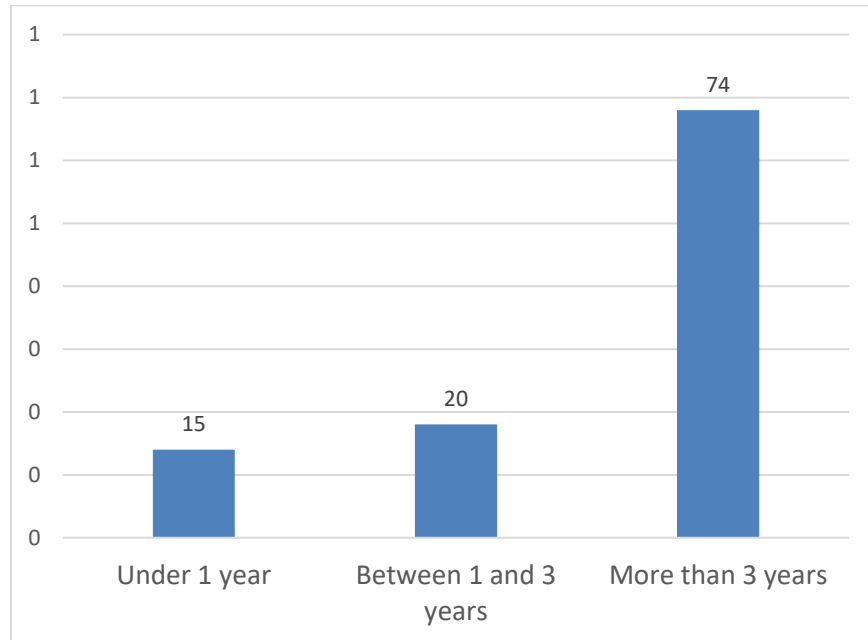
Name	Mobile	Email	Reason for Nomination
Rose Rich	5153574544	richrosec@outlook.com	Self nomination
Christ		christsomrsh@gmail.com	
Ellyn Grinm		ellyn@dogearedbooksames.com	Justice oriented & community driven
Paul Wagner			
Amber Smith	5154510349	aesmith29@gmail.com	Self nomination: I have time and have interest in community development
Austin Buellt	5157094504		
Jerry Ferguson	6415317057		
Dylan			Responsible
Felicita Valtiena	7085419859	Felicitallynnvaltienna@gmail.com	Reliable and honest
Jeffrey	6412206824	jeff.monscre@gmail. Com	Self nomination
Susan Abbott	5152318601	sifrette@hotmail.com	
Carrol Gammon		carolgammon@gmail.com	
Susan Abbot	5152318601	sifrette@hotmail.com	Communicative
Jamie West			Engage neighbors in their driveway throughout the year
Brian			
Randy Naeve			Engaged member in our neighborhood
Randy Neve			Engaged member in our neighborhood
Brian Peterson			Self nomination
BCC Church			
Khaitrina Phompong	5158353828		

Terron Warren	5152905935	terronwarren1965@gmail.com	
J.H. Kignesh Kumar	6464349004	vignesh@iastate.edu	
Ronda Hartsfield	5157267668		
Tyler Monney			
Shaya Kraut		shayakraut@gmail.com	
Kayla Nelson	8325672843	nelsonkayla@yahoo.com	
Brandon Thomas	3093614925	bheithomas@gmail.com	
Jude Schaffer	5154504861		
Ida Harness	5152914855		Trustworthy, personable, loves people
Connie Hargravee	5152945343		very knowledgeable respected, friendly and trustworthy
Jeremy Bolles	5152031918	jeremybolles@gmail.com	
Doyoung Lim			

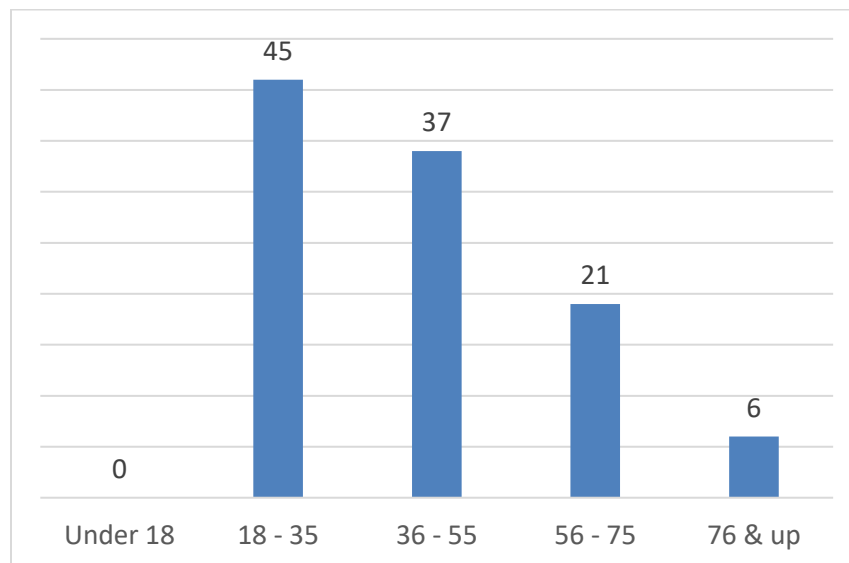
The rest of the questions concentrate on gathering the demographic data about the survey participants. They are summarized below.

Question 9: How long have you lived in Ames?

Sixty eight percent of the respondents (74 people) have lived in Ames for more than three years, 20 between 1 and 3 years, and fourteen percent (15 people) have lived in Ames under one year.



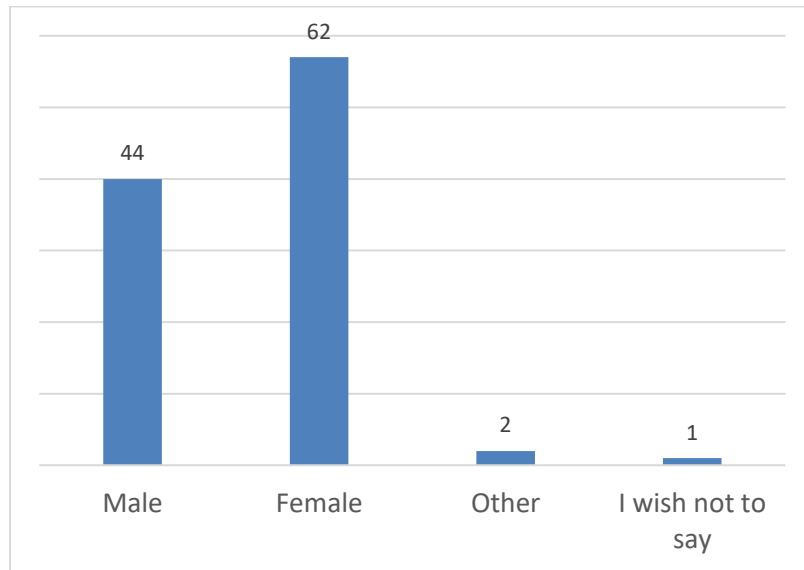
Question 10: Which age category do you fall under?



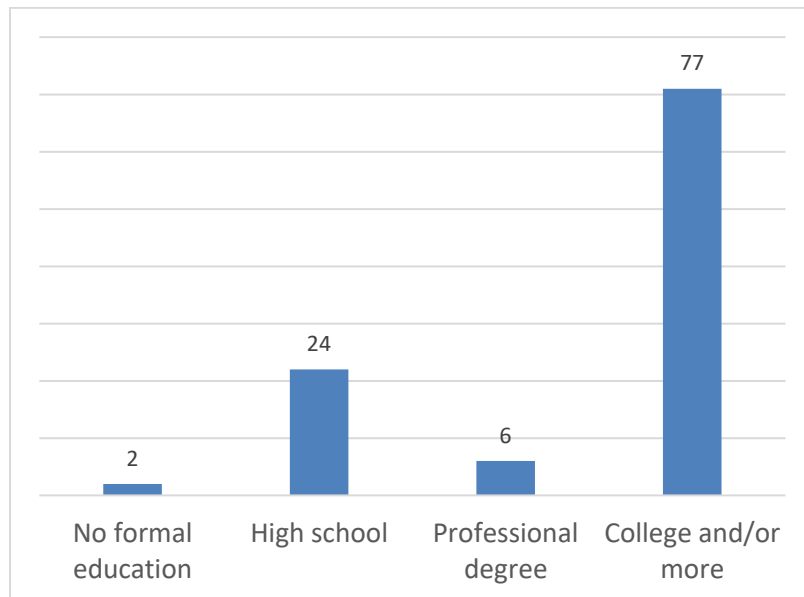
Responses were not sought from minors. The majority of the respondents fell within the “18-35” age bracket (45 responses, 41%), 37 in the age group of 36-55, 21 in the age group 56-75, and while 6 people (6%), were in the “76 & up” group.

Question 11: What gender do you identify with?

Of the respondents, the majority (62, 57%) were females, 44 males, 2 other and 1 did not want to reveal the gender.



Question 12: What is your highest level of education?

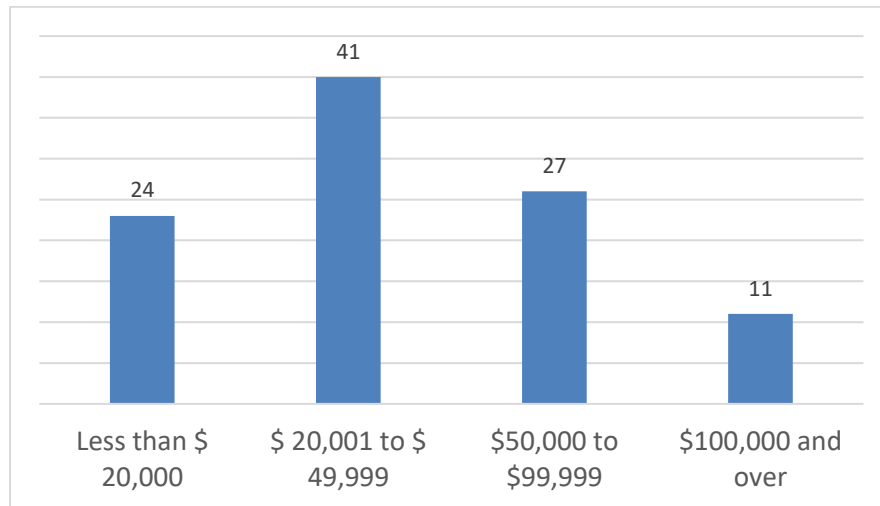


Even though we intended to target low-education and low-income levels, most of the residents that actually wanted to respond to the survey had a college or higher education. The majority, seventy-seven people, (71% of the respondents). The research team often experienced that people that were the main target group (low income, low education) did not feel comfortable

responding to the survey. 6 respondents had a professional degree, 25 a high school and 2 had no formal education.

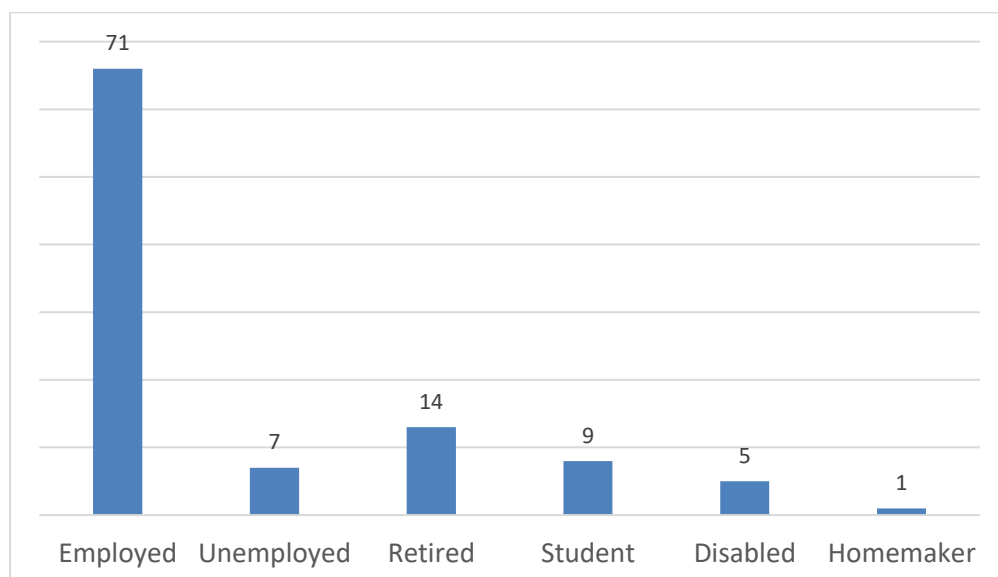
Question 13: What income range - only your personal income - do you fall within?

What comes as a surprise is the relatively low salary range of our participants that basically have a college degree. Among the respondents, the majority, 41 people representing 40% had their income range between \$ "20,001 to \$ 49,999" while the smallest count fell within the "\$100,000" and over.

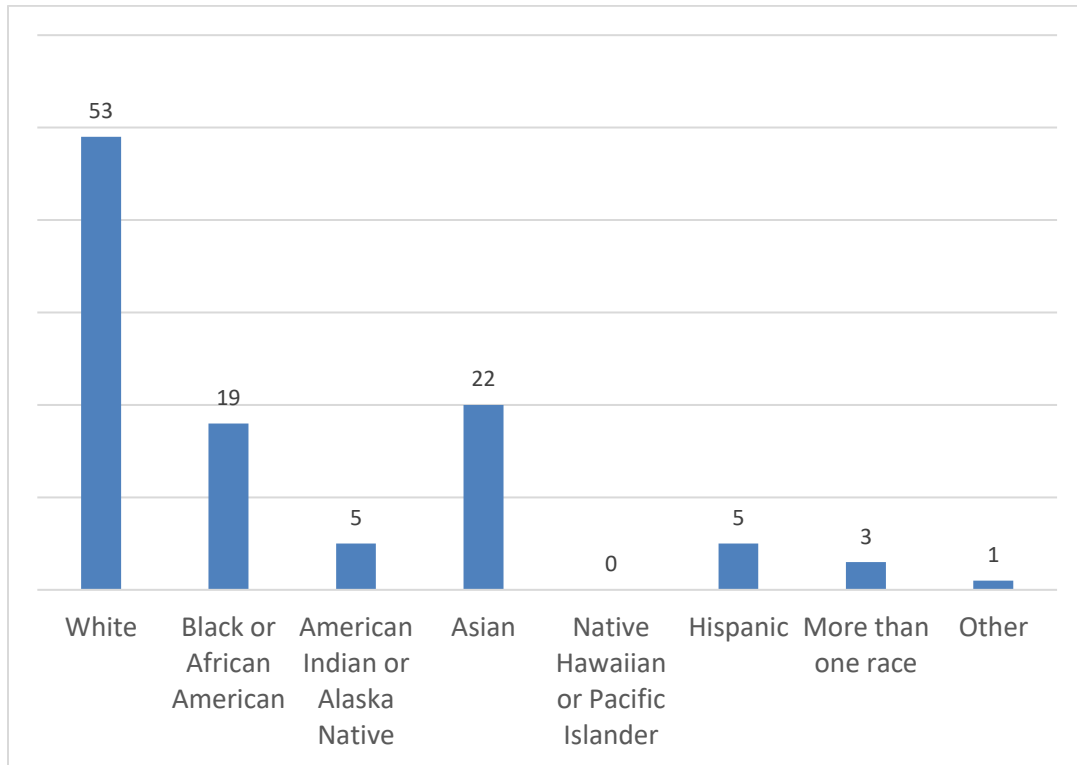


Question 14: What is your employment status?

The majority of participants are employed (71, which constitutes for sixty-six percent of the respondents, 14 retired, 9 students, 7 unemployed (7 %), 5 disabled and 1 homemaker.



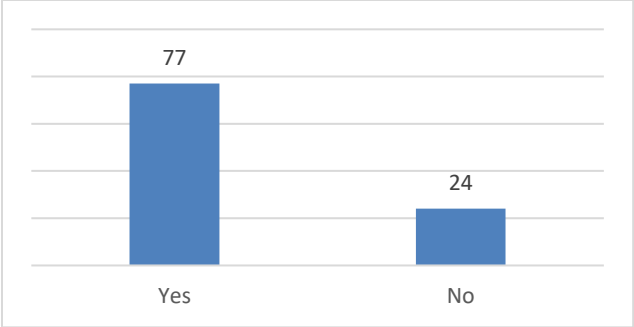
Question 15: What race do you identify with?



The respondents were spread across the racial groupings except for Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander group. This represented a particular success for this survey. The idea was to get responses from the minorities and the research team really succeeded in doing that. The majority of the population in Iowa is white, which is also reflected in this survey. The majority were Whites (53 participants, 49%), followed by Asians (22 participants, 20%), and Black or African Americans (19 participants, 18%), American Indian or Alaska Native (5 participants), Hispanic (5), More than one race (3) and Other (1).

Question 16: Is English your first language?

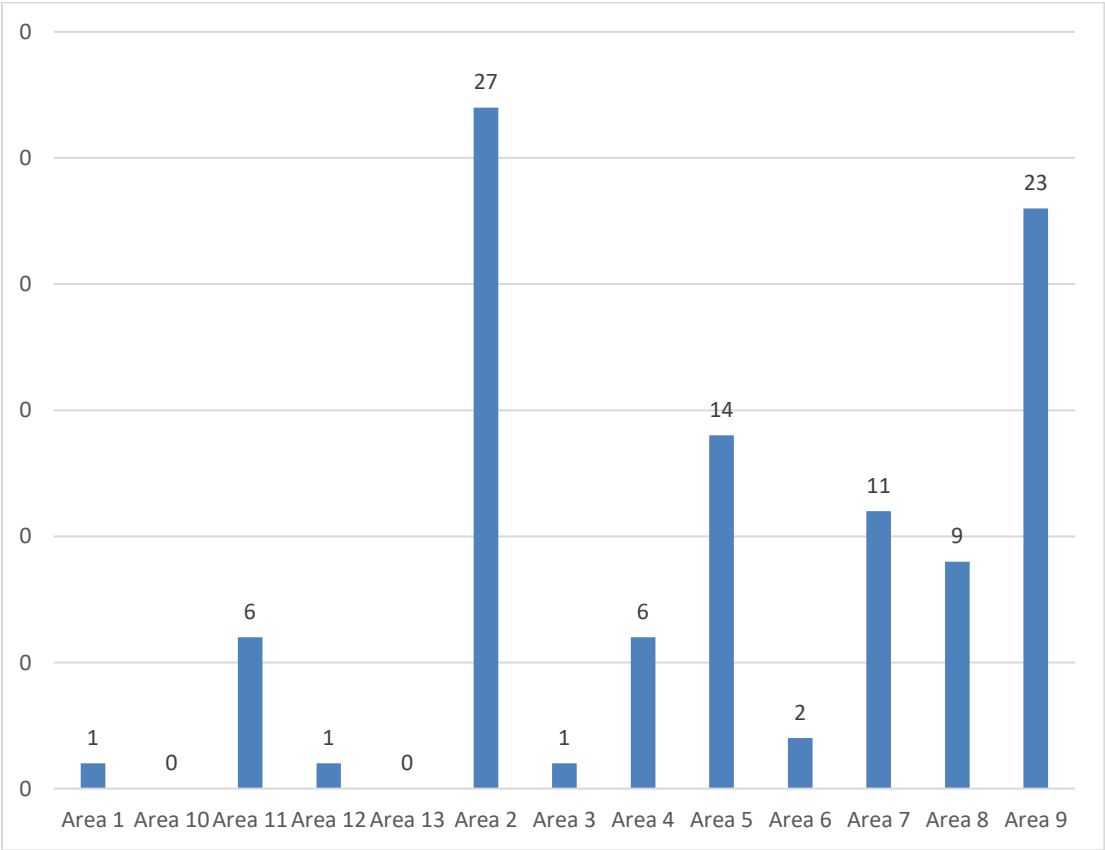
Majority of the respondents (77 people), constituting 71% had English as their first language. The 24 people that responded “no” recorded Korean, Chinese and Spanish as their second language. Amongst them, Korean recorded 20 people, Chinese 1, Spanish 1, German 1 and Saurashtra 1.

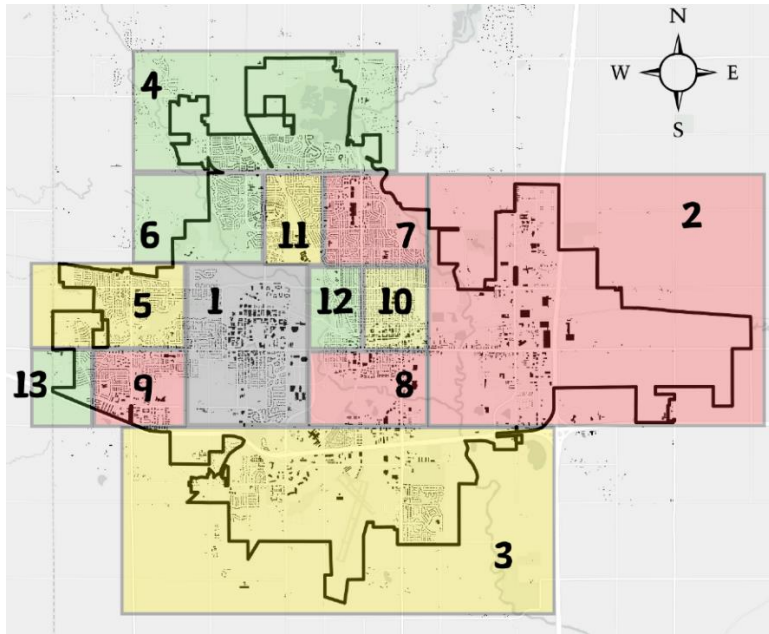


Question 17: Select the area of Ames you live in according to the map below.

The survey received the majority of the responses from Area 2, thus East 7th Street. Apartment visitations also saw responses in Areas 9, 5 and 7. The surveys conducted at the churches and other online responses helped to get responses across the other areas of Ames. This can be seen in the graph below combined with the representation on the map.

The project team distributed the survey in these churches and attended some services as well to connect with the community. These visits did not lead to many surveys being filled out.






4.7. Conclusions

The Rational Ignorance Survey was conducted in the City of Ames to explore residents' engagement in city planning discussions. All together 112 targeted underrepresented and marginalized residents participated. The survey indicates that the majority of participants (69%) have never engaged in discussions with city officials about the future of the city, with only 2% regularly participating in such discussions. The major factors that prohibit their participation include "not knowing how to participate, not being informed about engagement activities and finding discussion topics irrelevant". Additionally, the survey found that 62% of survey participants did not know how to contact local officials to address their concerns.

The engagement survey also explored the factors that would motivate respondents to become more engaged in discussions about the city's future. The top three motivating factors identified included "receiving advanced notice of engagement activities, easily accessible details about engagement activities, and accessible learning materials about discussion topics". The survey also revealed the most important issues to the participants are affordable housing, access to job opportunities, and childcare centers emerging. Additionally, the survey highlighted the need for more inclusive outreach efforts, including the provision of information in multiple languages and creating a website or email address to easily collect suggestions from the residents of the City of Ames.

In terms of demography, the survey found that most participants fell within the 18-35 age bracket, with 57% identifying as female. 68% of the participants have lived in Ames for more than three years, and the majority held a college and/or higher-level education. The survey also provided insights into the income range, employment status, racial identity, and language spoken



by respondents, offering a comprehensive understanding of the community's diverse composition. Majority of the respondents (77 people), constituting 71% had English as their first language. It is notable that the team received 20 responses from the Korean community due to the visit of their church and the event previously organized for this community. The community experienced a positive event and was ready to share and give something back in return. This is how trust and collaboration are built step-by-step.


The survey also helped identify potential neighborhood representatives based on their nominations, highlighting individuals who were considered community-driven, reliable, honest, trustworthy, knowledgeable, and respected. Quite a few suggestions were received from such neighborhood leaders which is a topic worthwhile investigating further in the next steps of the project.

Additionally, the survey mapped the areas where most responses were received, indicating the distribution of survey participants across different parts of the city.

It is also important to highlight the following challenges encountered:

- **Language barriers:** The translation of the questionnaires was limited to Korean and Chinese. At one of the visits to the churches, there was a large group of people that spoke Spanish but due to the unavailability of the questionnaires in their language, they could not be interviewed. If Spanish community would be targeted next the recommendation is to translate the questionnaire in Spanish to be able to receive more responses and the authentic responses by those that do not speak English, or their English is not good enough for them to be able to communicate their concerns.
- **Unreceptiveness:** As identified in the methodology, the first strategy to get respondents was through faith-based groups. Most of the emails requesting to join their meetings were not replied, while others did not grant the permission to come to their churches. This also cut across during door-to-door visits and leaving of QR codes at restaurants and shops. While others declined politely with various excuses, others were rude.
- **Insecurity in knocking doors:** Another factor that proved challenging for the research assistants was knocking on people's doors and the fact that the neighborhoods were new to them. As such, they had to walk in pairs, which yielded to only a few questionnaires being filled in a day.

Overall, the rational ignorance survey represents a first step in gaining a better understanding of the response, or a lack thereof, to engagement activities organized by the City of Ames. In the future this survey can be expanded and combined with other more playful activities. We hope the results will be useful to the City of Ames in thinking about the future and the strategies they could implement to engage underrepresented and marginalized communities.





5. CONCLUSIONS


This report concludes the collaboration between the City of Ames and the Community and Regional Planning Department for the purpose of investigating methods, strategies and technologies that may enable the city to successfully engage underrepresented and marginalized communities. This collaboration also envisioned to involve students, engage them in the project and enable them to understand the needs of the City of Ames and enable them to collaborate on a project that was requested by the City of Ames and based on the need in the practice.


Students in the following classes were involved in the project:

- Spring 2020, DSN564 Interdisciplinary Option Studio (6 credits). Report titled: Sustainable Mobility for Smart Cities: Studies of Ames, Iowa
- Fall 2020, CRP532/432 Community Planning Studio (6 credits). Report titled: Engaging Residents in Urban Planning: Focus on Ames, Iowa
- Fall 2022, CRP4555/555 Smart and Sustainable Cities (3 credits). Report titled: Play Ames 2.0: Imagine your City. Pop-up Moving Community Engagement
- Spring 2023, CRP4555/555 Smart and Sustainable Cities (3 credits). Report titled: Play Ames 3.0: Imagine your City. Ames Korean Christian Church and Rational Ignorance Survey

Students in both studios (Spring 2020, Fall 2020) were very engaged and accomplished work in research and on the field. Studios offer flexibility and time that enable students to work on the project, visit neighborhoods and plan their activities. It is also an expectation of a studio to work on study cases and projects. Engaging students in a project like this in regular lecture classes is different. These classes are scheduled for 80 minutes fixed twice a week and do not enable flexibility in changing these times. Students' expectations for these classes are very specific and at times did not match the needs of Play Ames project. In Fall 2022 some resistance was felt by some of the students enrolled in the CRP455/555 which led to the recognition that it is more appropriate to work on projects like Play Ames during studio classes.

The following events and work represent the highlights of this collaboration:


- **Interviewing experts, urban planners and city officials across the nation investigating and collecting best practices in engaging underrepresented and marginalized communities.** The main findings can be found in the report Fall 2020 titled Engaging Residents in Urban Planning: Focus on Ames, Iowa.
 - **The first community engagement festival was organized in September 2021** at four locations in Ames. This festival allowed for testing the concept of an engagement festival,
- 




a whole set of engagement methods and attracted over 250 residents. The festival was organized at four different locations simultaneously. The selected locations and their main topics were: Reliable Street – placemaking, Franklin Park – sensory urbanism, Est 7th Street – engaging with spatial thinking and mapping, 5th Street and Burnett – engaging with art and painting. The event was successful in attracting many residents. Even though placed in some of the identified neighborhoods with low income and marginalized populations it attracted a variety of residents, not only the targeted populations. The City of Ames was interested in more specifically methods that would allow for more targeted engagement of these populations.

- A **pop-up moving community engagement** concept and plan was developed in Fall 2022 to target specific communities and visit neighborhoods where underrepresented and marginalized communities live. The idea was to have a set of tools, activities, and questionnaires ready, pop-up in the neighborhood and engage residents. The following four locations were selected for this study: South Meadow, E 7th St Cul-De-Sac, 215 S Sherman, Hutchison Park. The concept worked better at the locations previously engaged in the project such as Est 7th Street. Deep conversations were possible at this pop-up, building trust and connection was experienced. This was great to observe. The residents remembered the Play Ames event and were willing to share and connect. This type of engagement is not recommended for first-time visits in the neighborhoods. It is also difficult to organize and depends on the weather.
- The last activity focused on testing possible involvement of **communities of faith**, the idea of **neighborhood representatives** and a **rational ignorance survey** exploring reasons why residents chose not to participate in community engagement activities organized by the City of Ames. These activities were executed in the Spring 2023. The team contacted many communities of faith and visited them and their services in person. The only very positive response was received in communication in Ames Korean Christian Church. The event was a success, and the team established a very good connection with the community which then also resulted in them participating in the rational ignorance survey. Once the community of faith agrees to collaborate this offers a unique and wonderful opportunity to reach this specific community. It, however, requires time investment into building these relationships and not many communities of faith were willing to collaborate at the Play Ames team's request.

The rational ignorance survey showed that the majority of the interviewed residents have never engaged in discussions with city officials about the future of the city and do not know how to contact local officials to address their concerns. The main factors that prevent them from participation include not knowing how to participate, not being informed about engagement activities, and finding discussion topics irrelevant. The main reasons that prevent them from participating: “not being informed about engagement





activities (26 responses),” “I don’t know how to participate (24 responses)”, and “discussion topics are irrelevant to me” (9 responses).

The idea of building a network of trustworthy people as representatives of the neighborhood selected and nominated by the residents seems a promising idea that needs further research.

- The team also published a book chapter enclosed at the end of this report in Appendix I. The reference for this publication is as follows:

Poplin, A., Schroeder, S., Betcher, G. Sairamesh, V. P., Nourin, F. and N. Jacobson (2023). Play Ames: Imagine your City. Engaging the Residents with Playful Learning Engagement Activities, in the book *Routledge Handbook of University-Community Partnerships in Planning Education*, Editors: Megan Heim LaFrombois and Jay Mittal, DOI: 10.4324/9781003347873-31, Chapter 24, p. 443 – 461.

Thank you for your trust!

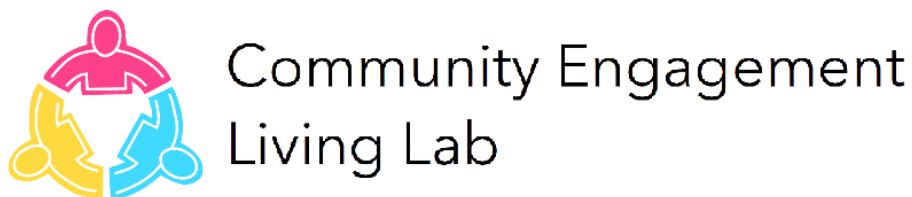


Appendix A: Advertising materials

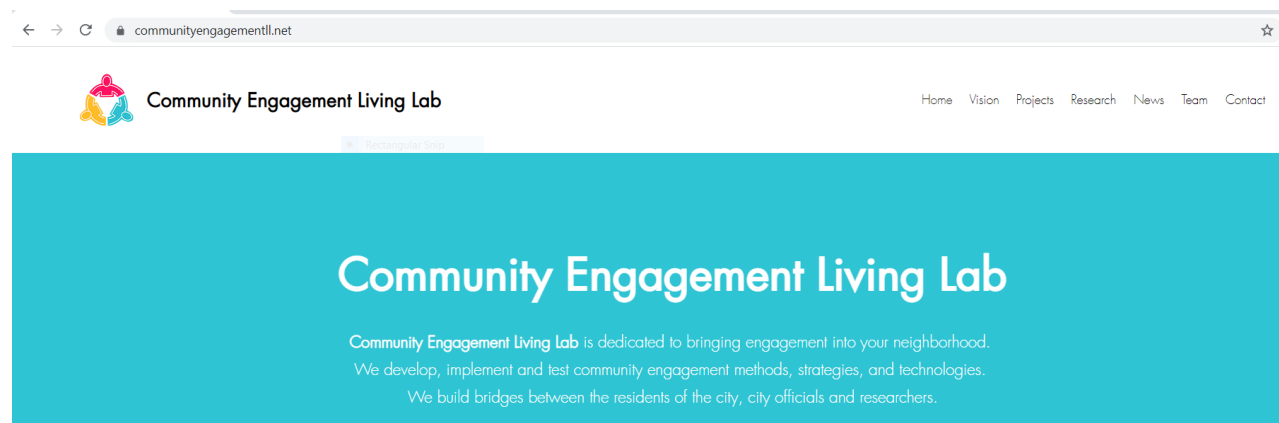
Play Ames: Imagine your City Logo: all credits for the design and implementation to Natalie Jacobson, and help with generation of ideas to Vishnu



Community Engagement Living Lab logo: all credits for the design and implementation go to Natalie Jacobson



Community Engagement Living Lab website: all credits for the design and implementation go to Fatema Nourin, and help with the initial set up to Vishnu Priya Sairamesh: <https://www.communityengagementll.net/>





Appendix B: Mobility Map Questionnaire





Play Ames: Survey Map Questionnaire

1. Does Mobility stop you from participating in activities and meetings held by the City?

Yes / No

2. Are there additional barriers stopping you from participating in activities and meetings held by the city? (list)

3. How often do you engage in the discussion about the future of the City of Ames with city officials?

Never Infrequently Sometimes Often Very Often

--	--	--	--	--

4. How could the city remove any barriers stopping you from participating in activities and meetings held by the city?



A detailed map of Ames, Iowa, highlighting various points of interest. The city's boundary is outlined in red. Key locations marked include Mount Pleasant, North Grand Park, May County Medical Center, Ames Public Library, Iowa State University, Drake College, and the Iowa State Fairgrounds. Major roads like US-96 and CR-80 are shown. A legend in the bottom right corner identifies the symbols used. A scale bar indicates distances up to 1.6 miles. The map was created by Thomas Kosarcz & Max Gula on 9/15/2021, using data from Iowa Goodata & Google Earth, and is projected in NAD 1983 UTM Zone 15N.

Legend

- Points of Interest
- ▭ Ames

0 0.4 0.8 1.6 Miles

Map created by: Thomas Kosacz & Max Gula on 9/15/2021
Source: Iowa Geodata & Google Earth
Projection: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 15N

Appendix D: Rational Ignorance Questionnaire | English

Ames Residents: Rational Ignorance Survey on Community Engagement

The goal of this survey is to explore how engaged are the residents of the City of Ames in discussions about the future of the city. We are a group of students/researchers from Iowa State University studying civic engagement in urban planning. We aim to learn about your experiences with city planning discussions so that the City of Ames can improve citizen engagement opportunities in the future. Your responses will be confidential and anonymous. All reports based on this survey will summarize question responses for the entire group. No individual responses will be identified. Participation is voluntary. It will take around 6 minutes to complete this survey.

Feel invited to answer the following questions:

1. How often do you engage in discussions about the future of the City of Ames with city officials?
Please Circle.

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---

Never

Rarely

Quite often

Regularly

2. What prevents you from engaging in discussions about the future of the City of Ames? Choose up to 3 of the following:

☐

No benefit from participating

☐

No access to services, internet, or transportation

☐

Not being informed about the engagement activities

☐

Discussion topics are not relevant to me

☐

Learning about the discussion topics is time consuming

☐

I don't know how to participate

☐

I participated in the past and I was not heard/listened to/respected

☐

I would like to, but the timing of the meetings doesn't allow me to

☐

The discussion topics are too complex to learn about

Other (please specify) _____

3. How satisfied are you with the opportunities to get engaged in the discussions about further development of your city/your neighborhood? Please Circle.

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---

Dissatisfied Somewhat dissatisfied Satisfied Very satisfied

Other (please specify) _____

4. What would motivate you to become more engaged in the discussions about the future of the City of Ames? Choose up to 3 of the following.

- ☐ Discussion topics presented in an easily understandable way
- ☐ Easy to find learning materials/background information about the discussion topics
- ☐ Easy to find details about the engagement activities
- ☐ Advanced notice of engagement activities
- ☐ A direct invitation to be involved
- ☐ Discussion topics related to my interests
- ☐ Easier to be involved
- ☐ Knowing my opinion will be heard

Others (please specify) _____

5. Which of the following issues are the most important to you? Choose 3.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Affordable housing | <input type="checkbox"/> Unfriendly neighborhood |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Accessibility to food | <input type="checkbox"/> Accessibility to recreational areas |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sidewalks | <input type="checkbox"/> Safety |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Job opportunities | <input type="checkbox"/> Efficiency of public transportation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Childcare | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of services and facilities, restaurants, schools |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Feeling isolated and lonely | <input type="checkbox"/> Availability of public transportation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Few opportunities for me to express my wishes for changes | |

Others (please specify) _____

6. Do you know how to contact your local officials to address your concerns?

☐ Yes


☐ No

7. Do you have any suggestions about how the City could encourage you to participate in the discussions about the future of the City of Ames?

8. We are working on establishing a network of neighborhood representatives. Please name a neighbor (it can also be you) that is trustworthy and respected in your neighborhood. This nomination will serve for internal purposes of research and will not be published anywhere.:

Name: _____ | Phone #: _____

Email: _____ | Reason for nomination: _____



9. How long have you lived in Ames?

☐

Under 1 year

☐

Between 1 and 3 years

☐

More than 3 years

10. What age category do you fall under?

☐

Under 18

☐

18-35

☐

36-55

☐

56-75

☐

76 & up

11. What gender do you identify with?

☐

Male

☐

Female

☐

Other _____

☐

I wish not to say

12. What is your highest level of education?

☐

No formal education

☐

High school


☐

Professional degree

☐

College and/or more





13. What income range - only your personal income - do you fall within?

- ☐ Less than \$20,000
- ☐ \$20,001 to \$49,999
- ☐ \$50,000 to \$99,999
- ☐ \$100,000 and over

14. What is your employment status?

- ☐ Employed
- ☐ Unemployed
- ☐ Retired
- ☐ Student
- ☐ Disabled
- ☐ Homemaker

15. What race do you identify with?

- ☐ White
- ☐ Black or African American
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
- ☐ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- ☐ Hispanic
- ☐ More than one race

Other _____



16. Is English your first language?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If you responded No, can you share which one is it? _____

17. Select the area of Ames you live in according to the map below.

☐ Area 1

☐ Area 2

☐ Area 3

☐ Area 4

☐ Area 5

☐ Area 6

☐ Area 7

☐ Area 8

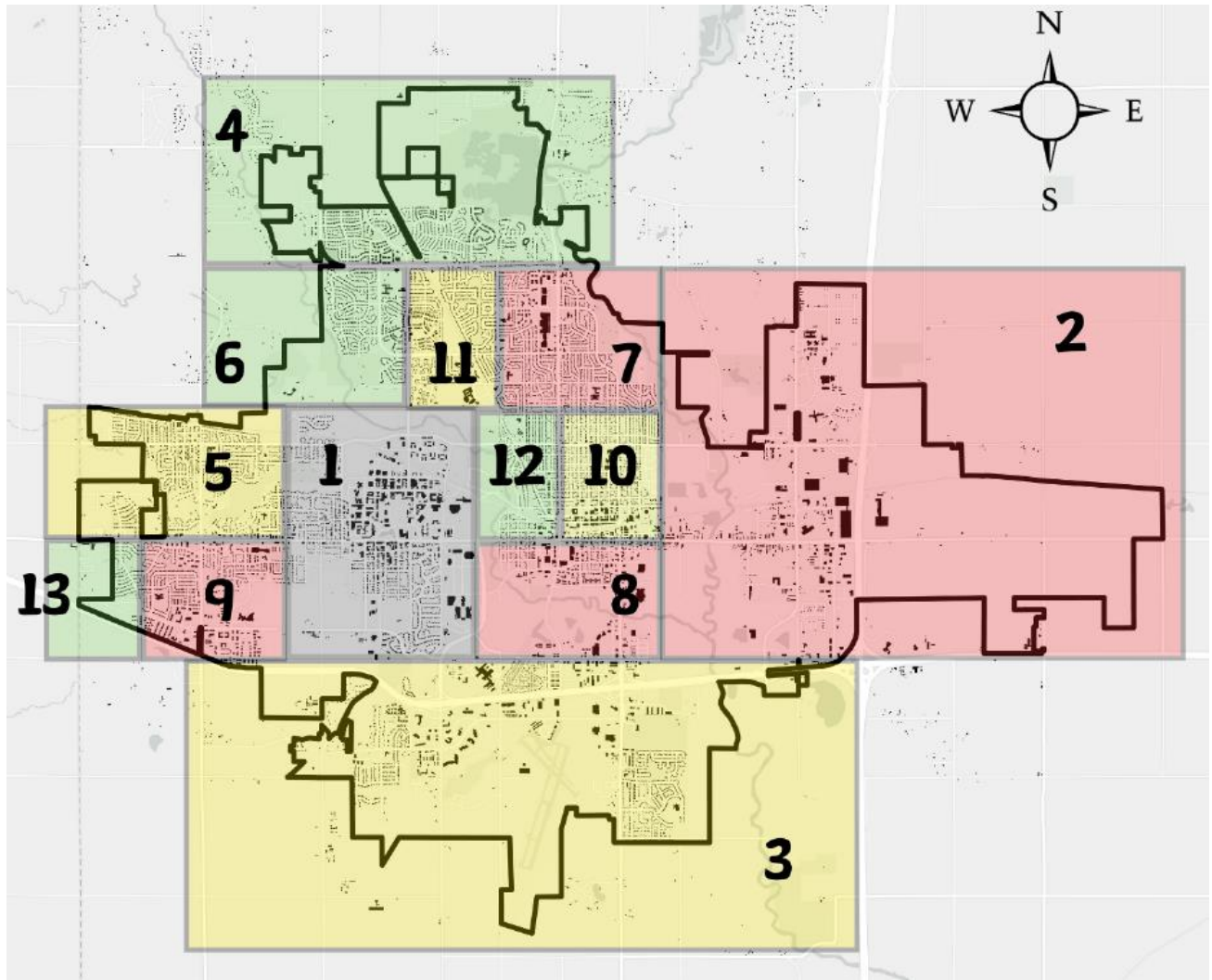
☐ Area 9

☐ Area 10

☐ Area 11

☐ Area 12

☐ Other _____



Thank you for participating. We appreciate your time! [Survey Link](#)

Appendix E: Rational Ignorance Questionnaire | Korean

SURVEY IN KOREAN

에임스 주민의 지역사회 참여에 관한 설문조사

안녕하세요, 저희는 Iowa State University에서 도시계획 분야의 주민 참여를 연구하는 학생 및 연구원입니다.

본 설문조사의 목적은 Ames시의 바람직한 미래를 위한 논의나 토론과정, 공청회 등에 귀하가 얼마나 참여하고 있는지를 탐구하는 것으로써, 이를 바탕으로 향후 시정부가 도시계획에 대한 주민 참여 기회를 개선할 수 있도록 제언하고자 합니다.

본 설문에 대한 참여는 자발성을 원칙으로 합니다. 귀하의 응답은 비밀이 유지되며 익명으로 처리됩니다. 본 설문조사를 기반으로 한 모든 연구보고서에서 설문참여자 개인의 개별적인 응답은 기록되지 않으며, 전체 참여자의 응답이 요약됩니다. 설문을 완료하는 데에는 약 6분 정도 소요됩니다.

다음 질문들에 대한 귀하의 의견을 자유롭게 답해주시기 바랍니다.

3. 귀하는 Ames시 도시계획을 위한 시 공무원들과의 논의 혹은 토론에 얼마나 자주 참여하십니까?
다음 중 선택하여 주십시오.

1	2	3	4
전혀 참여하지 않는다	거의 참여하지 않는다	가끔 참여한다	정기적으로 참여한다

4. 귀하가 Ames 시의 도시계획을 위한 논의 혹은 토론에 참여하지 못하는 이유는 무엇입니까? 다음 중 최대 3개를 선택해 주십시오.

- ☐ 논의 혹은 토론 참여로 인해 얻는 혜택이 없음
- ☐ 논의 혹은 토론 참여를 위한 수단(인터넷, 이동수단 등)이 없음
- ☐ 논의 혹은 토론에 관한 알림(공지, 공고 등)을 받지 못함
- ☐ 논의 혹은 토론 주제가 나와 무관함

☐ 논의 혹은 토론 주제에 대한 (사전)학습에 오랜 시간이 소요됨

☐ 논의 혹은 토론에 참여할 수 있는 방법을 모름

☐ 과거 참여하였으나 나의 의견이 경청/존중/반영되지 않음

☐ 참여할 의향은 있으나 논의 및 토론 일시가 나의 일정과 맞지 않음

☐ 논의 및 토론 주제가 너무 복잡함

기타 _____

5. 귀하는 귀하의 지역사회 발전을 위한 논의 및 토론 과정에 참여할 수 있는 기회에 대해 어느 정도 만족하십니까? 다음 중 선택하여 주십시오.

1	2	3	4
매우 불만족	불만족	만족	매우만족

기타 _____

기타 _____

4. 귀하가 논의 및 토론 과정에 더 적극적으로 참여하시려면 어떠한 부분이 우선 개선되어야 한다고 생각하십니까? 다음 중 **최대 3개**를 선택해 주십시오.

☐ 논의 및 토론 주제가 이해하기 쉬운 방식으로 제시되어야 함

☐ 논의 및 토론 주제에 대한 기초 학습 자료를 쉽게 찾을 수 있어야 함

☐ 논의 및 토론 행사에 대한 구체적인 정보를 쉽게 찾을 수 있어야 함

☐ 논의 및 토론 행사에 대한 사전적인 알림(공지, 공고 등)이 필요함

☐ 논의 및 토론 행사에 내가 직접적으로 초청되어야 함

☐ 나의 관심사와 밀접한 논의 및 토론 주제가 선정되어야 함

☐ 논의 및 토론행사에 참석하기 쉬워야 함

☐ 나의 의견이 경청/존중/반영된다는 확신이 필요함

기타 _____

5. 다음 도시계획 관련 주제 중 귀하가 가장 중시하는 주제는 무엇입니까? 3개를 골라주십시오.

☐ 주택 및 주택 가격 ☐ 이웃과의 친밀감

☐ 식품 조달 / 구매 ☐ 여가시설에 대한 접근성

☐ 보도/인도 ☐ 안전

☐ 일자리 ☐ 대중교통의 효율성 (정시성, 환승체계, 환경 영향 등)

☐ 육아/보육 ☐ 편의, 식당, 교육 서비스 및 시설

☐ 고립 및 정서적 외로움 ☐ 대중교통에 대한 접근성 (노선, 운행시간, 요금 등)

☐ 계획과정 중 주민참여

기타 _____

6. 귀하는 귀하의 민원을 제기하기 위해 공무원에게 연락하는 방법을 알고 계십니까?

☐ 예

☐ 아니오

7. Ames시의 바람직한 미래를 위한 논의 혹은 토론 과정에 주민의 참여를 독려하기 위해 Ames 시 정부가 취할 수 있는 개선방안이 있다면 자유롭게 제안해 주십시오.

8. 저희 연구진은 지역사회 네트워크를 구축하고 있습니다. 본인을 포함하여, 귀하의 지역사회에서 신뢰 및 존경받는 이웃이 있다면 추천해주시기 바랍니다. 개인정보는 연구 내부적으로만 활용되며 대중에 공개되지 않습니다.

성함: _____ | 연락처: _____

Email: _____ | 추천 사유: _____

9. 귀하가 Ames에 거주한 기간은 얼마나 되십니까?

☐

만 1년 미만

☐

만 1년 이상 3년 이하

☐

만 3년 초과

10. 귀하의 연령은 어떻게 되십니까?

☐

만 18세 미만

☐

만 18세 이상 35세 이하

☐

만 36세 이상 55세 이하

☐

만 56세 이상 75세 이하

☐

만 76세 이상

11. 귀하의 성별은 어떻게 되십니까?

☐

남성

☐

여성

☐ 기타 _____

☐ 응답을 원하지 않음

12. 귀하의 최종학력은 무엇입니까?

☐ 없음

☐ 고등학교 졸업

☐ 전문학위

☐ 대졸 이상

13. 귀하의 소득수준은 어떻게 되십니까?

☐ 연 \$20,000 이하

☐ 연 \$20,001 - \$49,999

☐ 연 \$50,000 - \$99,999

☐ 연 \$100,000 이상

14. 귀하의 현재 고용상태는 무엇입니까?

☐ 자영업 / 피고용

☐ 무직

☐ 은퇴

☐ 학생

☐ 신체적/정신적 장애로 인한 무직

☐ 주부/가사노동

15. 귀하의 인종은 무엇입니까?

☐

백인

☐

흑인 혹은 아프리카계 미국인

☐

아시안(동양인)

☐

미국 원주민 또는 알래스카 원주민

☐

하와이 원주민 또는 기타 태평양 제도 원주민

☐

히스패닉

☐

다인종 (혼혈 등)

기타 _____

16. 영어가 귀하의 모국어(First language)입니까?

☐

예

☐

아니오

아니라면, 귀하의 모국어(First Language)는 무엇입니까? _____

17. 아래의 지도를 참고하여 귀하가 거주하는 곳을 선택해 주십시오.

☐ Area 1

☐ Area 2

☐ Area 3

☐ Area 4

☐ Area 5

☐ Area 6

☐ Area 7

☐ Area 8

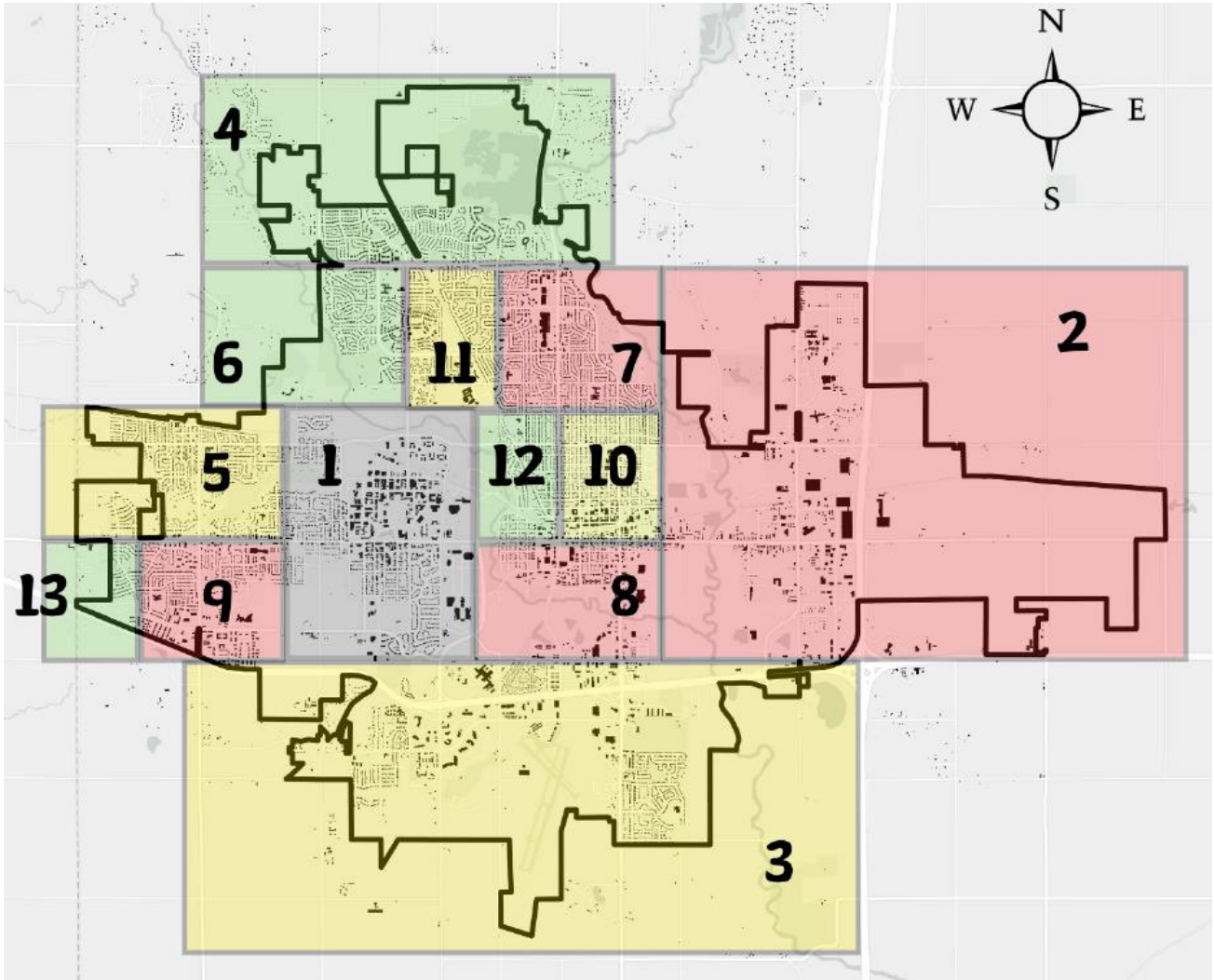
☐ Area 9

☐ Area 10

☐ Area 11

☐ Area 12

☐ 기타 _____



설문에 참여해주셔서 감사합니다.

본 설문에 온라인으로 참여하시려면 다음 링크를 클릭해주시요:

[Survey Link](#)

Appendix F: Rational Ignorance Questionnaire | Chinese

SURVEY IN CHINESE

“合理忽视”：

Ames市居民对社区规划的参与及满意度调查

您好，此项调查旨在了解Ames市居民对城市未来讨论的参与程度。

我们是来自爱荷华州立大学的学生和研究者，专注于研究城市规划中的公民参与度。我们期望了解您在城市规划讨论中的体验，希望借此帮助Ames市未来更好地促进市民的参与。您的回答将被严格保密，并以匿名方式处理。所有基于此调查的报告只会概括所有参与者的整体答案，而不会暴露任何人的具体回答。此调查完全基于自愿，预计您需要大约6分钟来完成它。

请自由选择回答以下问题：

1. 您一般多久会与市政官员或相关规划工作者讨论一次关于Ames市未来的规划与发展？

选择频繁程度：

从来没有	很少	较多	经常
------	----	----	----

2. 都有哪些原因阻碍您参与关于Ames市未来的讨论？请从以下选项中选择（最多3个）

<input type="checkbox"/>	参与这些市政相关的讨论对我没什么实际好处
<input type="checkbox"/>	没有方便的上网和交通工具来参与
<input type="checkbox"/>	没有得到相关讨论的通知或信息
<input type="checkbox"/>	这些话题和我的日常生活没什么关系
<input type="checkbox"/>	花时间去了解这些话题感觉不值得
<input type="checkbox"/>	我不太清楚该如何加入这些讨论
<input type="checkbox"/>	我之前参与过，但感觉自己的声音并没被重视
<input type="checkbox"/>	我其实想参与，但每次的时间都不太合适
<input type="checkbox"/>	有些讨论内容太专业，我难以理解
<input type="checkbox"/>	其他（请具体说明）_____

3. 您对参与城市/社区发展规划讨论的机会有多满意？

请选择满意程度：

不满意	有点不满意	比较满意	满意
-----	-------	------	----

<input type="checkbox"/>	其他（请具体说明）_____
--------------------------	----------------

4. 什么可以促使您更多地参与有关艾姆斯市未来的讨论？

请从以下内容中选择（最多3项）。

- ☐ 以通俗易懂的方式介绍讨论主题
- ☐ 易于找到有关讨论主题的学习材料/背景信息
- ☐ 易于找到参与活动的详细信息
- ☐ 讨论活动前会提前通知
- ☐ 直接邀请我参与讨论活动
- ☐ 讨论的主题与我关心的事情相关
- ☐ 更容易参与
- ☐ 知道我的意见会被听取
- ☐ 其他（请具体说明）_____

5. 以下哪些问题对您来说最为重要？

请从以下内容中选择（最多3项）。

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 负担得起的住房 | <input type="checkbox"/> 邻里关系 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 食品获取的便利程度 | <input type="checkbox"/> 前往娱乐场所的便利性 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 人行道建设 | <input type="checkbox"/> 安全性 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 就业机会 | <input type="checkbox"/> 公共交通的效率 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 儿童保育（托儿所） | <input type="checkbox"/> 社区服务和设施，如餐馆和学校 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 来自社区的情绪支持 | <input type="checkbox"/> 公共交通的可用性 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 表达任何意见的机会 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 其他（请具体说明）_____ | |

6. 您知道如何联系您的当地官员来反映您的意见吗？

- ☐ 是
- ☐ 否

7. 关于Ames市该如何鼓励像您一样的市民参与城市未来规划方面的讨论，您有什么建议？

8. 我们正在努力建立一个社区代表网络，请提名您社区中值得信赖且受到尊重的邻居（也可以是您自己）。此提名仅用于内部研究目的，不会在任何地方公开发布：

称呼：_____ 电话：_____

电子邮箱：_____ 提名理由：_____

9. 您在Ames居住了多久？

- ☐ 不满1年
- ☐ 1至3年之间
- ☐ 超过3年

10. 您属于哪个年龄段？

- ☐ 18岁以下
- ☐ 18-35岁
- ☐ 36-55岁
- ☐ 56-75岁
- ☐ 76岁及以上

11. 您自我认同哪种性别？

- ☐ 男性
- ☐ 女性
- ☐ 其他：_____
- ☐ 我不希望透露

12. 您的最高学历是什么？

- ☐ 无正式教育
- ☐ 高中
- ☐ 大专
- ☐ 大学及以上

13. 您的年收入范围（仅指您的个人收入）是多少？

- ☐ 低于 20,000 美元
- ☐ 20,001 美元至 49,999 美元
- ☐ 50,000 美元至 99,999 美元
- ☐ 100,000 美元及以上

14. 您的就业状态是什么？

- ☐ 已就业
- ☐ 失业
- ☐ 退休
- ☐ 学生
- ☐ 残疾
- ☐ 家庭主妇/夫

15. 您自我认同是哪个种族？

- ☐ 白人
- ☐ 黑人或非洲裔美国人
- ☐ 亚洲人
- ☐ 美洲原住民或阿拉斯加土著
- ☐ 夏威夷原住民或其他太平洋岛民
- ☐ 西班牙裔或拉丁裔
- ☐ 多种族
- ☐ 其他（请具体说明） _____

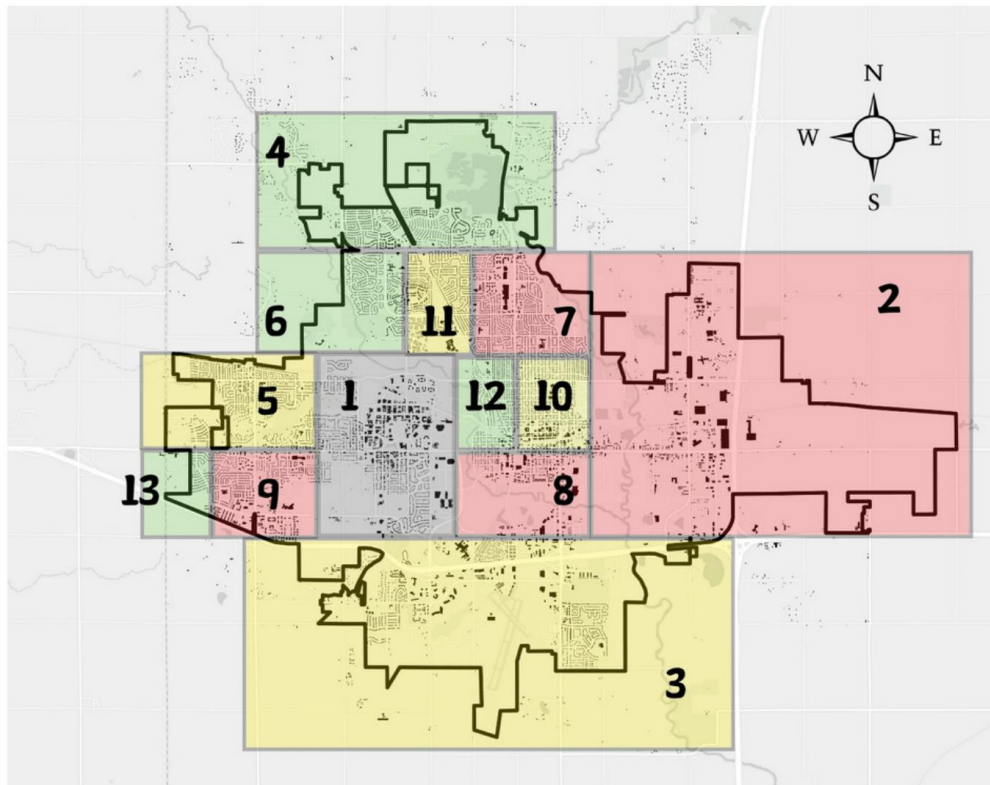
16. 英语是您的母语吗？

- ☐ 是
- ☐ 否

如果您选择了“否”，能告诉我们您的母语是什么吗？ _____

17. 请根据下方的地图选择您在Ames市居住的区域。

- | | | |
|---|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 区域 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 区域 5 | <input type="checkbox"/> 区域 9 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 区域 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 区域 6 | <input type="checkbox"/> 区域 10 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 区域 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 区域 7 | <input type="checkbox"/> 区域 11 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 区域 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 区域 8 | <input type="checkbox"/> 区域 12 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 其他 (请具体说明) _____ | | |



感谢您的参与，我们真心感激您抽出时间参与本调查！

Appendix G: Rational Ignorance QR Scan



Scan to take the
survey today!

Ames Residents: Survey on Community Engagement

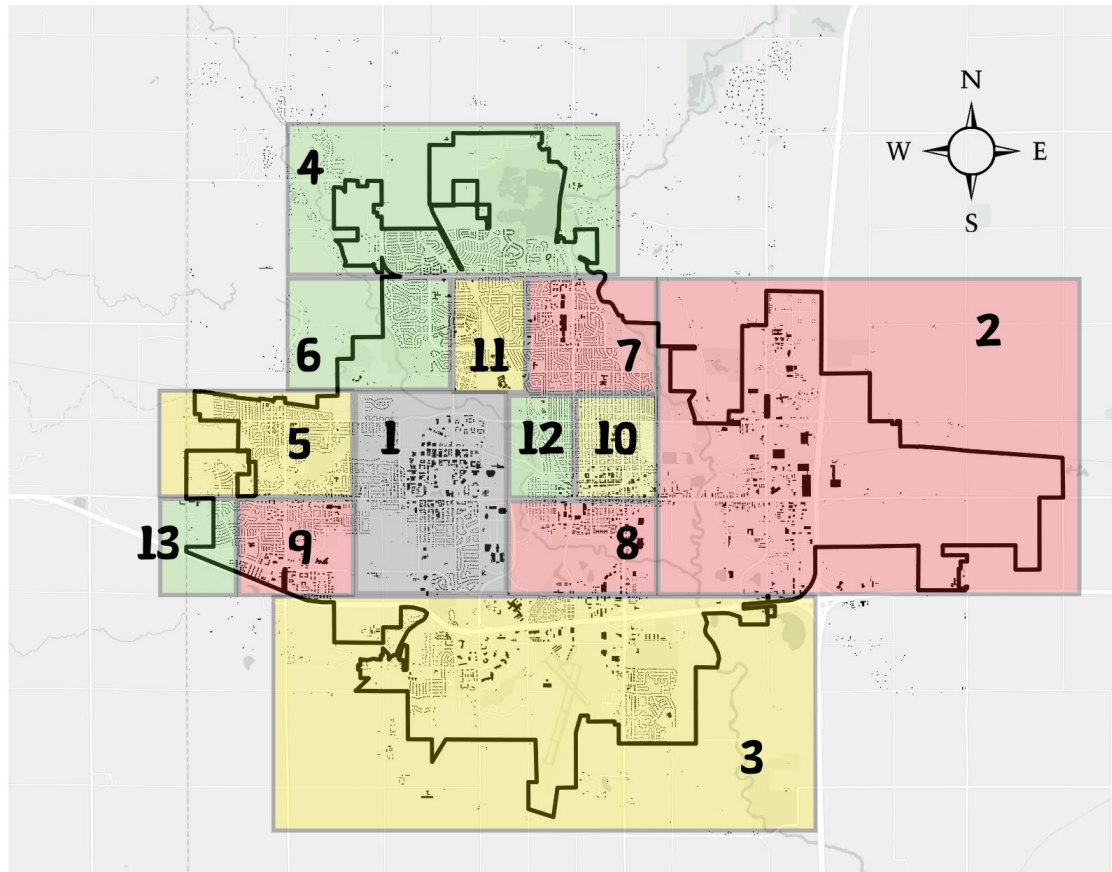
We are a group of students/researchers from Iowa State University studying civic engagement in urban planning.

We aim to learn about your experiences with city planning discussions so that the City of Ames can improve citizen engagement opportunities in the future.

www.communityengagementill.net



Appendix H: Rational Ignorance Survey Map



PLAY AMES: IMAGINE YOUR CITY. A CITY-UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP IN ENGAGING UNDERREPRESENTED RESIDENTS WITH PLAYFUL LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Alenka Poplin, Stella Schroeder, Gloria Betcher, Vishnu Priya Sairamesh, Fatema Nourin, and Natalie Jacobson

Key Takeaways

This chapter highlights the collaboration between the City of Ames and the Community and Regional Planning (CRP) Department at Iowa State University (ISU) to develop and test methods to involve underrepresented and marginalized communities in urban planning processes. A team of CRP students and faculty, collaborating with city representatives, developed, refined, and implemented playful public engagement activities organized around fun, co-creation, sustainability, and future visions for Ames. These activities, which other communities can replicate, included a barefoot path, origami, virtual reality, mapping, mobile data collection, mural painting, and more. They were user-tested by residents in September 2021 during the first community engagement festival, Play Ames: Imagine Your City. Two student groups assessed how residents accepted the engagement methods and the methods' effectiveness.

The main findings of the project include the need to:

- actively advertise the engagement activities in the community well before their planned implementation;
- continually collaborate with residents;
- identify festival locations at the heart of the selected communities; and
- develop short, quick, easily understandable activities that may attract everyone.

Replicating this event requires:

- a partnership agreement;
- dedicated funding;

- faculty willing to adapt course curriculum;
- well-defined course objectives supporting research and collaboration; and
- determined, passionate, and dedicated organizers.

Introduction

Engaging underrepresented and marginalized communities in urban planning presents significant challenges for municipal leaders. City officials and planners are always seeking better ways to reach out to these communities and establish communication and a long-term relationship in which the residents would feel respected and invited to co-create the future of the places they live. Traditional urban planning methods are designed to be top-down, often initiated by City officials when needed and required in the planning process. They are organized in one place and at a particular time usually in the form of town hall meetings, exhibitions, expert presentations, or round-table discussions. Many residents are unable to attend these meetings because they lack the time, do not feel welcome, or have never even heard of them. City officials generally experience very low attendance and meetings attract mostly white, well-educated residents in the middle to upper-income brackets.

This research explores innovative ways to address the lack of resident engagement using novel strategies, technologies, and methodologies to reach historically underrepresented and marginalized residents. For this project, these residents are identified as part of any of the following groups: low-income, low-educational level, Asian, African American, youth, college students, and other historically minoritized groups. The main idea of this research is based on two basic principles. The first principle is organized around play, playful learning, and game-based approaches. These approaches aim to be designed in a novel way to be attractive for inter-generational gatherings. The second principle is bringing community engagement into the neighborhoods, where the City officials would meet the residents where they live rather than asking the residents to come to City officials.

These two basic principles were tested in a collaboration between the City of Ames, Iowa; the CRP Department at ISU; and the Community Engagement Living Lab (CE2L). They jointly organized a city festival, Play Ames: Imagine Your City, which occurred on September 25, 2021. It took place at four chosen locations throughout the city, in census tracts identified with historically underrepresented and marginalized communities. Each location was dedicated to one specific theme: Location 1 concentrated on residents' visions for the future of the city; Location 2, on sensing the city and sensory urbanism; Location 3, on paper and digital mapping, asking residents where they feel unsafe; and Location 4, on the use of creative arts as an engagement strategy. Twenty-six students enrolled in an ISU CRP course facilitated activities and conducted research on the success of the engagement activities.

The results of their research show that the residents responded very well to the playful learning activities. The most successful activities were those that were creative, interested in a resident's perception and experience, resulted in a final and visible product, and offered an exciting new experience to the participants. The festival activities and final evaluation results were presented and discussed on November 9, 2021, at a meeting of the Ames City Council. This exemplary project demonstrates how a university and students can successfully collaborate with a city and work effectively with a community and engage the residents in friendly, enjoyable, creative, and innovative ways.

Literature Review

Engaging Underrepresented and Marginalized Populations in Urban Planning

One of the main challenges facing municipalities today is building inclusive cities for all groups in a community. Without any doubt, historically underrepresented or marginalized communities, such as racial, religious, and ethnic minorities; migrants and refugees; persons with disabilities; the elderly; the LGBTQ community; and people living in poverty are not engaged fully in an active participatory citizenship process and are often excluded from the urban discourse (Brackertz 2007; Bernt and Colini 2013). They may experience language difficulties or difficulties accessing relevant information or simply feel their experience would not be relevant to City officials' decision-making (Wilson 2001). City officials often lack effective and efficient means to interact with stakeholders, possess limited knowledge of multi- and intercultural exchange, or lack resources (Parnez 2015).

The exclusion of historically marginalized groups from community decision-making can have severe political and social costs and economic consequences. Existing barriers to participation of marginalized people affect the way infrastructure, services, or organizations are distributed. Such barriers limit governance and decision-making and can lead to fewer opportunities for education and employment (Kempin Reuter 2019). Cities that exclude marginalized communities cannot claim to realize the right to the city, a concept first introduced by Lefebvre (1996), which posits the idea that everybody has the right to access the resources of the city and be part of the process of developing, transforming, and shaping the city (Lefebvre 1996; Harvey 2008; Purcell 2014). A human rights approach to urban development demands a fundamental rethinking of what cities are and who they are for (Kempin Reuter 2019). Ever since Arnstein (1969) presented the Ladder of Citizen Participation study, academics and practitioners of local governments and planning professionals have become more interested in public participation in urban planning and management.

Through participation, various groups in the urban context can interact with each other and with government agencies, political decision-makers, third-sector and non-profit organizations, and business organizations to develop, create, and implement public policies and programs (Quick and Bryson 2016). Community engagement can be a powerful tool to guide investments toward the development of places, and cities and can be an important part of the public-government relationship (Bryson et al. 2013). Benefits include acquiring local knowledge or up-to-date data for problem-solving that is usually not easily accessible by conventional methods (Li et al. 2020). Research demonstrates that engaging local communities in decision-making processes or other issues related to their city can improve identification and place-belonging. The psycho-social processes and results derived from resident involvement in the transformation of a territory, such as identity, appropriation, sense of belonging, and community, lead to care, commitment, and collective responsibility for the conservation of and permanent and lasting improvement of the urban environment at different scales (Hernández 2006).

As Moughtin (2003) affirms, people must be involved voluntarily, and participation must emerge from the community. A society dominated by inequity, fragmentation, and individualism will exhibit no or a lesser degree of collective and territorial identification, so participation will hardly take place. Resident participation evolves slowly; in many cases, clear rules are not established, and its importance is frequently minimized and wasted in political rhetoric. Successful community engagement is a dynamic process with multiple routes and loops taken to find the right activities and forms of participation, which vary from community to community (Watson 2014).

Effects of Play, Digital Play, and Games

The importance of play has been well researched and the concept is multi-faceted (Piaget 1952; Erikson 1977; Vygotsky 1978). “Play” is a free activity (Huizinga 1955) that has the ability to stimulate and invite participants into the state of flow (Csikszentmihalyi 1990). It allows them to experiment with social experiences (Erikson 1977); provides opportunities to reproduce real-life conflicts, work on their resolutions, and ameliorate negative feelings (Piaget 1952); and teaches how to master emotional responses through playful, pretend-based narratives (Gottman 1986). Play may also foster the development of social cognition and development of cooperative skills, social competence, and peer acceptance (Piaget 1952; Vygotsky 1978).

Play can be enjoyed in the real-world environment or online, which is sometimes referred to as digital play. Digital play can be defined as “a voluntary, energizing activity that involves the use of digital technologies” (Kulman 2015). These activities are related to video and computer games, electronic toys, mobile technologies, and digital content creation. Examples of digital play include a teenage girl playing *Minecraft* on her computer or a 14-year-old boy playing *Call of Duty* with his friends on Xbox Live (Kulman 2015). Research shows the benefits but also the disadvantages of digital play. Play and games are intrinsically connected. Play can be a subset of a game, and a game can be a subset of play.

Granic, Lobel, and Engels (2014) classify the benefits of playing games into the following four categories: cognitive, motivational, emotional, and social, including engagement. The increased cognitive skills include faster and more accurate attention allocation, higher spatial resolution in visual processing (Uttal et al. 2013), enhanced mental rotation abilities (Green and Bavelier 2012), improved problem-solving skills (Prensky 2012), and improved spatial skills (Uttal et al. 2013). Playing games may also enhance children’s creative capacities (Jackson et al. 2012; Granic et al. 2014). Games motivate and teach persistence, stimulate continuous engagement (Granic et al. 2014), and help develop a sense of achievement and intelligence (Dweck and Molden 2005). They give immediate feedback on actions and activities and are, therefore, an excellent motivator and teacher (McGonigal 2011). Playing games tends to help generate positive emotions (Fredrickson 2001; Ryan, Rigby, and Przybylski 2006; Russoniello, O’Brien, and Parks 2009). The positive impacts of game play far outweigh the negative effects, such as addiction (Rooij et al. 2011), depression, or increased aggression (Ferguson 2007; Anderson et al. 2010). More recently developed games increasingly focus on supporting and enabling social activities (Lenhart et al. 2008; Entertainment Software Association [ESA] 2012), acquiring social skills and prosocial behavior (Gentile and Gentile 2008; Gentile et al. 2009), and effective cooperation (Ewoldsen et al. 2012). Lenhart et al. (2008) showed that youth that played games with civic experiences (for example, *Guild Wars 2* or a massive multiplayer online role-playing game) were more likely to be engaged in social and civic movements in their everyday lives. This may include raising money for charity, volunteering, and persuading others to vote. Some researchers and psychologists identified that playing video games can also trigger negative emotions, including anger, anxiety, frustration, and even sadness.

Community Engagement Festival Play Ames: Imagine Your City

The Main Objectives and Research Focus

Incorporating the positive attributes of play and games, the Play Ames: Imagine Your City community engagement festival sought to informally engage residents based on the idea of playful public participation (Poplin 2012). The festival provided an opportunity to design, implement,

Play Ames: Imagine Your City

and test innovative and joyful engagement strategies, methodologies, and technologies, which encouraged citizens to learn about their neighborhood, the city, and planning processes.

More specifically, the main objectives can be summarized as follows, to

- Develop engagement methods, strategies, and technologies that may attract and engage underrepresented or marginalized communities to participate in discussions about their city and urban planning activities.
- Test the developed and implemented engagement methods, strategies, and technologies in selected neighborhoods.
- Evaluate the engagement methods in order to provide feedback to the City of Ames about the most promising and successful engagement methods, strategies, and technologies to use in future outreach to historically underrepresented and marginalized communities.

Research concentrated on studying the effectiveness of the introduced playful learning engagement activities in attracting historically underrepresented and marginalized populations of residents in Ames. Research methods used were a survey in an online and paper form, a kids-friendly survey, and photo ethnography.

City-University Partnership

This challenge of reaching historically underrepresented and marginalized communities is one of a long list of challenges faced by the City of Ames and ISU in partnership over the years. The City and ISU have enjoyed a longstanding record of partnering to address community issues for the benefit of all residents, students and non-students alike (Gavazzi 2020). Working together is a hallmark of the town-gown relationship in this university community. Faced with the perennial challenge that plagues most municipalities, that of soliciting input from hard-to-reach groups, such as historically underrepresented and marginalized communities, including students, the City sought the assistance of its University partner in fall 2020.

That partnership was described in a Request for Assistance (RFA) that sought to create a mutually beneficial relationship between the City of Ames and classes taught in the CRP Department in the College of Design at ISU. The City wished to enhance its community engagement strategies to better solicit the involvement of residents while enabling students and faculty to participate in an experience that would enhance learning and research opportunities. CE2L was created as an umbrella under which the community engagement research could be organized. CE2L is an informal organization that has a neutral status when presenting to the residents and citizens. It acts as an intermediary between ISU and the City of Ames and currently does not have any formal structure. The main idea is to create a non-governmental organization (NGO) to help organize additional engagement activities in the city. A strong partnership was forged with joint funding from the City of Ames and the ISU College of Design's CRP Department Collaborative Interdisciplinary Fund. The University partners set out to design, test, and assess the efficacy of innovative means to improve outreach and promote trust in the community engagement process between City representatives and the historically underrepresented and marginalized communities of Ames.

The City of Ames Perspective

Such resident engagement is central to the concept of representative democracy, which is inherent in the Council-Manager form of government. Under this governing model, the Mayor and

City Council of Ames operate as the Legislative Branch, empowered to make rules, regulations, ordinances, and policies that impact the lives of residents. The City Manager serves as the Executive Branch of local government, responsible for implementing the direction given by the Mayor and City Council. The Mayor and City Council have been granted, as the result of an election, the authority to make policy decisions for the city's 66,424 residents (U.S. Census Bureau 2021). This approach differs from holding a formal public referendum on each important issue to determine what the majority of the residents want and then voting according to the majority opinion. For this reason, soliciting input from a broad range of residents is essential to creating equitable and effective policies. As Marc Ott, CEO/Executive Director of the International City/County Management Association, noted in his defense of the Council-Manager form of government, "... The real power of democracy is only realized when we value diverse views and opinions in making decisions that affect our communities" (Ott 2022).

Short of pursuing a formal public vote on each important issue before they make a final decision, the Ames Mayor and City Council are committed to obtaining input from impacted residents by utilizing various public engagement techniques. The techniques employed have typically been traditional ones, such as focus groups, public meetings, round-tables, and limited exhibitions, organized at set times and places. These techniques have proven ineffective for gathering substantial public input from traditionally underrepresented and marginalized groups, who may not be willing to engage or may not know how to engage with City representatives.

"Public Engagement," as defined by the Institute for Local Government (2016), "is a general term that represents a broad range of methods through which members of the public become more informed about and/or influence public decisions." For the City of Ames, public engagement is comprised of two types:

- City-initiated engagement, which is engagement initiated by the City to gain resident input on upcoming policy decisions or projects or to disseminate information on these topics to impacted residents, and
- Resident-inspired engagement, which is engagement with the City on issues, projects, or policy decisions that residents have brought forward for City consideration. These include neighborhood initiatives, quality of life issues, and elements of placemaking, such as – community art, events, and improvements.

While much of the interaction with residents is City-initiated, resident-inspired engagement is just as important. These two forms of engagement are essential to the efficient and equitable operations and policies of the City, yet they are extremely difficult to conduct with historically marginalized and underrepresented communities. Helping residents to feel that Ames is their "place," that they belong in the community, should involve their active input on and contribution to placemaking. The term "placemaking" is understood as a tool for the planning, design, and management of public spaces with a community approach. Broadly speaking, this perspective refers to an economic development strategy of "creating quality places where people want to live, work, play and learn" (Wyckoff 2014, 2).

To encourage interaction in the more playful and welcoming atmosphere of Play Ames: Imagine Your City, residents could ask questions and communicate with government representatives at the festival locations. City of Ames officials present at the event represented a number of departments and roles in the administration. The Mayor and the City Manager and members of his office were active and supportive. Additionally present on the day of the festival were several members of the City Council, the Director of Planning and Housing, the Director of Parks and Recreation, and the City Public Information Officer.

The University Perspective

Interaction between the City, faculty members, and students was the other key component of this partnership, as mutual benefit was one of the goals specifically identified in the RFA. Having locations throughout Ames act as a living lab for testing innovative engagement techniques and strategies provided a unique opportunity to further ongoing research in planning and engaging with communities and to practice communication.

Students enrolled in the CRP455/555 Smart and Sustainable Cities course (Spring 2021) were actively involved in the creation of novel, playful engagement techniques. The engagement techniques, strategies, and methodologies were designed during the summer by four student leaders and their advisors. The proposed plans were then refined and further developed as part of the class work by 26 students enrolled in the CRP 455/555 course. This part of the work was designed as a set of assignments, which allowed the students to continuously work on further development of the engagement activities. All students were also informed, at the beginning of the semester, about the date reserved for the festival, which was outside of class times. Four student-leaders who supervised the work of the students enrolled in CRP 455/555 could practice leadership skills. They were also responsible for the coordination of the activities at the four festival locations. The fact that this was a real-world example, that the City needed help, inspiration, and ideas for how to engage historically underrepresented and marginalized communities, additionally motivated and inspired students to participate.

Two student research groups were formed to study methods of documenting the process and collecting data. One group used a paper and online survey tool to gain responses about the activities and overall engagement during the festival. A second group used photo ethnography and field-observation methods to study the efficiency of the engagement activities. This documentation presented a further opportunity for the students to learn how to conduct research. The festival as a whole is an inspiring example of how to bring the residents, the City, the University, and its students together in a collaborative effort (Figure 24.1).

Students, themselves, are an underrepresented group in Ames, where they make up approximately 40% of the population (Deloitte 2020). Involving them in the planning and implementation of the event, along with encouraging them to provide resident input at the festival locations, aligned not only with the City's RFA goals but also with the Land Grant mission and strategic vision of ISU, which emphasize "learning by doing" with students engaging "in real-world class experiences and cutting-edge research" (Iowa State University 2016).

Play Ames: Imagine Your City Community Engagement Festival

The year of research and planning culminated on September 25, 2021, when ISU students and City of Ames officials executed Play Ames: Imagine Your City, the first community engagement festival. This festival offered an innovative means of community engagement resulting from the collaboration between the CRP Department and the City of Ames.

Following several semesters of research by CRP students on the demographics and community needs in Ames, the festival concept and the activities were designed during the summer by two ISU graduate and one undergraduate student, an international PhD candidate, and their advisors. The locations of the festival were carefully selected in collaboration with the City of Ames. They were based on a geographic information system (GIS) analysis in which maps were created of areas with a high number of residents identified as low-income, low-educational level, minorities, elderly, and children. These maps were overlaid to find specific areas in which the targeted underrepresented and marginalized communities live.



Figure 24.1 Team that designed and executed the first community engagement festival, Play Ames: Imagine Your City.

In agreement with City officials, the following four locations were selected (Figure 24.2): Reliable Street (West Ames), Franklin Park (West Ames), East 7th Street (East Ames), and the Downtown Ames (close to Main Street). Three festival sites—Reliable Street, Franklin Park, and East 7th Street – were located very close to the targeted areas. The Downtown location was selected due to its proximity to the Ames Main Street Farmers’ Market with the expectation that it may attract many people. The main goal was to bring the engagement directly into the neighborhoods and meet the residents close to their homes.

At each of the locations, the plan called for attendees to encounter a different set of playful learning activities developed with the goal of involving residents in a joyful and engaging way through experiential components. Two other collaborating partners, ISU Climate Change Action Theater and a yoga teacher, joined the team for the festival. Before the event, printed posters and flyers were distributed in the neighborhoods to advertise it. Social media was also used to advertise the festival to various resident groups (Figure 24.3a,b).

Location 1. Reliable Street. Wishes for the Future of the City

Engagement activities at Location 1, Reliable Street, concentrated on guerrilla gardening, origami for the future of the city, and urban planning games (Figure 24.4a–c). Guerrilla gardening encouraged residents to plant bulbs that are native to Iowa and provided learning opportunities for kids. **Urban planning games** aimed to teach residents about urban planning in a fun, interactive way. This activity aimed to encourage residents to spend time together and get to know one another. The **origami** activity concentrated on collecting wishes for the future of the city. Residents were asked the following questions. What is your favorite place within the city? What can be improved in the city? What is your vision for the City of Ames? Participants wrote responses on colored papers, which were collected and folded into origami

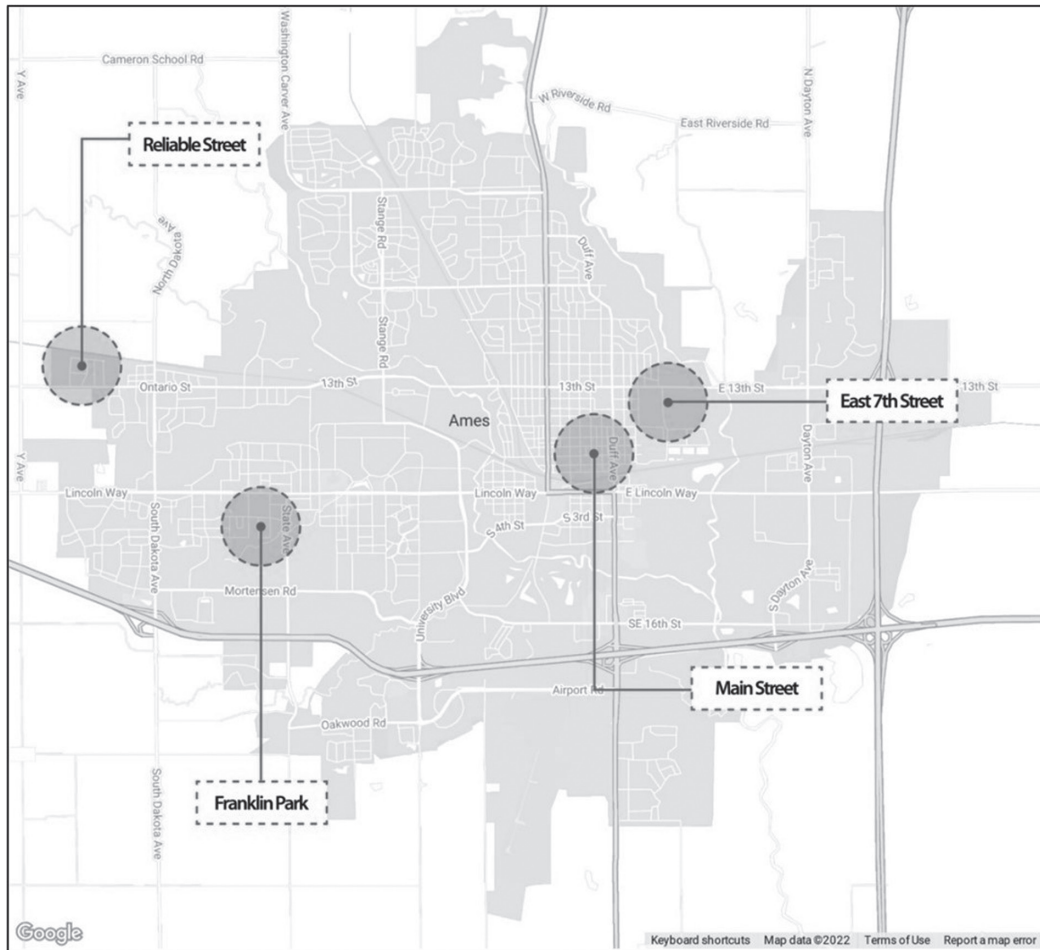


Figure 24.2 Sites of the four locations for the Play Ames Festival in the City of Ames.

flowers. Each flower, made of four folded papers, was then placed in the planted garden. The flowers created a garden of residents' dreams, visions, and ideas that could be given to City officials and urban planners.

Location 2. Franklin Park. Sensing the City and Sensory Urbanism

The engagement activities developed for Location 2, Franklin Park, focused on sensory urbanism. They invited participants to explore their own senses and encouraged residents to explore how they perceive the city. Participants could observe how the city looks and experience how it feels, smells, and sounds. In the end, these activities, inspired by sensory urbanism, encouraged residents to delve more deeply into what makes up a city's texture. They included the experience of a barefoot path, a breathing game, yoga (Figure 24.5 a–d), Climate Change Action Theater, and virtual reality.

For the **barefoot path** experiment, residents were asked to walk barefoot on a path filled with different materials and textures, which included pebbles, water, rocks, and hay, among



Figure 24.3 A poster (a) and a flyer (b) created to advertise the festival.

others. As walkers stepped on these materials with bare feet, student guides encouraged them to feel the material and reflect upon the memories associated with it. The **breathing game** encouraged the participants to explore their senses, breathing, and sensing their bodies. It included the experience of sensing the body while exercising various breathing techniques. Each stop along the game path encouraged participants to engage in a different physical activity combined with breathing. Participants were asked to close their eyes after a cardio activity; this helped them listen, feel their heartbeat, and sense their surroundings by listening and feeling. Additionally, participants were asked about their vision for the park. At the end of the game, participants were encouraged to explore the park to find some local materials, such as

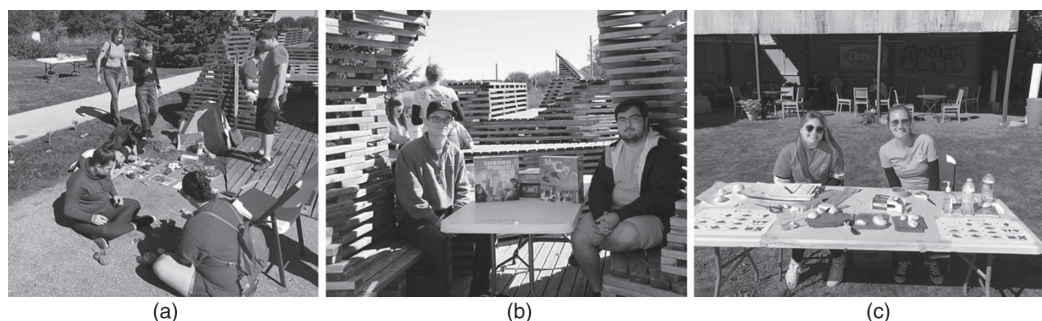


Figure 24.4 Guerrilla gardening (a), playing urban planning games (b), and origami (c).

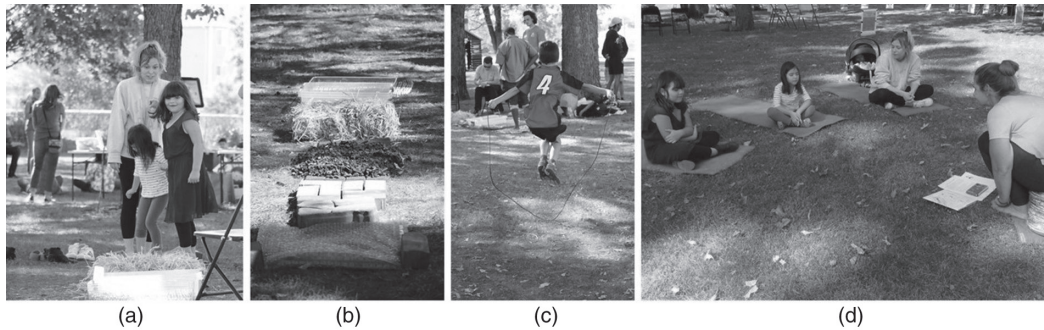


Figure 24.5 Barefoot path (a and b), breathing game (c), and yoga (d).

flowers and leaves, and bring them back to create paintings. Painting with the textures of the space was a hit with attendees. Participants explored the park, found different materials, and were very excited to make something colorful that they could take home. The **yoga** activity encouraged young and old to lie on yoga mats, recharge, take in the sun, and follow guided meditations. The **Climate Change Action Theater** troupe provided festival attendees with a visual and audio experience. The performance highlighted climate change and how we, the public, need to understand the importance of it and can act upon it. Finally, **virtual reality** took participants into the virtual world for an experience beyond their senses.

Location 3. East 7th Street. Paper and Digital Mapping

The engagement activities at Location 3, East 7th Street, included a spot-the-differences game, mapping of unsafe places and emotions, mapping of benches, and a virtual reality pop-up van (Figure 24.6a–c).

The main objective of these activities was to encourage residents to learn about GIS, the possibility of using an online application for data collection, and how to map benches through digital mapping. Additionally, the aim was for facilitators to explore spatial thinking with residents and teach them about visualizations, scales, and map representations. The **spot-the-differences game**, printed as a picture game on paper, enabled the residents to explore and play with paper maps. While trying to spot the differences on the printed maps, players were learning about map scales, map representations, and layers. Many residents enjoyed this activity. Another activity using a paper map was the **mapping of unsafe places and emotions** activity,



Figure 24.6 Spot-the-differences game (a); mapping unsafe places (b); mapping benches (c).

which also involved a paper questionnaire. Participants were asked to map places in Ames where they feel unsafe. While doing that, they shared their personal stories and their perceptions related to safety in the city. To contrast the more traditional paper maps, a digital map and application, developed for the activity by the team to collect data about benches, allowed participants to interact with technology in an activity called **mapping of benches**. Participants learned how to use the application, how to navigate a digital map, and how to use the app for mapping benches. They mapped the location of benches in the community and were able to store some basic attributes of the entries. A **virtual reality pop-up** van provided by the ISU FLEx (Forward Learning Experience) program was also onsite and attracted a large number of residents of all ages eager to experience 3D virtual reality scenes and “ride” a roller-coaster through the ISU campus.

Location 4. Downtown Ames. Collaborative Paint-by-Number Mural

The engagement activity at Location 4, Downtown Ames, concentrated on the collaborative painting of a mural (Figure 24.7a–c). This interactive, **paint-by-number mural**, filled in by residents, was drawn on the wall of a privately owned building, abutting a public parking lot, where it had high visibility for passersby and those parking their cars in the lot. Placement of the mural low on the wall ensured that even the youngest artists could reach a portion of the design without a ladder. The use of collaborative art in this setting provided insight into the unifying front art can bring to communities. This was an exercise in placemaking that demonstrated the power of art to bring people of all ages together in one space. This activity also provided an educational experience for all involved, especially the young children, who learned that they could contribute to the beauty and character of their city. Participants were instructed to paint and fill in the numbered areas with the correspondingly numbered paint colors. As they worked, attendees enjoyed music and the artwork of a local artist who set up an exhibit next to the mural site.

Preliminary Results and Discussion

Overall, the community engagement festival, Play Ames: Imagine Your City, was a success. It attracted approximately 250 participants and brought a positive atmosphere, engagement, and playful learning opportunities to residents of the community. Those who participated enjoyed the activities. The most successful engagement activities, in terms of attracting many residents, were activities that were creative and enabled participants to immediately see and

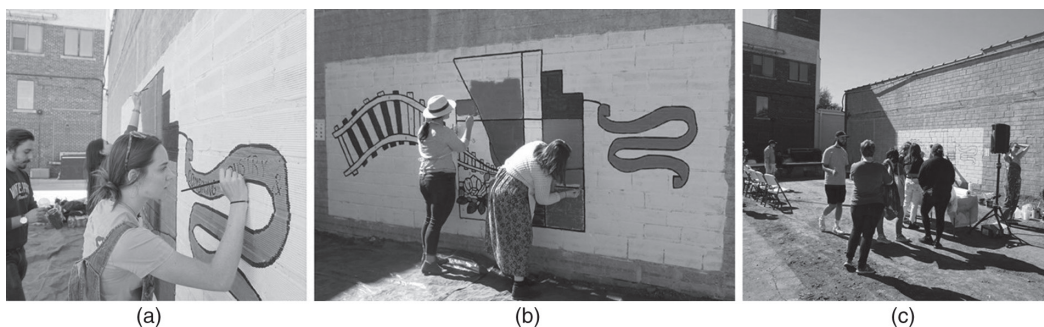


Figure 24.7 Paint-by-number mural.

experience the results of their creations. Such examples include painting the mural, painting stones, and creating origami flowers. These activities were easy to understand, demanded a short period of participation, and showed direct results. Experiential activities, such as the barefoot path, paper mapping, digital mapping, the spot-the-differences game, and yoga, were also very successful as they enabled participants to gain new knowledge and experiences.

The character of the locations also influenced their success for research focused on historically underrepresented groups. The East 7th Street and Reliable Street locations attracted more members of these communities. These locations were well embedded within neighborhoods, and the students and their advisors visited the neighborhoods several times in person before the festival to personally invite residents of these culturally, economically, and racially mixed areas to attend the event. This personal invitation strategy attracted more neighborhood residents to the locations, whereas the Franklin Park and Downtown sites attracted more participants from outside the neighborhoods. Foot traffic certainly contributed to the success of the East 7th Street location, as did groundwork done by the planning team to distribute information before the event. Franklin Park was successful in terms of attracting many participants. The only disadvantage was that few members of the targeted communities approached the team and participated in the engagement activities. The Downtown location attracted many residents who attend the Farmers' Market and cannot be considered underrepresented. Specific strengths and weaknesses for each of the locations are summarized in Table 24.1.

Organizing the festival fulfilled one of the goals of the RFA, to establish a "mutually beneficial relationship between the City of Ames and classes taught at Iowa State." The process had a positive effect on students, who, despite comprising a high percentage of the city's population, are also one of the historically underrepresented, marginalized groups in the community. By arranging, facilitating, and attending the festival, students felt more integrated into the community and gained new knowledge about Ames issues, City processes, City officials, and also about other residents and their needs, concerns, and visions for their city.

In the future, moving pop-up community engagement is planned. This should enable the team of researchers to organize activities even closer to where underrepresented and marginalized communities live. The activities will be designed specifically for these neighborhoods, which will be selected based on the educational level, level of income, and race of residents.

Conclusions

Play Ames: Imagine Your City, the first community engagement festival, brought the City of Ames, the ISU Department of CRP, students, City officials, and residents together. The event, organized on one day, primarily concentrated on bringing community engagement into the neighborhoods. Neighborhood locations aimed at targeting historically underrepresented and marginalized communities: residents who usually do not participate in urban planning activities. The activities at each location were designed to be playful, engaging, and unique learning opportunities for the participants.

The following agreements and funding need to be in place to make such an event a success. First, there needs to be an agreement among the primary actors. In this case, the involved actors included the City of Ames, the CRP Department of ISU and the Community Engagement Living Lab. Second, sufficient funding needs to be secured. The funding was provided by the City of Ames and the CRP Department Collaborative Interdisciplinary Fund. Third, faculty willingness to adapt the curriculum of a course or dedicate a course to the topic needs to be present. Fourth, the course, with well-defined objectives to support the research and

Table 24.1 Strengths and Weaknesses of Each Location.

Location	Strengths	Weaknesses and Recommendations
Location 1 Reliable Street	<p>The combination of the activities worked very well.</p> <p>Nice, cozy, and quiet area. The area invited people to participate in the activities.</p> <p>Residents of all ages participated. Stone painting was a definite highlight. Origami worked well for adult participants. They got engaged very quickly; it was an easy activity, easy to see the results.</p> <p>Kids enjoyed learning about gardening and actually planting the bulbs in the soil. They also enjoyed learning about native plants.</p>	<p>Because of the autumn season, bulbs were used and were not visible immediately. Fall is not the best season for participatory and community engaged gardening.</p> <p>Origami activity, with its more complex questions, did not work so well for the kids. Questions on the origami papers should be more concretely related to what the residents would like to change in their city.</p> <p>The prepared description of how to create an origami flower did not work well; it was better to explain how to fold the paper.</p> <p>The activity of playing board games seemed to be too long for the participants as there was a substantial time that needed to be invested when learning how to play the game.</p>
Location 2 Franklin Park	<p>Kids and youth loved the barefoot path; many tried going in more than three times. The transition of textures in the path worked well.</p> <p>Painting with the textures of the space was a hit. Participants explored the park with different materials and were very excited to make colorful collages that they could take back home.</p> <p>Yoga was very well received. Participants felt refreshed and would love to repeat it and/or stay longer.</p> <p>Virtual reality was attractive for many; it gave the chance for participants to explore the technology.</p>	<p>The barefoot path was more exciting for the children and youth; the adults mostly did not want to take their shoes off.</p> <p>At times, it seemed that the breathing game did not attract many participants. We would need more instructors being engaged in entertaining the participants and showing them different postures.</p> <p>Yoga exercise was very well received by all generations.</p> <p>The mini virtual reality station attracted some participants. More energy needs to be created around a small setting like that.</p> <p>Climate Change Action Theater, when performing, attracted many participants. During that time, other activities were almost empty.</p>
Location 3 East 7th Street	<p>Getting participants from Eastwood Apartments to attend. In-person invitations were effective.</p> <p>Getting participants from all age groups. Both younger and older participants were fascinated by the virtual reality.</p> <p>More younger participants participated in the digital mapping and the spot-the-differences game.</p> <p>A major number of participants mentioned Stange Road as one of the dangerous paces for biking.</p> <p>The giveaways – balloons, candies, fruits, inflatable globes – worked well as a reward for participation.</p>	<p>Some older people were intimidated by digital mapping, so they let their younger family members participate. They were perceiving digital mapping as a learning tool for their younger family members.</p> <p>In general, the participants did not seem to be very interested in creating a data inventory of the city and helping collect data.</p> <p>Participants appreciated the feeling that researchers care about them. They perceived the paper-mapping of “unsafe places” as a notion that researchers care about their safety.</p>

(Continued)

Table 24.1 (Continued)

Location	Strengths	Weaknesses and Recommendations
Location 4 Downtown Ames	<p>Participants gained valuable hands-on experience in painting a mural. They learned about the process and skill level needed to paint and were able to feel accomplished when they saw the finished product.</p> <p>A great atmosphere, everybody seemed to be in a good mood, good music.</p> <p>The activity was very enjoyable, accessible, and fun.</p> <p>Lots of participants joined from the Farmers' Market.</p>	<p>The flow of participants seemed chaotic at times.</p> <p>Participants were in and out in 15 minutes, a short turnaround time.</p>

collaboration with the City, needs to be approved at the departmental level. Fifth, projects like this require personal determination, passion, and dedication to be successful.

This first version of the festival opened questions as to how student engagement and resident participation might be strengthened in future events. The festival's overall plan and strong attendance allowed the organizers to test different methods, techniques, and strategies for engaging residents and to assess the success of each engagement activity, depending on its nature and time needed to complete it. The results show that playful activities attract all age groups, that people are willing to participate in community engagement events such as this, and that residents are interested in topics related to the urban environment in which they live. For students, whose schedules become full of coursework, sporting events, and social activities, early knowledge of the event and the benefits may be key to their participation and may encourage them to choose the festival over other activity options vying for time in their busy schedules. The festival demonstrated that if the City of Ames wants to improve public engagement, officials will need to move beyond the traditional engagement techniques currently employed and go to the neighborhoods to meet the residents where they are, even when planning another festival itself. There is definitely room for new types of festivals to be created, as long as they are done in-place and with-place.

Evaluation of some aspects of the festival and its activities has provided insights for future events. First, an effective festival requires targeted advance-advertising. For the 2021 festival, outreach started only two weeks before the event. The advertising and outreach needed to start earlier in the process. For future festivals, outreach and advertising should start at least one month before the event, with visits to the neighborhoods being done throughout the period to build trust with members of the underrepresented communities. Visiting these neighborhoods often and in person is crucial for the success of an event like this. An earlier start on outreach would enable event planners to make contact with target groups, either by official channels or through visits to neighborhoods, sports clubs, and schools. Starting earlier would also enable more coordination with the community and facilitate a better understanding of their needs and interests. Making the festival visible to passersby is also essential so that everybody feels invited and welcomed to participate. A festival will not be effective for placemaking or community engagement unless there is effort invested into working collaboratively with the residents to understand the people and the nature of the place.

As evidenced, community festivals have excellent potential to contribute to public engagement in an emergent and organic way. In this vein, another important aspect is the strategic location of the festival activities. The results show that locations with more personal connections to the targeted communities and locations in the heart of the targeted neighborhoods themselves attracted more members of the historically underrepresented and marginalized communities that were the focus of festival activities. Locations with a flow of people attracted more attendees and are likely to do so in the future.

The activities themselves are also an important aspect of successful engagement. During the festival, the students tested various participatory methods. In most cases, short, quick activities gained more attention, as they were easy to handle and did not demand a lot of time and effort. On the other hand, activities that were time-intensive, for example, board games, did not attract as many participants. Participants gave positive evaluations of those activities that attracted children but allowed parents to participate as well.

Finally, the findings presented in this chapter have enabled the City of Ames to move to the next step of pursuing improved engagement with residents, particularly those who are members of historically underrepresented or marginalized communities. The research conducted proves the power inherent in city-university partnerships to address a nationally recognized municipal challenge with innovative, playful engagement strategies. The findings add to the continuing conversation on the role that festivity plays in placemaking and as a tool to improve community engagement and strengthen the dialogue *entre los* different actors in a city.

Acknowledgments

This festival would not be possible without many dedicated people involved in the organization and execution of this festival. The students – Stella Schroeder, a PhD candidate at the University of Bío-Bío, Concepción, Chile; ISU graduate students Fatema Nourin and Vishnu Priya Sairamesh; and ISU undergraduate student Natalie M. Jacobson – worked under the supervision of Dr. Alenka Poplin to create a set of playful engagement activities for the four chosen locations. Stella, Vishnu, Fatema, and Natalie were the student leaders of the four locations and coordinated the work accomplished at these locations. Thank you to all students enrolled in the CRP 455/555 Smart and Sustainable Cities (in Spring 2021) who further developed activities presented at the festival.

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Additional information about the Play Ames: Imagine Your City festival can be found on the following website: <https://www.communityengagementll.net/play-ames-copy>.

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