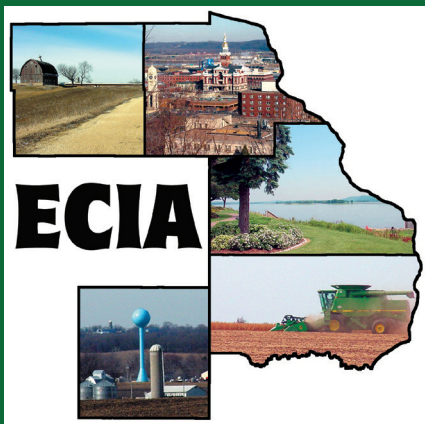


Delmar Storytelling Project

for Community Development

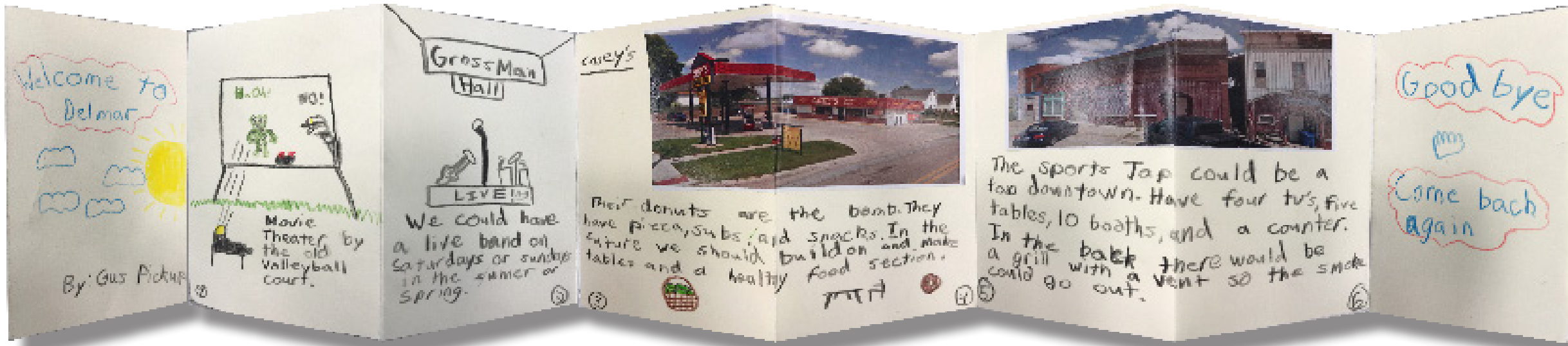


PROJECT STATEMENT

Graduate students in the School of Urban & Regional Planning course Community Development in the Upper Midwest worked with 4th-6th graders from the Delwood Community School District in Delmar, IA to produce videos and books that tell the story of the community through interviews with longtime residents.

The City of Delmar aims to engage their citizens in creating a vision for the town that builds on the community’s common values, and particularly to revive interest in community development and the small downtown business district. This project focused on a planning model that brings people together to identify what is distinctive and what matters most to residents, and to use that information to develop a vision and strategic plan for the community.

On-campus partners for the project include Center for the Book, Art Education, and IDEAL, with community support from the City of Delmar, the Delwood Community School District, the Delmar Economic Development Group, and ECIA.



Top: A completed accordion book made by a Delwood student; Bottom left: Open house vguests isiting with students about their books; Bottom center: A Delwood students working on her accordion book; Bottom right: Delmar residents watching the final videos at the Open House.

KEY STEPS

- UI representatives and Delmar officials worked together closely to establish and implement a process for gathering stories about Delmar that would help with future visioning and planning.
- University of Iowa Center for the Book guided the graduate students through an excercise to create accordion-style books for the project.
- The graduate students partnered with Delwood CSD 4th-6th graders to develop a set of questions for the Delmar storytellers. Student teams video recorded the storytellers on March 4th.
- The graduate students edited the videos to compile stories about Delmar, which helped to identify common themes and values in the community.
- At the final event on April 22nd, Delwood students put the finishing touches on their accordion books, focusing on the past, present, and future of Delmar. Later that day, the public was invited to a viewing of the videos and showcase of the students’ handmade books.
- View the final Delmar video on YouTube: <http://bit.ly/DelmarIISC>



Top left: Bookmaking at UI Center for the Book; Top center: Student teams working together on interviewing strategies; Top right: Delwood students learning how to make books; Bottom left: a Delmar storyteller; Bottom center: Dr. Connerly using Box City to talk about community at a Delwood assembly; Bottom right: Student teams conducting an interview.

