

THE SPPA CAPSTONE SURVIVAL HANDBOOK

**Tools for Your Community
Engagement Project**



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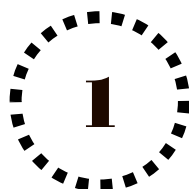
Ahoy there!

Like any grand adventure, SPPA capstone projects require skill, hard work, mental toughness, and working well with your team. This is likely to be the most challenging experience of your academic career, but also one of the most rewarding. You are working on real-world projects with invested community partners, with real implications for the people that live in those communities. Broadly speaking, our mission is to help improve the sustainability and resilience of Iowa communities. Fortunately, the faculty and community partners truly want you to succeed and will be your guides and collaborators along the way.

This experience will prepare you to be successful as you embark on your career and will certainly give you advantages in your job search. The value of this experience, though, will depend greatly on how much you engage with the project and apply the core principles you learned in your first year.

To help you in your journey, this guide is intended to provide some of the basic tools and resources commonly used in capstone projects. Keep this guide in mind as you progress through the various phases of your project.

Now go forth and make the world a better place!





SUMMER CHECKLIST: GETTING READY FOR YOUR CAPSTONE



Be an engaged and thoughtful person who makes a positive difference in the world



Enroll in a top-notch graduate program that has amazing experiential learning opportunities



Send an encouraging note to your fellow team members, telling them that you look forward to working together



Think about which team roles best align with your strengths and interests, and which you'd like to do to develop new skills



Spend some time learning about your partnering community (visit in the summer if you have the opportunity)



Browse through the model plans/reports provided by your faculty advisors



Write your first memo re: the purpose and main components of the type of plan you'll create for your project

The background of the slide features a light blue sky with a subtle, repeating pattern of the words 'TEAMWORK' and 'TOGETHER' in a light blue font. In the lower half, there are dark blue silhouettes of three people climbing a jagged, rocky mountain range. One person is at the peak, another is climbing up, and a third is at the base reaching up.

TEAM ORGANIZATION

in this section...

- team roles
- project management
- tools for collaboration



CHECKLIST: GETTING ORGANIZED

- ☐ Establish ground rules and expectations for your team regarding civility, equity of voice, dealing with conflict, etc.
- ☐ Assign team roles (remember these can be changed as necessary to give others experiences in these roles)
- ☐ Determine the method for file sharing and storage- the group "librarian" can then setup initial shared folders
- ☐ Determine how you'll promote the project through social media – whether it's an existing community partner account (that gives you admin permissions) or one you create
- ☐ Find a time that your team can meet outside of the weekly faculty advisor meetings. Determine how often and how long you will meet.
- ☐ Download the templates you'll use for project management (e.g. agenda, memos, Gantt chart)
- ☐ Think about the broad objectives and how you will break them up into tasks, lead roles, and timelines- you team will create a Gantt chart / work plan early in the semester



GROUP ROLES

Capstone projects are an exercise in leadership and cooperation, leveraging the strengths and potential of each individual team member. What will your team roles be?

You are the owner of the team's Gantt chart / work plan. You develop a timeline that breaks the project into manageable chunks. You update the Gantt chart or work plan as work progresses and tasks are completed. You are also the team "nudger", checking in with team members (including yourself!) to ensure work is completed on time.



You develop a shared folder structure and file management process so that materials are well-organized and easy to find. You keep an eye out for useful articles and resources. You follow local news in partnering communities for information relevant to your project. You package all important files together at the end of the year for the capstone archive.

You are the primary contact with the project partners for the team. You ask about their preferences for the type and frequency of communication. You compile the questions and requests from your team and communicate clear, concise messages to the project partners (but not so often that you flood their inbox!).



Roles should be distributed to ensure that all team members contribute equally (more or less) and to the best of their abilities.



You prepare thoughtful meeting agendas. You gather discussion items and weekly hours from your team members for the agenda. You budget and monitor time during the meeting. You facilitate conversation by asking questions and keep the discussion on topic. You make space for everyone to contribute. **This role can rotate among team members.*



You record main talking points and action items during meetings. You create a record of decisions made in the meeting, including responsibilities and timelines. You ask for clarification when necessary. You restate the action items at the end of the meeting. You share actions items to your project management app or by e-mail. **This role can rotate among team members.*

You take LOTS of GOOD photos – photos of the partnering community, photos of your team, photos of events, etc. You also take video. You edit photos. You find images online and, when necessary, get permission to use them. You keep photos and videos well organized in shared folders. You get tons of gratitude from the designer and promoter.



You promote the project on a variety of platforms, such as press releases, social media, local radio, and more. You use these tools creatively to generate interest and enthusiasm in your project, especially for activities that involve public input. You consider how best to reach different audiences. You contribute content to the SPPA social media student committee.



You might consider sharing roles if that works best for your team. Not all roles have to be individual.





CARTO- GRAPHER

You are the GIS lead. You build geodatabases and make visually appealing maps for the report.

You are the go-between for the group and your capstone mentor. You keep the mentor engaged in the project with regular check-ins and progress updates, while being respectful of their busy schedules. You coordinate meetings between your team and your mentor. You invite your mentor to presentations.



MENTOR LIASON



EDITOR

You pull together writing from all each individual team member into one well-organized and reader-friendly document. You find a consistent voice and tell a good story with your narrative. You obliterate typos and grammar problems. You have a big, time-consuming responsibility on the back half of the project, the busiest time of your grad school career.

You make work products visually appealing. You look at model plans and other media and bring design ideas to your team. You help design presentation slides. You format and design a professional-quality final report. You work with the visual media lead and promoter to obtain photos and graphics for the team's work products.



DESIGNER

You may have more than one role, but one person should not have multiple time-consuming roles (e.g. editor & designer).





COLLABORATION TOOLS

We surveyed alumni to find out what types of tools they use for collaboration and project management within their teams. What will work best for your group?

FILE SHARING



A “team site” can be used for both file storage and collaboration on shared documents. External partners can be given access. Links to other Office 365 software.



Typically used as a central location to store, share, and access files. Good for tracking your own personal files and keeping shared spaces less cluttered.



Useful for sending really large files. The free version allows you to send files up to 2GB.



An alternative to SharePoint. Easy to share files with community partners, but not directly linked to other Office 365 applications. Free storage limit is 15GB



Another online file storage platform that might be useful for occasionally sharing and receiving files from external partners. Free version limit is 2GB of storage.

COMMUNICATION



Microsoft Teams

Helps you have real-time conversations using chat instead of email, share and collaborate on files, and more. Integrated with your [Office 365](#) email account.



slack

Replaces e-mail to keep team communication organized. Use separate channels for any number of topics or teams. Send messages privately or to the whole team.



DISCORD

A completely free alternative to Slack, but more often associated with gaming rather than professional workspaces.

TASK MANAGEMENT



A visual view of tasks scheduled over time, showing start and end dates of different activities and the statuses of those activities. IISC has a template for you [here!](#)



Organizes projects into boards that tell what's being done, who's working it, and its status. Minimalist interface- like a white board filled with lists of sticky notes.



Planner

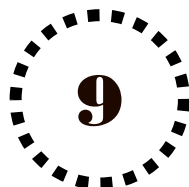
Allows teams to create work plans, organize and assign tasks, share files, chat, and get updates on progress. Available on [Office 365](#) and integrates with Microsoft Team.



asana

An alternative to Trello if you want a few more options, such as different layouts and the ability to sync tasks with your calendar (the paid version also includes Gantt charts).

Other tools from the alumni survey include: Asana, Box, ProjectWise, Monday.com, Keynote, JIRA, Engntye, Zoho, Premavera, Accela, Bluebeam, Power BI, yEd



OUTREACH



in this section...

- engagement methods and activities
- virtual meeting tools



PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT: CHECKLIST

- ☐ Review APA PAS Report 595: A Planner's Guide to Meeting Facilitation (found on ICON)
- ☐ Determine, in writing, the purpose and objectives for gathering public input.
- ☐ Choose an appropriate method of engagement to accomplish your research objectives.
- ☐ Identify your target audiences,. Make sure to consider diverse perspectives.
- ☐ Work with your community partner to choose a date, time, and meeting location (or virtual format, if not meeting in person).
- ☐ Create and implement a plan for promoting your event and reaching out to your target audiences.
- ☐ Prepare meeting materials and gather meeting supplies.
- ☐ Think through the flow of the meeting from the participant perspective and practice running through your facilitator talking points.



ENGAGEMENT MENU

Public engagement is an essential part of the planning process (not to mention a requirement for your project!). What form of engagement will best help you answer your research questions?

STARTERS

Impromptu Networking
Conversation Cafe

FRUITFUL DIALOGUE

Facilitated Discussion
SWOT Analysis
Strategic Doing
Focus Group
Asset Mapping
Chip Game

HEARTY EXPERTISE

Steering Committee
Key Informant Interview

FRESH PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Open House
Design Charette

STUFF YOU MIGHT NEED

- ☐ Paper
- ☐ Pens/Pencils
- ☐ Markers
- ☐ Sticky Dots
- ☐ Large Easel Pads
- ☐ Clipboard
- ☐ Camera
- ☐ Audio Recorders
- ☐ Canopy
- ☐ Tables & Chair
- ☐ A-frame Sign
- ☐ Easels
- ☐ Coffee
Maker/Dispenser
- ☐ Coffee
- ☐ Snacks, Refreshments,
Food
- ☐ Tableware
- ☐ Water
- ☐ Sign-In Sheets
- ☐ Name Tags
- ☐ Meeting materials
(agendas, maps, etc.)



Steering Committee

Steering committees (or “advisory groups”) involve members of the public who inform and advise decision making over an extended period of time. Members bring diverse perspectives and can help support the project by gathering local information, engaging members of the community, linking to local networks, offering expertise and cultural knowledge, and more.

It is important to consider the role and structure of the Steering Committee for your project as early in the process as possible.

- * **Time:**
 - * 1-2 hour recurring meetings
- * **Group size:**
 - * 8-12
- * **[How-To Resource](#)**
- * **Field Problems example:**
 - * [Salix Comprehensive Plan](#)
- * **Going virtual?** Use Zoom!



Facilitated Discussion

Facilitated discussion is a broad engagement method encompassing many types of outreach, but generally involves conversations with small groups built around a specific topic or issue.

In these discussions, facilitators stay neutral. Their role is to create the process and conditions that enable a group to discuss, plan, decide, learn, or grow. Facilitators conduct the discussion without trying to direct the group to a particular outcome. They make space for all voices to be heard and manage any conflicts that may arise.

- * **Time:**
 - * Varies
- * **Group size:**
 - * 3-10 (use breakout groups if necessary)
- * **[How-To Resource](#)**
- * **Field Problems example:**
 - * [Clinton Economic Development Plan](#)
- * **Going virtual?** Use Zoom and a shared collaborative document, such as a Google sheet or a Mural whiteboard



Key Informant Interview

Interviews, usually one-on-one sessions with select individuals, can be useful ways to get specific insight about a particular issue from an expert or to learn about a community. They are not efficient for gathering information from a large group of people.

Open-ended questions prepared by the interviewer shape the conversation and can extract spontaneous and unfiltered responses that might not be shared through less personal engagement methods. Preparation and practice will help ensure successful interview sessions.

- * **Time:**
 - * 2-3 hours
- * **Group size:**
 - * 3-10
- * **[How-To Resource](#)**
- * **Field Problems example:**
 - * [Iowa City Automated Vehicle Equity and Adaptation Plan](#)
- * **Going virtual?** Zoom meetings and phone calls are effective. Ask for permission to record the conversations.



Focus Group

A focus group is a facilitated discussion of 4-12 people to gauge their views and attitudes on a specific issue. Participants give spoken responses to open-ended and relatively broad questions, providing qualitative information for the project.

The group's composition is carefully planned to create a nonthreatening environment, allowing participants to talk openly and give honest opinions. The facilitator encourages personal sharing, but also dialogue among participants to generate depth, nuance, and variety to the discussion.

- * **Time:**
 - * 35-60 minutes
- * **Group size:**
 - * 4-12
- * **[How-To Resource](#)**
- * **Field Problems example:**
 - * [Jackson County Tomorrow Strategic Plan](#)
- * **Going virtual?** Use Zoom and ask for permission to record the sessions.

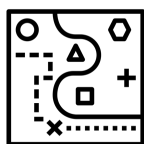


Open House

An open house is a public event to share project information and gather feedback, with opportunities for one-on-one conversations in an informal setting.

Open houses are held at an early stage to gather information from people, or further along in the process to provide information and seek comments on the progress of the project. Because an open house does not have a formal presentation, people drop by at their convenience, get the information that interests them, and stay as long as they wish.

- * **Time:**
 - * 2-4 hours
- * **Group size:**
 - * Open to the public
- * **[How-To Resource](#)**
- * **Field Problems example:**
 - * [Webster City Downtown Strategic Plan](#)
- * **Going virtual?** Consider using a website with the pertinent information and a way for participants to provide feedback.



Asset Mapping

Asset Mapping follows the concept of Asset Based Community Development (ABCD), which builds on a community's strengths and potentials. Community assets can include individuals, institutions, physical assets and more. Led by a facilitator, participants "map" assets, helping all to see internal potential and new opportunities. Assets mapping examines what works in the community in order to find place-based solutions, rather than what isn't working.

Asset mapping can have a spatial component, where participants mark up a map or even go on a community walk.

- * **Time:**
 - * 2-3 hours
- * **Group size:**
 - * 3-10 (use breakout groups if necessary)
- * **[How-To Resource](#)**
- * **Going virtual?** Try using Zoom and Mural together.



Design Charette

A design charette is a hands-on workshop to explore design options for a particular area, with attention to specific physical design problems and generation of agreed-upon solutions. Charettes are best used in situations with real projects when development is soon to occur.

The public is invited to contribute to a vision for overall design. Typical steps include visioning, developing alternative concepts, choosing a preferred plan, open house review, plan development, and public meeting confirmation.

- * **Time:**
 - * A series of 2-3 hour workshops
- * **Group size:**
 - * Can be a large audience with breakout groups (people around tables and maps)
- * **[How-To Resource](#)**



Survey

Surveys are useful for eliciting the views of specific groups, which could be the entire community or a targeted segment.

Careful consideration should be given to the purpose of the survey, the choice of questions, the survey population, and even the way the survey is delivered. Achieving a good response rate can be difficult, especially from low-participation and under-represented groups.

Be sure to know about other surveys that might be happening through IISC to avoid confusion.

- * **Time:**
 - * Minimize the length of time it would take to complete the survey
- * **[How-To Resource](#)**
- * **Field Problems example:**
 - * [Webster City Parks and Recreation Master Plan](#)
- * **IISC Resource**
 - * [Qualtrics survey template](#)



SWOT Analysis

SWOT Analysis is a type of facilitated discussion most often used for strategic planning or strategy development. The acronym stands for Strengths & Weaknesses (internal) and Opportunities & Threats (external).

Participants generate lists in a collective workspace for each category. Answers help identify areas to focus on and participants come to some consensus about the most important items, which are then used to develop strategies and action plans related to the overall vision, mission, and goals.

- * **Time:**
 - * 2-3 hours
- * **Group size:**
 - * 3-10 (use breakout groups if necessary)
- * [How-To Resource](#)
- * **Field Problems example:**
- * **Going virtual?** Try using Zoom and Mural together.



Strategic Doing

Strategic Doing breaks down complex challenges into achievable “pathfinder projects” that can be accomplished by participants.

Workshops begin with aspirational framing questions and then link and leverage the assets of the people at the table, often connected by loose networks, to identify potential opportunities that are relatively easy and have high impact. Participants all identify specific actions that they will accomplish prior to the next workshop, and the pattern keeps repeating.

- * **Time:**
 - * 3-4 hours
- * **Group size:**
 - * About 8 people per table)
- * [How-To Resource](#)
- * **Going virtual?** IISC has a Mural template for collaborative Zoom workshops



Impromptu Networking

Impromptu Networking is a method from [Liberating Structures](#) designed to “rapidly share challenges and expectations” and to “build new connections.”

Impromptu Networking is a productive way to begin a longer working session, introducing participants to one another with a meaningful prompt to inspire conversation.

The activity is short and active, with three rounds of 4-5 minutes each. The activity helps form new and powerful connections and sets the tone for engagement for the rest of the work session.

- * **Time:**
 - * 20 minutes
- * **Group size:**
 - * No limit
- * **[How-To Resource](#)**
- * **Going virtual?** You can use Zoom randomized breakout rooms



Conversation Café

The Conversation Café is a method from [Liberating Structures](#) designed to “engage everyone in making sense of profound challenges.”

The format of the Conversation Café helps people have calm and profound conversations in which there is less debating and arguing, and more listening.

Sitting in a circle with a simple set of agreements and a talking object, small groups engage in rounds of dialogue without unproductive conflict.

- * **Time:**
 - * 35-60 minutes
- * **Group size:**
 - * 5-7 (large groups can be split into breakout groups)
- * **[How-To Resource](#)**
- * **Going virtual?** Ditch the talking objects and use the mute function on Zoom . Record answers in the chat box.



Chip Game

Chip games provide a way for community members to visualize an array of future development choices in a collaborative map-based workspace.

In a chip game, small groups work together to talk through issues, make decisions, and illustrate their preferred pattern of development on a large printed map. They do this by placing stickers, or chips, that represent different types and amounts of development on the map, marking how they want their community to grow.

- * **Time:**
 - * 2-3 hours
- * **Group size:**
 - * 3-10 (use breakout groups if necessary)
- * **[How-To Resource](#)**
- * **Field Problems example:**
- * **Going virtual?** Try using Zoom and Mural together.



Source: Confluence

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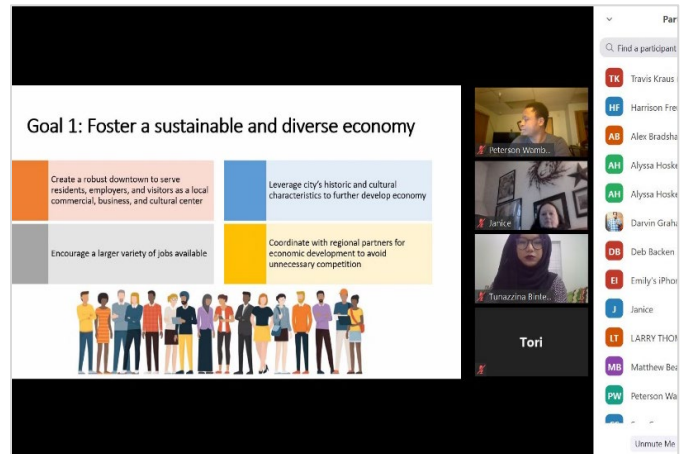


Past planning teams have had unique and innovative ideas for public engagement. Creativity is encouraged and often helps motivate the community to participate in your efforts!



PROGRESSIVE DINNER IN MASON CITY

The Mason City North End Neighborhood planning team creatively used the Open House format to both engage residents and support businesses in their planning area. With financial support from the county public health department and donations from restaurants, participants enjoyed four meal courses at four stops in the neighborhood. At each location, the planning team presented information and encouraged discussion about neighborhood issues. The final stop (the dessert course) was an unoccupied commercial space that had been cleaned up for the event, after having been used as storage for years. As an added touch, they put art in the storefront windows.



VIRTUAL TOWN HALL IN TAMA

After their spring semester public outreach activity (an excellent example of the Chip Game format) was upended by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Tama Comprehensive Plan team quickly pivoted to an online format. Their “Tama Talks” town hall was a virtual gathering using Zoom video conferencing. The team utilized many features of the software, including polls that allowed participants to prioritize objectives within each of the broad plan goals. They also shared their recommendations for Tama’s Future Land Use map and left time at the end of the meeting for participants to talk about other needs and opportunities in the community.



FOOTBALL IN KEOKUK

The planning team working on a Downtown Revitalization Plan for Keokuk wanted to engage residents early in their project. They decided to go where they knew they could interact with a lot of people in a short amount of time- what better opportunity than a high school football game? Despite the frigid temperatures, the team collected over 70 questionnaires and connected with over 100 game attendees over a 2-hour period. They also got to see the Keokuk Chiefs wallopp the visiting Fairfield Trojans by a score of 61-0.

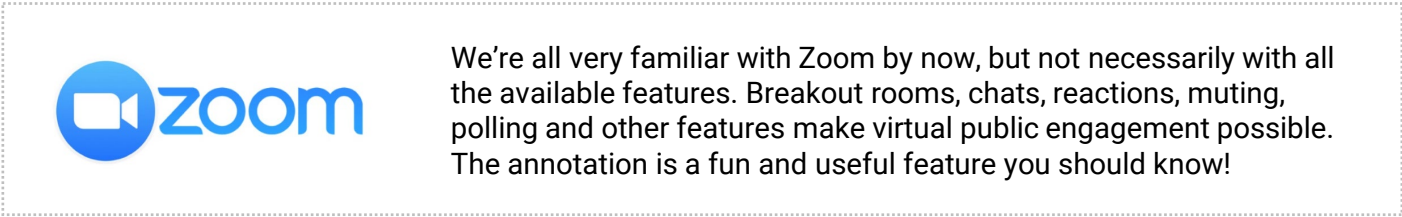


DELMAR VISION HOTLINE

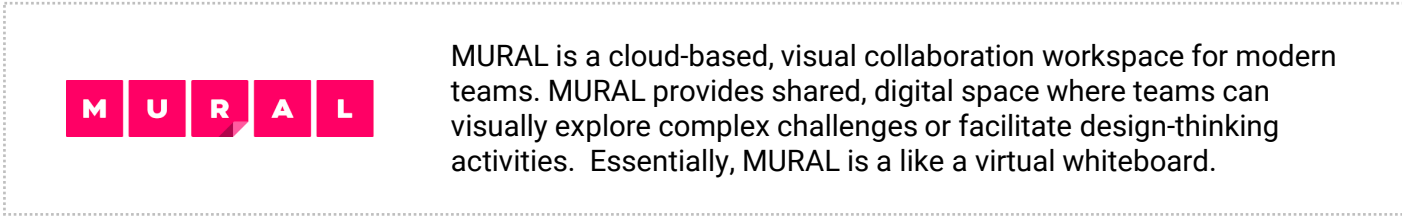
One student working to help with visioning in the small town of Delmar, Iowa (population 525) set up a unique way for residents to provide input- using Google to collect voicemails. Flyers around town encouraged residents to call in to a “hotline” and leave messages about their hopes for the future of Delmar. The hotline number was created with Google Voice, which generates a new phone number linked to the user account and transcribes voicemails to text. Unfortunately, only 3 people called into the hotline, but this was definitely a creative idea!



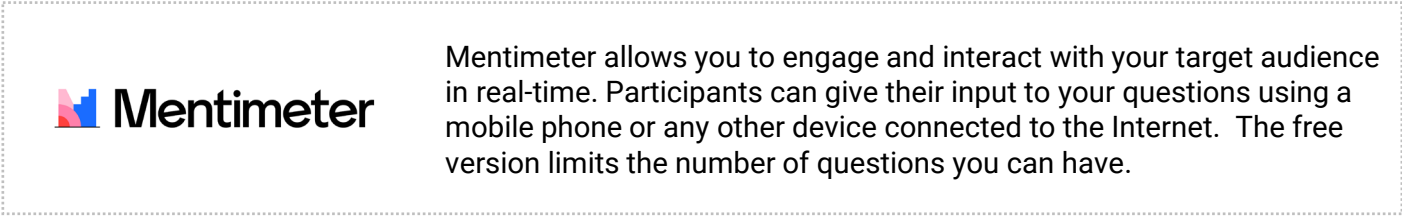
Online applications are super helpful (and increasingly necessary) for online collaborations, data analysis, and designing materials. If you've found other good virtual tools, let us know!



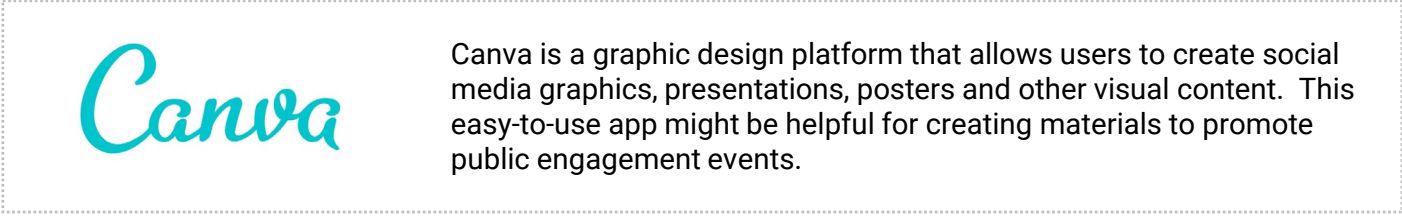
We're all very familiar with Zoom by now, but not necessarily with all the available features. Breakout rooms, chats, reactions, muting, polling and other features make virtual public engagement possible. The annotation is a fun and useful feature you should know!



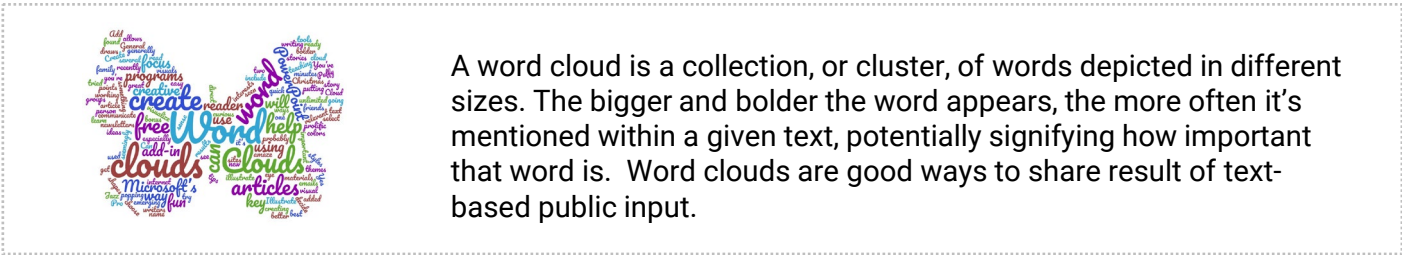
MURAL is a cloud-based, visual collaboration workspace for modern teams. MURAL provides shared, digital space where teams can visually explore complex challenges or facilitate design-thinking activities. Essentially, MURAL is like a virtual whiteboard.



Mentimeter allows you to engage and interact with your target audience in real-time. Participants can give their input to your questions using a mobile phone or any other device connected to the Internet. The free version limits the number of questions you can have.

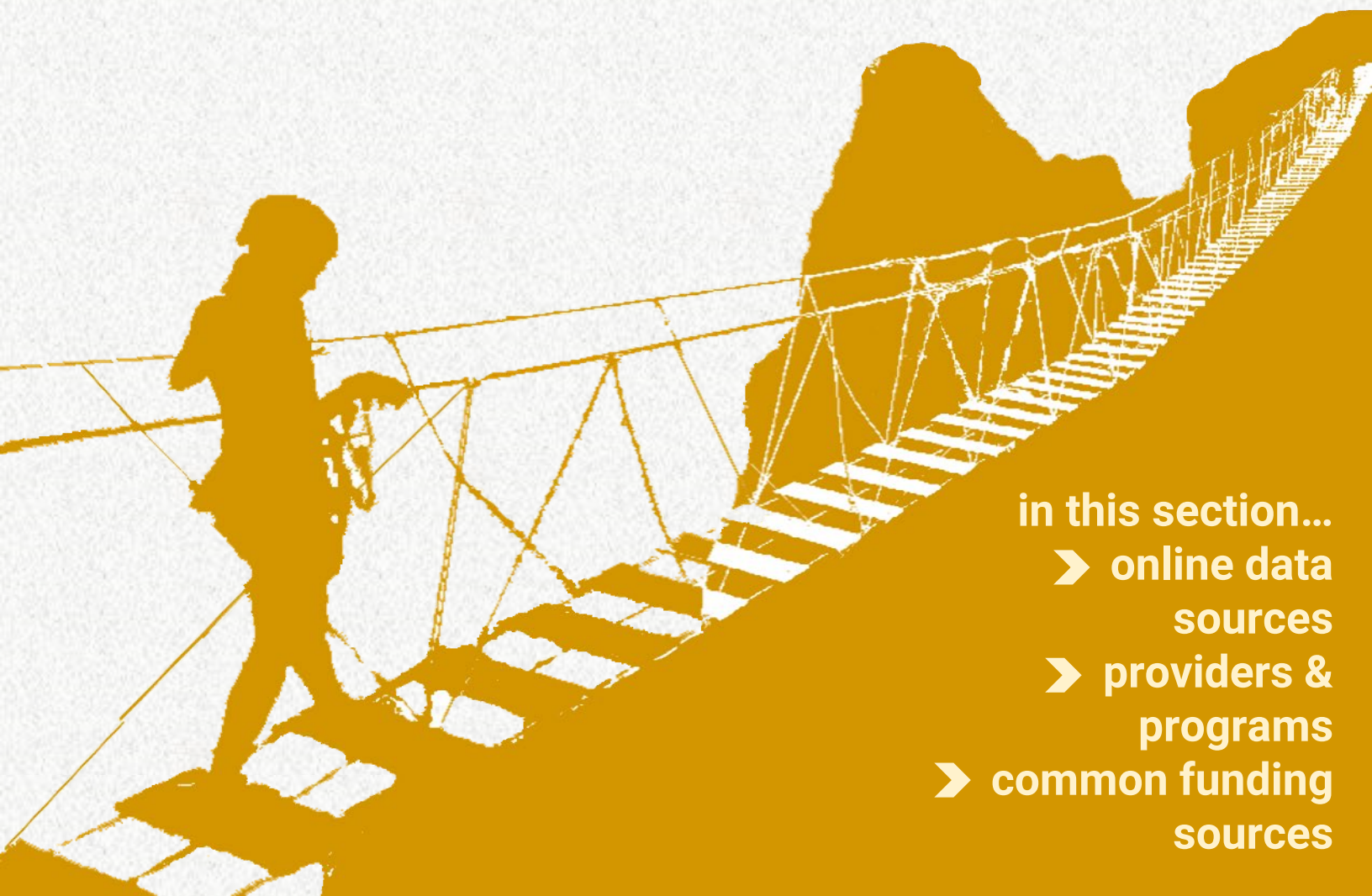


Canva is a graphic design platform that allows users to create social media graphics, presentations, posters and other visual content. This easy-to-use app might be helpful for creating materials to promote public engagement events.



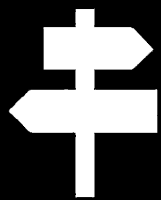
A word cloud is a collection, or cluster, of words depicted in different sizes. The bigger and bolder the word appears, the more often it's mentioned within a given text, potentially signifying how important that word is. Word clouds are good ways to share result of text-based public input.

INFORMATION STATION



in this section...

- online data sources
- providers & programs
- common funding sources



SERVICE AGENCIES

Communities are more successful when they build strong partnerships and leverage external resources (hence, IISC!). This handy guide will help you navigate some of these organizations.

 Economic Development


 Transportation

 Environment

 Housing

 Policy

 Associations

 Placemaking

Data

Funding

Programs

Technical
Resources
& Info










Topic
Areas













	Data	Funding	Programs	Technical Resources & Info	Topic Areas
 IOWA FINANCE AUTHORITY	✓	✓	✓	✓	
		✓	✓		
			✓		
	✓				 
	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	✓			✓	 

Data	Funding	Programs	Technical Resources & Info	Topic Areas
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	Data	Funding	Programs	Technical Resources & Info	Topic Areas
		✓	✓	✓	\$ 
IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY Extension and Outreach			✓	✓	\$ 
			✓	✓	\$
			✓	✓	\$
				✓	
				✓	

	Data	Funding	Programs	Technical Resources & Info	Topic Areas
		✓	✓	✓	
			✓	✓	
IOWA ARTS COUNCIL		✓	✓	✓	
				✓	
		✓	✓	✓	\$
		✓	✓		



DATA SOURCES

You might find these data sources helpful, especially as you search for information specific to Iowa communities. The Census and ACS are great, but don't overlook other sources!

LABOR

IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- * [Labor Force and Unemployment](#)
- * [Occupational Projections \(State/Region\)](#)
- * [Workforce Needs Assessment \(State/Region\)](#)
- * [Laborshed Studies \(State/Region/City\)](#)

BUSINESS & INDUSTRY

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE & FINANCE

- * [Retail Sales and Use Tax Report and Data Tables](#)

IOWA COMMUNITY INDICATORS PROGRAM

- * [City and County retail sales and trends reports](#)

LOCATION ONE SYSTEM (LOIS)

- * [Available Industrial Buildings and Sites in Iowa](#)

COUNTY HEALTH RANKINGS

* [Iowa County Health Rankings](#)

Health Factors

- * Tobacco Use
- * Diet & Exercise
- * Alcohol & Drug Use
- * Sexual Activity
- * Access to Care
- * Quality of Care
- * Education
- * Employment
- * Income
- * Family & Social Support
- * Community Safety
- * Air & Water Quality
- * Housing & Transit

Health Outcomes

- * Premature death
- * Life expectancy
- * Premature mortality
- * Child & Infant mortality
- * Poor Physical Health Days
- * Poor Mental Health Days
- * Low Birthweight
- * Frequent Physical Distress
- * Frequent Mental Distress
- * Diabetes
- * HIV Prevalence

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

* [Iowa DOT Open Data \(Data and GIS\)](#)

- * Crashes
- * Boundary and Reference
- * Classifications
- * Rail
- * Aviation
- * Transit Routes

* [Traffic Counts by City and County](#)

- * Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT)
- * Turning Movement Diagrams

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

* [Iowa Education Statistics](#)

- * PreK-12 Enrollments by Grade, Race, and Gender
- * Enrollment Projections
- * Free and Reduced-Price Lunch (FRL)
- * English Learners (EL)
- * Migrants
- * Immigrants
- * Student Performance
- * Staff Data
- * Financial Data

* [Iowa School District Boundaries](#)

Property specific data: Contact the Assessor's office in your partnering community to get information about physical characteristics, zoning classifications, property values, ownership, sale information, and more.

Current For-Sale and For-Rent Residential Properties: Look at website like [Zillow](#), [Trulia](#), [IowaHousingSearch.org](#), and [Craigslist](#). You can also find information on local realtor websites.

IOWA ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS

* [Iowa Housing Stats and Trends](#)

Housing and Urban Development

- * [Fair Market Rents](#)
- * [Income Limits](#)
- * [Picture of Subsidized Households](#)

US CENSUS TIGER LINE SHAPEFILES

IOWA GIS DATA REPOSITORY

IOWA GEODATA

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION OPEN DATA

IOWA GEOGRAPHIC MAP SERVER (Historical Aerial Imagery)



FUNDING SOURCES

One of the first questions you'll hear about your undoubtedly fantastic strategy proposals will be "how do we pay for that?" This list can help get you started on your funding recommendations.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- * [Iowa Economic Development Authority \(IEDA\) Community Development Programs and Funding webpage](#)
- * [US Economic Development Administration \(EDA\) Funding Opportunities webpage](#)
- * [US Department of Agriculture \(USDA\) Programs & Services webpage](#)

- * [Opportunity Zones](#)
- * [CDBG Downtown Revitalization Fund](#)
- * [IEDA – Brownfield and Grayfield Redevelopment Tax Credits](#)
- * [IEDA – Community Catalyst Building Remediation](#)
- * [IEDA - Nuisance Property and Abandoned Building Remediation Loan Program](#)
- * [IEDA - Employment Transportation Program](#)
- * [Iowa DNR - Derelict Building Grant Program](#)
- * [IDOT - Revitalize Iowa's Sound Economy \(RISE\)](#)
- * [IDOT Linking Iowa's Freight Transportation System \(LIFTS\) Program](#)

- * **Local Incentives:** Look up your partnering community's economic development incentives to find out about property tax abatement, revolving loan funds (RLFs), tax increment financing (TIF), and more.

FOR BUSINESSES

- * [Iowa Economic Development Authority Business Programs and Funding webpage](#)
- * [Iowa Source Link – Financing Fundamentals webpage](#)
- * [IEDA - Employee Stock Ownership Plan \(ESOP\)](#)
- * [IEDA - Economic Development Set-Aside \(EDSA\)](#)
- * [IEDA – High Quality Jobs Program](#)
- * [IEDA – New Jobs Tax Credit](#)
- * [IEDA – Demonstration Fund](#)
- * [IEDA – Iowa Innovation Acceleration Fund](#)
- * [IEDA – Proof of Commercial Relevance](#)
- * [IEDA – Small Business Innovation Research \(SBIR\) and Small Business Technology Transfer \(STTR\) Outreach Program](#)
- * [IEDA – Innovation Fund Tax Credit](#)
- * [IEDA – Targeted Small Business Program](#)
- * **Local Incentives:** Look up your partnering community's economic development incentives to find out about property tax abatement, revolving loan funds (RLFs), tax increment financing (TIF), and more.

WORKFORCE

- * [IEDA – Accelerated Career Education](#)
- * [IEDA – Iowa Industrial New Jobs Training \(260E\)](#)
- * [IEDA – Iowa Apprenticeship Programs](#)
- * [IEDA – Iowa Jobs Training Program \(260F\)](#)
- * [IEDA – Iowa Student Internship Program](#)
- * [Iowa Workforce Development – Work Opportunity Tax Credit](#)

- * [Iowa Finance Authority \(IFA\) Program webpage](#)
- * [Housing and Urban Development \(HUD\) funding opportunities webpage](#)

- * [CDBG Housing Fund](#)
- * [IEDA - Workforce Housing Tax Credits](#)
- * [IEDA – Disaster Workforce Housing Tax Credits](#)
- * [Main Street Iowa Challenge Grant \(for Upper Story Residential\)](#)
- * [Empower Rural Iowa – Rural Housing Assessment Grant](#)
- * [Empower Rural Iowa – Rural Innovation Grant](#)
- * [IFA – Community-Based Housing Revolving Loan Fund](#)
- * [IFA – Multifamily Loan Program](#)
- * [IFA – Local Housing Trust Fund](#)
- * [IFA – Project-Based Housing Program](#)
- * [HUD - HOME Program](#)
- * [HUD – National Housing Trust Fund](#)
- * [Federal Housing Tax Credit Program](#)
- * [Main Street Loan Program](#)

- * **Local Incentives:** Look up your partnering community’s residential development/improvement incentives to find out about property tax abatement, down payment assistance, and more.
- * **Regional incentives:** Look up funding resources administered by the area’s Council of Governments (COG), also known as the Regional Planning Agency, to find out about homeowner assistance programs.

ROADS, STREETS & BRIDGES

- * IDOT - Guide to Transportation Funding Programs
- * US DOT – Grants Webpage
- * IDOT - Revitalize Iowa's Sound Economy (RISE)
- * Linking Iowa's Freight Transportation System (LIFTS) Program
- * IDOT – Iowa Clear Air Attainment Program (ICAAP)
- * IDOT - County and City Bridge Construction Fund
- * Federal Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Program
(often administered by regional COGs)

TRAFFIC SAFETY & ENGINEERING

- * Traffic Engineering Assistance Program (TEAP)
- * Traffic Safety Improvement Program (TSIP)
- * Urban-State Traffic Engineering Program (U-STEP)
- * Highway Safety Improvement Program – Secondary
- * Pedestrian Curb Ramp Construction

TRAILS

- * State and Federal Recreational Trails Grant Programs
- * Iowa DNR - Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) Grant
- * IDOT – Iowa Clear Air Attainment Program (ICAAP)
- * IDOT – Iowa's Transportation Alternatives Program
- * IEDA – Enhance Iowa

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

- * [USDA Community Facilities Direct Loan & Grant Program](#)
- * [USDA - ReConnect Rural Broadband Program](#)
- * [USDA – Water & Waste Disposal Loan & Grant Program](#)
- * [IEDA– Community Facilities and Services Fund](#)
- * [CDBG – Water and Sewer Fund](#)
- * [Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant Program](#)
- * [Iowa Energy Center Grant Program](#)

PUBLIC ART AND PLACEMAKING

- * [**Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs Grants webpage**](#)
- * [**National Endowment for the Arts grants for organizations webpage**](#)
- * [IEDA – Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program](#)
- * [Enhance Iowa – Community Attraction and Tourism \(CAT\) fund](#)
- * [Keep Iowa Beautiful – Paint Iowa Beautiful Grant](#)
- * [National Endowment for the Arts \(NEA\) – Our Town Grant](#)
- * [NEA – Grants for Arts Projects](#)
- * [Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs – Art Project Grant](#)

ENVIRONMENT

- * [Iowa Department of Natural Resources \(IDNR\) grants webpage](#)
- * [Iowa Finance Authority State Revolving Fund Water Quality Programs webpage](#)
- * [IDOT – Iowa Clear Air Attainment Program \(ICAAP\)](#)
- * [Iowa Clean Water Loan Program](#)
- * [Iowa State Revolving Fund \(for watershed and stormwater control projects\)](#)
- * [Iowa Grocery Industry – Build with Bags Grant Program](#)

HEALTH & SAFETY

- * [IEDA - Nuisance Property and Abandoned Building Remediation Loan Program](#)
- * [IDNR – Derelict Building Grant Program](#)
- * [FEMA – Assistance to Firefighters Grants](#)

HAZARD MITIGATION & DISASTER RELIEF

- * [Iowa Homeland Security & Emergency Management funding webpage](#)
- * [IEDA – Iowa Nonprofit Recovery Fund](#)
- * [IEDA – Small Business Utility Disruption Prevention](#)
- * [IEDA – COVID-19 Targeted Small Business Sole Operator Fund](#)
- * [Iowa Hazard Mitigation Assistance grant program](#)
- * [US Small Business Administration \(SBA\) – Disaster Assistance Loans](#)

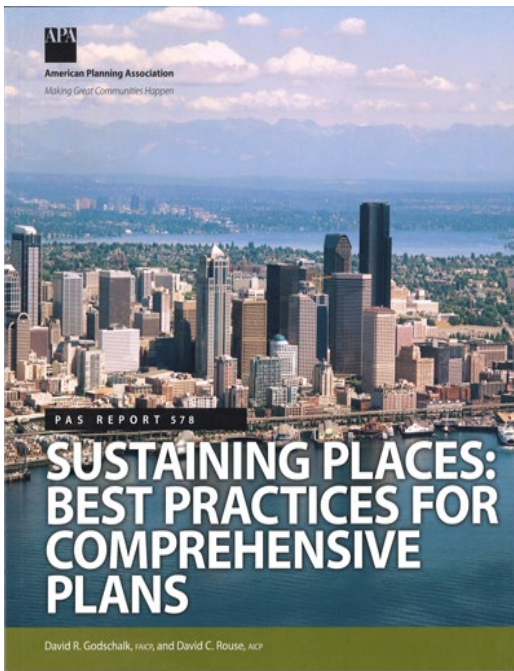
OTHER SOURCES

- * **Grants.gov**: Various Database of Federal grants
- * **IowaGrants.gov**: Various Database of State of Iowa grants
- * **The Wellmark Foundation**

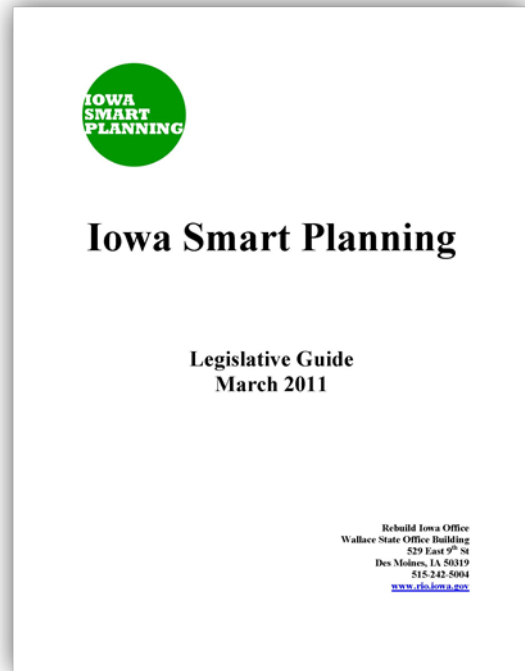
TOOLKIT LIBRARY



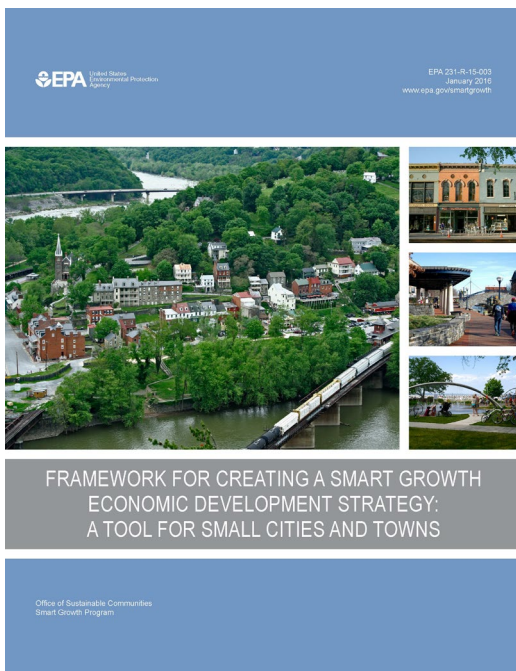
in this section...
➤ best practices
resources



Sustaining Places: Best Practices for Comprehensive Plans



Iowa Smart Planning Principles for Comprehensive Plans – Legislative Guide



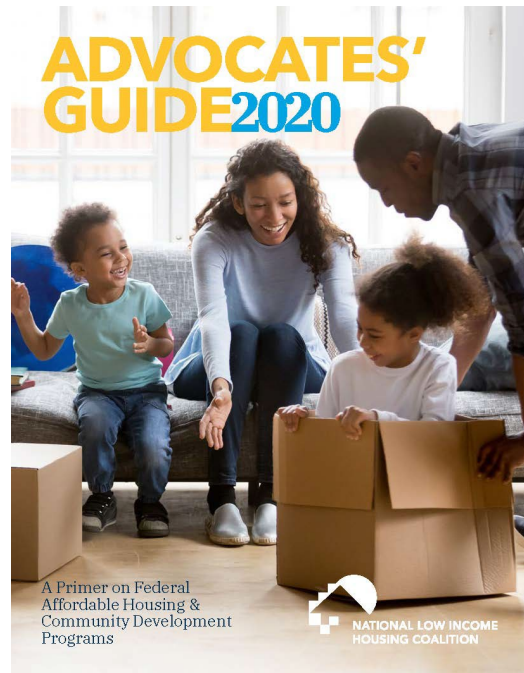
Framework for Creating a Smart Growth Economic Development Strategy: A Tool for Small Cities and Towns



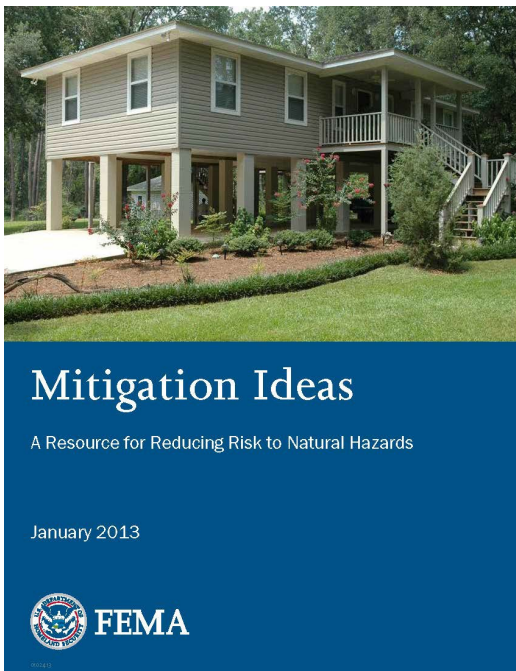
How To Do Creative Placemaking



How to Do a Downtown and Business District Market Analysis



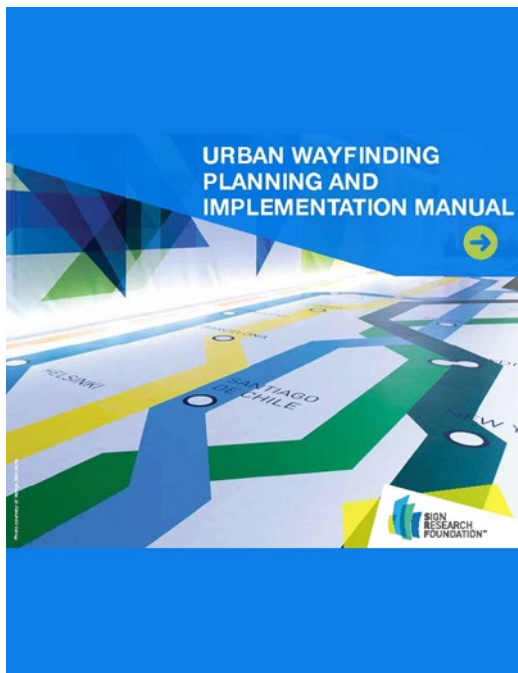
National Low-Income Housing Coalition publishes the *Advocates' Guide to Housing and Community Development Policy*



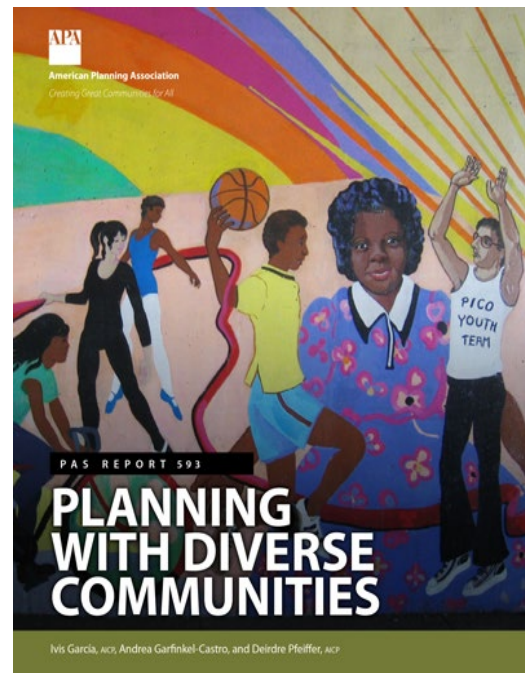
Mitigation Ideas: A Resource for Reducing Risk to Natural Hazards



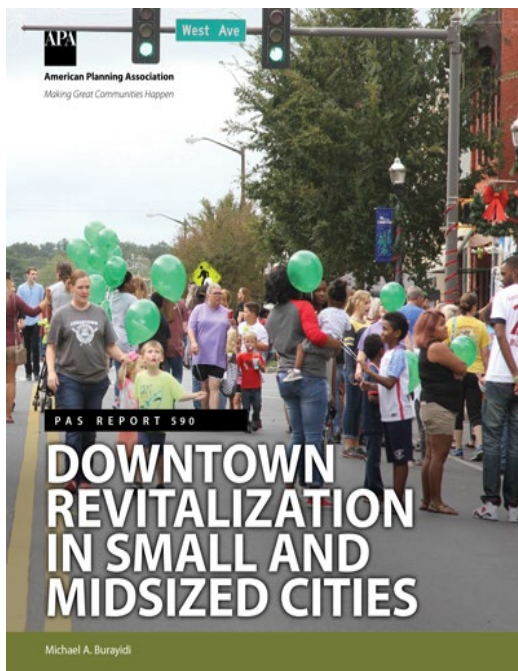
Better Block Recipe Library



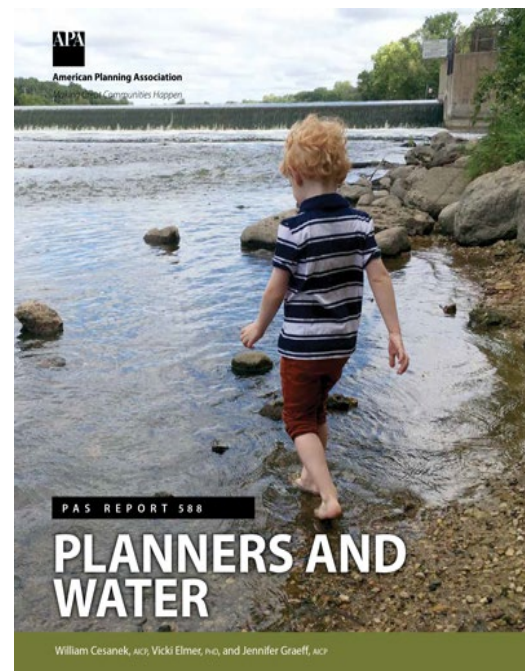
Urban Wayfinding Planning and Implementation Manual



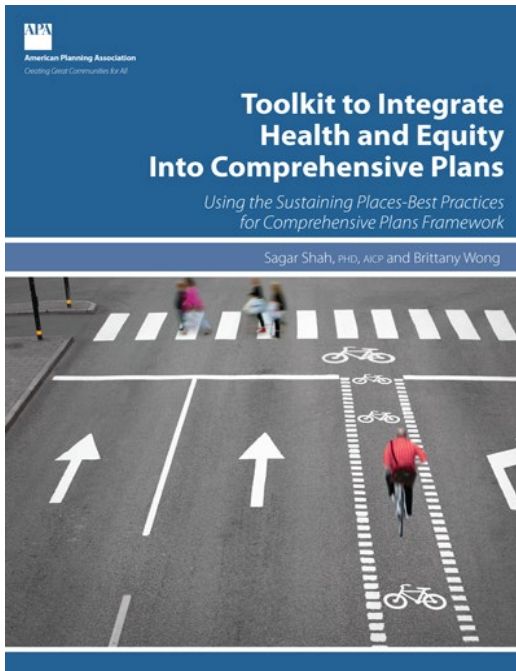
PAS Report 593: Planning with Diverse Communities



PAS Report 590: Downtown Revitalization in Small and Midsize Cities



PAS Report 588: Planners and Water



[Toolkit to Integrate Health and Equity into Comprehensive Plans](#)



PRO TIPS



THINK OF SEMESTERS AS TWO PHASES OF YOUR PROJECT

The fall semester (Phase 1) should be focused on learning about your community and understanding the underlying issues. Phase 1 work should be complete by the end of the first semester (i.e. all the content is written, proofread, etc.) so that you can focus on the actual planning strategies and recommendations (Phase 2) in the spring semester. The charts below breaks down typical project components by semester.

FALL SEMESTER

Planning Document

- Introduction
- Vision Statement
- Methodology
- Community Profile
- Synthesize Existing Documents
- Existing Conditions (requires site visit)
- Public/Stakeholder Input
- Comparable Cities / Case Studies
- Preliminary Maps
- Preliminary Goals & Objectives

Project Management/Other

- Group Organization / Roles
- Project Management Tools
- Group/Partner Communication
- Tracking Hours
- Budgeting
- Gantt Chart / Work Plan
- Public input events
- Problem Statement
- Poster Proposal
- End-of-Semester Presentation

SPRING SEMESTER

Planning Document

- Final Goals, Objectives
- Strategies & Recommendations
- Report Design
- Public/Stakeholder Feedback
- Final Maps
- Implementation & Evaluation
- Process for Plan Adoption
- Funding Sources

Project Management/Other

- Gantt Chart #2
- Recommendation Alternatives
- Gathering Public Feedback
- Process for Plan Adoption to Partners
- Mid-Semester Presentation
- Final Presentation
- APA Poster

**MORE PRO TIPS
COMING SOON!**

APPENDIX

Reference of Past Capstone Projects

Comprehensive Plans:

- [Cedar County Comprehensive Plan for 2038](#)
- [Resilient Mason City 2027: Mason City Comprehensive Plan Update](#)
- [Salix 2035 Comprehensive Plan](#)

Strategic Plans::

- [Jackson County Tomorrow Strategic Plan](#)
- [Cedar County: Envisioning a New Horizon Vision Plan](#)
- [Muscatine Riverfront Strategic Growth Plan](#)
- [Charles City Strategic Plan for Sustainable Riverfront Development: Paddling Into the Future,](#)
- [Decorah, Iowa, Smart Planning Principles, May 2011](#)

Sustainability Plans:

- [Mason City Sustainability Plan: The "Wright" Fit](#)
- [iGreenCR Evaluation : A field problems project in Cedar Rapids, IA](#)
- [Dubuque County Sustainability Indicators](#)
- [Sustainability Progress Report 2012](#)
- [Sustainable Dubuque 2012: Portrait of Poverty Study](#)
- [Dubuque's Green and Healthy Homes Initiative: A Priority Model and Recommendations for Long-term Success](#)
- [The Wellman Sustainability Plan, 2010-2020](#)
- [Renewable Dubuque: Renewable Energy for a Smarter Sustainable Dubuque](#)
- [Decorah WE CAN: It all begins at home. Energy Existing Conditions Report. Stormwater Existing Conditions Report. Policy Recommendations for Sustainability in Decorah, Iowa](#)

Technical:

- Self-supported municipal improvement districts : A toolkit for planning, implementation, and evaluation
- SSMID : A step-by-step guide for practitioners
- Iowa City Automated Vehicles Adaptation & Equity Plan
- Linn County Wind Farm Siting Analysis
- Iowa Reuse Readiness: A Toolkit for Identifying and Assessing Brownfield Sites
- Trout habitat and stream restoration in Decorah
- Frac-Sand Mining in Winneshiek County : A Comprehensive Impact Study
- Connecting Local Food Producers with Institutions in Dubuque,
- Water Quality Credit Trading and Charles City
- Lake Macbride Watershed Project Vegetation Management Plan
- Guidebook on Using Natural Restoration Methods in the Ralston Creek Watershed,
- The Decorah Metronet Fiber Broadband Network
- Decorah Stormwater Management Plan
- First Step Oskaloosa: Solid Waste Recommendations

Economic Redevelopment:

- [Clinton Economic Development Plan](#)
- [Cedar Rapids Workforce Retention Project](#)
- [Prosperity Eastern Iowa's Petal Project](#)

Downtown Revitalization:

- [Downtown Webster City Strategic Plan](#)
- [The Downtown Greenspace Plan](#)
- [Downtown Redevelopment in Burlington, Iowa](#)
- [Vision Anamosa: Working Together for the Future. A Report and Recommendations on the condition and revitalization of Downtown Anamosa, Iowa](#)
- [Design Concepts for Redevelopment of Downtown Davenport](#)
- [Improving Downtown Iowa City's Alleys : A Clear Path](#)

Neighborhood Redevelopment/Revitalization:

- [Mason City's North End Healthy Neighborhood Plan](#)
- [Sioux City Neighborhood Housing Study](#)
- [Housing for a Vibrant Dubuque: Neighborhood Choice & Redevelopment in Dubuque, Iowa](#)
- [Schools, Neighborhoods, and Student Outcomes in Dubuque, Iowa, Schools, Neighborhoods, and Student Outcomes: The Intersection of Education and Community Development in Dubuque, Iowa](#)
- [Reimagining the South Port of Dubuque](#)

Trails and Parks (Open Space):

- Webster City Parks and Recreation Master Plan
- Winneshiek County Trails: Economic Impact and Master Plan

Transportation:

- Sioux City Active Transportation Plan
- Leeds/Floyd Boulevard Corridor Study
- Muscatine Pedestrian & Bicycle Master Plan
- Increasing Mobility in Dubuque: Developing Alternative Mode-sharing Opportunities
- An Assessment of Transportation in Downtown Moline