

**INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY TASK FORCE
REPORT**



Presented to:
Ames City Council
May 13, 2008

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REPORT

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I.

Preface

The City of Ames strives to create a civic atmosphere in which all citizens may live, work, and study in a safe and non-discriminatory environment. In recent months, a constellation of issues relating to the ability of our community to adapt to an increasingly diverse population have captured public attention. Reports circulated of increased and more violent crime and of troubling incidents in schools. Some residents were angered by apparently discriminatory treatment by their fellow citizens.

In response to these challenges to the harmony and well-being of our community, the Mayor convened a public meeting on November 27, 2007, to hear from City and School professionals, and from the public. Based on the information and comments exchanged at that meeting, it became apparent that, if Ames is to be the welcoming, thriving community we all know it can be, every citizen and every institution must be actively involved in identifying and dismantling the barriers that separate us from one another.

To start the process of involving the entire Ames community in creating solutions to the challenges that face us all, the Mayor created the Inclusive Community Task Force, which was given the following charge:

- To identify and support existing programs and activities in the Ames community which foster greater understanding and better relations within the entire community;
- To identify unmet needs and opportunities for growth and improvement, including use of appropriate practices developed in other communities;
- To keep the community informed about the task force's progress and identification of unmet needs or underutilized resources;
- To report to the community and the city council by April 30 a report including findings, recommendations, and a plan for regular evaluation of progress.

The first meeting of the Task Force took place in January, 2008. The group, chosen to include citizens connected to a broad range of community institutions and individuals, met eight times, and also held two public input sessions. Task Force members began their work with the public comments made at the November 27 forum, and then sought input from community members in every part of Ames on the topics of what made them feel welcome, or unwelcome, in Ames, and what changes would enhance the degree to which the

City of Ames welcomes new residents. The results of those inquiries, expressed as challenges and opportunities, are contained in this report.

The focus of the Task Force's effort is principally on changes that can be made by individuals and non-governmental institutions to foster greater understanding and better relations within the entire community. We acknowledge that there are many individuals and organizations in the community already investing considerable effort in such activities, and we are grateful for the positive impact they have had. The intention of the Task Force is not to present a comprehensive listing of all actions that have been taken or might be taken, but to outline the kinds of activities suggested in response to our

questions about how we welcome new residents to our town and how we can insure that new residents become successful long-term residents. Each neighborhood, church, workplace, Parent-Teacher Organization, and individual will certainly have many more helpful ideas, which should be shared and implemented!

We are aware that at the public meeting, several citizens expressed concerns regarding law enforcement. Law enforcement issues are outside the scope of the Task Force's charge as established by Mayor Campbell. The Ames Police Department has created a Citizen's Advisory Committee of its own, and is actively pursuing a number of initiatives intended to enhance the effectiveness of the Ames Police Department in dealing with all members of the community. We assume, however, that all citizens agree both that fair and even-handed treatment by law enforcement officials is the right of all citizens in our democracy, and that criminal behavior is unwelcome at all times in our community.

Identification of appropriate practices from other Iowa communities was one of the charges of the Task Force. We regret that time constraints prevented us from completing this part of our task. The experiences of Marshalltown, Perry, Dubuque, Cedar Rapids, and Iowa City, among others, could provide relevant strategies for Ames. For example, Diversity Focus, a specialized consulting firm (www.diversityfocus.org) conducted extensive community surveys in Cedar Rapids and Iowa City, while the City of Dubuque provided diversity training for all city employees. These efforts were apparently effective, but would require substantial expenditure of funds to duplicate here. More investigation in this area would certainly yield useful results.

While the Task Force report most often provides specific mention of racial, socioeconomic, and language differences, we ask the reading public to consider inclusiveness challenges and opportunities with regard to the full spectrum of needs: those of veterans, immigrants, the developmentally and physically disabled and elderly citizens, as examples.

We began this process with the belief that no one individual or institution can resolve the challenges outlined in this report. However, working together, the individuals and institutions that make up Ames can help shape a more welcoming and inclusive community.

II.

Challenges

The Task Force has identified the following challenges facing us as a community and as individuals:

1. Building Bridges/Increasing Understanding Among Community Members

Some community members perceive that there has been a change in Ames and in the Ames Community School District student population in recent years. They perceive that there are increasing numbers of community members who are different from them, i.e. of a different race, different socioeconomic status, different educational background, or with different standards of public behavior. Some citizens have associated increased criminal activity in Ames with changes in the composition of the city's population. Stories, based on anecdotal description of these perceived changes, have developed and spread.

Ames has always been relatively transient, given the large proportion of the community associated with Iowa State University. Ames has also had a relatively diverse population for its size and geographic location. There is a perception that there are an increasing number of new residents coming to Ames with a high degree of transience driven by different factors, and with significantly different experiences: less schooling, fewer financial resources, fewer job skills, less trusting of and/or less comfortable with public institutions, and different attitudes and behaviors based on expectations in their former communities. There is increased potential for misunderstanding, distrust, and dislike to develop over differences in attitudes, behaviors, and abilities.

Challenges:

- How can we put stereotypes aside and treat each person we encounter, however different they may appear to be, as an individual?
- How can we avoid making damaging assumptions about all members of an ethnic or socioeconomic group based on the activities of individual members of those groups?
- What opportunities can we create to get to know each other; to build trust and understanding?
- How can we create person-to-person connections between existing and new residents?

2. Information Resources and Services

Ames has a wealth of services and resources: food pantries, rent and utility assistance, housing, counseling and support programs, medical assistance, preschools and child care, adult education and employment assistance, public transportation, sports and arts recreational groups, for example. Many community residents, both long-term and new,

are frequently unaware of the availability of many services. More effective methods for communicating the availability of services are needed.

Challenges:

- How do we help all new residents to connect effectively to the opportunities that initially attracted them to Ames?
- How do we distribute information regarding these services and resources? How do we keep this information accurate and up-to-date?
- How can we ensure that information is available in multiple languages?
- How well do existing resources match community needs?
- What systems and/or opportunities are available to promote economic self-sufficiency?

3. Developing a Community Where All Have the Opportunity to Succeed and Thrive

The city of Ames strives to offer all residents the opportunity to live in safe, clean, welcoming neighborhoods. Our city should also offer services, businesses, recreation, and entertainment resources to match the diverse needs, interests, and tastes of all Ames residents. The options currently available in our community do not yet reflect the diversity of ages, interests, and income levels of individuals in our community. Participation in community organizations can be limited by ability to pay fees and/or purchase needed equipment, scheduling, and availability of transportation. Our transportation needs have changed, and will continue to change, to support demographic changes.

Challenges:

- How do we ensure that housing in the community is available, safe and adequately maintained?
- How do we ensure that all residents are knowledgeable about and can access public services and community activities?
- How do we expand our shopping, dining, personal care, recreation, and entertainment offerings to meet community needs?
- How do we expand and change our transportation systems to reflect community needs?

III.

Opportunities

The Task Force has identified the following opportunities to improve welcoming and inclusiveness:

1. Building Bridges/Increasing Understanding Between Community Members

Ames *can be* a community where courteous, knowledgeable, and respectful service is provided at all businesses, government offices, schools.

- To ensure that the public face of the community is welcoming, the Chamber of Commerce, City of Ames Human Relations Commission, ISU Extension Service, and other organizations could collaborate in developing and offering a program for employers to train those who interact with the public in non-discriminatory customer service skills.
- To help ensure a future in which all are valued and included, all those who come into contact with school children (teachers, professional staff, bus drivers, cafeteria workers, custodians, etc.) should be trained to understand and assist students from diverse backgrounds (socioeconomic, religious, cultural, mental and physical capabilities).
- Programs that build acceptance and respect among students, such as Responsive Classroom, (see Appendix B.) have shown very positive results. Ames could consider ways to expand these programs to include parents/guardians and families.

Ames *can be* a community which offers diverse formal and informal opportunities for neighbors to get to know each other.

- Informal 'getting to know you' neighborhood gatherings are a great vehicle for building community, and should be encouraged in all Ames neighborhoods. Apartment residents and non-English-speaking residents should be made aware of the gatherings and encouraged to attend.
- Faith communities, neighborhood associations, civic groups, and others should provide opportunities for interaction between different elements of the community. Community groups should make use of social gatherings, seminars, and other events to invite members of other community groups and provide opportunities to get to know one another. Facilitated "Community Conversation" groups are recognized vehicles for productive interaction, and could be sponsored by faith communities and others. (See Appendix C. for further information on Community Conversations.)
- A 'Parent-to-Parent' program to pair an 'experienced' parent resident with a parent(s) who are new to the community could assist new families in the Ames Community School District. The 'experienced' parent resident

would be asked to acquaint the new family with available resources and school activities, and assist the new family with their transition to Ames.

- The existing FACES event could be reviewed, with specific consideration of expanded/revised content, scheduling, location, and sponsorship.
- A community organization or group of organizations could develop a program for welcoming new residents to the community. Pairs of individuals could serve as community and/or neighborhood “ambassadors” to meet with new residents upon their arrival in Ames, and provide follow-up visits as desired by the new resident.
- Faith communities and other community organizations could host periodic ‘newcomer’ meetings or events, where they specifically seek out new community residents and invite them to attend.

2. Information Resources and Services

Ames *can be* a community in which it’s easy for newcomers to learn about the services and resources available to them.

- A comprehensive, community-based “Welcome to Ames” packet should be provided for all newcomers. The packet could include information for people with limited financial resources, for people arriving from outside the United States, for apartment renters and for home buyers. Updates could be compiled through a single, centralized system. Availability would be widely and continually publicized, including through the City Side newsletter and other sources. Consideration should be given to offering the packet in languages other than English.
- Information about resources and services should be available in the key places where new residents connect to the community, such as
 - City of Ames utility registration office,
 - property management offices and real estate agencies
 - MICA
 - human resources departments of large employers
 - grocery stores and malls
 - Ames Public Library
 - Ames Community School District offices
 - Banks
 - Transportation services
- The City of Ames could sponsor additional community forums, similar to the November 27, 2007 meeting. These forums might include both an educational component and time for public comment. Possible topics for the education component include: Juvenile Justice System, Beyond Welfare, Youth and Shelter Services, Center for Creative Justice, Emergency Residence Project, ISU services to international students, Ames Police Department and school district updates.

- Community businesses and service providers should be encouraged to provide translation capabilities as appropriate.
- Community organizations could sponsor a 'Public Service Fair', similar to the 'Energy Fair', to provide an opportunity for all community members to learn about existing services.
- A reference desk could be created at City Hall to serve as a universal 'go to' site for information regarding public services and community organizations.
- The Ames Human Relations Commission could consider creating and maintaining a community service database.

Ames *can be* a community in which good relations between landlords and tenants help build strong neighborhoods.

- Property managers, landlords, tenants and the City of Ames can work together to improve landlord tenant relations and enhance compliance with relevant city ordinances.
- Neighborhood organizations should include both homeowners and renters as part of the neighborhood/community.

Ames *can be* a community where residents work with one another; not one for the other.

- Organizations such as Beyond Welfare are a model of the philosophy of providing service through working together, by linking people willing to help with people seeking support. Other organizations within the community could consider this philosophy as they develop their service plans.

3. Developing a Community Where All Have the Opportunity to Succeed and Thrive

Ames *can be* a community in which the needs of all demographic groups are considered when decisions are made by community institutions.

- The City of Ames should gather and disseminate demographic data to present an accurate picture of the community, not one based on anecdote. Demographic changes should be considered in city planning and programming.
- Several service agencies regularly assess community needs. Community institutions should use the data to determine the extent to which needs and services match in Ames.

Ames *can be* a community in which "Are we being inclusive?" is a key question in community development.

- The Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development Commission should encourage establishment of small businesses to provide shopping, dining, personal care, and entertainment options that represent the diversity of individuals and income levels within the community.

Ames *can be* a community in which local institutions work collaboratively to maximize access for all to community resources.

- Community organizations should work in partnership with the Ames Community School District and the City of Ames Parks and Recreation Department to provide affordable and accessible before and after school programs. New and existing programs should ensure that all children can participate without barriers such as cost or transportation.
- Public gathering places such as parks, gymnasiums, and meeting spaces should be available to all on a free or low-cost basis. Community organizations, local government, and educational institutions should partner to ensure that these resources are adequate to the needs of the community.
- The City of Ames and Iowa State University should continue to work together to ensure that Ames' public transportation system addresses changes in the community's geographic footprint and community composition. Special attention should be given to transportation that serves to major employers and regional medical centers.

IV.

Evaluation Plan

What measuring sticks can we develop to use to determine whether the community is making any progress at becoming more welcoming and inclusive?

Information provided at Mayor Campbell's forum and gathered by task force membership is congruent with views held by different segments of Ames residents. Several major themes have been identified. They are perceived lack of personal safety, differences in public behavior, and unacceptable treatment when interacting with institutions (i.e., law enforcement, educational institutions, etc.).

To facilitate understanding of progress in our community, several activities can occur on a regular basis to track Ames' progress as a welcoming and inclusive community. The information can be shared with and used by individuals and institutions.

Activity One

Community institutions can work collaboratively in creating and using a monitoring system to look at residents' opinions on a set of key welcoming and inclusive indicators. Use a survey that can be reused and/or use previously collected information.

Activity Two

Since all concerns are expressed by individuals and/or institutions, there can be periodic follow-up with the specific individuals and/or institutions to determine if concerns have been resolved.

Activity Three

Local media can be monitored for clues in local news stories, letters and complaints.

We need to remind ourselves that Ames is us. Individuals and institutions will need to work together to make this a community for all.

V.

Appendix A

Personal Statement

Note: This account was submitted by Debbie Lee, a member of the Task Force. It reflects one citizen's personal experience with many of the issues that surfaced at the November 27, 2007 City Council meeting.

After our first task force meeting, I wrestled with why I had been asked to serve. As I thought about the group, I realized that most members are in positions, professional or volunteer, where they frequently encounter new members of our community, or are working on their behalf...the schools, the churches, medical services, YSS, AMOS, the Human Relations Commission, the court system. I had a sense of being a 'fish out of water', as I had no such connection. Over time, I have concluded that one of my roles on the task force is to represent the members of the Ames community who are supposed to be welcoming new residents. I feel that the picture of Ames developed by our Task Force will not be complete without sharing some of the experiences of my neighbors and friends related to the changing composition of our community.

I live in what I will call a transitional neighborhood; a neighborhood that used to have significant levels of college students renting houses and apartments. As a neighborhood with a high proportion of college student residents, we were used to behaviors that were frequently annoying: loud cars, music, and parties, poor property maintenance and trash-strewn yards, and speeding.

Approximately five years ago, there began to be a change in the neighborhood. The change was coincident with a decline in ISU enrollment, and the availability of numerous new apartment complexes, which offered better amenities than the small, beat-up houses in our neighborhood. 'For Rent' and 'For Sale' signs appeared for prolonged periods in front of houses that had formerly been easy to rent. While I can not document this, it seemed that we eventually entered a period where landlords grew desperate to rent, and accepted tenants with a higher risk factor than they would have accepted in the past. Whatever the cause, neighborhood residents began to have experiences that generated uncertainty and fear. I witnessed first hand how quickly we can develop doubts about the desirability of living in a particular neighborhood.

We all know that you can have an annoying neighbor wherever your home may be located. What events and observations cause residents to change from loving their neighborhood to thinking it might be time to leave? In our neighborhood, the incidents included the following:

- Arrests for, and evidence of, drug-related activities in neighborhood homes.
- Citation of neighborhood residents for illegal possession of a firearm.
- Loud and/or profane language; frequent angry communication, in yards, at the park, or indoors, but so loud that the neighbors can hear.
- Violation of perceived property boundaries (taking bicycles from front yard, leaving them broken and discarded in other parts of the

neighborhood; insecurity about going out into your own yard at night, because you are uncertain who you might encounter; burglary).

- Children going door-to-door trying to sell used items or asking for money.
- People behaving in ways you were taught were dangerous or rude. For example, groups of people walking in the street, rather than on the sidewalk.
- Frequent observation of groups of children unattended by an adult in situations where resident would generally expect an adult to be present.

During this same time period, we were also observing changes at our children's schools. Parents began to express the following concerns:

- Fear that their child was not progressing in school as expected because the teacher was distracted by the needs and behavior of other children in the classroom. We observed increasing numbers of children being added to and leaving the classroom during a given school year, increased tardiness and truancy, increasing levels of incomplete homework, and classroom disruptions.
- Children not wanting to go to school because of loud, profane language and aggressive physical behavior.
- Wanting to encourage their children to be welcoming, but having concerns when their child was invited on play dates to the homes of unfamiliar families. Concerns included different attitudes regarding adult supervision, freedom to roam, profane language, presence of weapons in the home, and, in apartment settings, the behavior of other residents and their guests.

When parents at Edwards Elementary School began to express concerns in 2006-07, families in our neighborhood recognized their feelings.

Many of my neighbors are very informed, compassionate people. They are well aware that not everyone has had access to the opportunities they have had. They have chosen to live in an older neighborhood in part because they value the diversity of housing and individuals. Accordingly, they were initially welcoming. However, their experiences have made them more guarded. They are still compassionate, but they are wary. As the old saying goes, "once burnt; twice shy". They have seen some stereotypes confirmed, and will need some help reaching out again. They wrestle with how to be welcoming, and to encourage their children to be kind, and yet protect their children's safety and educational future. They have learned from experience that they do not wish to welcome drug use, weapons, or violent, abusive, bullying behavior.

I ask that you now view the violent incidents of fall, 2007 through the perspective of my neighbors' experiences. Yes, there have been violent incidents in Ames before. I would argue, however, that many of the previous incidents were different: a disgruntled, mentally ill graduate student; 'celebrity' student-athletes whose transgressions receive somewhat out-of-proportion local media coverage, and VEISHEA-associated alcohol-fueled criminal behavior. The violence in the fall of 2007 felt different. The incidents seemed focused in certain neighborhoods, often near ours. Those involved were not

college students. Alcohol consumption did not seem to drive the behavior. A twelve-year old boy who rides the same school bus as your own son, and allegedly threatens an adult with a knife, feels very different.

I have one more topic for comment regarding the degree of welcoming behavior in Ames. While I have been very impressed by the awareness and compassion of many of my acquaintances, I have also observed examples of the 'unaware' in our community. These folks don't set out to be unwelcoming; they simply have no framework for acknowledging that there are real-world differences between their life experiences and those of other community residents.

I have been part of several committees where fellow parents just assume the availability of transportation, money, and the job flexibility to participate in activities. They never realize that there is anyone who does not have access to the resources that they do. They don't realize that they are excluding anybody, because they don't even know that those 'anybodys' exist.

Unfortunately, what makes them aware that there are differences in the community are when sensationally bad things happen, such as the recent string of violent incidents. Then, there is fear. The day-to-day differences don't make the news. I believe many residents of Ames would be shocked to learn that some children come to school hungry because there is no food at home, not just because they decided to skip breakfast. Nothing in their experience has prepared them to consider the possibility.

In this case, what may help make a more welcoming environment is to help pull back the veil, to make people aware that we are no longer as homogenous a community as we have assumed in the past.

VI.

Appendix B

Responsive Classroom

(Information provided by Randy Podhaski, principal at Sawyer Elementary School, Ames, Iowa, 515-239-3790).

Responsive Classroom is a positive, proactive approach that develops a classroom and school community that is supporting, nurturing, and helps students become independent, intrinsically motivated learners. Students become responsible for their own behavior, develop a sense of belonging, and recognize their role in creating a positive classroom and school environment.

Guiding Principles

- The social curriculum is as important as the academic curriculum.
- How children learn is as important as what children learn.
- The greatest cognitive growth occurs through social interaction.
- There is a set of social skills that children need in order to be successful academically and socially.
 - CARES
 - Cooperation
 - Assertion
 - Responsibility
 - Empathy
 - Self-control
- Knowing the children we teach is as important as knowing the content we teach.
- Knowing the parents of the children we teach is as important as knowing the children.
- Teachers and administrators must model the social and academic skills which they wish to teach students.

Components

Most Ames teachers that implemented Responsive Classroom began with the Morning Meeting. Morning Meeting is a daily routine that builds community, creates a positive climate for learning, and reinforces academic and social skills.

Greeting

- Set a positive tone for the day.
- Provide a sense of recognition and belonging.
- Help children learn and use everyone's name.
- Let's children practice hospitality.

Sharing

- Develop and practice skills of caring communication (empathy and interest).
- Help children know others and be known to others.
- Encourage habits of inquiry important for cognitive growth.
- Give opportunities to practice speaking in a group.

- Develop vocabulary and language skills.

Group Activity

- Build community culture through fun.
- Foster active and engaged participation.
- Heighten the class's sense of group identity.
- Have fun together, while becoming more competent in the skills of CARES.
- Enhance the learning of curriculum content through group experiences.

News and Announcements

- Help children make the transition from Morning Meeting to the rest of the day and get them excited to learn.
- Develop and reinforce language, math, and other skills in a meaningful and interactive manner.
- Build community through shared written information.
- Reinforce social skills.

Other Components

Rules and Logical Consequences

Rules

- Establish a calm and orderly routine.
- Share the students' "hopes and dreams".
- What their hopes are in academic and social areas.
- What they hope to learn.
- Generate proactive rules together to meet their "hopes and dreams".
- Finalize to 3-5 general rules - positively stated.
- Write the rules for display in the room.
- Revisit the rules during the year.
- Teach - Model – Practice

Consequences

- Respectful - teacher's words and tone communicate respect for children.
- Focus on the behavior ("stop pushing" instead of "stop bullying").
- Relevant - a consequence is directly related to the children's actions.
- (in a group activity, if children are talking and not working together a logical consequence is they don't work together anymore today).
- Realistic - the consequence must be something the children can reasonably do and teacher can follow through on.

Guided Discovery

Guided discovery is a focused, purposeful technique used to introduce materials, areas, or activities to students.

Preparation

- Prepare materials to look appealing and allow children equal access to them.
- Introduction and Naming
 - Use open-ended questioning to stimulate interest in the items. Invite children to share what they already know about the material--introduce vocabulary.

- Generating and Modeling Ideas
 - Engage children in thinking how to use the material for learning and how to care for it.
- Exploration and Experimentation
 - Allow children to try out shared ideas of how to use the materials.
- Sharing of Exploratory Work
 - Sharing of the exploratory work and new ideas.
- Clean Up and Care of Materials
- Engage children in thinking through, modeling, and practicing how to clean-up materials, put them away, and use them independently later.
- Extensions

Academic Choice

Enable children to work at their highest potential through active learning that engage creativity and desire to explore their world.

Enhance a child's motivation by giving them choices in learning.

Support optimal learning for ALL children by providing for a range of developmental needs and styles of learning.

Teach children the skills needed for independent learning and self-evaluation.

Help children to articulate and share their learning and value the learning of others.

Help children build a "bank" of interests that can serve as a life-long resource.

Responsive Classroom Resources

- http://www.originsonline.org/res_classroom.php

(Teaching Ideas: Academic Lessons, Games, Greetings and Morning Meetings)

- http://www.originsonline.org/res_articles.php

(Articles and Research)

- <http://www.responsiveclassroom.cc/rc/articlelibrary/index.asp>

(Responsive Classroom Article Library)

Research Base

A study conducted from 2001-2004 by researchers at the University of Virginia' Curry School of Education found a link between the *Responsive Classroom* approach and improved student learning. The study, led by associate professor of education Sara E. Rimm-Kaufman and funded by the DuBarry Foundation, found that the *Responsive Classroom* approach is associated with better academic and social outcomes for elementary school children.

Children whose teachers and schools used the approach had higher scores on math and reading tests. Teachers using the approach felt more effective, had a greater sense of closeness with their students, and used more high-quality instructional practices than other teachers. In this study, the teachers were not selected randomly to implement the *Responsive Classroom* approach – instead their schools decided on their own to try the approach. This quasi-experimental study design, as it is known, is frequently used in educational research. It is one of the two types of research designs considered appropriate for educational research by *No Child Left Behind*.

Six key findings about children and teachers at schools using the *Responsive Classroom* approach were found as a result of this three-year longitudinal, The findings included: (1) Children showed greater increases in reading and math test scores. (2) Teachers felt more effective and more positive about teaching. (3) Children had better social skills. (4) Teachers offered more high-quality instruction. (5) Children felt more positive about school. (6) Teachers collaborated with each other more.

The findings show that the *Responsive Classroom* approach is equally beneficial for children considered “at risk” for school failure on the basis of socio-demographic indicators and children considered not at risk.

The findings are consistent with a body of research-based theory in education and developmental psychology suggesting that caring school environments produce classroom environments that are conducive to learning, and ultimately, higher-achieving children with better social skills.

VII.

Appendix C

Community Conversations/Study Circles

Facilitated “Community Conversation” through study circles where “small-group dialogues where all voices are equal and people listen respectfully. Participants examine complex issues and discuss possible solutions. Community-based study circle programs usually involve large numbers of people in many circles. These programs help communities develop their own ability to solve problems by bringing all kinds of people together to think, talk, and work to create change.

In a study circle, the facilitator is essential to helping the members talk and work together productively.” (The Guide for Training Study Circle Facilitators, Second Edition, 2006, pg. 1.)

Detailed information is available at www.studycircles.org or ISU Extension (515-294-9610).

VIII.

Appendix D

Minutes and Written Comments April 3, 2008 Public Input Session

MINUTES

Inclusive Community Task Force
April 3, 2008 – 7:00 p.m.
Public Input Session
Ames City Auditorium

Task Force Members Present: Barbara Woods, Jane Acker, Randy Podhaski, Denise Denton, Deb Lee, Linda Butler, Amber Corrieri, Chris Rehmann, Cherie Wandling. Facilitator Jeanne Warning was also present.

The public input session began at 7:00 p.m. Mayor Ann Campbell welcomed those attending and thanked everyone for coming. Mayor Campbell explained that the Task Force has been meeting since the beginning of January. She spoke about what led her to assemble this Task Force, beginning with the concerns that were raised about changes in the community in the late fall. On November 27, 2007 City Council had a meeting on the subject with 400 people in attendance. This attendance proved that the topic deserved more on-going attention. As a result, Jane Acker and Barbara Woods agreed to co-chair the Inclusive Community Task Force, consisting of the community members who have been diligently meeting since January to examine issues that are changing in our community, and to go to City Council with recommendations by April 30. Mayor Campbell hoped that all in attendance had read the draft report.

The Task Force has completed in-depth work, and has now come to hear what other community members have observed, that might be incorporated into their report. Mayor Campbell explained, “this Task Force is by no means an all inclusive kind of committee, even though it is entitled the Inclusive Community Task Force, but instead, people asked to be on this Task Force are people we felt could represent different segments of the community and from there go out and do their individual research. I think you will see that has, in fact, been done.” Mayor Campbell again thanked everyone in attendance for coming to the first public input session. The second session is Saturday morning at 11:00 a.m. in the Council Chambers.

Co-chair of the Task Force, Jane Acker, instructed anyone who wished to speak to complete a card, located at the back entrance of the auditorium, and come to the microphone to speak when called upon. She said the Task Force was eager to hear comments on the draft report. Ms. Acker spoke of the tremendous participation from a very busy group of people who took their responsibility on this Task Force very seriously. She also mentioned that a couple members of the multi-cultural learning community at Iowa State have been working with the Task Force, and some of their findings will be incorporated into the report.

The members of the Inclusive Community Task Force introduced themselves:

- Betsy Hoffman, Executive Vice President Provost at Iowa State
- Bobby Hunter, Senior at Ames High School, involved in extracurricular activities which reach out to the community (including school newspaper)
- Amber Corrieri, Ames Community Bank. Very active in the business community, but also a member of the City's Human Relations Commission;
- Cherie Wandling, senior at Ames High School. I was asked to be on the committee because I'm involved with different clubs at school.
- Randy Podhaski, Principal at Sawyer Elementary School
- Debbie Lee, I was invited, I believe for providing past neighborhood leadership and general community issues;
- Denise Denton, Prevention Specialist at YSS
- Chris Rehmann, member of AMOS, a mid-Iowa Organizing Strategy
- Linda Butler, Pastors at Collegiate United Methodist Church, Wesley Foundation and member of the Ames Area Religious Leaders Association
- Barbara Woods, Iowa State University Extension and community volunteer

Ms. Acker stated that the goal of the public input session is to hear what members of our community have to say about the draft report that was posted on the City web site last week. Additional copies are available for anyone who has not had the chance to fully immerse themselves in the content of the report. The report outlines challenges that the Task Force feels the community faces as we attempt to be welcoming and inclusive of newcomers, as well as opportunities for all citizens and institutions in Ames to extend a more effective welcome to newcomers. Ms. Acker introduced the facilitator Jeanne Warning, of Iowa State University Extension.

Facilitator Jeanne Warning said she believes this is a great opportunity for those of us who are citizens of Ames. The Task Force has put in many, many hours in a few short months – exploring, finding information, talking to people, and they have invited us one more time let them know if they have actually captured the challenges and opportunities to make this a welcoming, open, comfortable community in which to live. Ms. Warning presented the following to those present: “You’ve been invited to respond to this preliminary report. They truly do want to know: Is there something you agree with or support in terms of the report? Are there some things that you think are missing? Is there something else you want them to further consider before they do the final report at the end of this month?”

Ms. Warning reminded anyone who wished to speak to keep comments focused on the report, and that law enforcement issues are not within the scope of this Task Force's work. She also stated that the Task Force will not be answering questions this evening, but simply wants to hear comments about the draft report.

Public comments as follows:

- Jim Davis, 5019 Keats Street
“Ames is a wonderful, international community and that is a tremendous strength and I don't get the feeling that it's been adequately appreciated and celebrated. I used to live in Chicago and they have all kinds of ethnic communities and those ethnic communities have resources to share, they have celebrations to share, they have food to share, they have dances and songs. It just seems as though there ought to be a way to have an

event in Ames to celebrate that wonderful global community that we are. I can visualize a weekend kind of like the art show in Des Moines; have food booths and opportunities for groups to sing. It would give them a chance to raise some money for their organizations; give them a chance to show off their resources. I just think we could celebrate the community we are in a really wonderful way. This is kind of stratospheric that somehow there has to be a lot of specifics behind it and I can understand that you don't have the ability to say such and such a group will do such and such, but it does seem as though there ought to be an opportunity for you to make some more specific suggestions to some specific groups that would say hey guys it really would be nice if you would do such and such."

- Phyllis Pritchard, Kate Mitchell school area

Referred to Page 4, Developing a Community Where All Have the Opportunity to Succeed and Thrive. "I think it is very important that we all have the opportunity to contribute to community. That it shouldn't just be receiving services, but being able to provide our own skills/resources also. Everyone, including the homeless, have something to contribute, and I think we should take advantage of that."

- Yvette Rodriguez

"I was working with the Multicultural Learning Community Class, and as part of our project we were helping the Task Force. We distributed surveys to a number of students and Ames residents that we ran into at Iowa State, ages ranging from 18 to 61, and as was brought up earlier, numerous people in the survey said that one of the activities that they would enjoy would be a cultural festival. It was something that was brought up again and again in the surveys. A lot of people mentioned food and art as things they have seen in Des Moines and other communities that they would enjoy. I interviewed the Mayor of Marshalltown who says an effective event they have is the Latino Cultural Heritage Festival. I know that there is one in Des Moines also. I think it would be a good idea if we had something like that in Ames, not necessarily for Latino culture, but for just multi-cultural in general. Some of our other findings were that some people feel that our inter-racial relations need to be worked on in Ames. They didn't expand on how to go about that, but I think the festival would be a good idea. A lot of people commented on the lack of things to do in Ames. It was more the younger crowd, but even some of the older participants didn't really have activities that they enjoyed. They mentioned shopping centers and things like that didn't really have to do with inter-racial relations."

- Louise Dengler

"I have lived most of my life in Ames. I am wondering how to go about getting something going in my area. I'm the only single family and owner occupied dwelling within about four blocks. It used to be that people got acquainted sitting on front porches in the summer. Apartments don't have porches. Students are busy, and I find myself with a full calendar too. I was just wondering how you were going to go about doing these community things you suggest in your report."

- Charlie Bailey, Iowa State University

"I see some students here from the high school. I talked with Jane earlier about a program our high school was running because we had multicultural issues also, and just blending in general because we came from all different middle schools. The program we had was called "E-rase-ism", which was like a play on words. It dealt with finding

different programs and activities for students to be able to interact with each other, whether it was planning after school activities/athletics and stuff like that. Another big one that we used that really helped out a lot was at lunch about once every quarter they had program at lunch. The kids would draw a number out of a hat and they would have to sit at a certain table. They would have a teacher at every table, monitoring the students to make sure they were interacting. Just talking to people and having fun, not sitting with same people all the time and talking about the same things.”

- Barbara Woods shared emails that had been received
“In the second section on the challenges we talked about information resources and services, so one of the things we discussed was how to make sure people know about the services, how they get information. One of the challenges we asked about was how we distribute the information. How do we know how well some of the existing resources match community needs? Some of the feedback I received was questioning whether our current resources do meet the needs. They talked about Good Neighbor and how they are strapped and they also mentioned the free medical clinics and the long lines there. I just wanted to point out some of the pressures on the existing services.”

Betsy Hoffman

“I sent the invitation for these open forums out to all the senior administrators at ISU and asked them to distribute them. I got back a number of emails thanking us for doing this.”

Jane Acker

“I would like to echo Jim’s observation early on about how we didn’t get real specific about who would be doing what. I don’t know that we were invited to assign chores, as much as the temptation is there. I have received a couple of emails from persons that suggest they are doing what we very much hoped they would do, that is factoring our findings and observations into their thoughts about what their own church might do, what their school or PTO might do, what their neighborhood might do. Someone at the public library is thinking about how they might be able to use their programming opportunities. Perhaps even a few people are thinking about their own responses to customers of their businesses, or people that they see on the street around town. That is one of the very important results that we hoped to achieve.”

- Sue Benson
“I would like to thank the Task Force and Mayor Campbell for assembling the Task Force. It is very important for the community in light of national, political and international events. It underlies the importance of this and the strong foundation you’re providing for us. I really liked the public service and fair and the welcome packets. Under #1, Building Bridges/Increasing Understanding, the second bullet I thought it was a great idea to orient teachers, professional staff, bus drivers, cafeteria workers, custodians, trained to understand and assist students with diverse backgrounds. I wonder if something like that could be expanded to parents or families, because there could be interactions among the school children if someone wanted to go home with someone else, play with someone, or even with intramural activities or extra-curricular activities that families could benefit from this type of orientation and education as well.”

- Kim Costerman
“I have lived in Ames 2-1/2 year and found it to be very welcoming. We came from the northern Illinois area. We have been very intentionally trying to be involved in neighborhoods; trying to work toward neighborhood community and have found our

neighbors to be very open to that type of thing. But I was very interested in what the Task Force was doing because I'd like to see that broaden a little bit. Our neighborhood is kind of ethnically diverse, it is generally the same socio-economic level. But there is a neighborhood next to us that is a little different and I'd like to see us expand and think of neighborhood a little more broadly. I am thinking of some of the things you talked about the need to increase awareness and accepting the attitudes between racism. We visited many churches when we came to Ames and I see a lot of churches working in that direction, and hope to see a lot more of that happening. I also noticed that a number of the challenges you mention had to do with disseminating information and I wonder if somewhere along the line you might recruit neighborhood ambassadors to be people to be disseminating that information. Some people talk about this multi-cultural festival. We went to FACES last weekend and I would love to see that become a bigger thing. You have the beginnings of a great cultural event there."

- Sherry Terresi

"I am a social worker at LSI. I just wanted to comment on some services provided at LSI on behalf of the in-home workers there, they would like to do what they can to help distribute information to new residents and to help market their services as well as any other services. Another thing that might help is to break up into small groups to discuss and then present collective group ideas so it's not so scary to stand up here and talk."

It was explained that the session is being taped to replay on Channel 12, so therefore everyone must use the microphone.

- Jerry Chase

"I had an interesting conversation this afternoon with a young lady who attended Ames High School and who decided to switch to Gilbert. The reason she decided to go to Gilbert was because it was a more accommodating attitude in Gilbert than there was in Ames. In the Ames High School she felt discriminated against, bullied, primarily because of her economic status. This tells us two things. One: that we need to work on that in Ames High School, and two: that along with all the other discriminators, that certainly economic status is one. I'm on the AMOS Mid-Iowa Organizing Strategy, Youth and Education Team. Several things have come across to us, but one I'd like to point out is that kids have told us that there is an open discrimination across cultural barriers, and that kids are not treating each other the way kids ought to be treating each other. There is a need there. Somehow we need to get to the kids who are discriminating against the others and who are unfriendly in many cases, and get them to buy into the concept of not doing that."

Mayor Campbell said she appreciates the work the Task Force has been doing. "I have found that people have come into the Mayor's office with comments also and I have tried to direct all those to the Task Force. I do find it interesting that of those numerous people that have come in, there does seem to be a common theme that is run through many of the suggestions. Many of these people have been new residents of Ames. One of those common themes seems to be the important focus that the faith community can provide to everyone; secondly, the important role the schools play as a link the rest of us do not have."

Ms. Warning stated that there were some very thoughtful comments, and hearing no more, the formal part of the meeting will be brought to a close. She expressed sincere

thanks to each person for coming. She reminded attendees that there is a form in the back that can be used to share written comments with the Task Force until April 8.

The public input session adjourned at 7:50 pm.

IX.

Appendix E

Minutes and Written Comments April 5, 2008 Public Input Session

MINUTES

Inclusive Community Task Force
April 5, 2008 – 11:00 a.m.
Public Input Session
City Council Chambers

Task Force Members Present: Barbara Woods, Cheyrl Inyang, GP Foote, Denise Denton, Elizabeth Hoffman, Chris Rehmann, Debbie Lee, Cherie Wandling. Facilitator Don Broshar was also present.

Co-chair Barbara Woods welcomed attendees and said the intent of this session is to have input and thoughts shared about the draft report. She said that if someone wanted to comment without speaking publicly, they may use one of the comment forms and return it to the Task Force prior to April 8.

The public input session began at 11:00 a.m. Mayor Ann Campbell welcomed those attending and thanked everyone for coming. Mayor Campbell explained that the Task Force has been meeting since the beginning of January. She spoke about what led her to assemble this Task Force, beginning with the concerns that were raised about changes in the community in the late fall. On November 27, 2007 a forum was put on by the City Council, and facilitated by Don Broshar. Approximately 400 people came to a presentation and listened to the presentations made by the school district, by our housing coordinator and by our Chief of Police. This attendance proved that the topic deserved more on-going attention. As a result, Jane Acker and Barbara Woods agreed to co-chair the Inclusive Community Task Force, consisting of the community members who have been diligently meeting since January to examine issues that are changing in our community, and to go to City Council with recommendations by April 30. Mayor Campbell hoped that all in attendance had read the draft report. The directive given to this Task Force were to deal with community issues, keeping in mind that running concurrently, the Chief of Police has established a group for Police activities.

Facilitator Don Broshar discussed the session's purpose and how the card system would be used for deciding the order of speakers. He asked that speakers limit their input to three minutes.

Public comments as follows:

- David Sahr of Beyond Welfare
"The first thing that I'd like to suggest before the report is published that we begin it not with challenges and opportunities, but start with some bragging about what good things

we're doing and what good things are going on in the community. That would start us off on a positive note. The second thing that I noticed when I looked at Page 9, which is a listing of agencies that are involved with opportunities, there were at least three groups of people that were left out. Maybe because we think their needs are already being met, or maybe we just didn't think about them. The first one is our veterans. What are we doing for our veterans? We give them rousing send offs, but what do we do for them when they come back? I have heard that 1/3 of the homeless are veterans. The second group is the immigrants. I think it is important to remember that. I'm involved with the Beyond Welfare organization, and one of things we are very aware of is that we're going to have to change our name. We need to get rid of the name Welfare because it stands in the way of Hispanics being involved in our community. When they see the word welfare, they think government and they stay away because they're afraid of deportation or members of their family being deported. The third group is the developmentally disabled. We provide services for them, but are we getting involved with them? Are we involving them in our community? That's one of the challenges that I see. We've talked a lot about what needs to be done for people, but we're not emphasizing that we need to do things with people, and involving the people with the identification and solution to the problem. That's also a part of the opportunities we need to look at."

- Venerable Yang

"I'm a member of Ames Area Religious Leaders, formerly known as the Ames Ministers' Association. We've been very interested in this and I'm glad to see a lot of ministers participating. I would like to add support for what was just said about the veterans, immigrants, and mentally and developmentally disabled. I would like to include the physically disabled as well. We need to know more about where the resources are and who is actively involved. It was nice to see the list in the report, but I'd like to see more about addresses, like for the FACES group. I came to Ames several years ago as an ISU student and didn't know that there was a problem with diversity. When I came back a couple years ago after living in New York City I saw that there was a marked difference in being a resident of Ames and contributing to the community here, and being an Iowa State student. I just spoke with an Iowa State student at Hastings and she is not planning to make Ames or Iowa her home after graduation, because her career needs aren't going to be met by this community. That's one of the biggest issues: that we lose people as residents because there is a lack of jobs or high paying jobs. I would like to see that addressed. I would like there to see less meetings and more on the action side. I've been in this community two years and still people don't know I'm here. I would like to offer my services as well. It's very much a part of our Buddhist practice to serve the community at large."

- Joyce Cummings

"I have more questions than comments. I just wondered what other communities were looked at by the Task Force? I wondered if there was any particular reason not to including some reference to some other initiatives around the state or Midwest? Since I don't have kids in school anymore, I don't know what the classroom situation is, so I would like to have that defined in the final report. The last thing is I wondered is if there could be some sort of a bibliography included in the report listing some recognized studies from different professional fields that might have some relevance on this initiative. I wonder if there could be any responses to these things today?"

Facilitator Don Broshar reminded the group that the purpose for the day was to get input, not respond to questions.

- Carolyn Jons

"I would just like to offer a thought. As I read the report, I appreciate the work that has gone into it. I was reading on Page 9 the examples of organization that offer resident support. I would like to suggest that an organization called Raising Readers in Story County fits that mission very nicely. It is our belief that all families want the best for their children and we come alongside families with children who are newborn to five and we give them respectful support. We offer parenting tips, early language and literacy tips, and then of course we give them books to put into the hands of their children and to read with them. We also have a program that we are working on this year that we call Reading Corners. We are working with ten sites. Five of them are health care waiting rooms, five of them are non-profit organizations. Eastwood of Ames is one of them. We're working with them to transform a portion of their community room into a welcoming book nook, a literacy friendly environment. We're all about reaching every parent in Story County with the message of how they can raise their children to be ready for school, loving reading. We also are putting extra effort into making contact with families living in poverty. I would suggest that this organization is a good one and want you to know we're here."

- Jan Beran

"I'm a neighborhood group leader. Ames is a very highly organized neighborhood/ community. When you look at the list it goes on and on, and there are other groups that could have been added, like the Indian Cultural Association, which is a large group. I don't know, there may be some other groups organized according to their birth origin. I think there is the potential to learn from groups, from individuals who are not organized, and I don't know how we get at that. I know that a lot of neighborliness goes on between and among people who are not organized into groups. Maybe sometimes being organized can be a barrier to people who are not organization-oriented. I don't know if the Task Force talked about that at all. We tend to get into organizations, and a lot of people would just rather talk with people and be friendly and have get-togethers. There are a lot of one community efforts that go on in those because they are an informal support group. Probably many of you are part of such groups and probably most of us here are a part of organization, but I'd like to have us also consider that there are fellowships, there are socializations that go on, there are many new faith groups emerging, and those are important ways of making our community one community."

- Jean Marie Marsden

"I was just now looking over the report. As a member of the Ames Interfaith Council Cabinet, it has been on our minds what we can do. On Page 5 in the Building Brides section it mentions faith communities, neighborhood associations, etc. should provide opportunities. Toward the end of that paragraph it mentions facilitated "Community Conversation" groups are recognized vehicles for productive interaction. Now it's stated as though that's a common thing and everyone knows what that is. I'm wondering if the Task Force would be willing to provide suggestions or some leadership training or some kind of model on how a faith community goes about creating and facilitating a "Community Conversation" group. What does that look like, how can we do it, how can we make ourselves available to provide opportunities for people to come together and find out what our common interests are and what are the common solutions? It's a

wonderful suggestion. It says we should do it. I just want to know what it is we should be doing? How we should be doing that? And, Is there some support for that?"

- Gail Johnston

"First of all, thank you to the committee members. You have done a lot of work and I recognize the number of hours you've put into it. I also appreciate the tone of the report, saying that this business of making the community welcoming to others is an on-going responsibility and privilege that involves all of the community, individuals as well as organizations. I wanted to point out and appreciate the mention of the responsive classroom that the school district has initiated; to point out that too is a broader collaboration because much of the funds for training came from local businesses, and included not only teachers from the Ames school district, but teachers from other communities as well."

- Robert Knight

"I am the Pastor for the New Birth Baptist Church in Ames. I'm surprised that there are not more people here today. I guess that saddens me but I have to be reminded that there are more people that will come in response to fires than when working on solutions. We need to keep that in mind that there was a fire at one point and now we need to work on the solution, and that is usually the most difficult thing. We as a community need to be very careful. There are many, many folks that need to be reached out to. Some of them were mentioned earlier, and I surely don't want any of them forgotten. Ames should be welcoming to all people, different colors, different races, sexes, it doesn't matter. What we need to do though is to come together as a community and work together and this is a first start for that process. The faith community, I believe, will play a major role in that. As I was looking over the report at breakfast this morning, I noticed that there was a question about how to reach out to people in the community. What came to my mind were churches, grocery stores, maybe even a help center, even the schools are places that we can reach out to the community to reach those that need to know about some of the help organizations. I was surprised that some of the help organizations that were listed I was not even aware of. I think we need to publicize that in ways that other facilities don't feel threatened. The goal is to get people to a point where they are self sufficient. When they become self sufficient they will become constructive members of this community, and that should be our goal."

- Andi Smith

"I want to thank the Task Force for what they are doing. My speech is mainly about newcomers, and it's a reflection also on some of the things in your report. I believe when first arriving in a new town, there's a lot of fear. It's scary. Sometimes acting out in aggressive ways is a defense mechanism due to conditioning. Maybe the area or circumstances in which the newcomer lived conditioned them to act certain ways for whatever reason, but the end result was fear. Maybe this was their experience. I believe we've all had some fear at some point, and especially when we've made a major move away from what we're used to, so I believe the way to help newcomers feel less fearful or aggressive is through the human connection. We're all running the same race here no matter what our ethnicity or background is, we're all part of the human race, and I believe it's that mindset that is the most helpful. The human connection is the best because it puts us all on the same level, sort of a 'we're all in this together' feeling. A welcome packet is a wonderful idea, but alone, amidst trying to unpack and settle in it may get lost in the shuffle, but a packet with people will make more of an impact. Perhaps there could be a volunteer organization started, sort of a welcome wagon style

with a website that landlords could link on to with contact information for the new tenant. There could be two volunteers that go together, one of the same ethnicity and the other not, to show our comradery, and to help the newcomer feel a connection to their culture here. The volunteers could arrange to pay a visit with a packet of lists and services, a very extensive list. This could include a welcome letter signed by the volunteers including their phone numbers or email addresses if they're comfortable doing so. The volunteers would follow up in two weeks with a phone call and then possibly once a month for a couple months, making sure to open up the lines of community. The newcomer can take it or leave it, but this shows, as a community that we're reaching out, and all in this together. This may alleviate some fear. In addition, I'd like to suggest more ethnic clubs. I'd suggest that churches begin a once a month or quarterly night for newcomers. And again I'd just like to say that I don't think we can look to change people and to remember that you can't put out fire with fire, it takes water to put out a fire. All we can do is consider what it is we all want and need which the same for all of us, which is to feel cared for and welcome. And most importantly, things take time."

- David Sahr

"I was reflecting on one of the statements on Page 7, Developing a Community Where all Have the Opportunity to Succeed and Thrive. Ames *can be* a community in which "Are we being inclusive?" is a key question in community development. One of the things I've learned in the last few years is to be intentional about language, because language can really separate us. Are we being inclusive? A friend of ours from Northwestern University says that the two biggest barriers to inclusiveness and hospitality in a community are politics and conflict of interest. I remember another thing he said was, How can there be any conflict of interest to be involved in the community? So I think we need to look at that, programs within our City. What do you mean by conflict of interest and how does that separate us rather than bring us together? Politics is very partisan and biased and we need to find a way to get past that. I would also like to comment on what Robert said. There is no such thing as self sufficiency, we are all inter-dependent. In order to be sufficient we need each other and we need the community. Maybe we need to re-examine what self sufficiency means."

- Venerable Yang

"I have quite a list of websites resources pertaining to groups for groups. I am the person who has nominated Ames as one of the great places in Iowa. I am receiving a lot of emails about a lot of grants for different community based programs. I can see how this would fit in nicely. If you want grant information please contact me. Please call me at 233-3876. I have spent the last six years accumulating resources. If you need to find money I can help you."

- Joyce Cummings

"I would also like to thank the Task Force for a terrific job, a lot of energy, a lot of meetings and a lot of good hard thought, as well as the writing of this report. It is a very impressive start."

- Connie Hargrave

"I've been a member of the Ames community for nearly 20 years and my comments really go to the heart of some of the things that are going on. First of all I applaud the committee who had an arduous task, applaud the work and leadership of the Mayor with reference to this. However, as I read the report, I want to know where the meat of it is,

because I feel like the report is our way of being politically correct and not addressing getting at the heart of the issue. I think of myself as an active member of the community, but I'm also one who tends to watch and when things are comfortable that's great. When I show up at events and I speak, that tells me that there is something majorly wrong going on in the community. My question for the Task Force is: Are we looking at some of the fundamental things that are causing us to address an inclusive community? I've been here 20 years and nobody came to my house with a welcome, no one had to tell me how to function in a community. Part of what is happening is people have come to the community who don't function the way we do and we have a problem with that. That's the heart of what has happened. The challenge is for us to look at what parts of our community from people coming here and if they were participating the way we'd like, we wouldn't be saying anything. So we need to look critically at some of the major components of our community that are benefiting from people coming and not being able to thrive. Who is benefiting from the development of slum like apartments on the west side of Ames. We want people to live in a place where they can thrive and become self sufficient, but how come we are not making comments about half painted apartments? My other question is, as we go forward with implementing what the Task Force as asked, who are the pillars of this community who are going to make this happen? What I'm talking about is the business community, the large developers, major business entities, the key stakeholders in the university community. Who is going to make this happen? Iowa State brings a plethora of African American athletes and they don't really have a problem with feeling comfortable here. How are we going to pull leadership from city government, and the university and key business entities who in a large way direct how this community feels, or at least they take the lead in inclusiveness? So my charge to the committee is: how are we going to have those pillars step up and take that role?"

Facilitator Broshar thanked everyone for their comments.

Co-chair Barbara Woods said the Task Force truly does appreciate these comments, and emphasized that if anyone still had comments to make, comments would be taken until April 8. The Task Force will be meeting again on April 9 and again on the 23rd and will process the comments. Ms. Woods explained that the task of the Inclusive Community Task Force was to put some things on the table, but it's going to take many individuals to make anything change. She also said that she places her faith in this community, and that the Task Force will submit the report to the Mayor and City Council by April 30.

The public input session adjourned at 11:55 a.m.

X.

Appendix F

Some Existing Community Resources

1) Examples of organizations/activities that potentially fit the mission of 'fostering greater understanding and better relations throughout the entire community':

Beyond Welfare: *office at 130 Sheldon Ave.; 292-5992; weekly dinners at Collegiate Presbyterian Church, 5:30 p.m. Thursdays.*

City of Ames Human Relations Commission

Breaking Down the Barriers

FACES Celebration

Boys and Girls Club

Friendships International

ISU/Ames community host family/single program

International Students and Scholars Office

International English Classes: First Evangelical Free Church, St. Cecilia's

Resources for residents coming to Ames from outside the U.S. –

Campus Baptist Church

Memorial Lutheran Church

2) Examples of organizations that assist residents with various aspects of daily life and community participation:

Mid-Iowa Community Action, Inc.

City of Ames Planning and Housing Department

Emergency Residence Project

Habitat for Humanity of Central Iowa

Story County Community Housing Corporation

Ames Sustainable Neighborhoods

St. Andrews Lutheran Church Rental Property Ministry

Food at First

Faith Communities

Youth and Shelter Services

Heartland Senior Services

People Place

National Alliance on Mentally Illness of Central Iowa

Richmond Center

Center for Creative Justice

City of Ames Parks and Recreation Department

Sports, Music, Dance, and Theater Organizations

Ames Community School District

Raising Readers in Story County

Several community resources available in the following areas:

Food Pantries

Rent and Utility Assistance

Clothing and Furniture

Housing Assistance
Counseling and Support Programs
Medical Care
Preschools and Head Start Centers
Child Care
Employment Assistance
Adult Education

3) Examples of existing resource guides:

- Mid-Iowa Community Action, Inc. Story County Resource Guide
 - Published by MICA; 125 South Third Street, Suite 100; (515) 956-3333
 - Available on line at www.storycountyresourceguide.org
 - Provides information regarding food pantries, rent and utility assistance, clothing and furniture, subsidized housing, counseling and support programs, medical resources, preschools and Head Start centers, child care, employment assistance, adult education, and a list of useful phone numbers.

- Ames Bulletin Board
 - Published by Championship Productions, Inc.; Amy Bergan, Editor (515) 232-3687; email @ ChampionshipProductions.com
 - Provides information useful to visitors, new, and long-term residents. Includes information regarding current events, local organizations, local faith communities, galleries and museums, and restaurants. Includes advertising. Published quarterly. Available at many public and private sites within the community.

- Ames Guide to City Services (may be out-of-print)
 - Published by City of Ames Public Relations Office; Susan Gwiasda, Public Relations Officer; 515-239-5204, www.CityofAmes.org

- City of Ames 'Good Neighbor' brochure (in development)
 - Published by City of Ames Public Relations Office; Susan Gwiasda, Public Relations Officer; 515-239-5204, www.CityofAmes.org