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College of Architecture, Planning, and Landscape Architecture

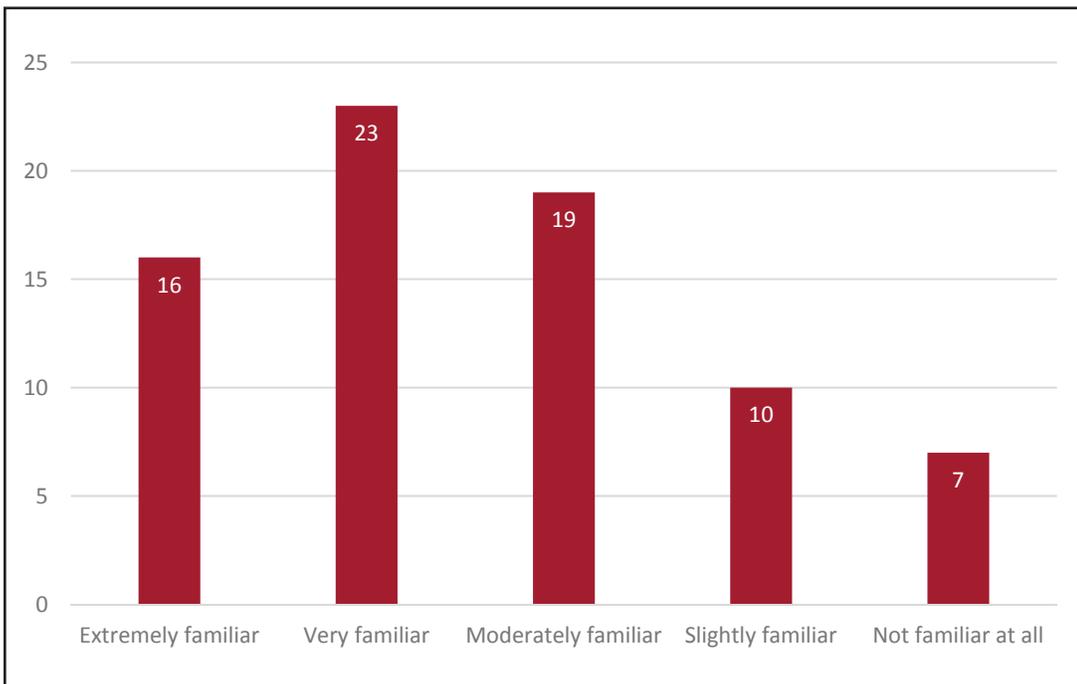
# Drachman Institute Feedback from the Community

On October 17th, Gina Chorover, Kelly Smith, and Laura Jensen from the Drachman Institute, along with Courtney Crosson, Assistant Professor in the Architecture Degree Program, delivered a presentation to CAPLA faculty and staff in order to kickstart a visioning process for the future of the Institute. As a result of recent changes in leadership, including the current search for a new CAPLA Dean, Drachman has solicited input from interested faculty through an online survey and is embarking on an RFP process in order to best determine the Institute's future role in both the college and the larger community.

This document contains the results from the online survey that was emailed to 197 community members, including all neighborhood association presidents in the City of Tucson; government, for-profit, and non-profit partners; and several former Drachman employees.



## Q1 – How familiar are you with the Drachman Institute's mission and previous work?



**Q2 – In the past have you worked with the Drachman Institute (in any capacity)?**

	<b>%</b>	<b>Count</b>
<b>Yes</b>	70.3%	52
<b>No</b>	29.7%	22
<b>Total</b>	100%	74

**Q3 – In what capacity did you work with the Drachman Institute? (check all that apply)**

	<b>%</b>	<b>Count</b>
I worked as a DI employee	19%	8
My organization was a non-profit partner on a project with DI	26.2%	11
My organization was a source of funding for a DI project	21.4%	9
My organization was a government partner on a project with DI	35.7%	15
I (or my department) was an academic partner on a project with DI	9.5%	4
I (or my organization or neighborhood) was a recipient of community design services	28.6%	12
I (my organization or neighborhood) was a recipient of research services	14.3%	6
Other	26.2%	11

**Q4 – Please describe any positive aspects of working with (or for) the Drachman Institute:** Responses fall into the following categories:

**High quality/professional work**

*“Students were organized and prepared, presented themselves professionally.”*

*“Very professional and diligent. Provided high quality and robust research which few non-profits are capable of conducting on their own.”*

*“Responsive and professional organization and personnel.”*

*“The City of South Tucson has received high quality research and planning services numerous times over the years in areas such as housing and transportation planning. The Institute has strongly supported South Tucson’s efforts to develop the El Paso and Southwest Greenway project.”*

**Benefits to students**

*“Experience of working with real clients, learning from knowledgeable staff, having a flexible schedule, and working on exciting and real community-based and meaningful design was invaluable as an architecture student.”*

*“Collaborative environment, great leadership, good place to gain experience for CAPLA students.”*

*“It was very rewarding to see the professional growth of students working with the community and to see the community benefits of working with CAPLA students.”*

*“My student employment at the Drachman Institute was my first job in architecture and I loved it. I got into architecture to contribute back to my community and I felt great about every project I worked on from designing housing for Habitat for Humanity, to helping underserved communities such as Apache Junction, Avondale,*

*the Navajo Nation, and South Tucson...The Drachman Institute prepared me for, and contributed to my role in architecture and in giving back to the community as I do."*

### **Community Engagement**

*"Work done by Drachman filled void in community for projects that neighborhoods could not afford to hire consultant; provided students with real projects in the community to work on...provided visible outreach to the community."*

*"Always great at framing the issues and engaging the community."*

### **DI work helps neighborhoods to get grants**

*"The work and history we had with the Drachman Institute assisted with our neighborhood to secure funding with Pima County Neighborhood Reinvestment grant."*

*"We were able to use the DI information to apply for grants. We were chosen as a Back to Basics Neighborhood twice because of the design work we received from the DI. We also were able to take that information back to the County for some reinvestment money."*

### **Neighborhood plans now implemented**

*"Drachman helped us envision an entire neighborhood plan. This plan was incredibly important to us in both gaining shared understanding and passion for our vision, and using images from Drachman's plan in grant proposals to actually realize the neighborhood features in the plan. To date, many of the features have been implemented, including chicanes, a pocket park, a greenway down 5th avenue."*

*"Working with the Drachman Institute, the County was able to provide first time homebuyers with innovate new home design and construction as well as provide investment in an older neighborhood."*

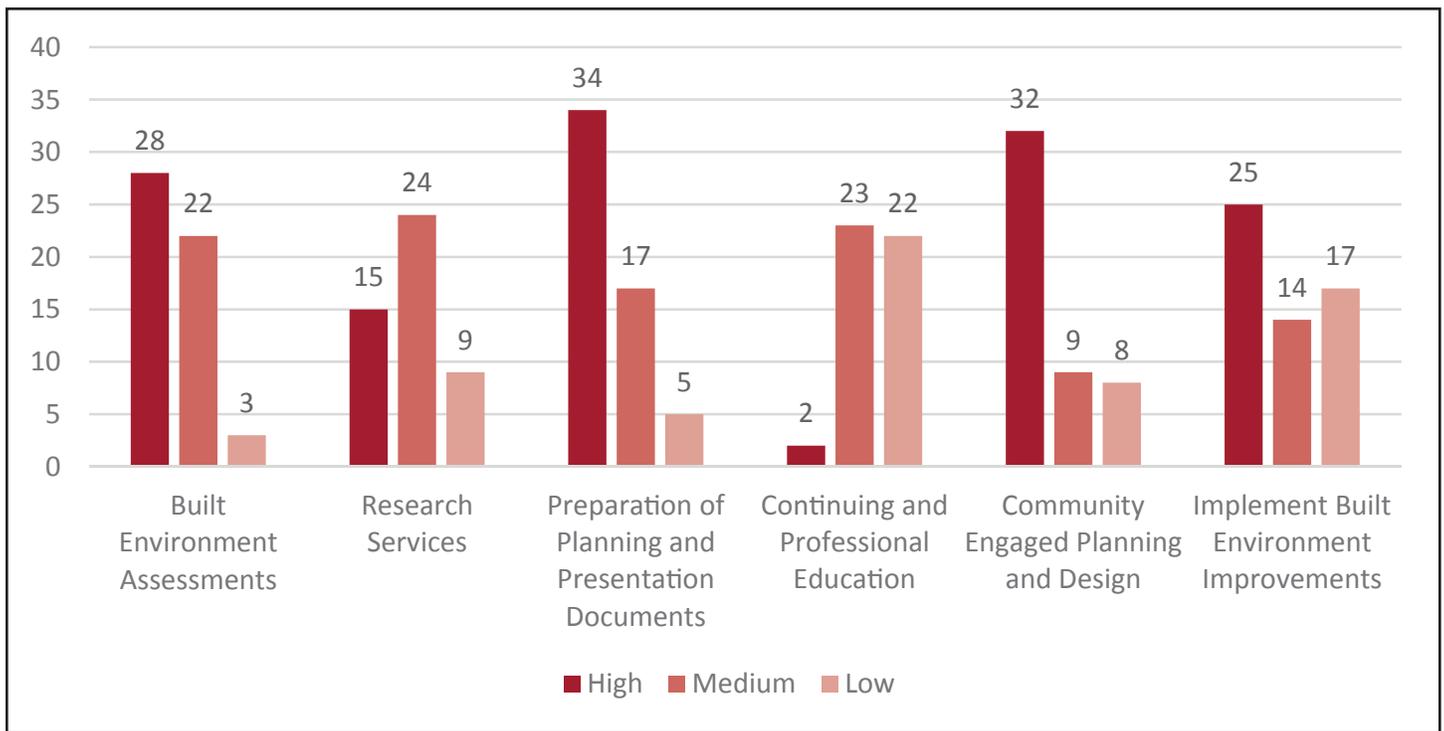
### **Q5 – Were there any specific challenges or negative aspects of working with the Drachman Institute? Please explain.**

The majority of responses indicated that there were no negative aspects of working with the Drachman Institute. However the following issues were brought up:

- The high Indirect Rate required by the University
- While neighborhood plans are important, getting them funded and implemented is a problem; a lack of follow-up
- The relationship to CAPLA was unclear; lack of support from CAPLA; for those individuals that worked for the Drachman Institute, the lack of support and the stress of finding funding was always an issue.

### **Q6 – In your opinion, how could the work of the Drachman Institute best benefit the community? Please rank order the following six items in terms of community needs (or the needs of your particular organization or your neighborhood). Drag and drop the responses into "High Priority," "Medium Priority," and "Low Priority," with no more than three in each category.**

Number of people indicating the following were a High, Medium, or Low priority for the community:



Overall Rankings: Within each priority column items were ranked between 1 and 3. Those values were recoded on a scale from 1 (lowest priority) to 9 (highest priority) and then totaled to create an overall ranking.

Results from highest priority (most points) to lowest priority (fewest points):

	Total Points
Preparation of <b>Planning and Presentation Documents</b> (historic preservation plans, transit-oriented development, neighborhood and regional master plans, graphic design)	389
Provide <b>Built Environment Assessments</b> (inventories, GIS mapping, demographics, open space, transportation, and housing, etc.)	351
Offer <b>Community engaged Planning and Design</b> (small group facilitation, public participation workshops, design charrettes)	326
<b>Implement Built Environment Improvements</b> (walkability, bikeability, traffic calming, tree planting, community gardens, exercise paths)	307
Provide <b>Research Services</b> (quantitative, qualitative, project reporting, physiological and environmental sensing)	258
Offer <b>Continuing and Professional Education</b> (workshops, credit and non-credit courses)	164

Five people added “other” priorities:

- The ability to bring cultural people together.
- Continue the Heritage Conservation Program.
- High priority is to continue providing hands-on structural assessments and stabilization/restoration.
- Contribute to the education of students by giving them real world problems to work on, and training them in the realities of working for and in cooperation with underserved communities.
- A high priority may be students providing (and learning) how to do and provide HIAs – Health Impact Assessments for potential housing developments.

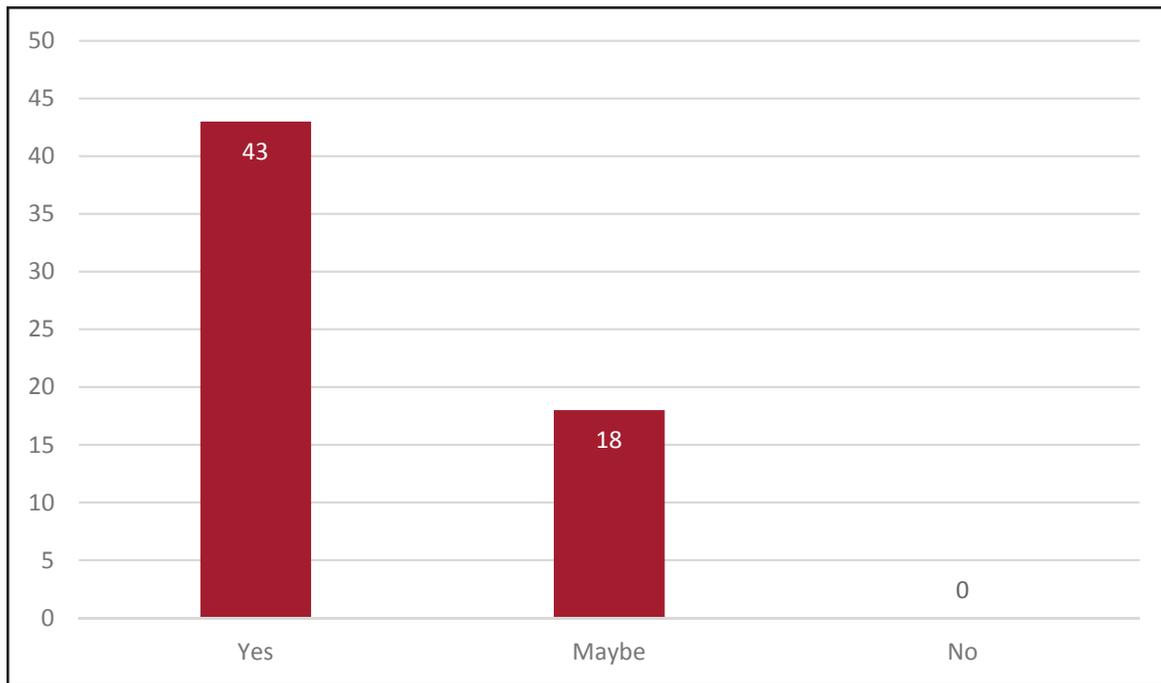
**Q7 – Do you have any additional comments on community needs and the role of the Drachman Institute?**

Individuals from certain neighborhoods pointed out their specific needs as a community, such as park improvements and pedestrian and bike safety. Some indicated that getting their community engaged is a problem, and that Drachman has played an important part in facilitating that engagement in the past. Furthermore, organizations that used to provide services to neighborhoods (like PRO Neighborhoods) no longer exist, and Drachman Institute can fill that void.

Others said that implementation is the problem – *“We have assessments, assessments, plans, plans, and more plans. What we don’t have is anyone who can actually help us find money and implement any of the plans or abate any negative issues seen during assessments.”*

It was mentioned that the Drachman Institute needs to have a clear mission statement and communicate effectively with the public about what services they can provide.

**Q8 – Would you or your organization be interested in working with the Drachman Institute on projects in the future?**



**Q9 – Please explain why you would or would not be interested in working with the Drachman Institute.**

Note that all of the respondents were interested in working with the Drachman Institute in the future. Many reiterated that they have numerous community needs that could be addressed by the Institute. Others pointed to the unique position that Drachman is in to provide services:

*“This is a valuable community resource and needs to be preserved. The Drachman Institute has the ability to pull together unique assets that are almost impossible for anyone else to replace in our community. Academic knowledge, reputation, student enthusiasm and effort, volunteers, local partnerships, national and international connections, technological capacity, wide-ranging expertise through multi-college collaborations, ability to properly collect and use sensitive information, and the ability to disseminate findings.”*

**Q10 – Please let us know if you have any other comments or suggestions regarding the future of the Drachman Institute.**

Final comments were overwhelmingly positive, encouraging Drachman Institute to continue its important work. Responses fell into the following themes:

**Drachman Institute plays an important role bridging the University with the outer community:**

*“I believe there is a continuing role for strong community outreach efforts by the UA, exactly the kind of service the Drachman Institute has provided over the years. I hope there would be a redoubling of the commitment to these valuable community development services.”*

*“It is important for the College to engage the community by providing expertise that directly benefits the people of southern Arizona and fill needs that would otherwise remain unaddressed. It benefits the students as well since it ties real projects and people to their academic experience, which again, they may not get otherwise. A college without outreach is self-serving and stagnant.”*

*“It seems that DI was an important program/department that linked the University with its wider community.”*

**Drachman Institute plays an important role for students:**

*“I came to the University of Arizona’s School of Architecture because of the Drachman Institute. It was important to me that my education connected me in real ways to the community I wanted to serve. I was not alone in this – I remember the widespread and passionate interest in employment opportunities at the Drachman Institute. If the University, the College, and the School of Architecture wish to continue to attract, retain, and grow professionals who care about and actively contribute to the community, they will find a way to continue the amazing traditions of the Drachman Institute.”*

*“Students working with the Drachman Institute often cultivate a strong social ethic that carries with them throughout the duration of their careers, regardless of where they end up working. This is a critical component of improving our society’s collective future and a positive impact that extends far beyond the Drachman Institute.”*

**Drachman Institute has a positive reputation and has played an important role in the community:**

*“Your Institute has a great reputation and we would welcome the opportunity to work with you.”*

*“Your work is vital for the health and well being of all of our communities. Please, please, please continue. Now more than ever we need your presence and your skills!”*

*“Please continue to assist neighborhoods in all the capacities that are possible given your funding resources. Thank you for your work up to today, and I sincerely hope that the programs of the Drachman Institute can be expanded throughout the city in communities who are struggling. Please focus strategies on writing grants and coming up with funding so that neighborhoods can continue to thrive.”*

