

**Strategic Plan**

Submitted by:

**MARKET STREET SERVICES, INC.**

[www.marketstreetservices.com](http://www.marketstreetservices.com)

September 7, 2011

**LIVE WORK GROW**

## LIVE WORK GROW

*Market Street* brings original insights and clarity to the evaluation and revitalization of the places where people live, work, and grow. Through honest and informed assessments, *Market Street* can equip you with the tools to create meaningful change. Our solutions successfully merge our experience and expertise with the economic and social realities of our clients. *Market Street's* community clients are successful at creating stronger programs, increasing operational budgets, and creating new quality jobs that improve the quality of life in their communities.

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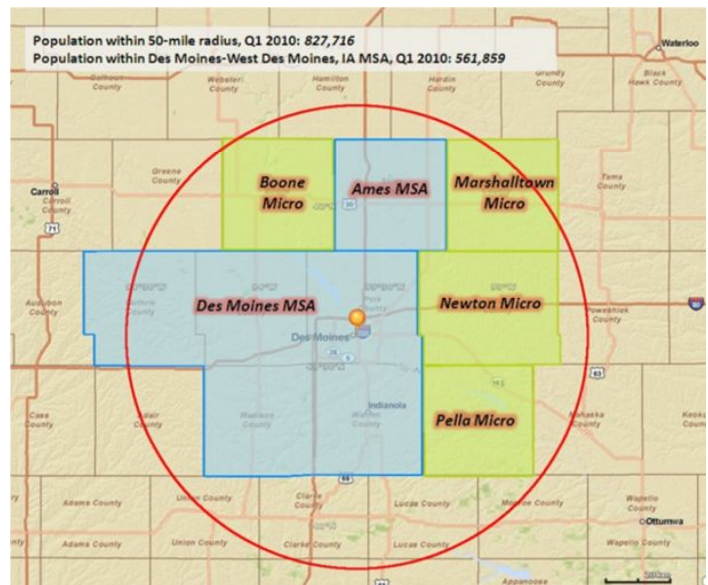
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## OVERVIEW

Greater Des Moines and Central Iowa is at an important crossroads. The region has vibrant neighborhoods, a strong business community, dynamic arts and recreational attractions, and a desirable quality of life. But the region also has its challenges. Local leaders feel the time is right to take advantage of opportunities and address challenges through a clear vision and plan for Iowa’s capital region. This process, branded **Capital Crossroads**, has resulted in the development of a new five-year vision strategy for the region.

Capital Crossroads represents the latest phase of what has been ongoing strategic planning in Greater Des Moines. Efforts such as the Golden Circle process, the Major Projects Task Force, and Project Destiny all laid the groundwork for the current strategic process and led to the development of critical economic, workforce, quality of life, and infrastructure capacity. However, Capital Crossroads is different in that strategic priorities focused on individually in past projects were assessed as a comprehensive, holistic framework under this current visioning effort. Likewise, the planning geography of key Capital Crossroads study criteria has been broadened to include a 50-mile-radius labor shed drawn from the state capitol building in Des Moines.

This “Central Iowa” geography, seen in the graphic to the right, mimics a labor shed that existing and prospect companies and site-selection professionals use to assess communities as locations for investment. The Central Iowa designation also allows Capital Crossroads to capture the dynamic research and education taking place at Iowa State University, the manufacturing concentrations in Marion County, and other regional assets not included in the Des Moines Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA).



For the Capital Crossroads regional visioning process, the Greater Des Moines Partnership, Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines, Iowa State University, Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, Bravo Greater Des Moines, United Way of Central Iowa, Prairie Meadows Racetrack and Casino, and other key partners retained national consultant Market Street Services to facilitate the development of Greater Des Moines and Central Iowa’s strategic plan.

The process of determining a vision for the Capital Crossroads region began with a comprehensive, objective analysis of the key trends, strengths, challenges, threats, and opportunities facing Greater Des Moines and Central Iowa as it looks to develop jobs and talent in the most competitive economy this nation has ever experienced. This process began with a brief **Economic and Demographic Snapshot** inclusive of key indicators affecting the region's population and economy.

The **Community Capacity Assessment** then compared Greater Des Moines and Central Iowa against the regions of **Omaha, NE; Madison, WI; and Denver, CO** to determine how the Des Moines metro area competes for jobs and talent in the New Economy.

Underpinning much of the Capital Crossroads research was an incredibly robust **public-input process** that leveraged thousands of local stakeholders in the determination of the region's competitive position and strategic priorities. Public input included:

- ⇒ Over 50 **one-on-one interviews** with top Central Iowa leaders
- ⇒ Thirty constituency-specific **focus groups** (half of which were facilitated by Iowa State University Extension Community Development Specialists) with stakeholders representing Central Iowa's health care community; elected officials; top employers; young professionals; college students; high school students; higher educational and training officials; public and private K-12 representatives; social services providers; minority leadership; and numerous other categories.
- ⇒ An **online survey** available for over six weeks at the project website (CapitalCrossroadsVision.com) and distributed by the area's top employers and academic institutions. The survey received nearly 3,500 responses; this represents the highest survey-response total in Market Street's 14-year history.
- ⇒ An **online survey** directed towards Central Iowa's young professionals. The survey received nearly 800 responses.

The **Target Cluster and Marketing Analysis** identified key business sectors that Des Moines and Central Iowa is most competitive for in addition to assessing the ways in which the region markets itself to the nation and world. While the region's marketing efforts are strong, they could be better focused on target sector opportunities and more data-intensive related to website content. Recommended sectors are:

- ⇒ Finance and Insurance
- ⇒ Information Solutions
- ⇒ Health and Wellness
- ⇒ Agribusiness
- ⇒ Advanced Manufacturing
- ⇒ Logistics

All of the quantitative and qualitative research conducted for the process informed the development of the **Capital Crossroads Strategic Plan**, a five-year strategy providing the region with a vision for sustainable economic growth and development. The Plan is comprehensive and will engage stakeholders and constituency groups from across Central Iowa in its implementation.

The final component of the process, the **Implementation Action Plan**, determines how the Capital Crossroads Strategic Plan is put into action. Implementation priorities, lead and support entities, budgets, performance measures, and other elements are included in this report.

Overseeing all parts of the process was a **Steering Committee** of diverse local leaders assembled to ensure the visioning process reflected the key needs and opportunities of the Greater Des Moines and Central Iowa region. The Committee provided critical feedback both during meetings and via online surveys that ultimately shaped the content, character and design of the Strategic Plan.

## **CAPITAL CROSSROADS STEERING COMMITTEE**

### **TRI-CHAIRS**

**Angela Connolly**, Polk County Supervisor

**J. Barry Griswell**, Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines

**Cara Heiden**, Wells Fargo Home Mortgage

### **COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

**Ako Abdul Samaad**, State Representative

**Mayor Charles (Chaz) Allen**, Jasper County

**Bob Andeweg**, Metro Advisory Council

**Chief Judy Bradshaw/Joanne Pollock**, Des Moines Police Department

**President John Byrd**, Simpson College

**Teree Caldwell-Johnson**, Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines

**Jeff Chelesvig**, Civic Center of Greater Des Moines

**Shannon Cofield**, United Way of Central Iowa

**Mayor Frank Cownie/Rick Clark**, City of Des Moines

**Mary Cownie**, Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs

**Dan Culhane**, Ames Chamber of Commerce

**President Rob Denson/Mary Chapman**, Des Moines Area Community College

**Greg Edwards**, Greater Des Moines Convention & Visitors Bureau

**Bill Fehrman/Kathryn Kunert**, MidAmerican Energy

**President Gregory Geoffroy/Tahira Hira**, Iowa State University

**Paul Gregorie**, Emerson Process Management/Fisher Division

**Neil Hamilton**, Drake University

**President Kent Henning**, Grand View University

**Laura Hollingsworth**, The Des Moines Register

**Fred Hubbell**, Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines

**MD Isley**, Bravo Greater Des Moines

**Steve Lacy**, Meredith Corporation

**Brian Laurenzo**, Bravo Greater Des Moines

**Zachary Mannheimer**, Des Moines Social Club

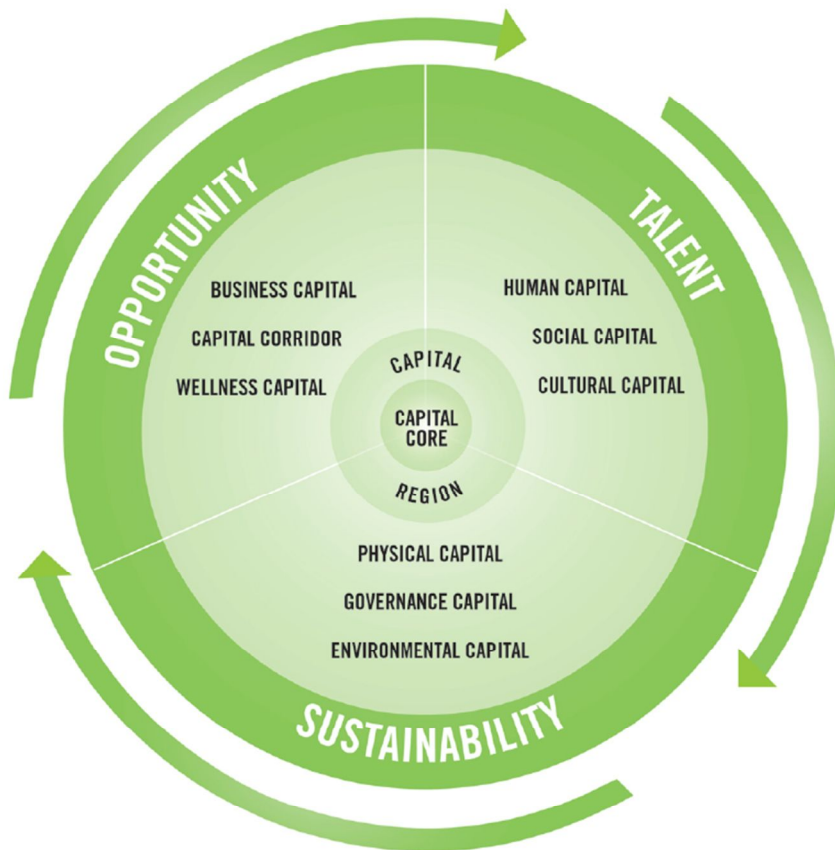
**President David Maxwell**, Drake University  
**Christopher McDonald**, Iowa Asian Alliance  
**Isaiah McGee**, African American Business Association  
**Jeff Nolan**, Madison County  
**Gary Palmer**, Prairie Meadows  
**Suku Radia**, Bankers Trust  
**Scott Raecker**, State Representative  
**Sid Ramsey**, Iowa Health System  
**Mayor Ruth Randleman**, Warren County  
**Christian Renaud**, StartupCity Des Moines  
**Bob Riley**, Feed Energy Company  
**Nannette Rodriguez**, ALIANZA  
**Amedeo Rossi**, Des Moines Music Coalition  
**Pastor Clair Rudison**, Black Ministerial Alliance  
**Nancy Sebring**, Des Moines Public Schools  
**Roger Underwood**, Ames  
**Tom Urban**, Des Moines  
**Mayor Steve Van Oort**, MIALG  
**David Vellinga**, Mercy Medical Center  
**Bob Vermeer**, Vermeer Manufacturing  
**Wendy Waugaman**, Iowa Federation of Insurers  
**David Wilkerson**, Waukee Public Schools  
**Martha Willits**, Greater Des Moines Partnership  
**Connie Wimer**, Business Publications  
**Larry Zimpleman/Mary O'Keefe**, The Principal Financial Group  
**Steve Zumbach**, Belin McCormick Law



## CAPITAL CROSSROADS STRATEGIC PLAN

Capital Crossroads’ vast amount of public input – over 4,500 participants – and ample quantitative research led to the identification of a number of key strategies and tactics for Greater Des Moines and Central Iowa to pursue in the coming five-years to take the community to the next level of success. These strategies and tactics are encompassed by a set of “**strategic capitals**” that define the path forward for the region. The strategic capitals encompass elements of the “people, prosperity, place” categories detailed in the Competitive Capacity Assessment and Target Cluster and Marketing Analysis reports, but focus specifically on key competitive themes that relate to the region’s existing capacity and future potential. These themes are: 1) **Opportunity**; 2) **Talent**; and 3) **Sustainability**.

The “capitals” play on both connotations of the term: 1) the notion of being a “center” and, 2) a factor of production used to generate other benefits. Central Iowa’s capitals will sustainably advance its future prospects. They are interrelated and must all be advanced effectively for Greater Des Moines and Central Iowa to truly achieve its desired future. The ten interdependent capitals informed three **Guiding Principles** that serve to define and structure the Capital Crossroads Strategic Plan. These Guiding Principles position and inform all aspects of the Strategic Plan’s implementation and impact on Central Iowa communities.



**CAPITAL CROSSROADS**  
A VISION FORWARD

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES

**TALENT drives success**

- Career-focused education and training pipelines
- Leadership, diversity and civility
- “Quality of place” that retains and attracts top talent

**Capture high-value OPPORTUNITIES**

- Target sectors developed through holistic strategies
- Wellness as an economic model with social benefit
- I-35 Corridor development

**Growth must be SUSTAINABLE**

- Regional collaboration, consolidation and smart planning to maximize fiscal and human resources
- Competitive infrastructure and natural resources protected and enhanced for future generations
- Multi-modal connectivity
- Central Iowa is only as strong as its core

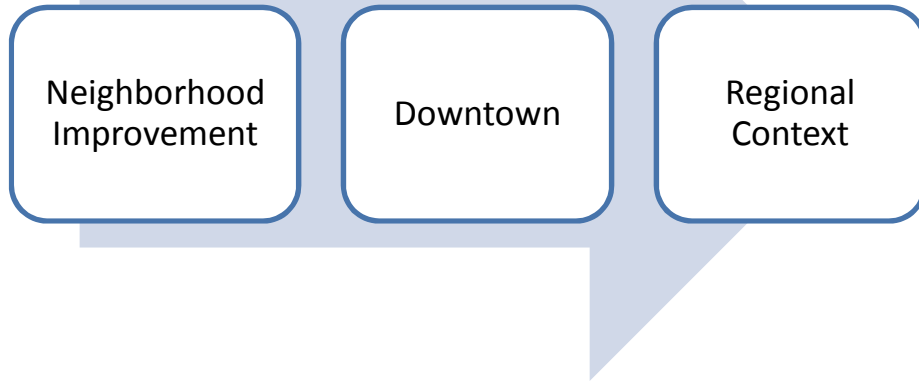
Each Guiding Principal contains three component capitals. Each strategic capital, in turn, is divided into three components. The components leverage a set of key tactics necessary to most effectively impact Greater Des Moines and Central Iowa's competitive position and future prospects. These tactics are not intended to incorporate every single activity currently taking place that could relate to the strategic capitals. Instead, they represent important efforts, programs, policies, developments, and entities that over 4,500 stakeholders said can take Greater Des Moines and Central Iowa to the next level.

Ultimately what Capital Crossroads provides the region is a clear **direction** for the future. Will every single action contained in the plan be implemented in five years? Perhaps not; nor will the 2011 dynamics of the plan be exactly the same as those in 2012, 2013, 2014, etc. But Capital Crossroads nevertheless provides a sturdy platform to ground regional partners' ongoing and new efforts moving forward.

Much has already been done in Greater Des Moines to advance the region towards its goals. Capital Crossroads is not a new beginning but rather an opportunity to add momentum to what has been a decades-long rising trajectory for Central Iowa communities.

**(NOTE: ANY ACTION STEP THAT INCLUDES (BP) IN THE TITLE MEANS THAT A BEST PRACTICE ASSOCIATED WITH THAT ACTION IS LISTED IN THE APPENDIX TO THIS STRATEGY.)**

## 1. Capital Core



### Justification

Throughout the Capital Crossroads process, two common themes from the data research and public input were the diverging demographic and socioeconomic trends in the City of Des Moines versus the broader region coupled with the need to ensure that the “core city” remains strong to bolster the overall welfare of Greater Des Moines and Central Iowa. While Des Moines’ trends have been experienced at one time or another by nearly every city of size in America, not every city responds to these issues effectively. Nashville, Tennessee is an example of a city that has seen tremendous revitalization and reinvestment in the urban core as a result of significant public-private investment and a coordinated regional response. Meanwhile, Detroit, Michigan has seen some intown investment, but its splintered region has never truly embraced urban revitalization as a key mission.

Above all, the Des Moines metro area must acknowledge that it is truly an “urban” community that will experience trends commonly associated with cities of size. As noted, how the region responds to these trends will influence the vitality of every Central Iowa community.

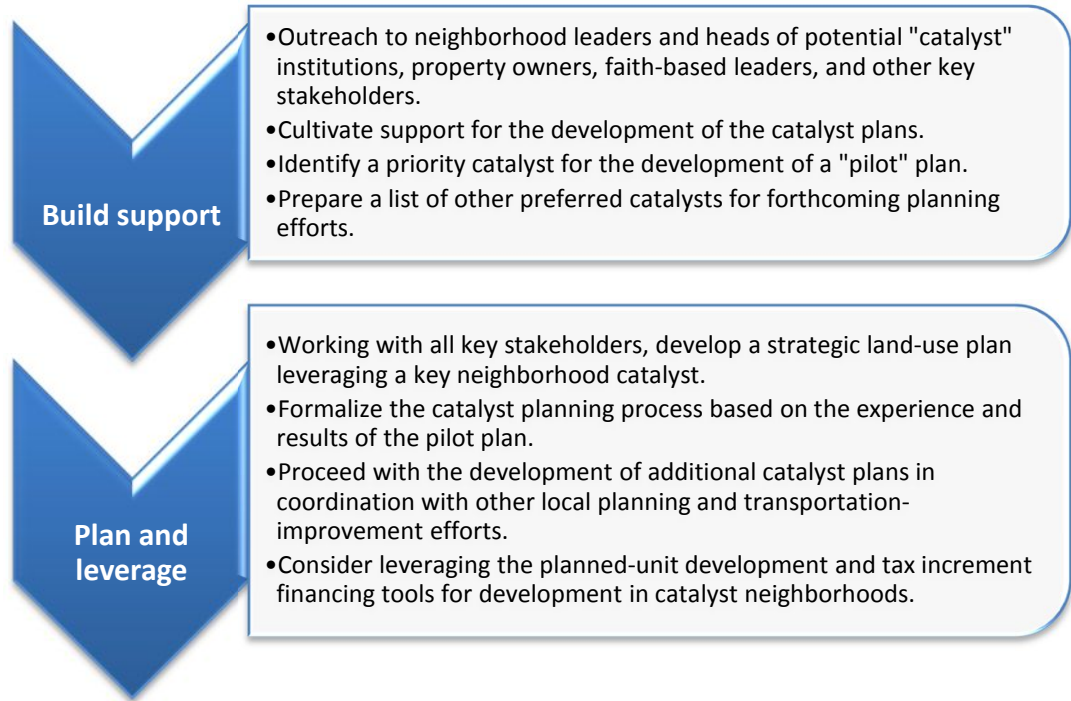
### 1.1: NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT

Des Moines’ neighborhoods will be the key to its survival and revival. The energy, attention and investment made in Downtown Des Moines must be applied to districts across the city. Key “catalysts” can jump-start and sustain development efforts and serve to better connect neighborhoods with downtown.

**1.1.1: LEVERAGE KEY ASSETS AS “CATALYSTS” FOR NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT AND REVITALIZATION. (BP)**

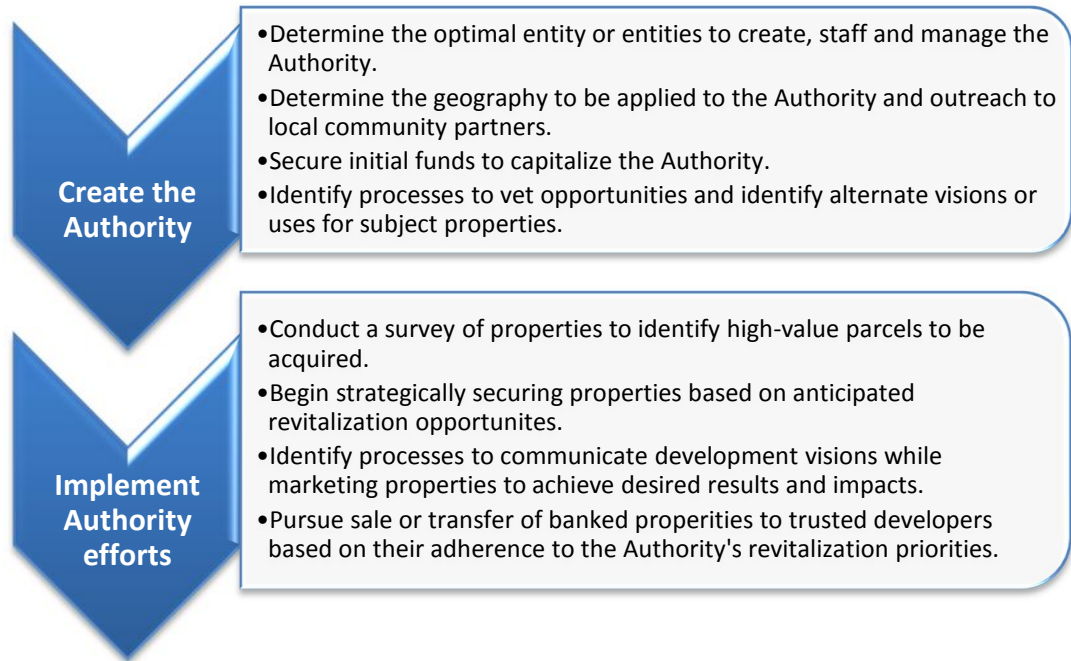
Much effort has been made to conduct neighborhood-based planning in Des Moines. With the help of Des Moines officials, neighborhoods across the city have developed plans that have led to renewed investment, lower crime rates and numerous aesthetic improvements. Partnerships have also enabled the not-for-profit Neighborhood Development Corporation to revitalize commercial districts through targeted investments. Building upon these efforts, the next level of area planning could focus more specifically on leveraging existing assets as catalysts to spur revitalization in adjacent streets and blocks. For example, the 1,000-employee Broadlawns Medical Center in North Des Moines has invested millions to update its facilities. Determining how Broadlawns can spur reinvestment in its neighborhood, be it health care offices, retail, or residential, and what the hospital could do to support this planning and development could be a high-value opportunity to pursue. Other potential neighborhood catalysts are:

- ⇒ Des Moines Area Community College Urban Campus/6<sup>th</sup> Avenue Neighborhood
- ⇒ Des Moines Zoo/Fort Des Moines
- ⇒ Drake University
- ⇒ Grand View University
- ⇒ Gray’s Lake/Water Works Park
- ⇒ Iowa State Capitol
- ⇒ Mercy Medical/Iowa Health-Des Moines/Iowa Lutheran Hospital
- ⇒ Riverpoint/W. Martin Luther King Parkway
- ⇒ Southridge Mall
- ⇒ VA Central Iowa Health Care System



**1.1.2: CREATE A DES MOINES LAND BANK AUTHORITY. (BP)**

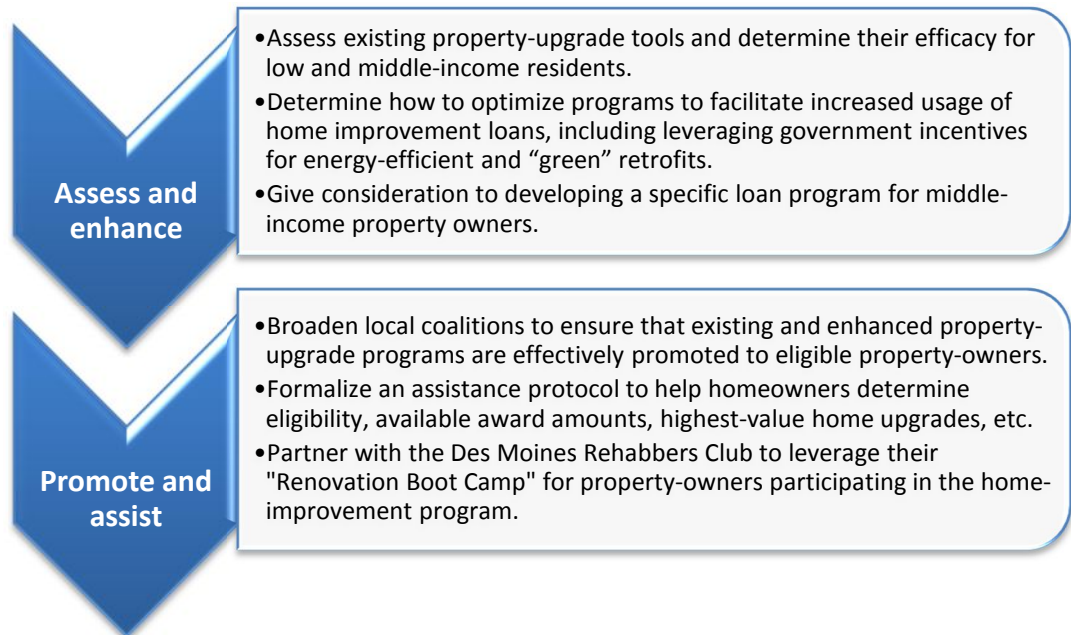
A strategy that has proven effective in other communities is to leverage resources to obtain land and properties for the purpose of neighborhood revitalization. Acquiring and “banking” (holding) land – preferably contiguous parcels – enables governments and their community partners to control this land for high-value public and/or private-sector projects. One of the challenges with land banking as a municipality or even within an agency is that banked sites are often those most in need of rehabilitation and are thus less attractive to developers. As a result, banked land can sometimes be offered at lower costs to investors as a development incentive. Land banking can also mitigate costs to tenants and buyers so they are not displaced as property values rise in the area.



**1.1.3: ENHANCE THE CAPACITY AND PROMOTION OF TOOLS ENABLING PROPERTY-OWNERS TO UPGRADE THEIR HOMES. (BP)**

Data show that increasing numbers of middle-to-high-income residents are showing preference for Greater Des Moines suburbs over locations in the city. One reason for this may be Des Moines' housing stock; multiple intown neighborhoods feature smaller homes with two or fewer bedrooms and only one bathroom. One way to better appeal to homeowners of means would be to enable existing property owners to remodel and add on to their homes to make them more marketable.

Des Moines currently has programs – including offering tax abatements on improvements that increase the value of property by a threshold percentage – designed to assist eligible low-income property owners with making critical repairs to their homes. The city also provides resources along with Polk County, area banks and neighborhood associations to the Neighborhood Finance Corporation (NFC), a not-for-profit mortgage bank that offers loans for home buying and improvement. Not only could these existing programs be enhanced or better promoted to low-income property owners, but additional programs could be developed so qualified middle-income residents could upgrade their properties.



## 1.2: DOWNTOWN

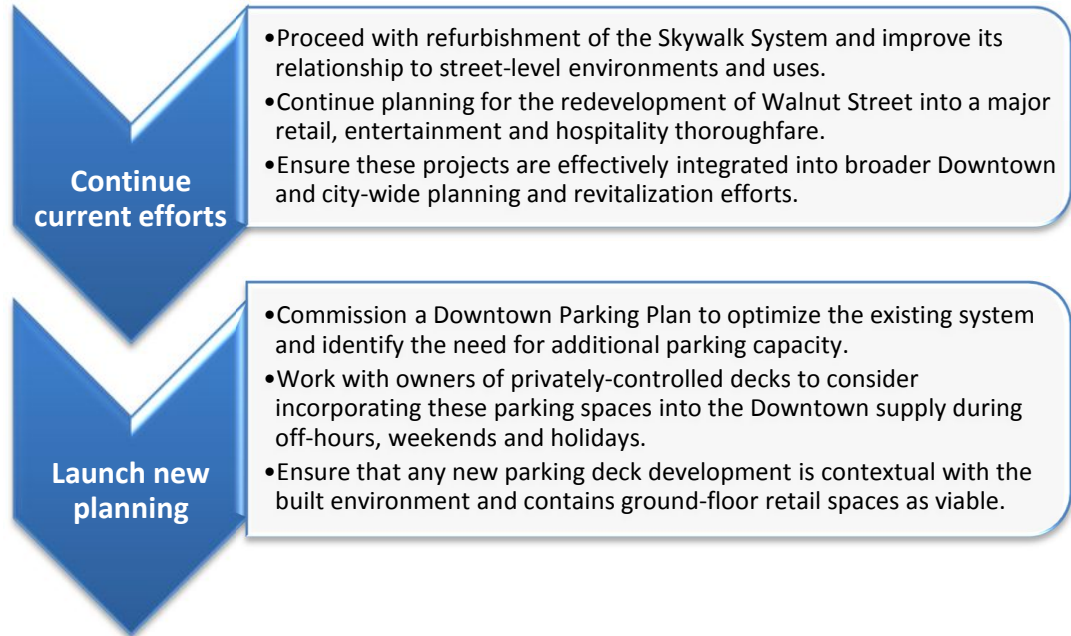
Over the last decade, Downtown Des Moines has been transformed by over \$2 billion in new commercial and residential development and the addition of world-class amenities, top-rated restaurants, cultural events and entertainment. Des Moines now offers a downtown urban lifestyle to complement the region’s already strong quality of life and slower-paced neighborhoods. Home to some 95,000 employees and major corporations, Downtown Des Moines is the region’s most concentrated economic growth engine; its momentum also allows Central Iowa to compete more effectively for top talent and creative industries. Leveraging these trends, Downtown is now marketed as an environmentally sustainable commercial location choice, a thriving arts and cultural center, and an increasingly popular living choice, especially among young adults.

Downtown does face challenges, however; some of which are the result of the recent Great Recession. The Downtown office sector is experiencing high vacancies, while a number of aging commercial buildings are struggling to remain competitive in the marketplace. Retailing in the Downtown core is limited, and many of the public amenities in the core are aging. Clearly, it is time to focus on the challenges that threaten the benefits of a healthy Downtown. However, returns on investment are much greater than simply an enhanced Downtown core. As numerous stakeholders from across the region noted, a robust plan to strengthen Downtown Des Moines will benefit all of Central Iowa.



**1.2.1: PROCEED WITH REFURBISHMENT OF KEY DOWNTOWN INFRASTRUCTURE.**

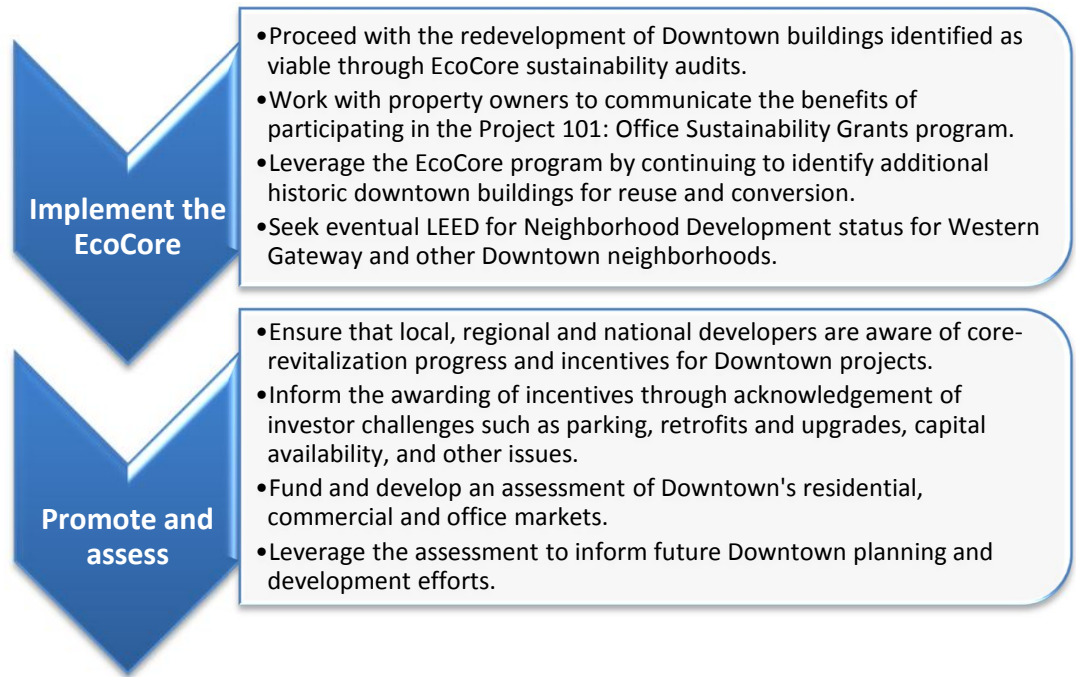
Many of the vintage 1970s Downtown infrastructure projects are aging and require refurbishment, including the Skywalk System, the Walnut Transit Mall (which will be obsolete when the new Transit Hub is completed in 2012), and a number of the municipally-owned parking decks. It is critical that these older resources are not allowed to become obsolete as new Downtown projects flourish.



**1.2.2: FOSTER DOWNTOWN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT THROUGH BUILDING UPGRADES AND CONVERSIONS TO FILL OFFICE VACANCIES.**

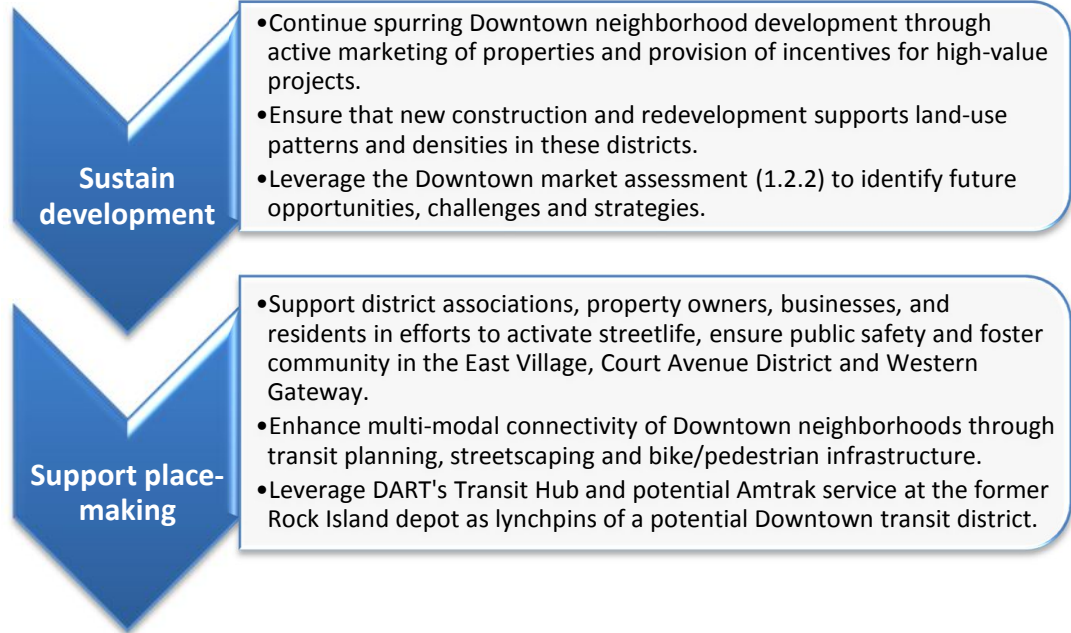
While traditional office retention and recruitment programs must continue, new programs helping to reposition Downtown in the marketplace like the EcoCore should also be promoted. Projects leading to reinvestment in office buildings in order to retain their competitiveness – or conversion of non-competitive historic office buildings to residential and other uses to give them new economic life – can lead the way to Downtown core revitalization.





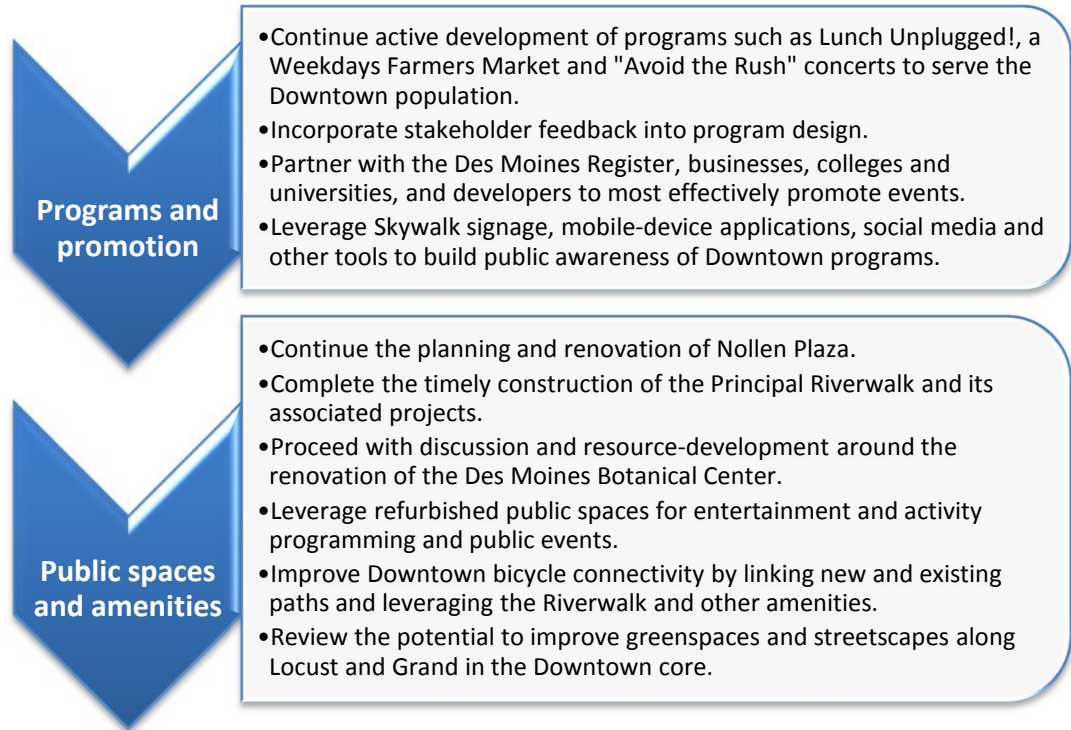
**1.2.3: CONTINUE DEVELOPMENT OF DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOODS.**

Even with a renewed emphasis on the core, it is critical that development momentum in Downtown neighborhoods be sustained and perpetuated. Continued investment in the East Village, Court District, and Western Gateway should be focused on new residential and mixed-use development and conversion of older commercial properties to residential and retail uses.



**1.2.4: PROMOTE DOWNTOWN’S UNIQUE WORK-LIFE ADVANTAGES.**

Those who work Downtown have access to more than just office buildings; they are in the heart of Des Moines’ arts, culture, and entertainment district. By providing a number of different opportunities for Downtown’s thousands of office workers to experience the arts and enjoy the “Downtown experience” before, during, and after business hours, Des Moines can enhance Downtown’s retail viability, street-life, and tourism-serving amenities, and attract more residents to the core. Completion of the Principal Riverwalk, refurbishment of Nollen Plaza, and renovation of the Botanical Center are key projects in this regard.



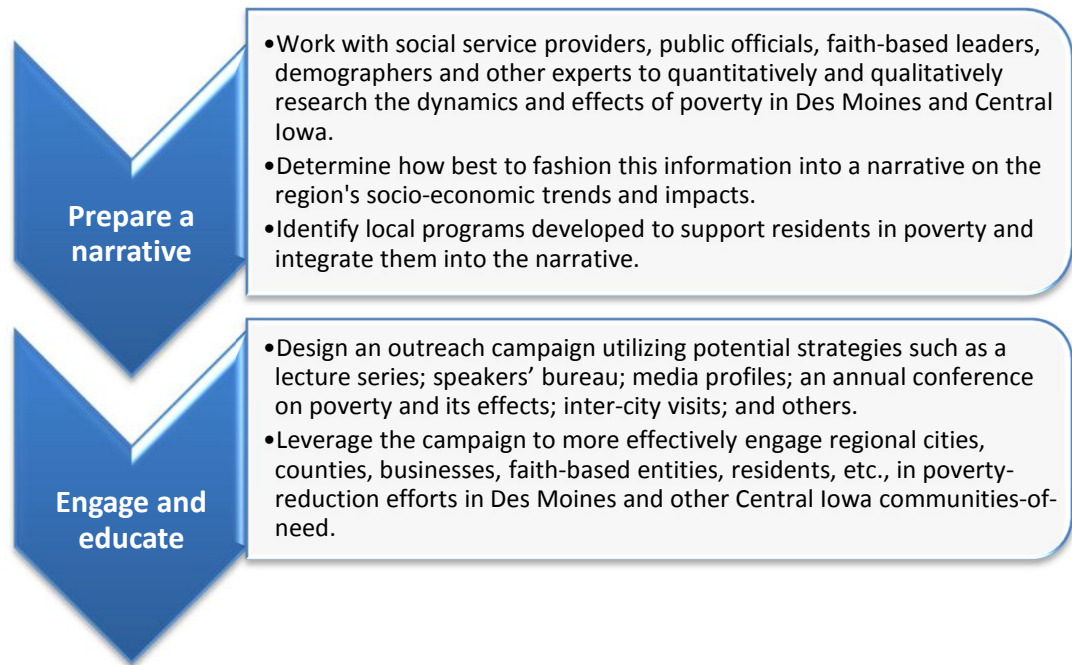
**1.3: REGIONAL CONTEXT**

Regardless of geographical or political affiliation, numerous Capital Crossroads stakeholders said that trends, opportunities, challenges, programs and initiatives in the City of Des Moines affect the health, vitality and competitive position of the entire Central Iowa region. Passing off Des Moines’ changing socioeconomic and economic trends as the sole responsibility of city stakeholders ignores the realities of today’s regional economic model; the Central Iowa labor shed is the geography of analysis for site consultants and companies considering expansion in or relocation to the Des Moines area. Thus, what happens in Des Moines truly does impact all regional constituents. These notions must be discussed and debated regionally in order to build consensus around collaborative efforts to strengthen the region’s core for the full benefit of Central Iowa.

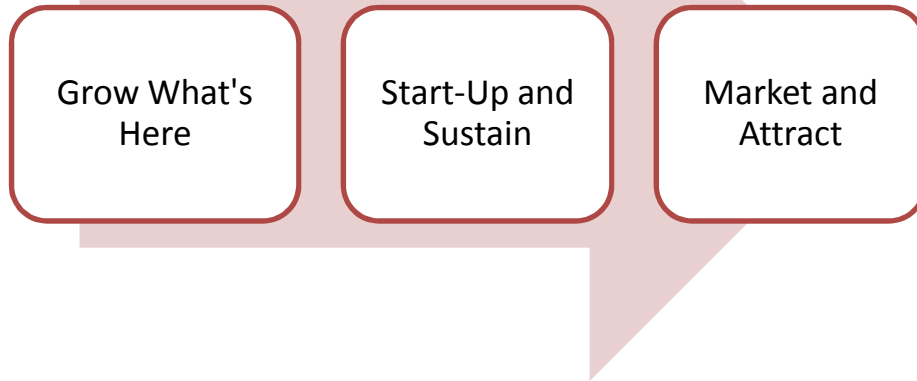
**1.3.1: IMPROVE LOCAL AND REGIONAL AWARENESS OF DES MOINES AND CENTRAL IOWA’S POVERTY-RELATED ISSUES.**

It would likely surprise many residents to learn of rising poverty rates and the percentage of students eligible for free and reduced price lunch in Des Moines and other regional communities. The effects of Greater Des Moines’ rapid growth and in-migration, coupled with the continuing impact of the Great Recession, has altered socio-economic trends in the region and created a number of “urban” issues Central Iowa communities have rarely, if ever, experienced.

Initiating dialogue with regional leaders and constituents on issues the City of Des Moines is experiencing and addressing will help Central Iowa understand and acknowledge its role in supporting Des Moines' efforts and the regional benefits of a strong core city.



## 2. Business Capital



### Justification

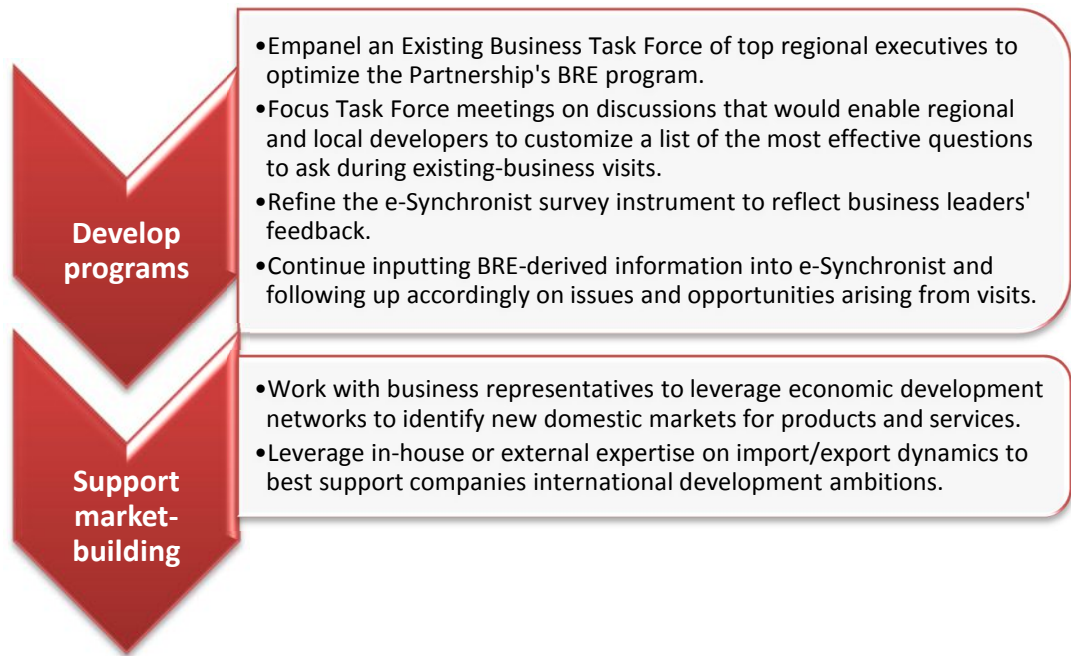
Economic development and employment creation must be centered on Greater Des Moines and Central Iowa's most competitive and highest-value target sectors. By focusing on those business categories with the highest probability of success, local practitioners can maximize investments in capacity-building, supportive resources, programmatic development, and internal/external marketing. It is critical to leverage all three key economic development strategies in the growth of Greater Des Moines and Central Iowa's target sectors. These are: existing business retention and expansion; small business development and entrepreneurship; and external marketing and attraction.

### 2.1: GROW WHAT'S HERE

Existing businesses account for the vast majority of new jobs created in a community. Ensuring these companies receive the attention and support necessary to expand is essential to a comprehensive economic development program.

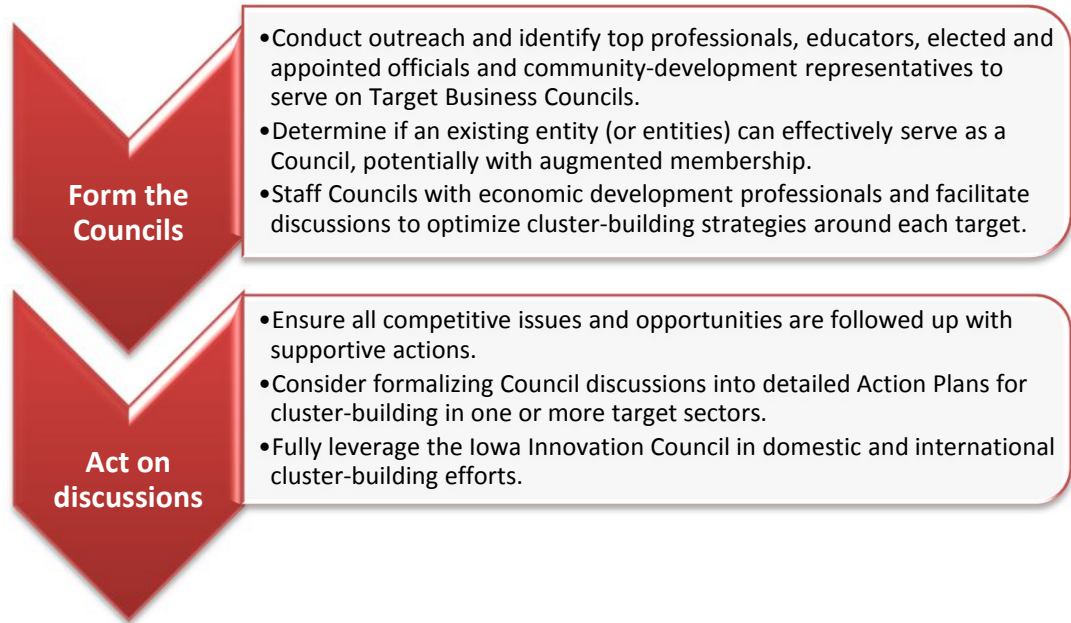
#### **2.1.1: OPTIMIZE EXISTING BUSINESS-RETENTION AND EXPANSION (BRE) PROGRAMS.**

Greater Des Moines already does much that is right related to BRE. Professional staff make annual visits to top employers and leverage e-Synchronist software for data collection; e-Synchronist sub-licenses are held by local departments for the development of community reports; and local and regional economic developers are responsive to companies' needs when expressed. However, some corporate officials said BRE programs are too often reactive instead of proactive. Existing-business calls are often the most effective means to also identify new relocation prospects.



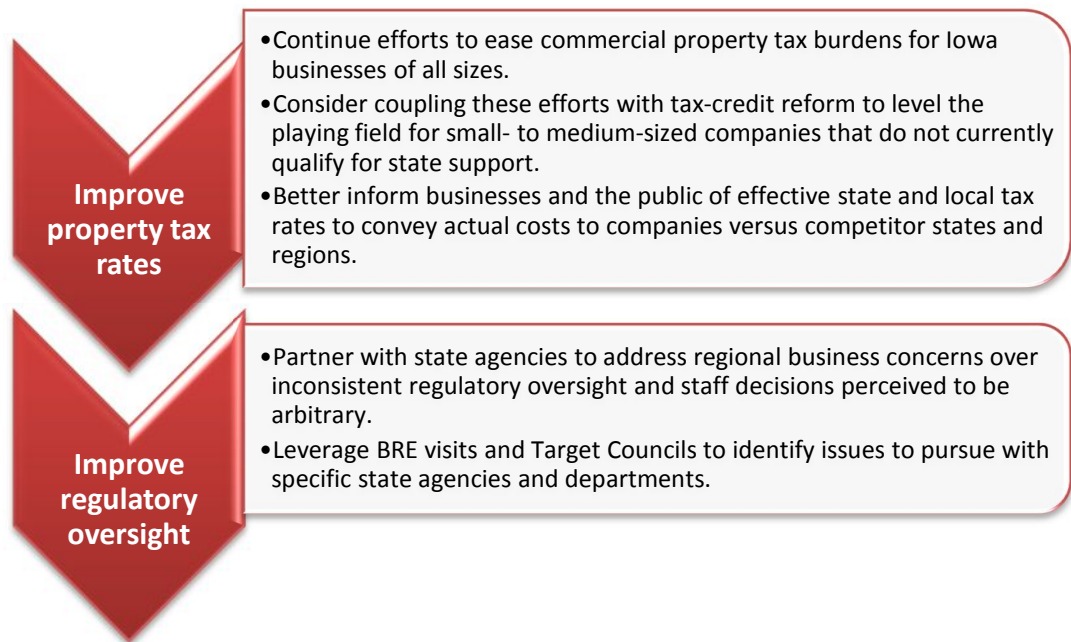
**2.1.2: CREATE TARGET BUSINESS COUNCILS FOR CENTRAL IOWA'S HIGHEST-VALUE EMPLOYMENT CLUSTERS. (BP)**

The professionals that operate in a particular target business sector have expert knowledge on the competitive challenges and opportunities affecting that sector. Efforts to develop clusters based on target business advantages would therefore be most effectively informed by empaneling public, private and institutional leaders for facilitated discussion on the best target development strategies to pursue.



**2.1.3: IMPROVE CENTRAL IOWA’S BUSINESS CLIMATE.**

Overall, Central Iowa’s business climate was said to be competitive, especially as it related to workforce availability, support from government, labor costs, quality of life and other components. However, certain key elements were identified by stakeholders as needing attention.



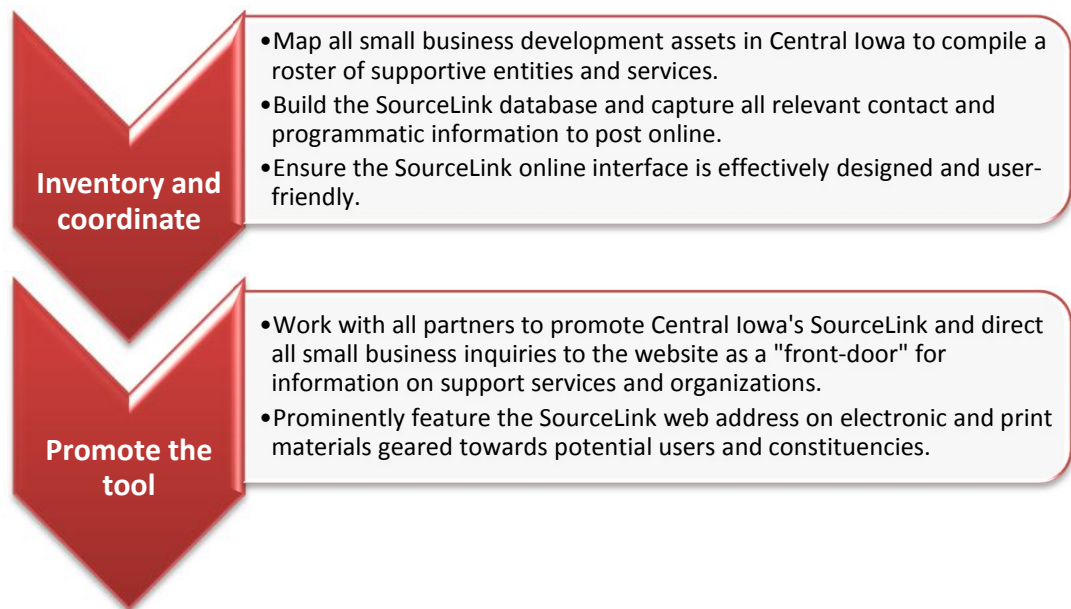


**2.2: START-UP AND SUSTAIN**

Every new small business, start-up enterprise or entrepreneurial endeavor can one day grow to become a community’s largest employer. Therefore, it is incumbent that regions support entrepreneurs, innovators, researchers and fledgling small business people as robustly as possible in all facets of the development process. Central Iowa was said to have strong yet often disconnected small business development and enterprise-creation processes.

**2.2.1: IMPLEMENT THE SOURCELINK ONLINE SMALL-BUSINESS PORTAL IN GREATER DES MOINES AND CENTRAL IOWA.**

Greater Des Moines and Central Iowa have a number of key small-business support entities with proven track records of effectively assisting entrepreneurs looking to launch an enterprise. The most visible of these are the Mid Iowa Small Business Development Center and affiliated West Des Moines Business Incubator and the ISU Small Business Development Center. Other resources include the Buchanan Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership and Pappajohn Center for Entrepreneurship Outreach at Drake University, Des Moines SCORE, Central Iowa SCORE, and the Business Innovation Zone (BIZ). SourceLink was developed by the Kauffman Foundation of entrepreneurship in Kansas City and is leveraged by that city, St. Louis, Tulsa and other communities. It will enable all of Greater Des Moines and Central Iowa’s small business resources to be available via one central source. Site-visitors can access assistance information online or be directed to community partners and programs that help entrepreneurs start, sustain and grow their businesses. Central Iowa’s SBDCs will likely be the point-of-first contact for SourceLink visitors; the centers can then refer clients to other providers as necessary.



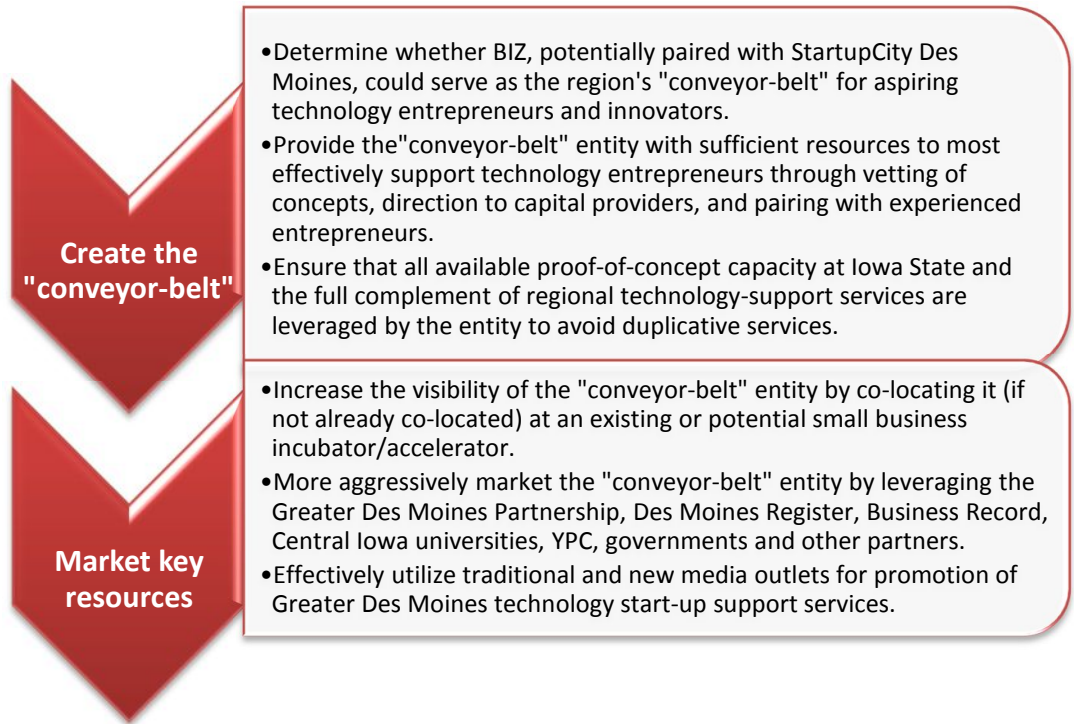


**2.2.2: EFFECTIVELY SERVE ASPIRING ENTREPRENEURS AND INNOVATORS BY CREATING A MORE VISIBLE AND HIGHER-CAPACITY “CONVEYOR-BELT” TO SUPPORT TECHNOLOGY STARTUP DEVELOPMENT AND EXPANSION. (BP)**

To optimize Central Iowa’s enterprise-development capacity, it is critical to differentiate between technology-based, potential “gazelle” opportunities and more typical service and retail small businesses. Each category requires different types of support. It would benefit Greater Des Moines to focus additional resources on enhancing its capacity to foster development of high-technology, innovation-based start-ups tied to the region’s target business sectors. The concept of a “conveyor-belt” to support high-value technology startups refers to the process of guiding technology entrepreneurs through all phases of the launch and growth of their companies. This includes proof-of-concept assessment, seed funding, prototype product-development, identification and capture of capital resources, exit-strategy planning, bridge/mezzanine capital acquisition, professional guidance from staff and entrepreneurs-in-residence, etc. A single entity that provides all these services does not currently exist in Greater Des Moines.

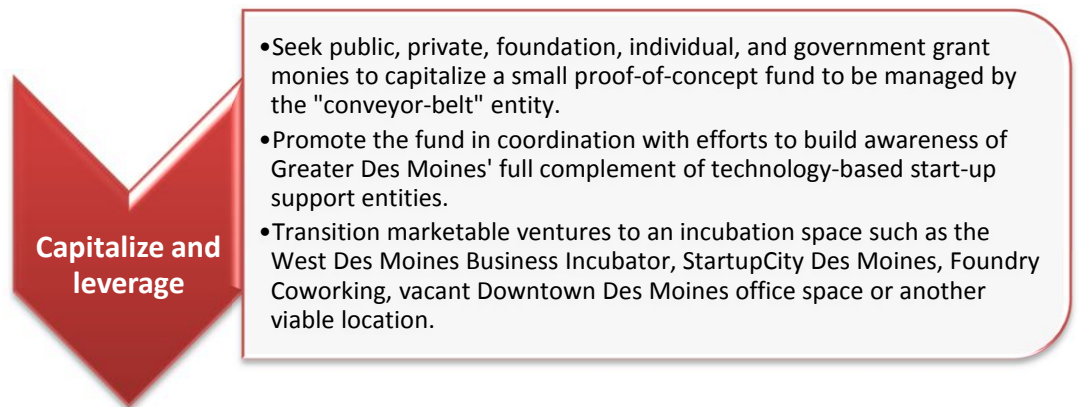
That said, since its creation, BIZ has steadily built a local reputation as an effective assessor of marketable startup technology concepts and built a network of relationships among funding entities and individuals that enables it to refer entrepreneurs to capital sources with the capacity to support them. Leveraging an enhanced BIZ as this “conveyor-belt” entity, potentially co-located at an incubator/accelerator like the new StartupCity Des Moines, could provide Greater Des Moines with a scalable mechanism to one-day approach the systematic support models of some of the nation’s top entrepreneurial regions. It is also critical that the entity that becomes the “conveyor-belt” takes advantage of the full and growing complement of regional and statewide organizations and tools to support technology-based economic development (TBED). These include:

- ⇒ VentureNet Iowa
- ⇒ Iowa State University Office of Intellectual Property and Technology Transfer
- ⇒ Iowa State University Research Foundation
- ⇒ Iowa Innovation Council
- ⇒ Iowa Entrepreneur Network



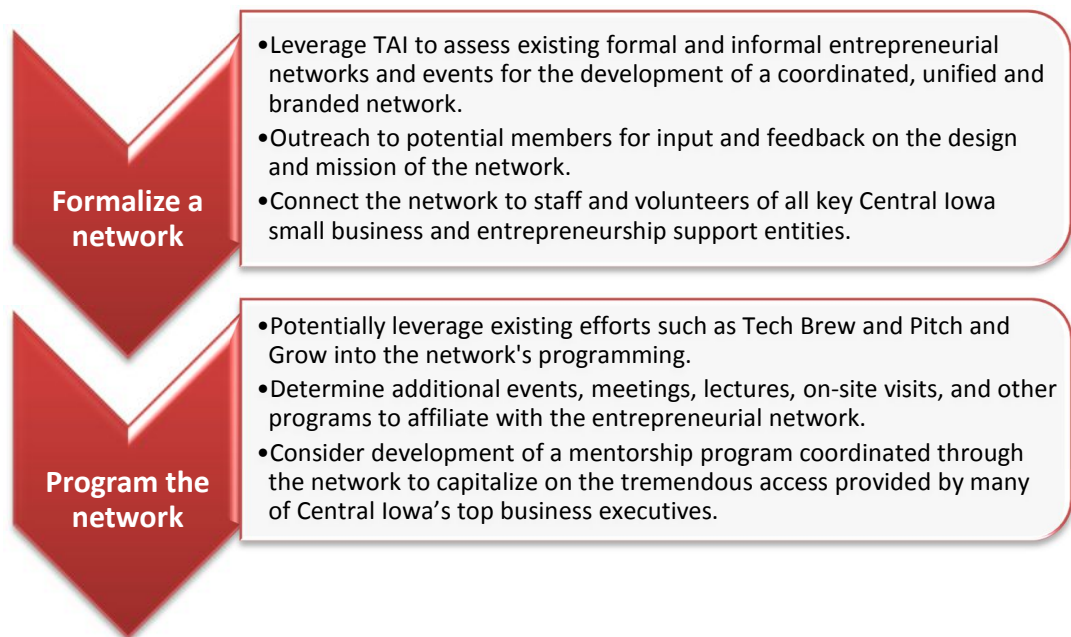
**2.2.3: CAPITALIZE A PROOF-OF-CONCEPT FUND TO BE MANAGED BY THE DESIGNATED "CONVEYOR-BELT" ENTITY.**

While Greater Des Moines' existing small-business-support entities currently direct entrepreneurs with potentially viable business ideas to the region's sources of investment capital (Angels, venture, private, government, etc.), there is a need for initial seed money to vet ideas at their very earliest stages. A proof-of-concept fund would enable the "conveyor-belt" support entity to provide small amounts of capital for innovators with promising ideas to take their concepts to the next level.



**2.2.4: EMPOWER, ENHANCE AND SUPPORT AN ENTREPRENEURIAL NETWORK IN CENTRAL IOWA.**

The Technology Association of Iowa (TAI) is the principal entity facilitating the development of an entrepreneurial network in Central Iowa. Events such as Tech Brew, Pitch and Grow and the Prometheus Awards represent a solid core of networking opportunities; but stakeholders still expressed frustration over a lack of identifiable “points-of-entry” to access Central Iowa’s technology professionals. An enhanced and better supported entrepreneurial network could help to alleviate this issue. The aforementioned Iowa Entrepreneur Network should also be leveraged.



**2.2.5: PARTNER WITH IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY TO OPTIMIZE ITS TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER PROCESSES AND COMMERCIALIZATION PIPELINE. (BP)**

Iowa State University is arguably the most multi-faceted, holistic, high-capacity, and important agriculturally-focused research university in the world. The Battelle Institute has gone on record saying as much. Continuing to enhance the University’s capacity and success in translating research to market could be transformative for Central Iowa’s economy.



**2.3: MARKET AND ATTRACT**

The third component of a holistic economic development program is promoting Central Iowa to outside prospects and site consultants. Marketing should be data-driven, target-specific and focus on venues, markets and events that hold the highest value for economic development investors. Both domestic and international opportunities should be pursued.

**2.3.1: OPTIMIZE GREATER DES MOINES' MARKETING PROGRAM.**

The Greater Des Moines Partnership's external and internal marketing programs are strong. Only slight adjustments are needed in a handful of focus areas to ensure that the programs continue to show positive results.

**Key actions**

- Focus all programmatic efforts more specifically on Central Iowa's target industries, including applying the "Do More" brand to these sectors.
- Heavily emphasize online tools, such as a world-class, information rich website.
- Convert to electronic platforms versus printed brochures, promotional materials, and direct mail as much as possible and utilize new technologies to further differentiate the region.
- Continue strong public relations efforts and earned-media placements.

More specific marketing enhancements include:

⇒ **Greater Des Moines Partnership Website**

- Make rankings and sales messages dominant on the homepage and add a map of the region.
- Create a user-friendly, visually compelling "one-stop shop" for data; enable users to customize reports delivered in spreadsheet format.
- Make "Target Industries" a tab in the main navigation bar.
- Develop a sub-page that focuses more deeply into workforce skill-sets and training capacities.
- Invest in greater search-engine optimization.

⇒ **Social Media**

- Develop content that will drive national media covering the Iowa caucuses to the Partnership's Twitter account and other new media tools,
- Continue to work to increase the number of social media followers who live outside of the region.

⇒ **Marketing Missions**

- Focus trips only on those geographies containing a high concentration of target industries and site consultants.

⇒ **Trade Shows and Real Estate Events**

- In the future, marketing missions should be the primary focus, supplemented by only a small number of highly targeted, executive level industry and real estate conferences.

⇒ **Internal Marketing**

- In addition to the Principal Golf Classic, the Partnership should add one to two smaller (up to three guests) inbound events throughout the year.

⇒ **Public Relations**

- Pursuit of earned media should continue to be a significant aspect of the Partnership’s future economic development initiative.

**2.3.2: EXPLORE THE EXPANSION OF INTERNATIONAL MARKETING EFFORTS.**

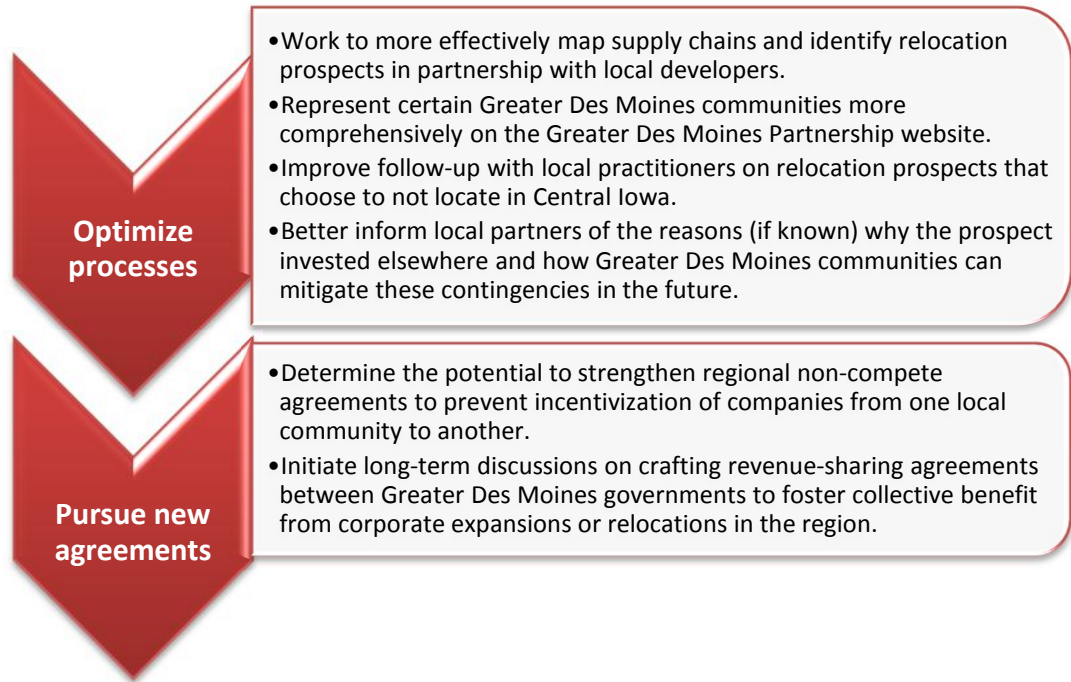
The Greater Des Moines Partnership takes a cadre of regional leaders on an annual international trip to a fast-growing economic nation to pursue potential foreign-direct investment (FDI) opportunities in that country. It also leverages a host of support programs and entities to assist regional businesses with international marketing and development. It could potentially add value to the Partnership’s marketing program to determine if there are other opportunities to leverage overseas markets for regional gain.



**2.3.3: IMPROVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONALS ACROSS GREATER DES MOINES AND CENTRAL IOWA. (BP)**

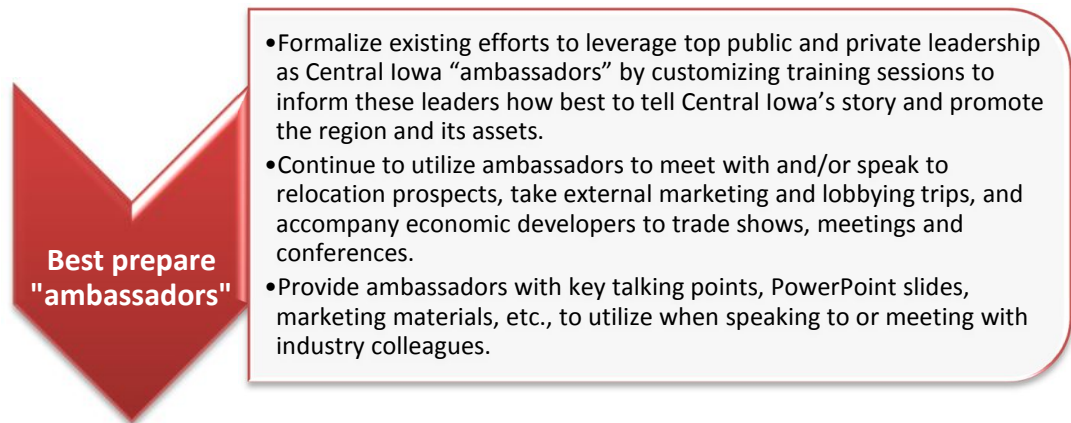
Relationships between the Greater Des Moines Partnership and its network of local development practitioners was said to be very strong. However, there are a handful of elements that practitioners said could be improved. In addition, the potential to more effectively manage inter-regional competition could be pursued.



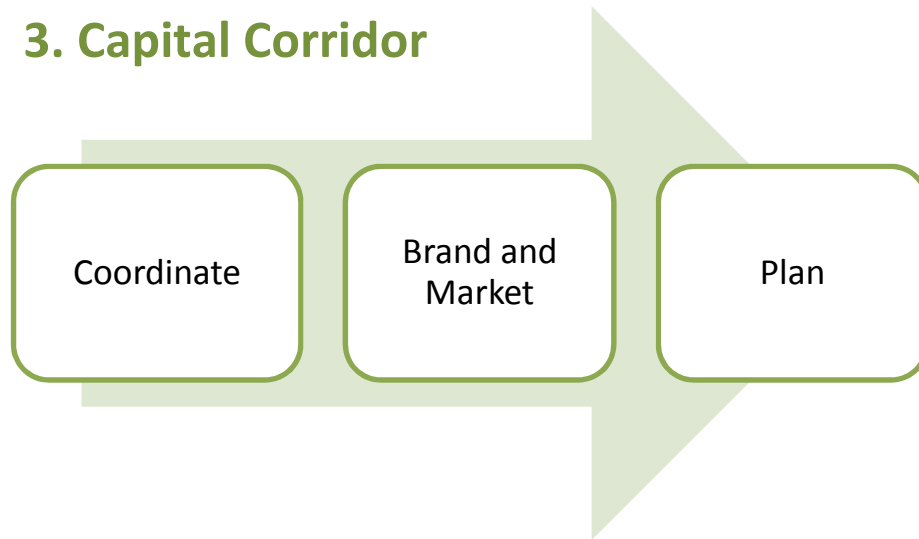


**2.3.4: FULLY LEVERAGE LOCAL LEADERSHIP AS CENTRAL IOWA “AMBASSADORS.”**

The best salespeople for a region are often those business, governmental, institutional and non-profit leaders who already live, work, play and do business in the community. Ensuring they know the best “story” to tell prospects about Central Iowa is important.



### 3. Capital Corridor



#### Justification

While growth in Greater Des Moines has predominantly moved west, south to Indianola and north to Ankeny, the potential to leverage the stretch of Interstate-35 between the Des Moines and Ames metropolitan areas for well-planned, sustainable and high-value growth and development could be transformational for Central Iowa's economy and population base. Successfully and smartly densifying this corridor could build the critical population and economic mass necessary to take Central Iowa to the "next level" of regional prominence. Enhancing the relationships between public and private leaders in Ames and Des Moines also holds tremendous benefits for the advancement of Central Iowa cluster-building, policy, transportation, land use, smart growth, and natural-resources initiatives.

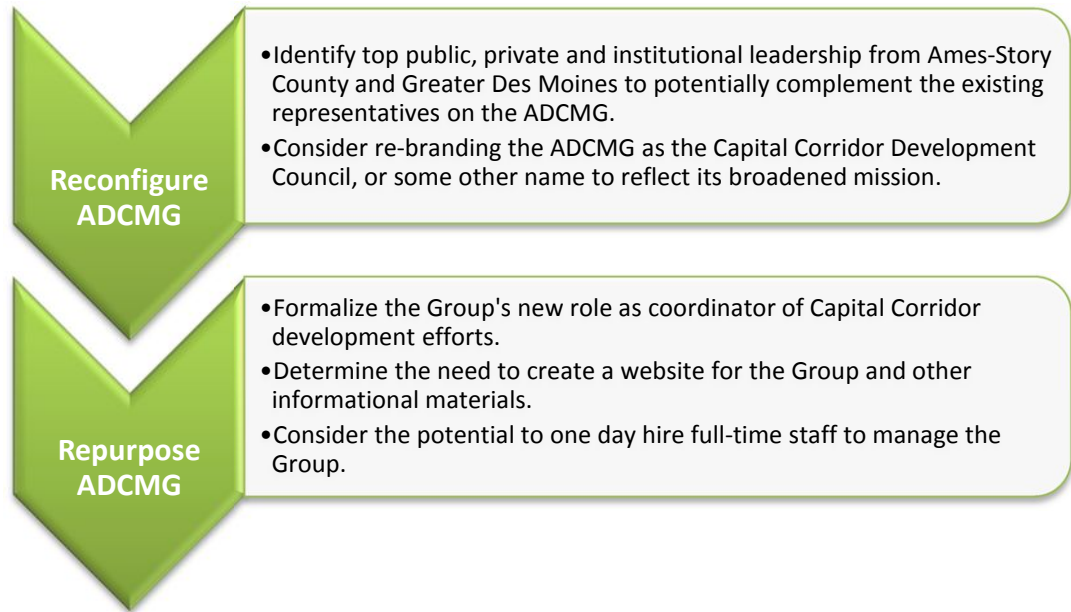
#### 3.1: COORDINATE

In order to effectively transform the Interstate-35 corridor between Ames-Story County and Greater Des Moines into the connective tissue that drives Central Iowa's march towards greater regional prominence, it will be necessary to leverage a high-level, cooperative and collaborative assembly across multiple constituencies to shepherd the Corridor-development effort and foster long-term relationship-building. A group of economic developers from Ames-Story County, Greater Des Moines, and communities along the I-35 Corridor – partnered with a representative from Iowa State – has been meeting regularly over the previous three years to discuss shared opportunities. This **Ames-Des Moines Corridor Marketing Group (ADCMG)** – potentially with key additions – should be considered as the principal coordination entity for the Capital Corridor development initiative. Broader efforts will also be needed to connect Ames and Des Moines across personal, socio-economic and cultural divides built up over years of cautious relationships between the communities.



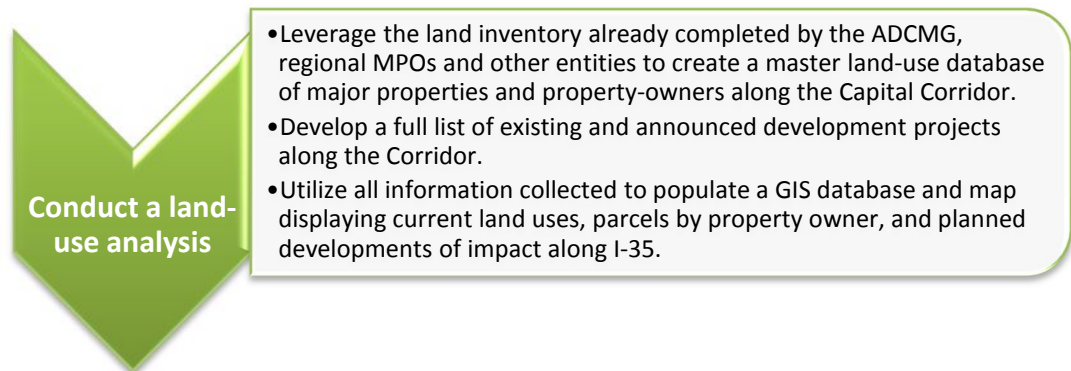
**3.1.1: OPTIMIZE THE AMES-DES MOINES CORRIDOR MARKETING GROUP TO SERVE AS THE COORDINATOR OF CAPITAL CORRIDOR PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS.**

As noted, the ADCMG has built the inter-regional relationships and expertise necessary in its three-year history to serve as the lead entity guiding Capital Corridor efforts.




**3.1.2: CONFIRM A PROPERTY INVENTORY AND LIST OF CURRENT AND PLANNED DEVELOPMENTS ALONG THE CORRIDOR.**

While the market will ultimately determine what land will move along the Corridor, confirming an understanding of existing land uses, major property owners and developments of size/significance either underway or planned will help inform Corridor planning efforts.



**3.1.3: FOSTER “VIRTUAL” CONNECTIONS ACROSS THE CAPITAL CORRIDOR.**

Numerous stakeholders expressed cynicism during the Capital Crossroads process that relationships between Ames and Des Moines could ever be as fruitful as those between, for example, Cedar Rapids and Iowa City. Differences are just too great, they say, community identities too distinct. Capital Corridor efforts are not designed to change Ames and Des Moines in any way, simply to create “win-win” scenarios that will greatly benefit both areas. Quite simply, the Central Iowa labor shed is how the region is being assessed by employment prospects and site consultants. Acknowledging this and working to unify regional leaders and stakeholders over common ambitions and concerns will ensure that I-35 truly becomes a binder rather than divider of these two vital urban areas.



Identify and unify

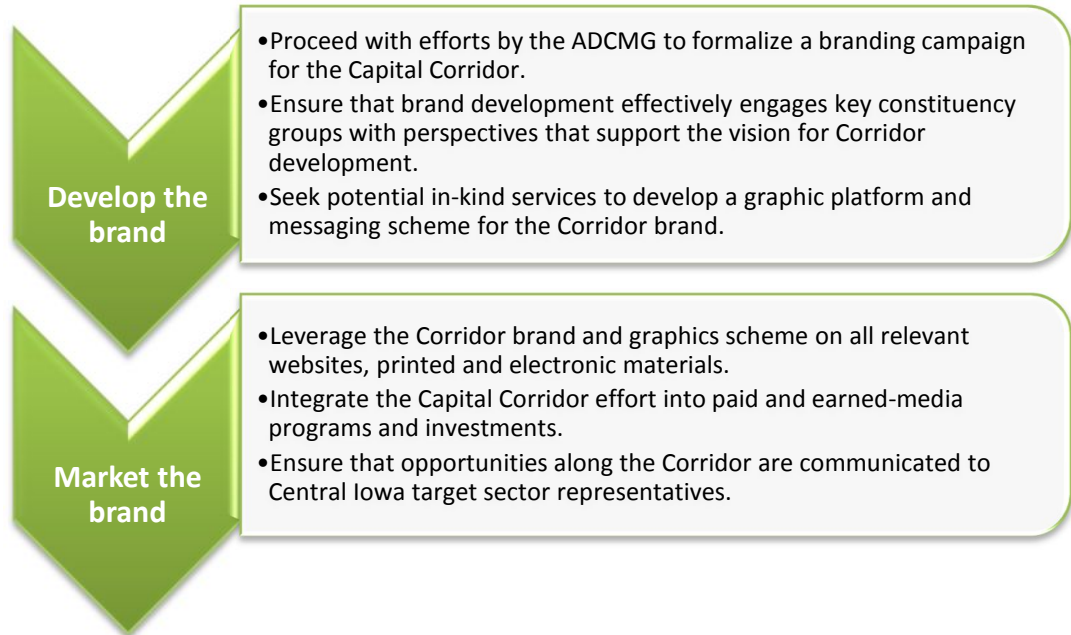
- Research and catalogue all existing Ames-Des Moines interrelationships on boards, commissions, and other groups.
- Identify opportunities for greater cross-representation on appointed bodies.
- Leverage existing organizations in both areas to host Central Iowa networking events.
- Consider positioning Ankeny as the lynchpin of Capital Corridor efforts to better unify Ames and Des Moines across “virtual” divides.

**3.2: BRAND AND MARKET**

As can be seen by the success of an effort like the KC Animal Health Corridor, an effective brand and marketing campaign can significantly drive the economic development prospects of an initiative. Though, according to Central Iowa stakeholders, the Kansas City region does not have an equivalent animal science capacity to Central Iowa, it nevertheless has seen tremendous success in the attraction of animal-sciences firm to the corridor. Central Iowa partners, guided by the Capital Corridor Development Board, should initiate both external *and* internal campaigns to brand and market I-35 in Central Iowa.

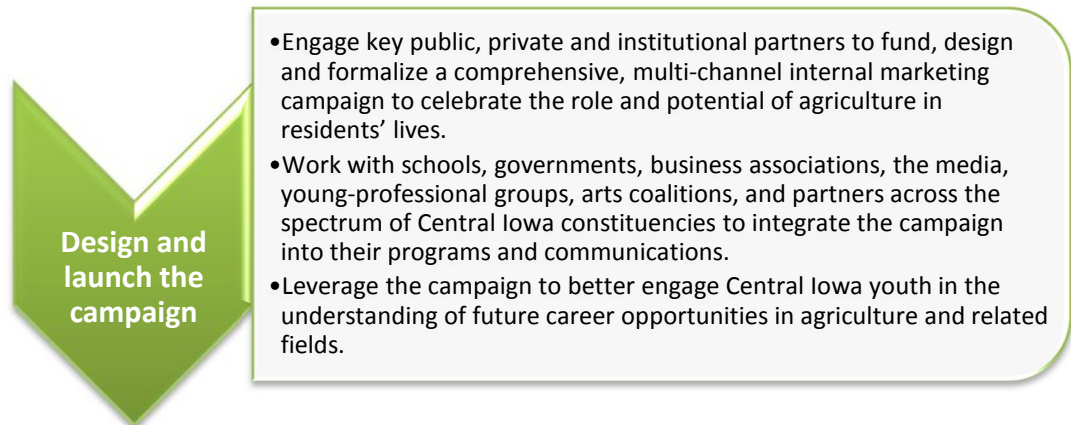
**3.2.1: CREATE A BRAND FOR THE CAPITAL CORRIDOR AND AGGRESSIVELY LEVERAGE IT IN EXTERNAL MARKETING CAMPAIGNS. (BP)**

The Ames-Des Moines Corridor Marketing Group is currently engaged in a Corridor-branding effort that would capture the focus areas of biosciences, including animal health, plant sciences, biofuels, food and nutrition. This effort should be fully leveraged for the Capital Crossroads strategy.



**3.2.2: COMPLEMENT CAPITAL CORRIDOR EFFORTS BY LAUNCHING AN INTERNAL CAMPAIGN TO ACKNOWLEDGE AND CELEBRATE CENTRAL IOWA’S AGRICULTURAL ECONOMY AND RELATED SECTORS.**

From world-leading research conducted at Iowa State, to the nation’s top corn and soybean producers, to numerous agri-business concerns employing thousands of Central Iowans, to the presence of the “Nobel Prize of food” in the World Food Prize and Borlaug Dialogue, Central Iowa can rightly claim to be a global center of food policy and production, plant science and animal science. However, multiple stakeholders commented that Greater Des Moines does not understand or embrace this legacy or capacity.

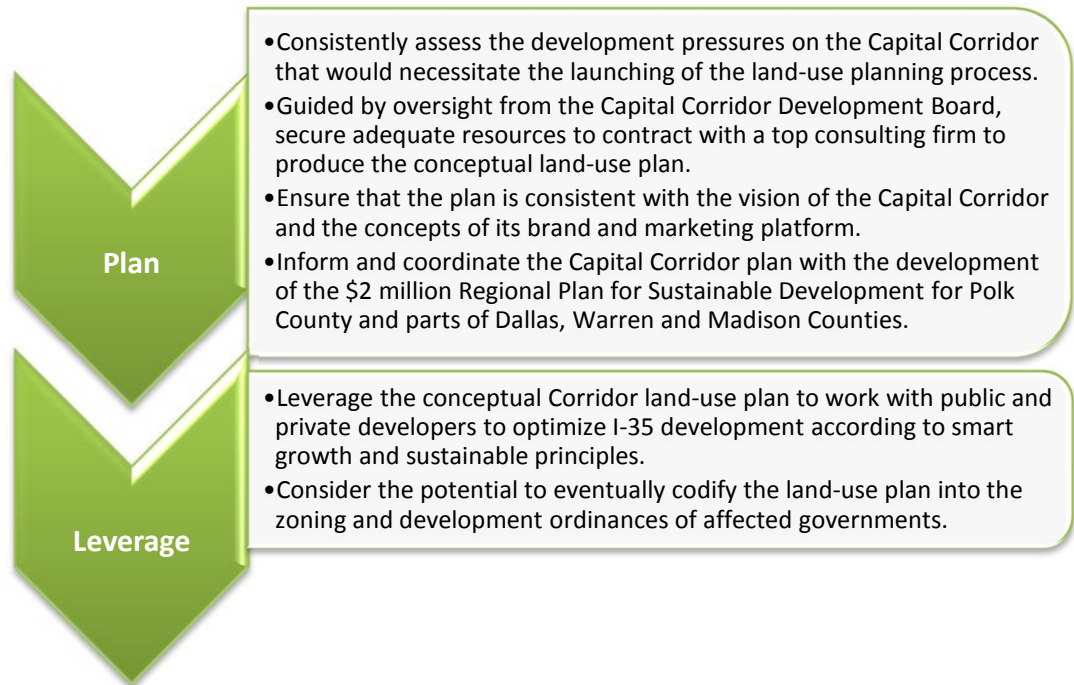


**3.3: PLAN**

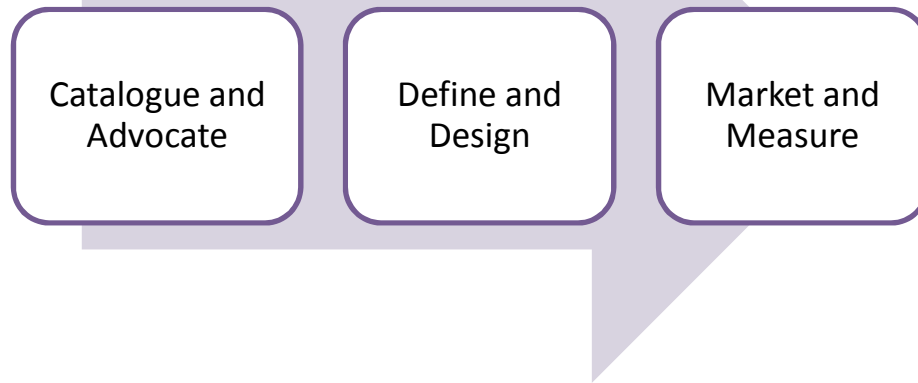
Though current market demand does not warrant investment from public and private partners to develop a conceptual land-use plan for the Capital Corridor, an aggressive and coordinated effort to brand and market the Corridor would likely increase pressure on landowners to consider purchase and development offers. When that occurs, the Capital Corridor Development Board (proposed) should consider assembling funding partners to contract for the production of a conceptual land-use plan to inform development scenarios along the Corridor.

**3.3.1: FUND AND PRODUCE A CONCEPTUAL CAPITAL CORRIDOR DEVELOPMENT PLAN.**

In order to effectively get ahead of eventual growth along the Corridor, the conceptual land use plan would determine where densities would make the most sense, where road and utilities infrastructure is needed, and where residential, industrial, commercial, and retail projects should be sited. The Plan would not be public policy but rather serve as a tool to inform conversations with developers as interest is shown in specific parcels. It would also enable governments to prioritize investments in infrastructure if desired.



## 4. Wellness Capital



### Justification

A groundswell of interest is materializing in Greater Des Moines to capture opportunities to make the region a national model of wellness. The effort would leverage existing capacities and governmental, non-profit and corporate wellness efforts to coalesce these strategies into a holistic wellness program for implementation in Des Moines-area communities. From the perspective of the Capital Crossroads initiative, a regional wellness initiative would serve many “capitals”: business, social, human, environmental, physical, governmental, and possibly even cultural. However, it is the potential to leverage a comprehensive wellness campaign to create economic opportunities in Central Iowa, change perceptions of the region through marketing of the initiative and its components, and retain and attract businesses and talent in Health and Wellness and other target sectors that could have the most dynamic local impact.

### 4.1: CATALOGUE AND ADVOCATE

The first step in developing a comprehensive regional wellness initiative would be consensus-building among key partners. Inherent in this effort would be the need to identify the key public, private and not-for-profit constituents with the capacity and interest to be involved in a program of this type. The public-at-large must also be made to understand the benefits of a wellness initiative and why they should support it.

#### 4.1.1: RESEARCH AND CATALOGUE EXISTING WELLNESS-RELATED EFFORTS AND ENTITIES IN CENTRAL IOWA.

The development of a formal wellness initiative must start with an understanding of existing programmatic, personnel, and resource capacity.

**Assess  
capacity**

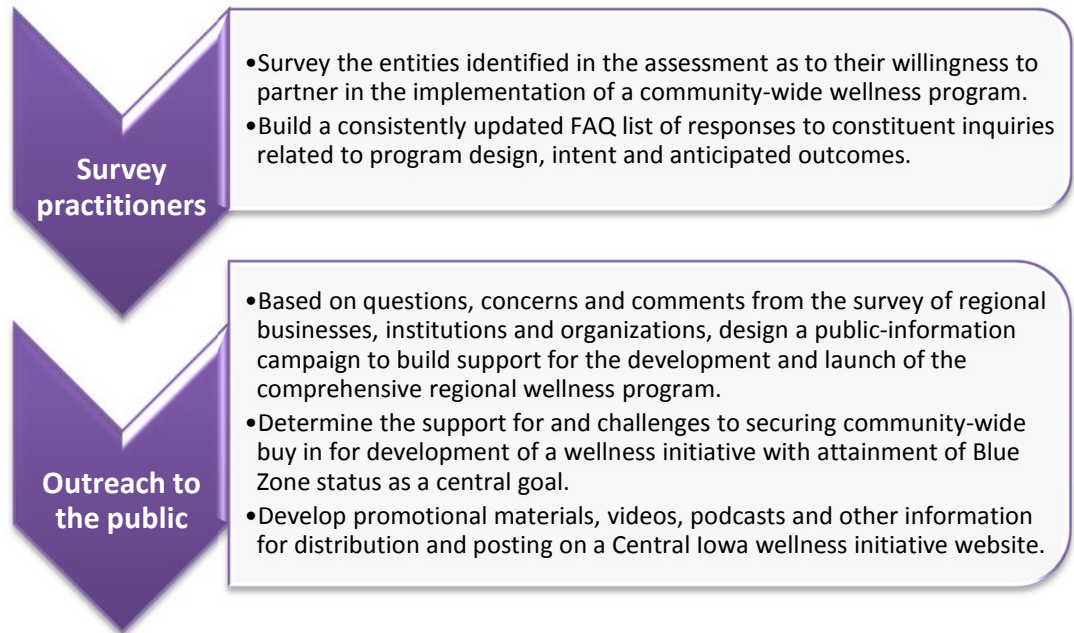
- Survey and record companies that have – or plan to – develop a wellness program or protocol for employees.
- Build an ongoing database of these programs along with information on health care facilities, organizations, companies, faith-based entities, and institutions that either engage in wellness efforts or offer training and guidance to clients.
- Focus existing efforts into initial categories to inform the development of the wellness initiative and begin to assess any existing programmatic gaps.

**4.1.2: ASSESS POTENTIAL REGIONAL BUY-IN FOR DEVELOPMENT OF A COMPREHENSIVE, COORDINATED AND MEASUREABLE WELLNESS INITIATIVE.**

Many Central Iowa stakeholders likely cannot differentiate the concepts of health and wellness, not to mention grasp the strategies and sub-strategies that would comprise a regional wellness initiative. While there seems to be recognition that "wellness" involves more than diet and physical activity, many may not conceive of other components, for example, happiness. Wellness involves emotional/spiritual wellbeing, intellectual wellbeing and social wellbeing. Local leaders should explore whether these notions are of interest to the broader community by initiating discussion on what comprises wellness and focusing on the topic of Blue Zones<sup>1</sup> as a framework for discussion of these issues.

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<sup>1</sup> A Blue Zone is a region of the world where people commonly live past the age of 100. Scientists and demographers have classified these communities as having common healthy traits and life practices that result in above-average longevity. Strategies are underway to develop targeted Blue Zone communities.



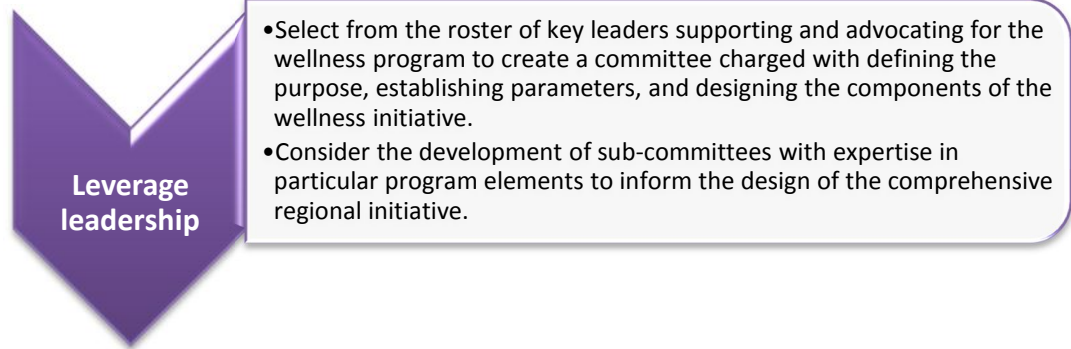
**4.2: DEFINE AND DESIGN**

Based on initial information-gathering, regional outreach, and advocacy efforts, the parameters of the wellness initiative should have come into clearer focus. Design of the formal programmatic components of the initiative should be a collaborative effort among the key stakeholder entities engaged in implementing and managing the program and measuring its impact.

**4.2.1: FORM A PROGRAM-DESIGN COMMITTEE TO CREATE THE SPECIFICATIONS OF THE WELLNESS INITIATIVE.**

Empaneling top representatives of constituencies critical to the effective design and development of the regional wellness initiative will ensure that the program reflects existing and best practice efforts. Numerous local leaders have been building support for a wellness effort incorporating the potential implementation of a Blue Zone designation in the region; these individuals must be key players in the planning and activation of the regional wellness initiative.

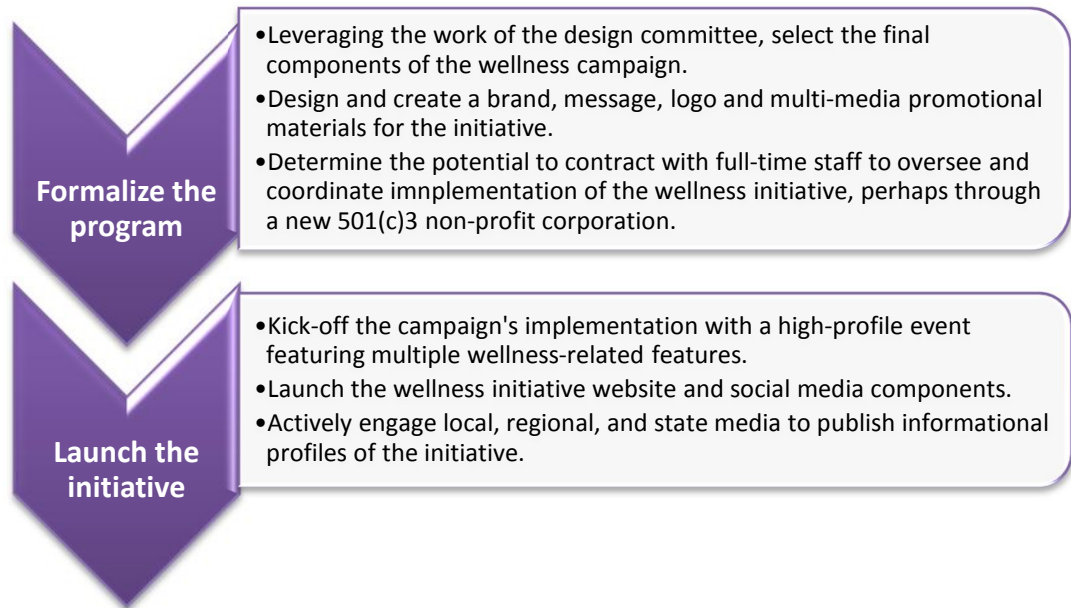




**4.2.2: FINALIZE THE WELLNESS INITIATIVE AND ACTIVATE THE PROGRAM. (BP)**

Once comprehensive community outreach and engagement has been performed and parameters and programmatic elements for the wellness initiative selected, the next step is the public announcement and rollout of the campaign.

Program coordinators should leverage this event to initiate the marketing and messaging components of the initiative.



Based on initial surveys and discussions with regional stakeholders, potential components of the wellness initiative could include:

- ⇒ Universities driving research initiatives into health, wellness and the role plant and environmental sciences plays in these dynamics;



- ⇒ Companies driving wellness through internal programs while health care facilities serve as “medical homes” for holistic and preventative patient treatment;
- ⇒ “Reengineering” of activity based on the Blue Zones model with the potential for Greater Des Moines to be selected as a candidate for official designation as a Blue-Zone-in-development;
- ⇒ Capitalizing on World Health Organization’s selection of the City of Des Moines as an Age-Friendly City and the implementation dynamics of this distinction;
- ⇒ Continuing the development of bicycle/pedestrian trail infrastructure in Greater Des Moines and connecting existing systems to new capacity;
- ⇒ Leveraging bike/ped infrastructure to better connect neighborhoods and activity centers, including the ongoing implementation of Des Moines’ Complete Streets program;
- ⇒ Codifying the encouragement of physical activity in the public realm through the development of Active Design zoning regulations;
- ⇒ Working with local retailers to put healthy foods at their checkout lines;
- ⇒ Redeveloping the Des Moines Botanical Center to focus on nutritional and medicinal plant species;
- ⇒ Continuing to promote active lifestyles through the development of skate parks, skating rinks, bike paths and trails, outdoor basketball and tennis courts, dog parks and passive parks, and activities on the Des Moines and Raccoon Rivers, Gray’s Lake and other regional waterways;
- ⇒ Leveraging initiatives like Healthy Polk, Healthy Iowa, Live Healthy Iowa, and wellness centers in Indianola and other communities;
- ⇒ Corporate efforts such as Hy-Vee’s inclusion of dieticians in every store and merchandising supportive of healthier lifestyles;
- ⇒ Evidence-based prevention models to help fight against contraction of chronic diseases;
- ⇒ Sustainable agriculture and local foods movements, inclusive of community gardens and farmer’s markets; and
- ⇒ Attraction and development of sporting events such as tennis tournaments and bicycle races, plus the leveraging of existing events such as the Drake Relays and the Hy-Vee Triathlon.

**4.3: MARKET AND MEASURE**

Once the wellness initiative has been designed, metrics to assess its performance and outcomes must be developed. The initiative should also be leveraged to change perceptions about Central Iowa and appeal to companies, investors, and talent attracted to the philosophy and implementation of regional wellness programming.

**4.3.1: DEVELOP PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS AND OUTCOME METRICS TO ASSESS THE EFFICACY OF THE WELLNESS INITIATIVE.**

A campaign as comprehensive, multi-faceted, and ambitious as the regional wellness initiative must be consistently and accurately measured to inform program operators, participants, funders and the public-at-large of its progress and success.



- Leverage the program-design committee to oversee the development of performance-tracking metrics for the initiative.
- Research previous years of Central Iowa health data to identify and record population trends that will inform projections of health benefits from the effective implementation of the wellness initiative.
- Communicate these metrics to program partners and incorporate into the initiative’s informational campaign.

**4.3.2: MARKET CENTRAL IOWA’S WELLNESS INITIATIVE TO THE NATION AND WORLD.**

The issue of external misperceptions of Central Iowa’s key assets, opportunities and resources was a common theme of Capital Crossroads public input. Fully leveraging a transformative campaign like the regional wellness initiative to change opinions and attitudes about Central Iowa can generate direct benefits in terms of attraction and retention of jobs, talent and investment.



- Effectively tell Central Iowa’s wellness “story” through a formal marketing campaign across multiple media and channels.
- Identify the highest-value publications, websites, programs and markets to spread the word on the region’s transformative effort to improve residents’ health and wellbeing.
- Leverage public-relations capacity to secure earned media placements in top publications .
- Capitalize on the media convened for the Iowa caucuses by aggressively promoting Central Iowa’s wellness program.
- Provide detailed information on the initiative on the Greater Des Moines Partnership website and those of partner organizations, institutions, companies and governments.

- Pursue opportunities to develop a “health tourism” sector by marketing the wellness initiative to targeted constituencies and media.
- Integrate the wellness initiative into external marketing programming focused on growth in Central Iowa’s Health and Wellness sector.
- Promote and leverage the wellness initiative for talent retention and attraction, outreach to entrepreneurs and venture capitalists, retiree recruitment, small business development, and other opportunities.

## 5. Human Capital



### Justification


The U.S. economy is increasingly being driven by talent more than any other competitive factor. Companies are now following the skilled workers as opposed to the other way around; this represents a seismic shift in how communities compete and jobs are created. Greater Des Moines and Central Iowa have a long history of educational success driven by community leaders who understand the value of quality academic institutions and the development of accomplished graduates. While local student performance is stagnant or declining in certain districts, this has not dampened the community's will to foster quality educational opportunities; the challenges to achieve success are simply greater. Developing a trained workforce is not only about formalizing an effective "cradle to career" pipeline and retaining and attracting top talent, but also ensuring children and adults are not restricted by social factors such as poverty, hunger, fear of crime, lack of childcare, chronic disease and other issues that can affect whether a student reaches his or her full potential.

### 5.1: CRADLE TO CAREER

There is no more important determinant of future success than performance in elementary and secondary school. Though Central Iowa's schools have traditionally been one of its key strengths, this situation is changing. The region cannot afford to see its school performance decline to non-competitive levels. And it must acknowledge that graduation from high school is no longer a reliable guarantor of career success. Providing graduates with the skills needed to succeed in college or the workplace must be a critical concern of leaders and educators at all levels.

**5.1.1: ENSURE THAT UNIVERSAL PRE-KINDERGARTEN PROGRAMMING IS PROVIDED FOR ALL CENTRAL IOWA CHILDREN IN THE SHORT- AND LONG-TERM FUTURE.**

Iowa had reached a place that most states are still aspiring to: the funding of pre-school for every child in the state. A proposed needs-based system was heading to defeat in the 2011 legislature but will likely be brought before the house and senate again in subsequent years as budget deficits remain an issue. Central Iowa must always make its voice heard in the ongoing chorus defending universal pre-K in Iowa.



**Maintain active coalitions**

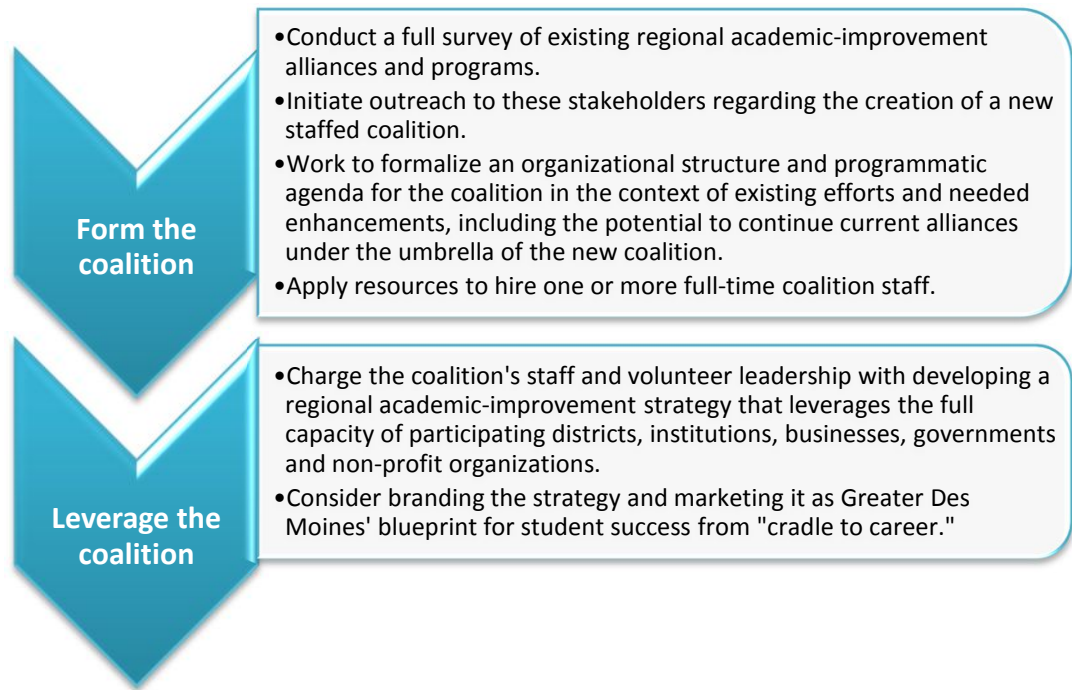
- Ensure that Central Iowa public, private and institutional leadership is consistently engaged in efforts to protect universal pre-K in Iowa.
- Engage top legislators prior to and during each session to gauge the status of universal pre-K and argue for its continuation.
- Monitor and compile the most recent research on the long-term benefits of pre-K programs to present to legislators if necessary.

**5.1.2: ENHANCE PARTNERSHIPS AMONG GREATER DES MOINES EDUCATION AND TRAINING, GOVERNMENT, PRIVATE, AND NON-PROFIT CONSTITUENCIES TO FOSTER POSITIVE ACADEMIC RESULTS FOR STUDENTS FROM “CRADLE TO CAREER.” (BP)**

Recognizing the critical importance of children’s educational outcomes on their lives and the overall health of the region’s economy and quality of life, leaders in Greater Des Moines and Central Iowa have come together to forge strategic partnerships for improving academic performance. One such partnership is Greater Des Moines’ Business Education/Alliance, a group of educators and private business people who meet regularly to discuss ways to help the region’s students succeed. Another is the Iowa Innovation Gateway, a seven-county partnership across Central Iowa that works to connect business and education to create a pipeline of qualified employees for regional companies.

While these existing partnerships have made a positive impact, a more comprehensive, coordinated, diverse, and higher capacity organization is needed to take efforts to the next level. Based on successful models in communities such as Cincinnati, Louisville and Nashville, Greater Des Moines should leverage its current alliances for the creation of a staffed public-private coalition inclusive of education, non-profit, community, civic, philanthropic, and business sector representatives. Formalizing a new staffed educational-improvement coalition will provide an “umbrella” to incorporate and/or leverage existing alliances for the benefit of regional students. Existing partnerships need not go away, though they will likely change, either in membership or programmatic design. Above all, a new public-private coalition with full-time staff will enable existing and future academic-improvement efforts to function more effectively,

collectively and with the support of a much broader coalition of leaders across all constituencies.



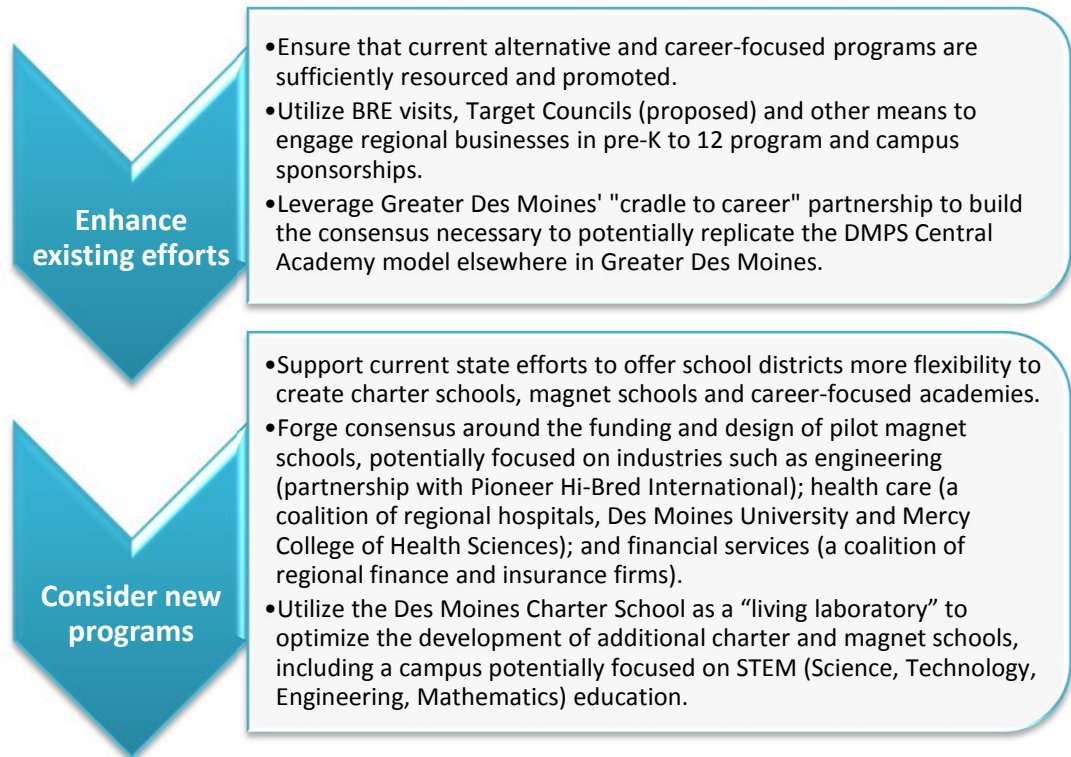
Model coalitions in other regions focus on such elements as:

- ⇒ Kindergarten readiness;
- ⇒ 4<sup>th</sup> grade reading proficiency;
- ⇒ 8<sup>th</sup> grade math proficiency;
- ⇒ High school graduation rates and ACT scores;
- ⇒ Career and technical education and placement;
- ⇒ Exposure to entrepreneurial and career-based education;
- ⇒ Parental involvement efforts; and
- ⇒ Postsecondary enrollment and completion.

Key to these coalitions' work is a commitment to coordinated advocacy, funding alignment, and data-driven decision-making.

**5.1.3: PROVIDE MORE ALTERNATIVE-EDUCATION MODELS FOR GREATER DES MOINES STUDENTS.**

Des Moines Public Schools (DMPS) and other regional districts have steadily increased the number of programs that expose students to careers and occupations, often in partnership with local companies. DMPS offers parents a choice of multiple International Baccalaureate campuses and one public Montessori school, while its Central Campus offers college-credit courses in dozens of professional fields; the district’s Central Academy provides the region’s top students with the opportunity to take college-credit Advanced Placement courses. DMPS’ Charter School, launched in 2010-11, has also seen success and a strong demand for increased enrollment. With Iowa’s charter school law being reexamined by the new Branstad Administration, greater flexibility for districts to launch alternative-campus models could be forthcoming.



**5.1.4: DEVELOP A COLLABORATIVE TUTOR-RECRUITMENT EFFORT FOR GREATER DES MOINES SCHOOLS.**

Supplementing paid pre-K to 12 faculty with volunteer tutors from the community is a proven method for providing certain students with the additional guidance, encouragement, and support needed to succeed. In other communities, the regional educational-achievement partnership has launched and coordinated a tutor-recruitment effort.



**Design and leverage**

- Determine the optimal partners to design, coordinate and manage the tutor-recruitment effort.
- Consider leveraging the regional "cradle to career" partnership to coordinate and manage the program.
- Outreach to Mentor Iowa to determine if volunteer mentors would be interested in also serving as in-school tutors.
- Populate a database of interested volunteer tutors and assist schools with leveraging the database to connect with potential tutors.

**5.1.5: INTRODUCE ACADEMIC SUPPORT LABS IN ALL CENTRAL IOWA PUBLIC SCHOOLS WHERE NEEDED.**

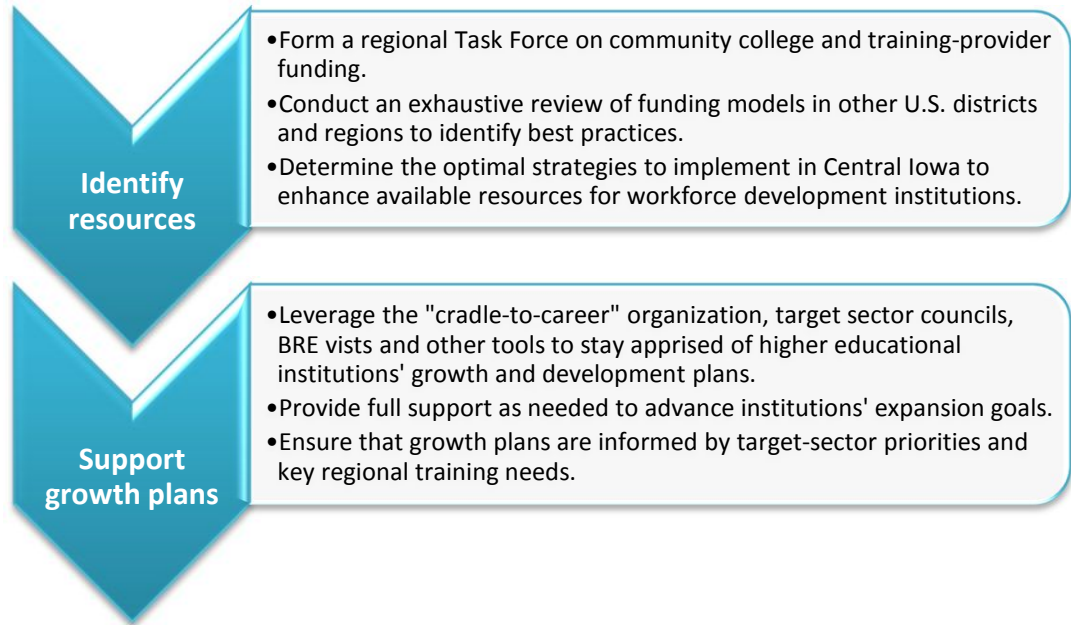
A partnership between United Way of Central Iowa and Des Moines Public Schools, Academic Support Labs have been launched in most city high schools, with plans to expand the program to elementary and middle schools. The model should also be considered for regional expansion to districts with schools that could greatly benefit from the Support Labs.

**Local and regional expansion**

- Continue efforts to secure the resources to integrate Support Labs in all Des Moines Public Schools.
- Work through the regional "cradle to career" partnership to identify K-12 districts interested in applying the Support Lab model in one or more campuses.
- Leverage existing and potential funding streams to resource new regional Labs.

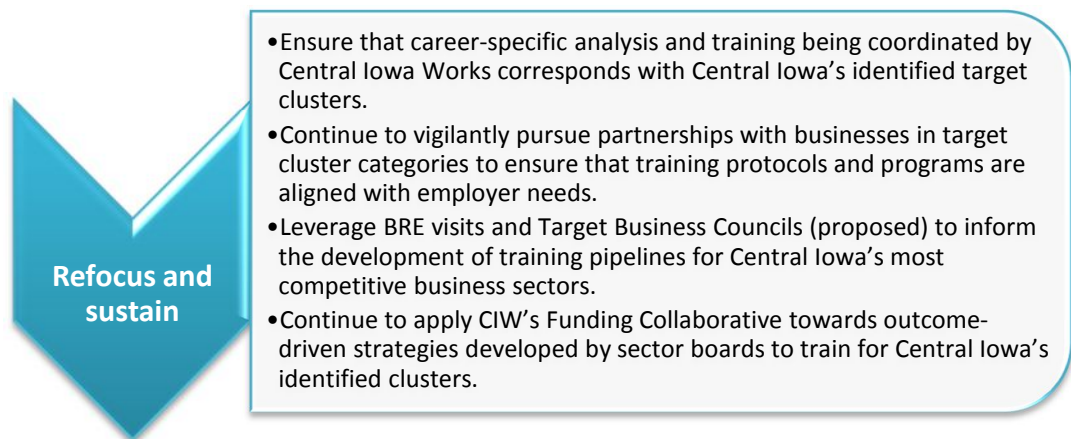
**5.1.6: ENSURE CENTRAL IOWA COLLEGES, UNIVERSITIES, AND WORKFORCE-DEVELOPMENT ENTITIES HAVE THE CAPACITY NECESSARY TO TRAIN ALL ELIGIBLE STUDENTS.**

Programs in multiple Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) campuses are space-constrained as demand for training outstrips supply. It is critical that DMACC and other training providers have the resources to effectively prepare all needed workers for area companies. Similarly, expansion plans of all four-year public and private colleges and universities in Central Iowa must be supported to ensure that the region maintains a competitive advantage over rival communities.



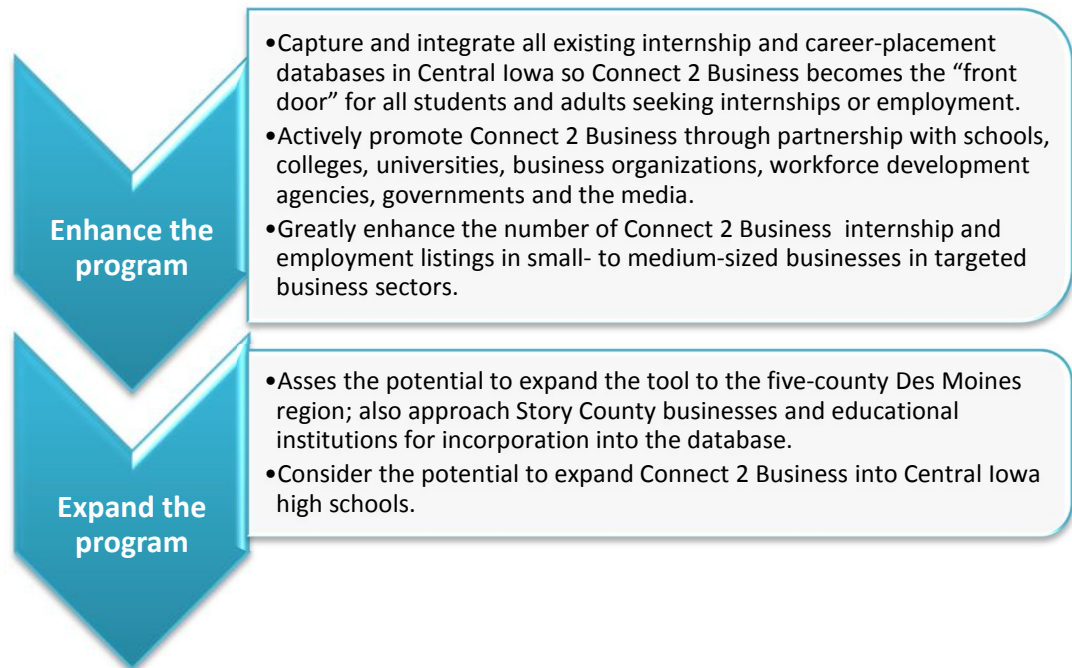
**5.1.7: FORMALIZE EDUCATION AND CAREER-TRAINING PIPELINES FOR CENTRAL IOWA'S TARGET BUSINESS SECTORS.**

Central Iowa Works (CIW), the region's de facto workforce board, coordinates "career pathways" to train adults for careers in information technology, financial services, construction, advanced manufacturing, health care, energy and the service/retail sectors. For the most part, these sectors conform well to Capital Crossroads targets; the only exceptions are construction and service/retail. While these sectors are important, they are typically low-paying and do not add wealth to the region. Consideration should be given to eliminating these pathways and replacing them with logistics and a more direct application to agribusiness.



**5.1.8: EXPAND AND BETTER PROMOTE CENTRAL IOWA’S INTERNSHIP PLACEMENT PROGRAMS.**

Availability and utilization of business internships is one of the most effective ways to provide students with workplace experience and enhance the likelihood that they will remain in the region after graduation from high school or college. Greater Des Moines’ Connect 2 Business online workforce development portal is evolving into a dynamic tool for students and businesses. Enhancing this resource will ensure that it continues to serve a critical role for workforce development and talent retention.



**5.1.9: CREATE A GRADUATE CENTRAL IOWA PROGRAM. (BP)**

The support pipeline for career training does not end after high school or college. Adults – particularly those in underserved communities and lower-income neighborhoods – who have completed some college coursework but not yet earned a degree benefit greatly from enhanced levels of support with returning to school and resuming their educations. Other communities have leveraged partnerships to create adult-education programs that work closely with clients to help them earn a college degree and move into quality employment.



Design and  
promote

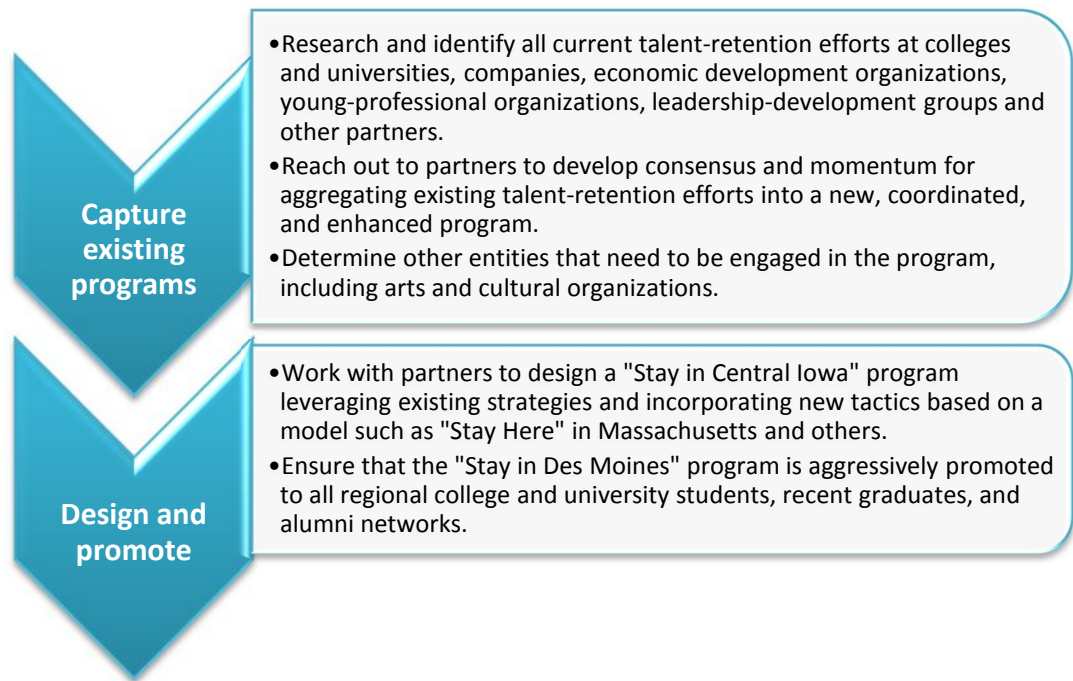
- Leverage a best-practice model to develop a similar adult-degree attainment program in Greater Des Moines.
- Formalize partnerships with all accredited regional colleges and universities to matriculate adults in the Graduate Central Iowa program onto their campuses.
- Consider providing full-time or shared staff to offer adults free guidance and support to assist them with identifying colleges/programs best suited to their needs, filling out and filing financial-assistance forms, providing support with academics, balancing work, family and education, accessing a computer, completing paperwork or improving study skills.
- Leverage all appropriate community partners, including faith-based representatives, to help promote Graduate Central Iowa and direct interested adults to the program website and/or office.

## 5.2: TALENT MAGNET

A shortage of talented workers was an issue in Central Iowa pre-recession and it will be again. Though multiple ongoing efforts seek to promote Greater Des Moines as a destination for talent, the region's external perception and cold climate make talent attraction and retention a constant problem.

### 5.2.1: DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE AND COORDINATED GRADUATE-RETENTION STRATEGY.

The odds of successfully retaining a pending or recent graduate of a Central Iowa college or university are much higher than recruiting this individual from outside the region. By formalizing a "Stay in Central Iowa" graduate-retention program that leverages multiple strategies to effectively retain college and university graduates, regional leaders can seek to capitalize on the dynamic in-state and external talent drawn to Central Iowa institutions. It is also far less costly to retain an existing graduate than to recruit a talented professional from outside the region.

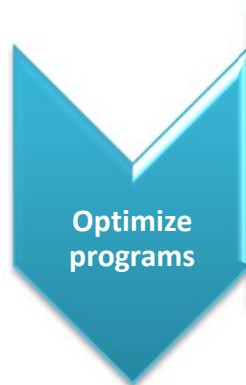


Based on components of best-practice efforts from across the country – especially **“Stay Here” Massachusetts** – the following elements could be included in Central Iowa’s program:

- ⇒ Leveraging of the aforementioned Connect 2 Business program to provide all interested Central Iowa students with internships with companies of all sizes and industries. Program operators should conduct targeted follow-ups with internship recipients to best assist them with remaining in Central Iowa.
- ⇒ Developing a program (like ONEin3 Boston) that connects Greater Des Moines young adults with resources related to home buying, business development, professional networking and civic engagement. Young Professionals Connection (YPC) Des Moines could coordinate.
- ⇒ Identifying “Stay in Central Iowa” ambassadors in government, business, sports, entertainment and education to film promotional materials, speak to college classes and meet one-on-one with talent considering remaining in the region.
- ⇒ Leveraging a local entity such as the Des Moines Social Club (DMSC) to serve as “hosts” to visiting young-professional employee prospects for Des Moines-area businesses. DMSC would introduce the candidates to Greater Des Moines cultural, social and entertainment assets for young talent.
- ⇒ Working with local experts to create a social-media campaign featuring a “Stay in Central Iowa” stand-alone website or microsite to serve as a web portal for students and young professionals to post viral videos, read articles about Greater Des Moines and Central Iowa, and subscribe to a customized newsfeed.

**5.2.2: CONTINUE TO LEVERAGE MULTI-MEDIA AND MARKETING TO PROMOTE GREATER DES MOINES TO EXTERNAL TALENT.**

The Greater Des Moines Partnership has utilized social media, out-of-town events and a tour sponsorship for local band The Nadas, among other strategies, to spread the word about Greater Des Moines and Central Iowa as a place to live and work. The Partnership and other Central Iowa entities should continue to optimize talent-marketing and attraction efforts to ensure that regional businesses have access to an available pool of highly skilled workers.



- Continue to aggressively pursue outside-the-box, new-media-focused strategies to capture the attention of outside talent.
- Consider opportunities such as the Iowa caucuses, the 80/35 concert, the Des Moines Arts Festival and other unique events to leverage for talent attraction.
- Determine the value of developing a marketing campaign focused on Greater Des Moines educational resources, accessibility to leadership, and strong employment opportunities with a potential tagline such as “Come to Learn – Stay to Earn,” or an equivalent message.

**5.3: SOCIAL WELL-BEING**

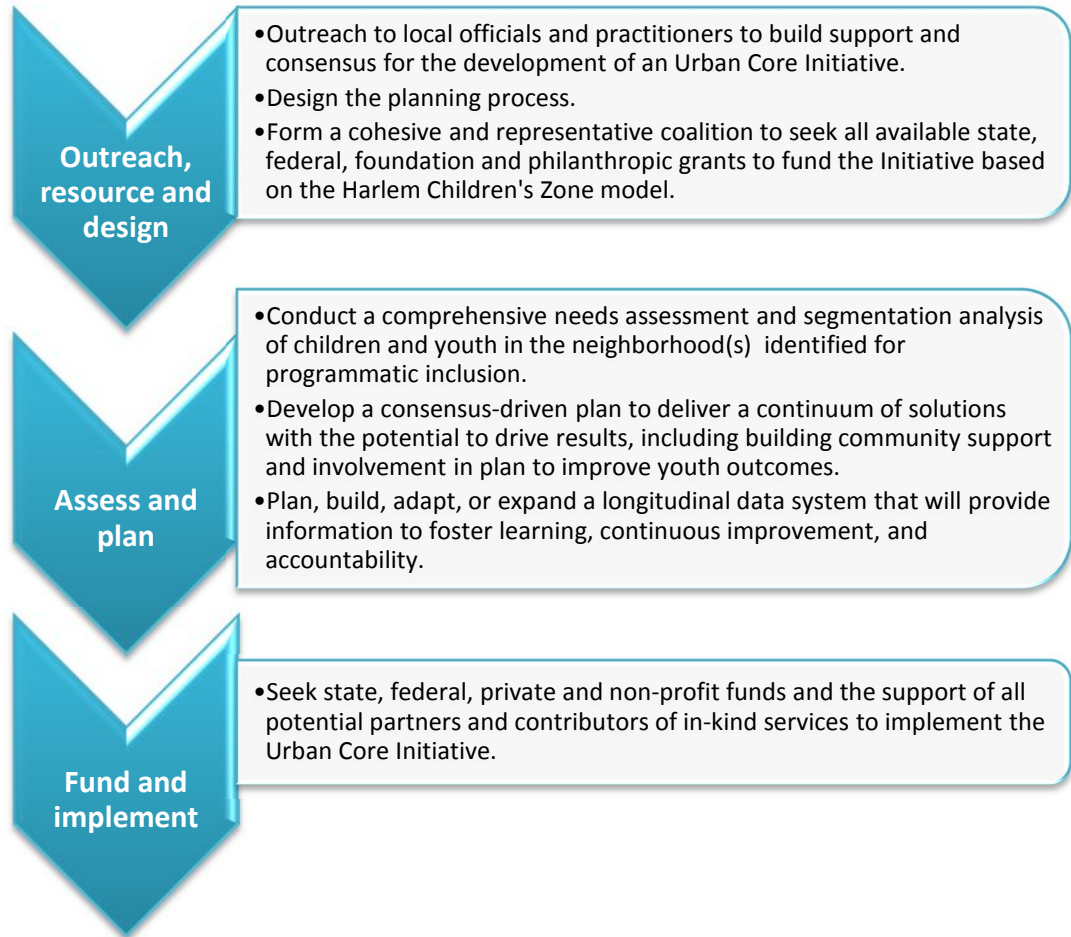
Poverty and the number of residents-in-need in the City of Des Moines are increasing, affecting numerous issues including school performance, crime rates, provision of social services, transit-dependency, and others. There are numerous partners working every day on programs to address the needs of Des Moines’ low-income families; stakeholders said that not only could more be done to improve residents’ lives, but that efforts could be better coordinated. It is also important to acknowledge that poverty is not an issue exclusively confined to the Capital City. Suburban and rural communities in Central Iowa are also experiencing increasing numbers of residents-in-need as in-migrants from rural Iowa stream into the Capital Region drawn by the potential for good jobs at competitive wages.

**5.3.1: RESOURCE AND DEVELOP AN URBAN CORE INITIATIVE IN DES MOINES MODELED ON THE "HARLEM CHILDREN'S ZONE" PROGRAM. (BP)**

Harlem Children’s Zone (HCZ) is an effort begun in the late 1990s in New York City to help low-income families break cycles of generational poverty. HCZ currently serves more than 10,000 children and 7,400 adults through parenting workshops, pre-school programs, disease-management efforts, a public charter school, anti-obesity programs, and college-student support. The HCZ model informed the development of the federal Promise Neighborhood program that sought to replicate Harlem’s efforts to significantly improve the educational and developmental outcomes of children and youth in



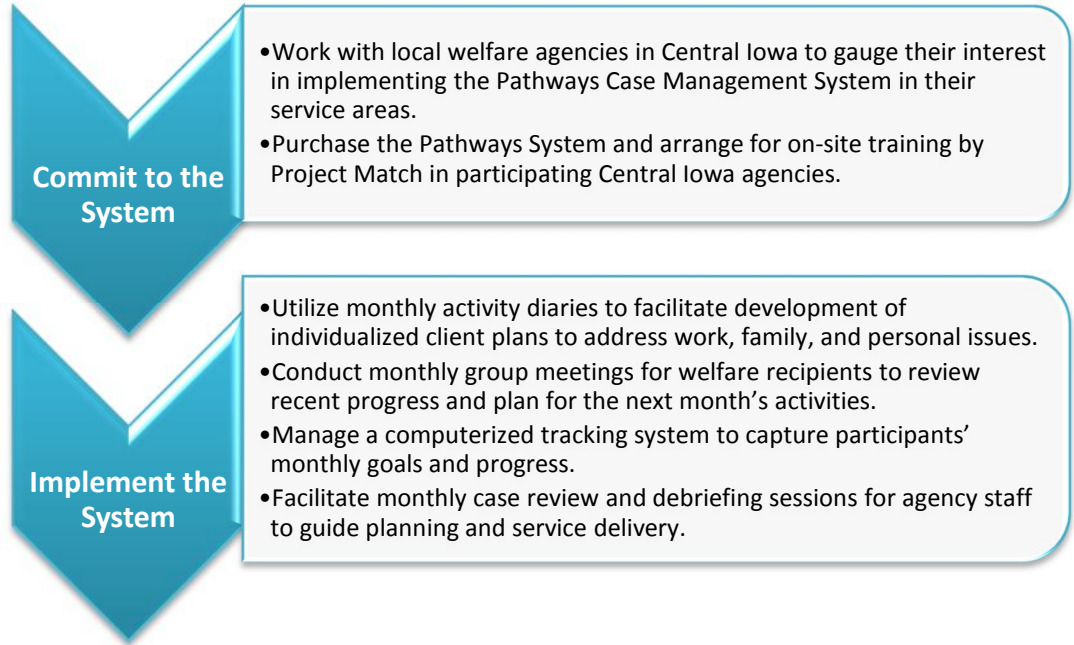
disadvantaged neighborhoods. While Des Moines did not submit a Promise Neighborhood grant application, the city’s public, private and non-profit leadership should nevertheless seek to resource and develop an Urban Core Initiative that leverages the dynamics of Harlem Children’s Zone and brings constituents together behind a coordinated and collaborative effort to improve youth outcomes in Des Moines’ inner city.



**5.3.2: IMPLEMENT THE PATHWAYS CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM IN CENTRAL IOWA. (BP)**

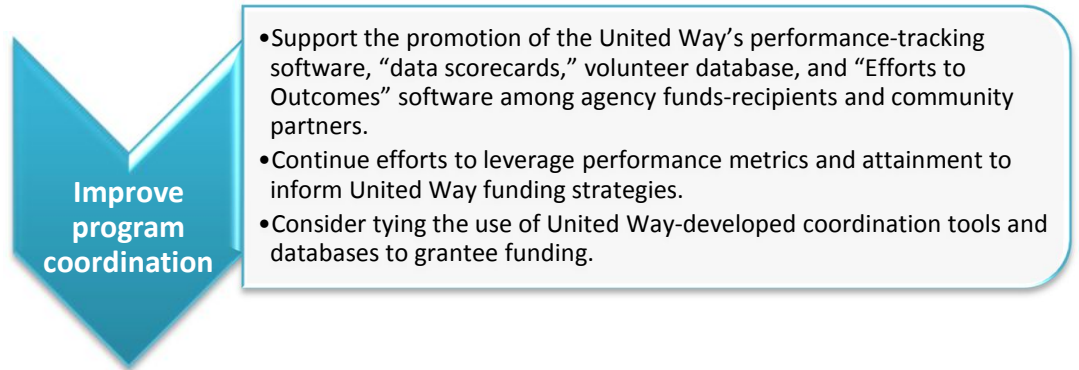
Project Match, a Chicago-based program development and research agency, developed the Pathways Case Management System as a tool to transition welfare recipients into the workplace. The System model has been replicated at sites around the country and could advance efforts in Central Iowa to raise labor force participation rates and increase local wealth.



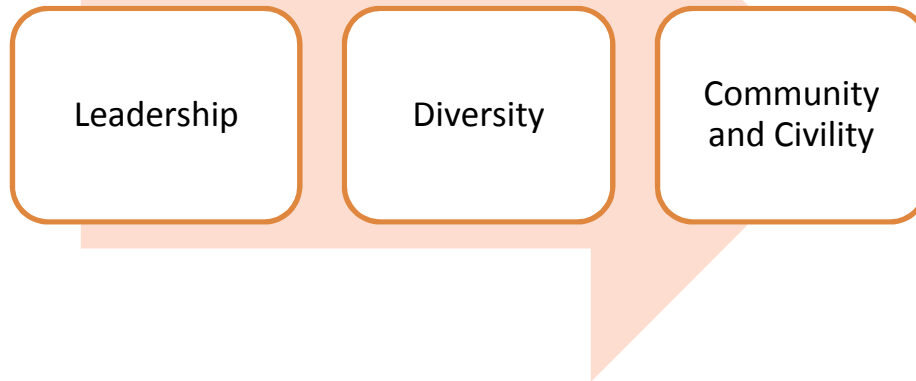


**5.3.3: INCREASE AWARENESS AND USAGE OF UNITED WAY OF CENTRAL IOWA'S EXISTING SUPPORT, MEASUREMENT AND COORDINATION TOOLS.**

Improved coordination of service providers is essential to maximizing the social services delivery system. The United Way has implemented tools to help foster this coordination, but they are not utilized as fully as possible.



## 6. Social Capital



### Justification

Communities are only as strong as their leadership. Even the most visionary of vision plans would not be effectively implemented without the support of equally visionary leadership that can effectively convey the benefits of strategies that may disrupt the status quo or threaten an entrenched constituency. In order for leadership to be most effective, it must also reflect the demographic composition of the community and welcome a diverse set of voices, perspectives and opinions. Finally, conversations about community change and “creative disruption” must be civil in tone and attitude so that consensus and coalition-building is not sacrificed by acrimony or distrust.

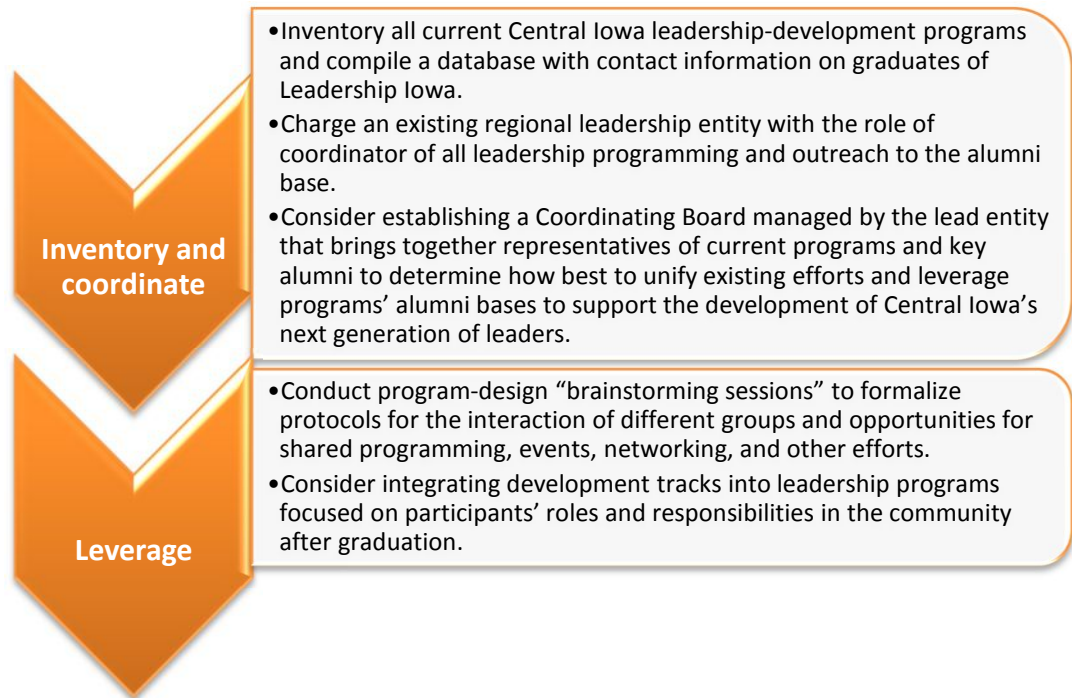
Greater Des Moines has succeeded throughout its history because of the capacity, vision, openness and philanthropy of its leadership. But this region is changing, both demographically and generationally, as a new cohort of aspiring leaders emerges to assume the responsibility of taking the Capital Region to the next level of economic prosperity, social awareness, cultural dynamism, and national prominence. Ensuring that this next generation of leaders is as impactful as the last will require more effective outreach to racial, ethnic and cultural groups that have yet to assume positions of influence or authority on the boards, commissions, councils and informal networks that comprise Greater Des Moines’ power elite.

### 6.1: LEADERSHIP

Accessible and progressive leadership has been Greater Des Moines’ hallmark almost since its founding. Today’s generation of leaders has done much to transform the region and make it one of the nation’s most admired. But current leaders are beginning to step aside; a new generation must rise up and continue moving the region forward towards its goals.

**6.1.1: BETTER COORDINATE AND LEVERAGE EXISTING LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS AND THEIR ALUMNI.**

There are numerous leadership-development programs and groups in Central Iowa. Each one has its own value as it provides aspiring leaders with the skills necessary to maximize their impact on their communities, region and state. However, it would provide even greater benefit to Central Iowa for these efforts to work better together and collectively engage program graduates in the advancement of regional visions and action plans.



**6.1.2: DEVELOP A PROGRAM TO OFFER A "CREDENTIAL" TO CONFIRM POTENTIAL LEADERS' ACQUISITION OF KEY KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS TO SUPPORT THEIR WORK IN THE COMMUNITY.**

Similar to "work-ready" certifications for potential employees, validating that an individual has been prepared for a leadership role through acquisition of key skill sets and exposure to best-practices can help members of public and private groups of influence identify and select new members and associates.



**Design and  
utilize**

- Leverage the Coordinating Board (Action 6.1.1) to create an assessment tool that certifies an individual is effectively prepared to serve a leadership role.
- Research and detail effective regional leadership groups and community-focused efforts to determine the criteria that constitutes an effective local leader.
- Create the assessment tool and seek confirmation of its value from chair persons and directors of entities that could utilize the credential in their selection of members.

**6.1.3: OPTIMIZE YOUNG-PROFESSIONAL NETWORKING AND PROGRAMMING.**

Greater Des Moines’ Young Professional Connection is a dynamic organization that has provided an effective entry-point for young adults looking to grow their personal networks and become more engaged in the community. However, stakeholders say that YPC’s membership could become more cohesive and diverse.



**Broaden the  
reach**

- Continue YPC’s efforts to evolve the organization into more than a “social” network.
- Program additional meetings and get-togethers in different locations across the region, at different times during the day and evening, and at venues besides bars and restaurants.
- Work to actively engage young leaders of different races, ethnicities, sexual preferences and professional backgrounds to ensure that YPC is a more diverse organization reflective of Greater Des Moines’ changing demographics.

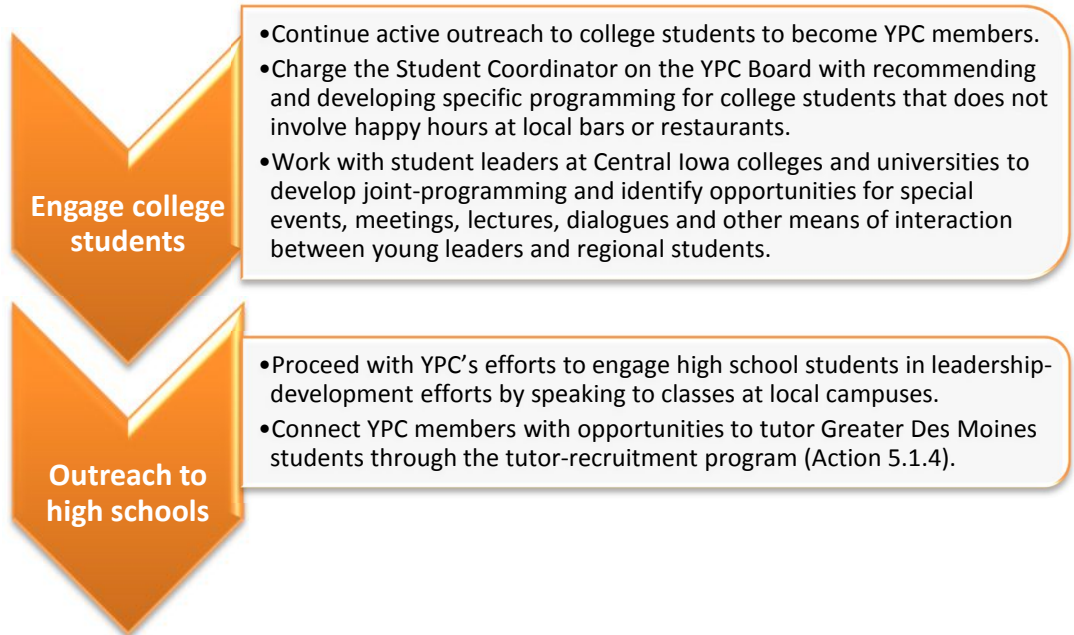


**Bridge gaps**

- Leverage arts and cultural opportunities as a “bridge” between more corporate and “artistically-focused” YPC members (Action 7.3.3).
- Consider what additional programming could also help bridge the gap between different YPC constituencies.

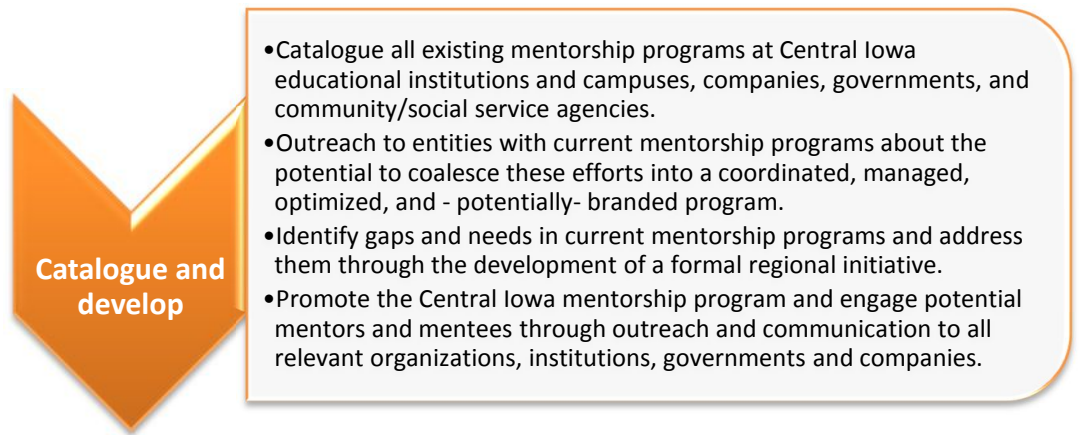
**6.1.4: ENGAGE STUDENTS IN NEXT-GENERATION-LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS.**

Leadership development should not be confined to individuals who have already graduated from college or university. Engaging young adults in leadership development while still in school can formalize an even more effective leadership pipeline in Central Iowa.



**6.1.5: DEVELOP A FORMALIZED REGIONAL MENTORSHIP PROGRAM.**

While Greater Des Moines leadership was said to be especially open to meeting and speaking to young people and newcomers about the community, its business networks and social dynamics, this process is more reactive than proactive. Many stakeholders said the region should develop a formal, managed and sustainable mentorship program to ensure that access to Central Iowa leadership is provided to those who seek it. A custom-designed program would also ensure that leaders who volunteer their time are not overwhelmed by constant requests for guidance and counsel.



**6.1.6: CREATE A MINORITY LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM TO ENSURE THAT CENTRAL IOWA’S LEADERSHIP REFLECTS THE DEMOGRAPHICS OF THE COMMUNITY. (BP)**

Existing efforts such as the Greater Des Moines Partnership’s quarterly multi-cultural reception, Diversity Ambassadorial program, and the work of its Diversity Committee should be maintained and enhanced as is feasible. But more active efforts could take place to ensure that diversification of Greater Des Moines’ leadership structure is pervasive and ongoing.



**6.2: DIVERSITY**

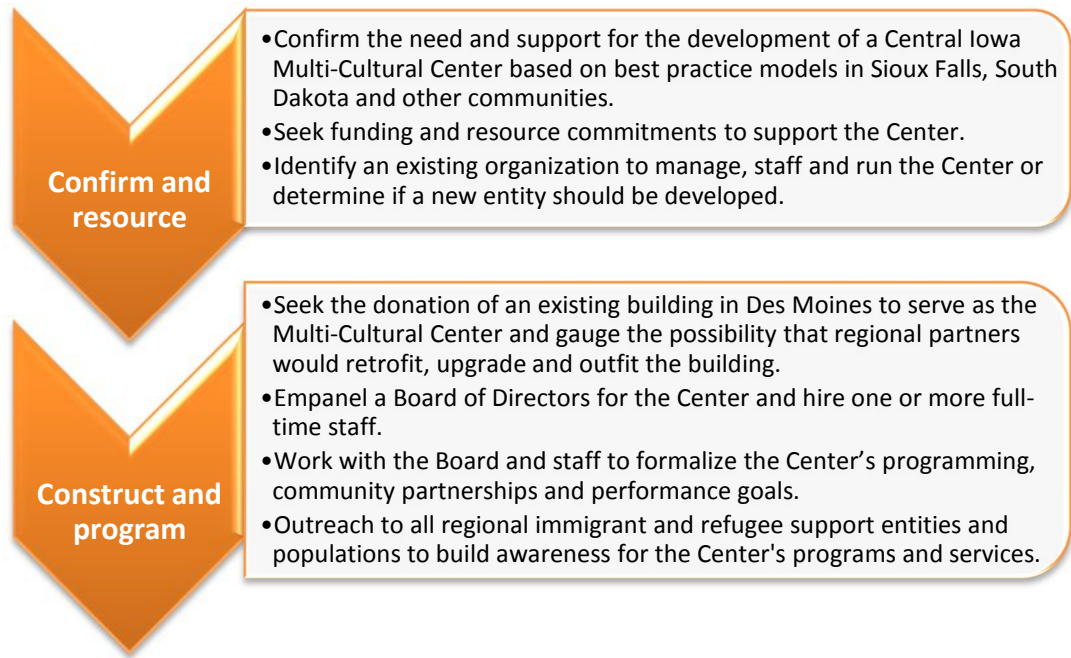
Data show that Central Iowa, especially the City of Des Moines, is becoming more diverse every year. Decades of refugee-relocation efforts have also enriched the region’s diversity through integration of cultures from Asia, Eastern Europe and Africa. Many regions understand that diversity is a strength that can be leveraged to enhance quality of life, social capital and community engagement. Greater Des Moines has shown that it has the potential to become one of these places.

**6.2.1: DEVELOP AND STAFF A CENTRAL IOWA MULTI-CULTURAL CENTER. (BP)**

Though there are entities such as the Des Moines Hola Center, the state’s New Iowan Center, Catholic Charities, and Lutheran Services in Iowa that work with immigrants and refugees to help them establish new lives in Central Iowa, stakeholders said there is no

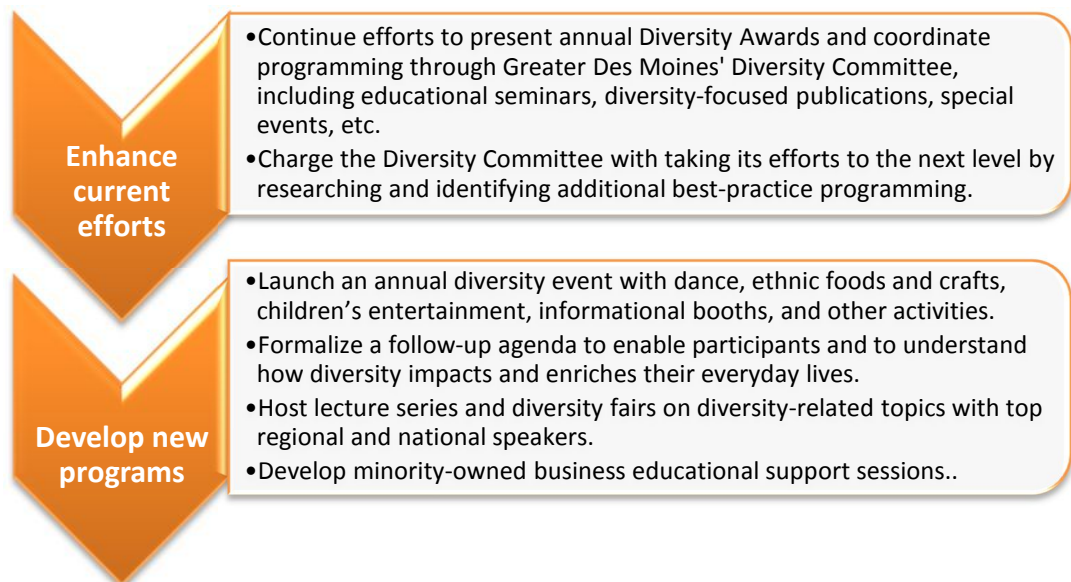


one central comprehensive resource to serve as a principal destination and resource for new and existing international residents in the region.



**6.2.2: CELEBRATE REGIONAL DIVERSITY THROUGH HIGH-PROFILE ACTIONS AND EVENTS.**

It takes more than just acknowledging that diversity is important for a community’s successful future. Regional residents must experience diverse cultures and understand how diversity can enhance the quality of their community and lives.



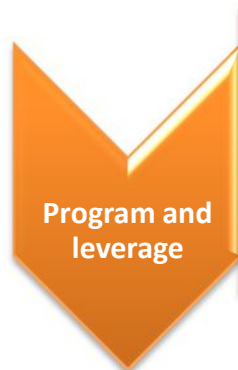


**6.3: COMMUNITY AND CIVILITY**

Discourse and inter-relationships in a community set an overall tone for how individuals and constituency groups work together and collaborate across a wide spectrum of issues. Establishing an expectation that Central Iowa will be a region that engages in civil discourse and fosters a climate of mutual respect will significantly improve the likelihood that Capital Crossroads efforts will be successful.

**6.3.1: CONTINUE EFFORTS TO FOSTER DIALOGUE ON CIVILITY AND ITS ROLE IN COMMUNITY-BUILDING.**

Greater Des Moines has acknowledged a phenomenon that most regions have yet to understand or address: the decline of public civility and civic and community capacity. Efforts to ensure Greater Des Moines constituencies can engage in constructive dialogue without divisiveness or acrimony must continue.




**Program and leverage**

- Move forward with programming of civility dialogue lunches and other events affiliated with the “Better Together” effort.
- Ensure that lectures and discussions incorporate a diversity of voices and perspectives and are effectively promoted.
- Host events throughout Greater Des Moines and Central Iowa.
- Leverage the Férscipe Society in Greater Des Moines to engender positive community change through focused dialogue on key issues, challenges and opportunities.

**6.3.2: INTEGRATE THE CONCEPT OF CIVILITY INTO OFFICIAL AND UNOFFICIAL REGIONAL DISCOURSE.**

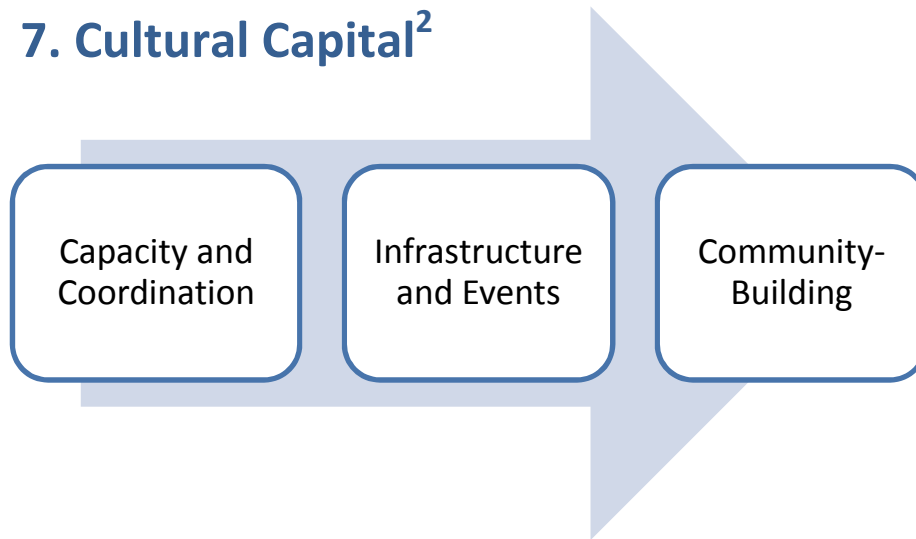
Civic and community capacity would be enhanced through adopting the practice of civility in all relevant forms of public discourse.



**Ensure civil discourse**

- Formalize a protocol for use by participants in public discourse.
- Consider the potential to compel elected bodies, appointed boards and committees, and other formal groups to become familiar with the protocol through training sessions or classes.
- Outreach to professional associations, public-interest groups, civic organizations and other partners to propose leveraging civility concepts into their operations, meetings, and discussion sessions.
- Use a “polarity thinking” framework that promotes discussion of “both/and” concepts as opposed to “either/or” for all public discourse.
- Leverage the Iowa Caucuses as a format for integration of polarity thinking.

## 7. Cultural Capital<sup>2</sup>



### Justification

Arts and culture is an important community component that cuts across a number of strategic “capitals” – business, human, social, Capital Core, environmental, and, arguably, others. A region cannot be world class without a comprehensive, consistent and fiscally aggressive commitment to the arts as a critical driver of economic, community, tourism, and quality of life development. Greater Des Moines and Central Iowa has demonstrated a sustained dedication to building arts and cultural assets for years; the result is a community with an impressive array of cultural resources for its size. As the Capital Region continues to evolve and mature, taking its arts community and economy to the next level will further enhance the region’s competitiveness as a destination for talent, business and visitors.

### 7.1: CAPACITY AND COORDINATION

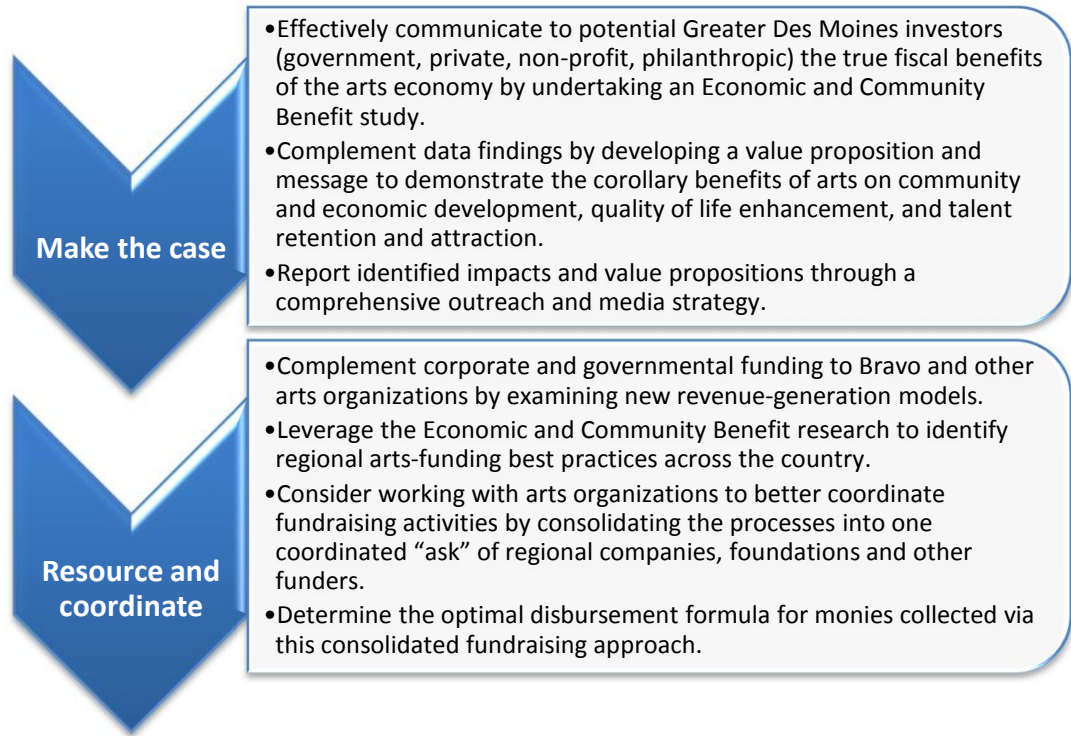
Providing the capacity to grow the arts and culture sector and the coordination to ensure that local resources are optimized, marketing is centralized and audience-development is collaborative can further enhance the key role arts plays in enriching quality of life and retaining/attracting talent.

#### **7.1.1: SUSTAIN AND GROW FINANCIAL RESOURCES TO SUPPORT THE ARTS ECONOMY.**

Regional contributions made to support the arts in Greater Des Moines, whether through disbursements to Bravo Greater Des Moines or corporate/non-profit philanthropy to fund specific organizations, events and facilities must be maintained and enhanced. Arts organizations and venues must also be instructed how to develop programming to become more self-sustaining. As Bravo implements its Community

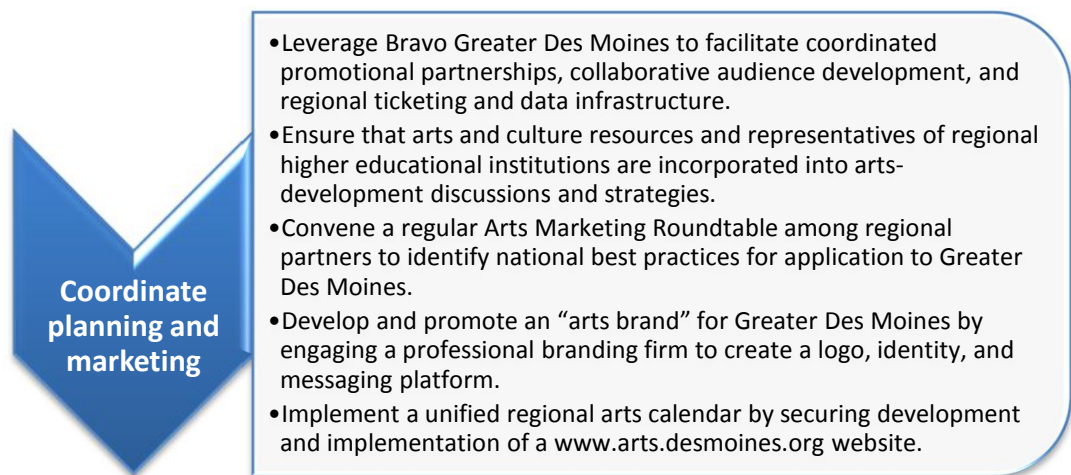
<sup>2</sup> Note: Capital Crossroads Arts Capital strategy has sought to integrate and leverage the Community Cultural Plan prepared for Bravo Greater Des Moines.

Cultural Plan, it will be critical that the organization has the necessary capacity to be successful.



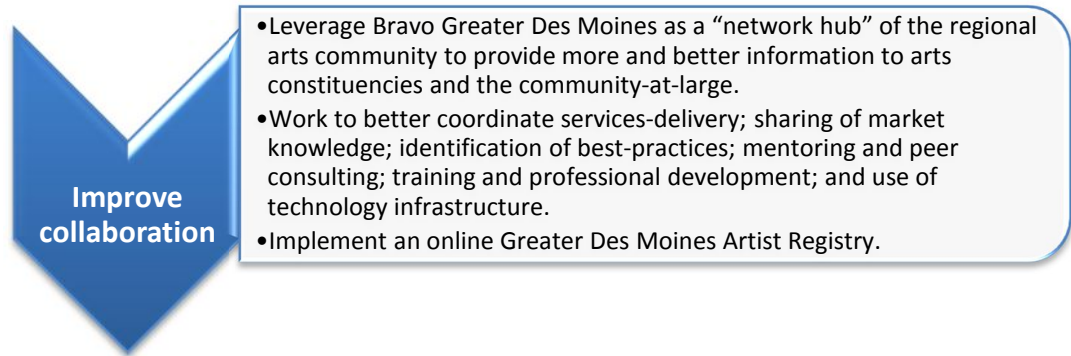
**7.1.2: DEVELOP MORE CENTRALIZED, COORDINATED AND ENHANCED ARTS MARKETING, PROMOTION AND ATTENDANCE-BUILDING STRATEGIES.**

Capitalizing on existing capacity of arts organizations, facilities and venues, Greater Des Moines should work to coordinate external campaigns as effectively as possible.



**7.1.3: ENSURE COLLABORATION AND INFORMATION-SHARING AMONG GREATER DES MOINES' ARTS AND CULTURAL ENTITIES.**

As with any economic cluster, the arts in Greater Des Moines would benefit from more dynamic partnerships and communication between its component members.



**7.1.4: ENHANCE EFFORTS TO DEVELOP A REGIONAL MUSIC ECONOMY. (BP)**

From Austin to Nashville to Athens, Georgia to Seattle, music has helped brand the area, contribute to economic dynamism and enhance quality of life. Greater Des Moines has a small but growing cadre of artists and venues that is poised to grow in visibility and impact if effectively nurtured and supported. The Des Moines Music Coalition, the principal entity developing the region’s music economy, works to program events like the 80/35 festival and Gross Domestic Product concert, promote and support local bands, attract top touring bands and program and manage a “music university” for aspiring performers. Taken to the next level, the local music industry could create jobs and strongly impact the retention and attraction of young talent.



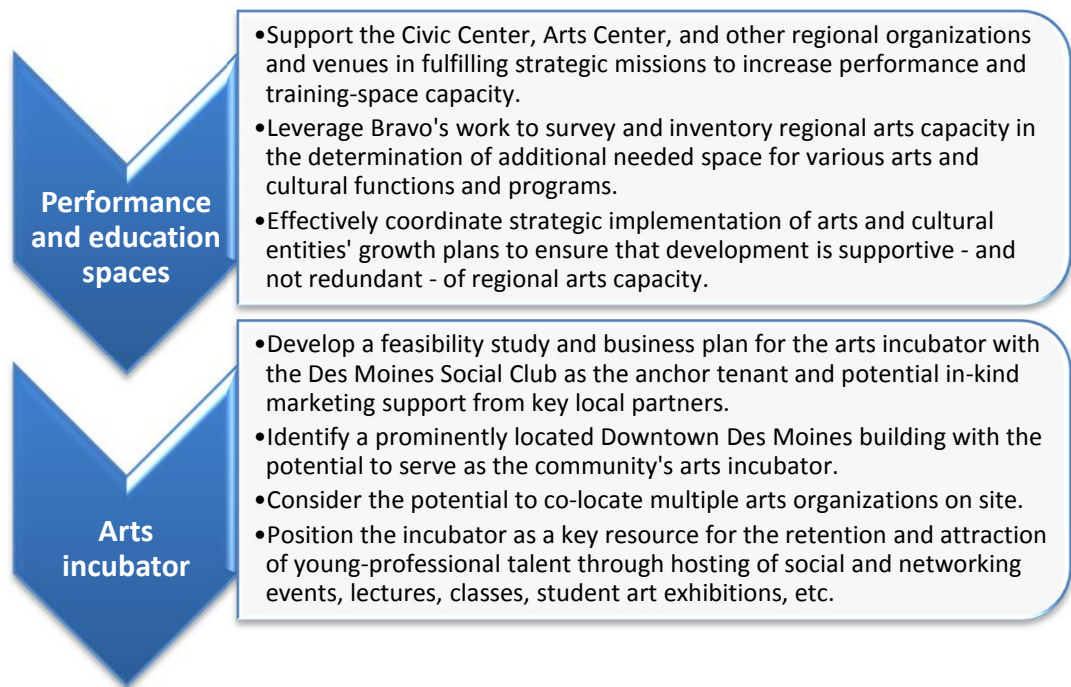
**7.2: INFRASTRUCTURE AND EVENTS**

Greater Des Moines was said by stakeholders to have more capacity in arts, culture and music resources than its size would indicate. However, to reach a “critical mass” that will position the region more competitively with larger “talent magnet” regions, more arts infrastructure and programming must be developed.

**7.2.1: INCREASE AVAILABLE SPACE FOR ARTS PERFORMANCE, EDUCATION AND INCUBATION. (BP)**


Greater Des Moines’ arts and cultural sector would benefit from additional physical spaces for performances, classes and educational sessions, and the nurturing of emerging artists through the creation of a high-profile, flexible, dynamic and central location for arts development in the community.

The region’s two most frequented arts destinations, the Civic Center of Greater Des Moines and Des Moines Arts Center, both have strategic goals of enhancing available arts, performance, and educational square footage. Similarly, the Des Moines Social Club has been honing its mission to serve as an accessible gathering place for art, theater, ideas and information since its founding in 2009 and is well positioned to serve as the anchor tenant – potentially joined by one or more regional organizations – of a Greater Des Moines arts incubator.



**7.2.2: PURSUE POTENTIAL DESIGNATION OF ARTS DISTRICTS IN GREATER DES MOINES COMMUNITIES.**


Though galleries and artists’ studios often cluster in particular areas in a city, creating a special arts district designation can help market these amenities and attract additional assets to the neighborhood. Some communities take this designation even further by creating special zoning categories and guidelines to differentiate their arts districts. Opportunities exist across the Greater Des Moines metro to capitalize on burgeoning arts clusters by designating them as differentiated districts.



- Leverage BRAVO's arts assessment to identify regional arts concentrations.
- Work with city leaders to assess the potential to designate these areas as formal arts districts
- Pursue district designation and potential zoning and regulatory adjustments.
- Fund signage and urban design improvements specific to the district.
- Consider developing land-use plans for a district (or districts).
- Market the districts to local residents and visitors.

**7.2.3: PURSUE DEVELOPMENT OF A PROMINENT MID-SIZED PERFORMANCE VENUE IN GREATER DES MOINES.**

Local entertainment-industry professionals note that Greater Des Moines has a gap in its live-performance venues between large arenas and smaller clubs and theaters. The strategically-located addition of a 1,500-seat venue would fill out the region’s complement of performance spaces and enable local booking agents and promoters to attract shows that previously could not be accommodated in Greater Des Moines.



- Continue efforts to source an optimal location for the new venue.
- Identify resources for the acquisition of land, site planning, venue design and construction.
- Leverage the venue to program performances and events that will further differentiate Greater Des Moines arts and culture sector.
- Work to effectively connect the new venue to other regional activity centers through road, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.



**7.3: COMMUNITY-BUILDING**

In addition to providing aural and visual enjoyment, the arts has the capacity to bring communities together, expose audiences to new ideas and narratives, attract tourists, and bridge cultural divides between people of different races, ethnicities, incomes and professions.

**7.3.1: CONNECT REGIONAL COMMUNITIES AND VISITORS WITH GREATER DES MOINES’ ARTS, CULTURAL, HERITAGE, ARCHITECTURE AND PUBLIC ART ASSETS.**

Greater Des Moines’ comparatively large and diverse arts and culture capacity often makes it difficult for residents and visitors to experience the region’s full complement of resources. Maximizing the impact of Greater Des Moines’ arts economy would have great benefit across a number of strategic “capitals.”



- Work with the media, professional organizations, public agencies, and other partners to change the mindset of Greater Des Moines’ residents about their community’s arts and cultural resources.
- Leverage the enhanced organizational planning and operations outlined in the Community Cultural Plan to improve outreach, awareness-building, delivery, and assessment of arts and cultural programming to all Central Iowa communities.
- Consider developing stand-alone online media and branding for Greater Des Moines cultural, heritage, architectural assets.
- Charge Bravo Greater Des Moines and the Des Moines Convention and Visitors Bureau with developing an annual Cultural Tourism Plan and implementation guidelines.

**7.3.2: ADVANCE THE VISION AND MINDSET OF THE ARTS AS A CRITICAL COMPONENT OF THE COMMUNITY’S “FABRIC.” (BP)**

By capturing and leveraging the crossroads of arts, culture and industry to communicate Greater Des Moines’ present strengths and future opportunities, the region can build not only cultural capital, but social, governmental, human and business capital as well.





- Leverage the enhanced coordination provided by the Community Cultural Plan to determine the most effective means to weave arts and culture in to the region's "fabric."
- Consider initiating a coordinated campaign to utilize the work of local artists for corporate branding and promotion, design of public spaces, educational efforts, community signage, and other projects.
- Determine the potential to complement the Des Moines Arts Festival with additional events such as "arts weeks," open-studio tours, public arts sales, exhibits at Des Moines International Airport, etc.
- Pair local companies with entities like the Des Moines Social Club and Bravo to develop programs for employees such as arts competitions, music concerts, dance performances and others.

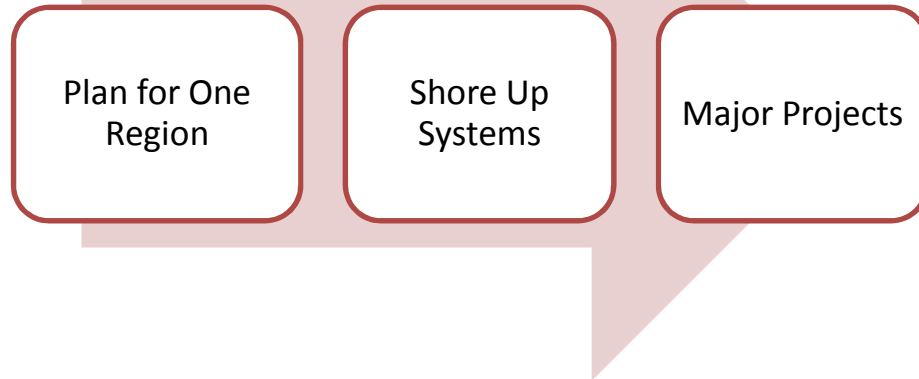
**7.3.3: LEVERAGE THE ARTS TO BRING DIFFERENT GREATER DES MOINES CONSTITUENCIES TOGETHER.**

Formal settings such as public meetings or crowded events like sports games, concerts, fairs, and festivals might attract diverse crowds, but they do not provide the opportunity for these attendees to comfortably interact and discuss issues. The arts can serve as a tool to not only draw diverse residents to a location but also provide a shared experience to engage them in conversation and debate.



- Foster coalitions among Greater Des Moines' arts entities to develop programming that presents unique perspectives, new ideas, and profiles of different cultures and lifestyles.
- Work with partners across all community sectors to drive customer traffic to these events, shows, exhibits, and performances from different professional, racial, cultural, and generational constituencies.
- Leverage venues such as the proposed arts incubator, the Des Moines Arts Center, Civic Center of Greater Des Moines, regional campus galleries and theaters, arts displays in civic buildings, and other sites as gathering places for diverse constituencies to come together and view, discuss, and debate arts and community.

## 8. Physical Capital



### Justification

Central Iowa is faced with a situation that many regions would envy; it must consider the best way to accommodate additional population and economic growth without sacrificing the quality of life and natural amenities that residents treasure. Sustainable growth and development must become more than a buzzword. It must inform how Central Iowa plans for the future, develops the necessary infrastructure to remain competitive in a challenging economy and considers visionary projects that can accelerate the region's advance towards the pinnacle of U.S. metropolitan areas. The \$2 million federally funded Sustainable Communities Regional Plan for Polk and surrounding counties will be a critical tool in the management of this future growth and will be significantly leveraged for Capital Crossroads implementation.

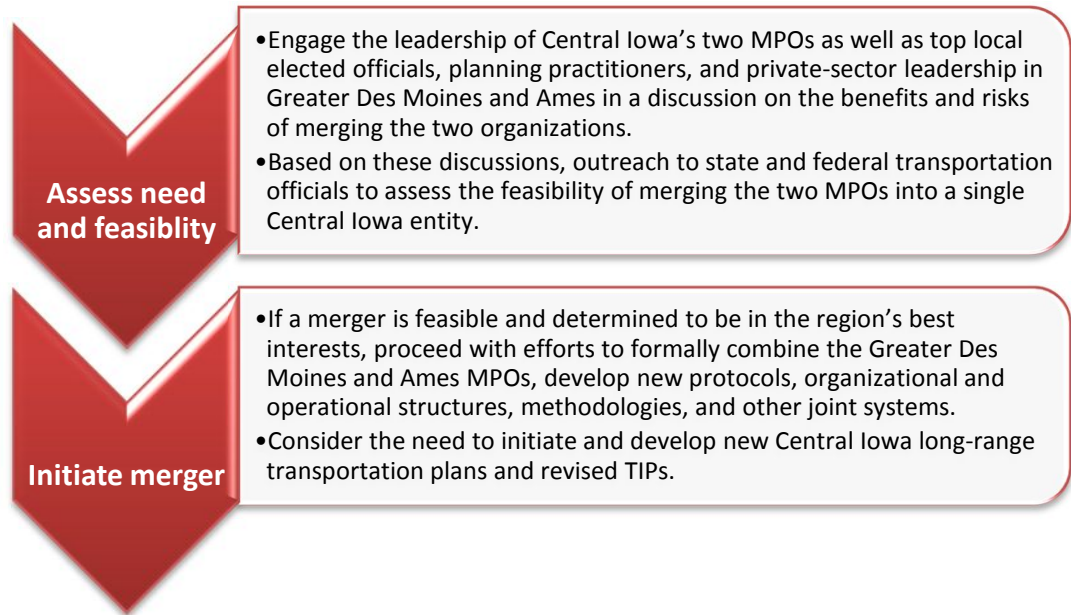
### 8.1: PLAN FOR ONE REGION

Greater Des Moines is one of the fastest-growing metropolitan areas in the Midwest. The Ames MSA is also growing at a fast clip. There is a likelihood that these two regions will one day merge into a single statistical entity; this is especially true if the Capital Corridor fulfills its promise as a transformative growth engine for Central Iowa. If this occurs, the eventual Des Moines-Ames MSA will undoubtedly grow by thousands of new residents. This reality should inform all regional planning undertaken for Central Iowa communities and governments. Through processes like the Sustainability Plan, the Capital Crossroads region has the chance to get out in front of this growth by developing sustainable systems to manage the impact of new in-migrants. However, continued factionalism among Central Iowa governments will compromise this future vision and imperil the region's promising growth trajectory.

**8.1.1: CONSIDER REALIGNING CURRENT PLANNING GEOGRAPHIES TO REFLECT FUTURE DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS AND THE NEED FOR “SMART GROWTH” SOLUTIONS.**

Central Iowa’s two metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) represent Greater Des Moines and Ames-Story County respectively. Thus, the principal entities to inform how the Capital Region manages its growth are planning for separate and distinct regional geographies. Consideration should be given to eventually merging the Des Moines Area and Ames MPOs into a single Central Iowa entity more closely resembling the Central Iowa (Region 11) Regional Transportation Planning Alliance. If the merging of the Des Moines and Ames MPOs proves to be too controversial to go forward, the agencies should nevertheless seek to work in lockstep when planning for the transportation needs of their regions into the future.

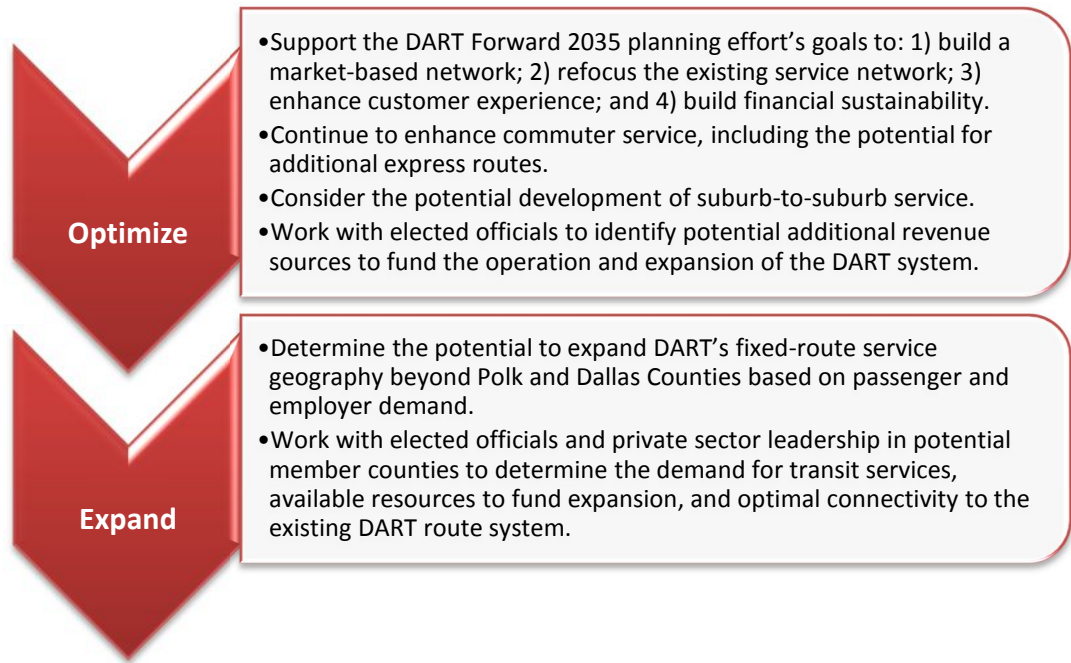
The aforementioned Sustainable Communities Regional Plan will be a dynamic and essential process; however, its planning geography is smaller than the Central Iowa labor shed. The Sustainable Communities effort should maintain its focus but still take into account the population and growth dynamics fostered by a more unified Central Iowa region.



**8.1.2: ENSURE THE DES MOINES AREA REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY (DART) EFFECTIVELY SERVES ITS CURRENT CONSTITUENCIES AS IT PREPARES FOR FUTURE GEOGRAPHIC EXPANSION.**

With the pending construction of its new Transit Hub, DART will enhance its ability to coordinate a hub-and-spoke system radiating from Downtown Des Moines. While this will be beneficial, stakeholders said that improved connectivity between Des Moines and its suburbs, workers to jobs, adults to training, college students to West Des Moines

and other activity centers and, eventually, Des Moines to Ames is important to the region's future.



**8.2: SHORE UP SYSTEMS**

Infrastructure, principally in the City of Des Moines, is being compromised by age, pollution or changing climate patterns. While Des Moines officials must seek to effectively address these issues, regional leaders should nevertheless support the City's efforts as necessary to ensure the overall viability of Greater Des Moines.

**8.2.1: IMPLEMENT THE PLAN TO REPAIR THE CITY OF DES MOINES' WATER AND SEWER SYSTEMS.**

As with many other older cities, Des Moines is facing issues related to the failure – or potential failure – of aging infrastructure. The City's 100-plus-year-old sewer system is in need of significant repair and, in some cases, replacement if Des Moines is to remain a viable destination for businesses, especially in and around downtown.

**Proceed with upgrades**

- Ensure active and ongoing support of the Des Moines Metropolitan Wastewater Reclamation Authority (WRA) and City of Des Moines’ \$140 million rebuild of the city’s sewer system between now and 2023.
- Best facilitate the timely construction of a new \$50 million high-flow combined storm and sanitary treatment facility in Des Moines.
- Monitor storm and wastewater infrastructure upgrades to ensure compliance with state and federal environmental mandates.

**8.2.2: CONTINUE EFFORTS TO PREVENT FLOODING IN CENTRAL IOWA BY INVESTING IN EFFECTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE FLOOD-CONTROL EFFORTS.**

With “100 year” and “500 year” floods occurring regularly in Central Iowa, it is clear that previous assumptions about flood-control preparations are outdated. While damages are often most acute and visible in urban districts, potential solutions to frequent flooding are said to lie in regional efforts tied to river systems and watershed management. As one Capital Crossroads stakeholder noted, “You can’t build your way out of floods. Go upstream and reduce velocity.”

**Leverage regional watershed planning**

- Assemble a project team of key Central Iowa stakeholder agencies and officials to discuss regional flood-control solutions and strategies.
- Leverage efforts such as the Central Iowa Greenways Initiative to determine how development of sustainable greenways along the Des Moines and Raccoon Rivers can reduce the threat of flooding.
- Utilize key elements of Iowa’s Smart Planning legislation (SF 2389) to capture effective planning principles, incentives, and key strategic elements to inform flood-control planning.
- Take advantage of state tools such as the Iowa Green Infrastructure Playbook and the Rebuild Iowa Office’s Smart Growth Partnership and Community Recovery Toolbox to inform Central Iowa efforts.
- Work towards the development of a consensus-driven, comprehensive watershed-management plan for Central Iowa that includes flood-control measures at its core.

**8.2.3: IDENTIFY AND IMPLEMENT IMPROVEMENTS THAT PROVIDE NECESSARY FLOOD PROTECTION TO MAJOR URBAN AREAS AND VALUABLE COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES.**

In addition to addressing long-term structural solutions to prevent destructive flooding, there must also be short-term consideration given to existing structures and potential in-fill development sites located in the 500-year flood plain. These valuable properties must be protected even as sustainable, permanent flood-control and prevention solutions are designed and implemented.

  
Identify and  
protect

- Assess the exposure to potential damage of built and developable in-fill urban properties in flood zones.
- Identify the most at-risk buildings and sites for flood damage.
- Develop a prioritized list of improvement projects for the most at-risk areas.
- Seek funding to facilitate design and construction of preventative solutions.
- Ensure greenfield land remains undeveloped while implementing priority projects.

### 8.3: MAJOR PROJECTS

As Central Iowa prepares for sustained population growth, there are a handful of transportation infrastructure projects that can greatly enhance the region's competitive capacity to accommodate regional expansion. Benefits would accrue to the Central Iowa economy, mobility, and connectivity with other regional communities and those beyond Iowa's borders. While these efforts will in some cases require significant capital outlays, major investments will undoubtedly be needed if Central Iowa is to accommodate tens of thousands of additional future residents.

#### **8.3.1: CONTINUE WITH EFFORTS TO FUND, CONSTRUCT AND/OR REDESIGNATE PRIORITY TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS IN GREATER DES MOINES.**

Enhancing the region's supply of high-capacity roads and highways is not only critical to facilitate population growth but can make Central Iowa more competitive for logistics and manufacturing employment. Efforts in Greater Des Moines are ongoing to create new highway capacity and re-designate existing multi-lane divided thoroughfares as federal interstates. In addition to these highways on the city's outer beltway, there are also intra-regional arterials (Southeast Connector, Southwest Connector, and Martin Luther King Parkway, among others) that hold the potential to greatly improve mobility and commerce.

**Develop and designate**

- Proceed with design and construction of the Northeast Beltway Corridor along a preferred route northeast of the Interstate 35/80 interchange terminating at U.S. Highway 69.
- Seek the eventual designation of the Corridor as a U.S. Interstate.
- Continue to support efforts of the Purple Heart Highway Collaborative to redesignate the U.S. Highway 65/Iowa Highway 5 bypass south of Des Moines into a federal Interstate.
- Lobby for the funding and construction of high-value intra-regional arterials in multiple Central Iowa communities.

**8.3.2: COMMISSION A LOGISTICS DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR CENTRAL IOWA.**

Based on current capacity and future opportunities, logistics was one of the target sectors recommended for Central Iowa to pursue through a holistic program focused on existing businesses, recruitment, and small business development. While the region has many assets, including east/west and north/south interstates, three Class I rail lines, and an international airport with strong cargo capacity, more must be done to make Central Iowa competitive against adjacent regions like Kansas City and Omaha. A comprehensive assessment of Central Iowa’s existing and potential logistics economy will enable the region to most effectively support and advance its economy in this sector.

**Assess and plan**

- Build consensus for the planning process among key Central Iowa public and private leadership.
- Empanel a Steering Committee and hire a consultant.
- Assess the complete competitive dynamics of Central Iowa's logistics economy and future prospects.
- Ensure the process includes analysis and recommendations for inter-modal distribution capacity, potentially aligned with the Capital Corridor.


**Design and construct**

- Identify the highest-value infrastructure and economic development projects to most effectively grow Central Iowa's logistics economy.
- Formalize an implementation plan for development of priority projects.
- Secure resources to begin design and construction of top projects.



**8.3.3: SUPPORT THE CONTINUED STUDY AND POTENTIAL FUNDING OF HIGH-SPEED RAIL THROUGH GREATER DES MOINES.**

Billions of dollars have been appropriated by the federal government to study the development of high-speed passenger rail along key U.S. corridors. Illinois has been aggressive in its pursuit and receipt of these monies and has set a goal of developing high-speed rail service from Chicago to the Quad Cities. Plans have been discussed to extend this line to Omaha through Greater Des Moines. While Governor Branstad has not publicly supported this initiative, Iowa still has a window of opportunity to successfully lobby for inclusion in high-speed rail planning and funding.




**Build support**

- Continue efforts in the Iowa legislature to rally support behind the development of high-speed rail service in Greater Des Moines.
- Build effective case statements on the benefits of high-speed rail connectivity to Chicago for Central Iowa’s economy, tourism industry, and talent-development efforts.
- Consider engaging in a public-education campaign to improve awareness of the regional value of high-speed rail and the role public citizens can play in influencing legislators’ policy decisions.

**8.3.4: INITIATE A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY ON THE DYNAMICS OF REGIONAL PASSENGER AIR SERVICE AND ITS POTENTIAL FOR COMPETITIVE ENHANCEMENT. (BP)**

One of the principal competitive issues mentioned by Capital Crossroads stakeholders was the high cost and limited connectivity of flights out of Des Moines International Airport (DMIA). The City of Des Moines currently owns and administers DMIA but has proposed the creation of an Airport Authority to assume operational control over the facility to save costs and improve efficiency. Because air service is so critical to how Greater Des Moines competes for companies, tourism and talent, it would benefit the community to conduct a detailed analysis of regional air service to determine if capacity could be enhanced.



**Assess service capacity**

- Commission a professional study of passenger air service in Greater Des Moines.
- Consider inclusion of a cost-benefit analysis to gauge the efficacy of providing route-subsidies for carriers serving DMIA.
- Determine whether to expand the scope of the analysis to include air cargo as well.
- Based on the results of the study, implement recommended strategies to improve passenger air capacity in the region.

**8.3.5: PARTNER WITH DART, REGIONAL MPOs AND OTHER AGENCIES TO STUDY THE DEVELOPMENT OF FIXED-RAIL OR BUS-RAPID-TRANSIT CONNECTIVITY BETWEEN AMES AND DES MOINES.**

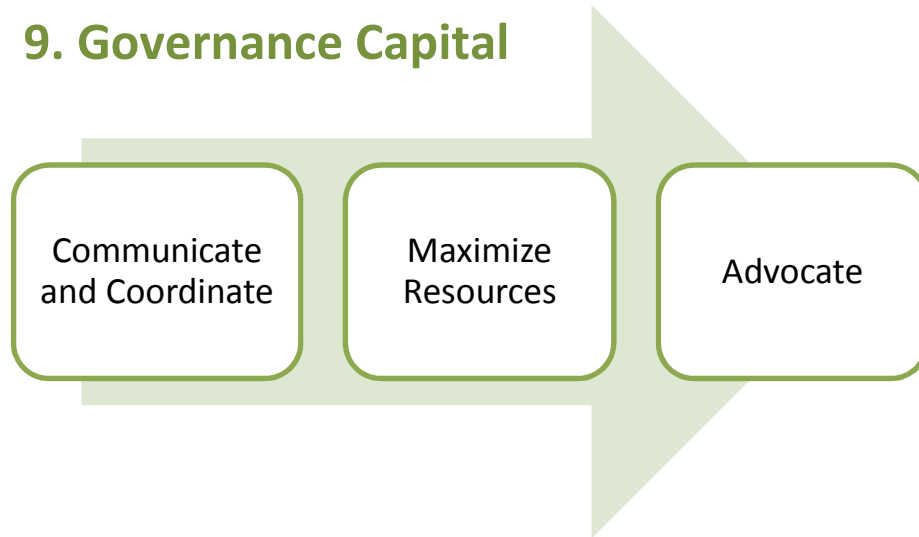
A key outcome of the eventual build-out of the Capital Corridor will be the need for enhanced connectivity between the two urban poles of the highway. As such, a component of future Capital Corridor planning should be the study of a transit link between Ames and Des Moines. A high-capacity transit link would help ease congestion pressures for drivers as the Corridor develops and densifies.



Evaluate and plan

- When regional officials determine a Capital Corridor land-use plan is justified, integrate the analysis of an Ames-Des Moines transit link into the process.
- Ensure that proposed service is consistent with the core principles of DART Forward 2035.
- Potentially leverage recommended fixed-route transit service to source needed monies for implementation.
- Capture potential opportunities for station-area planning and transit-oriented development generated by an approved Ames-Des Moines fixed-route linkage.

## 9. Governance Capital



### Justification

In an era of perpetually constrained local budgets and rising costs for personnel, services, and infrastructure, governments are seemingly forced every year to propose and enact painful operational and programmatic cuts. In order to ensure that Central Iowa governments are able to sustainably manage growth without sacrificing essential public services, elected and appointed leaders in the region should consider all high-value, consensus-based strategies to partner more effectively to serve their constituents. This will entail a new spirit of regional communication, coordination, and compromise as opposition may arise to what will be perceived as losses of local control and resources. In actuality, selectively streamlined, consolidated, and efficient regional governance and service-delivery will save commercial and residential taxpayers money and foster regional cohesiveness that will improve Central Iowa's competitiveness across many "capitals."

### 9.1: COMMUNICATE AND COORDINATE

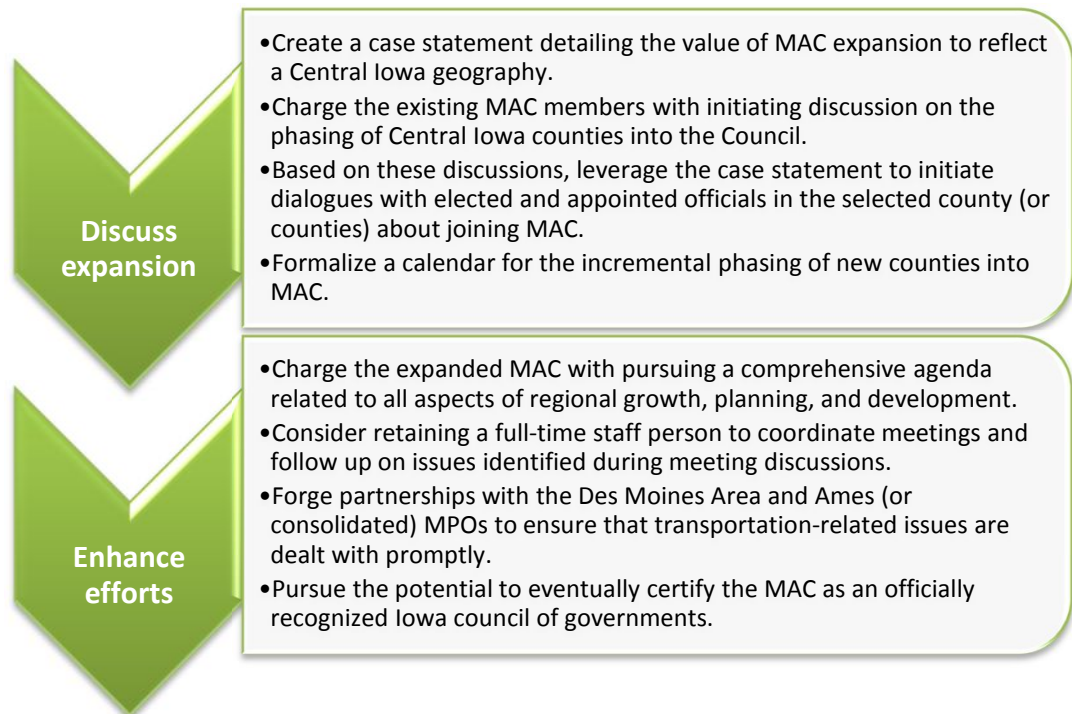
Central Iowa is the only region in the state not a member of the Iowa Association of Regional Councils (IARC). That is not to say that regional planning does not take place in Central Iowa. As previously noted, the Des Moines Area MPO and Ames MPO are transportation planning agencies for the five-county Des Moines region and one-county Ames region respectively. Meanwhile, the Central Iowa Regional Transportation Planning Alliance (CIRTPA) is the designated regional transportation planning agency for the eight counties in Iowa Department of Transportation's Region 11, which overlaps with the Des Moines and Ames MPOs. The Metro Advisory Council (MAC) in Greater Des Moines is a group of local elected officials that meets monthly to discuss issues of shared concern among Polk, Dallas and Warren Counties.

No single agency accomplishes the goals of a council of governments, which, according to IARC, "Provides a forum that combines the elements of transportation planning,

housing development, solid waste planning, and use planning, workforce development, and economic development into a comprehensive approach to regional growth and development.” It should be no surprise that numerous stakeholders feel that Central Iowa governments are “very fractured” and “no planning is done on a truly regional scale.” While the Sustainable Communities Plan will greatly improve this situation, more must still be done.

**9.1.1: EXPAND THE METRO ADVISORY COUNCIL TO ADDITIONAL CAPITAL CROSSROADS COUNTIES.**

MAC was said to be a functional convening body that builds solid relationships among participating governments and elected officials. However, Central Iowa needs a higher capacity, more broadly representative and holistic planning entity to serve its future needs.



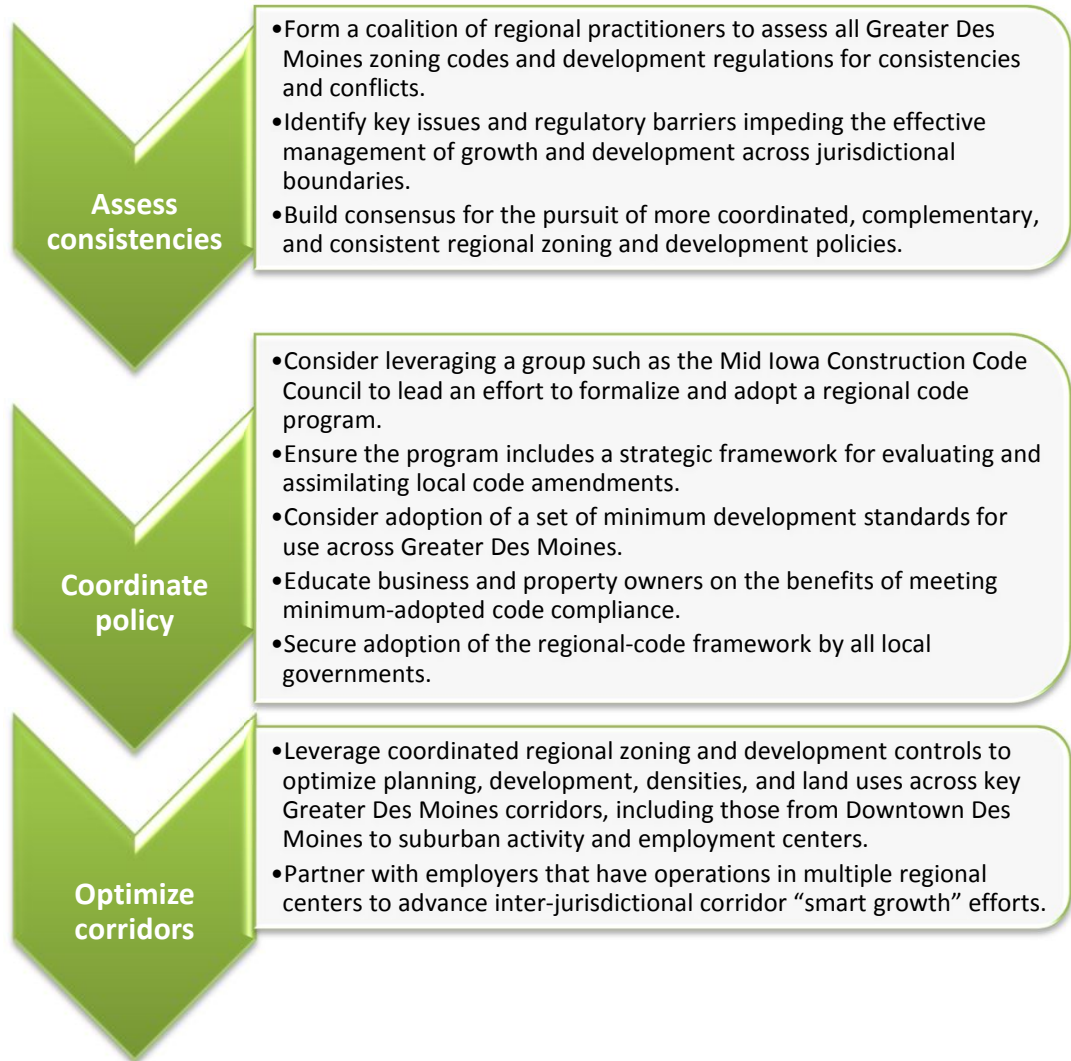
**9.1.2: OPTIMIZE LOCAL ZONING AND DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCES TO ENSURE REGULATORY INTEGRATION AND COORDINATION ACROSS GREATER DES MOINES. (BP)**

The City of Des Moines zoning code has not been updated since 1965. However, because the city is almost wholly built-out, any thought of developing a new ordinance must be considered in a broader regional zoning and regulatory context. All communities in the region essentially adopt the same family of codes, but local amendments, year of adoption, the edition adopted, and code interpretations may vary. Thus, an effort to ensure structured, mutually-supportive inter-jurisdictional regulations

with common adoption and amendment schedules could greatly enhance efforts to plan effectively, optimize land uses, and measure growth outcomes.

Because key growth corridors cross city and county boundaries, promoting structured, mutually-supportive regional zoning and development policies would also improve development coordination and foster densities that support other goals such as mass transit, bicycle/pedestrian options, vibrant commercial centers and a quality mix of residential options. Finally, local development should comply with a set of minimum adopted standards and work within approved regional permitting and inspection systems. This would ensure that investors do not follow a “path of least resistance” that could lead to piecemeal development and hindrance of smart, managed regional growth.

Many of these issues and opportunities will be assessed within the context of the Sustainable Communities Regional Plan. Capital Crossroads efforts should always be supportive of and integrated with this plan.



**9.1.3: ASSESS THE BENEFITS OF CREATING A METRO WATER AUTHORITY IN GREATER DES MOINES.**

The Metro Waste Authority (MWA) has proven to be a successful regionalization of solid-waste-management services while the Wastewater Reclamation Authority (WRA) effectively serves as the regional wastewater utility. Greater Des Moines public leaders and appointed officials should consider whether equal benefits could be accrued through the creation of a similar authority focused on the provision of water and the sustainable management of its supply. As a testament to the fact that it is focused on regional thinking, Des Moines Water Works (DMWW) has included Regionalization as one of its Key Result Areas in its 2010-2014 Strategic Plan, pledging that “DMWW will expand key partnerships with other entities for the purpose of developing long range

plans, increasing economies of scale, and protecting water resources on a regional basis.”



**Discuss, assess  
and act**

- Continue engaging in regional discussion on the potential creation of a Metro Water Authority in Greater Des Moines.
- Pursue DMWW strategic action to increase its regional customer base, promote joint participation in cost-reduction projects among regional water utilities, and promote and expand key regional partnerships.
- Conduct a contingency analysis of the costs borne by the City of Des Moines and regional partners if one or more suburban governments were to pull out of the Water Works system.
- Assess both the fiscal and political consequences of such an action to inform discussions as to the efficacy of creating a metro water authority for Greater Des Moines.
- If consensus can be reached on this initiative, begin the process of development the new framework.

**9.2: MAXIMIZE RESOURCES**

Research has proven time and again that consolidating certain regional services makes good fiscal sense and maximizes scarce government resources. It also saves taxpayers money that can be reinvested in the local economy. However, it would be naïve to propose that all regional services be consolidated; it simply is not politically viable. Consolidation of Des Moines and Polk County has become a non-issue due to perceived intractable opposition. However, entities such as DMACC, the Greater Des Moines Partnership, Metro Waste Authority, Polk County Trust Fund and others prove that Central Iowa governments are capable of working together effectively.

**9.2.1: APPOINT A SHARED SERVICES TASK FORCE COMPRISED OF REGIONAL ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICIALS TO ASSESS THE POTENTIAL FOR SERVICES-CONSOLIDATIONS IN GREATER DES MOINES AND CENTRAL IOWA. (BP)**

Informal discussions have taken place among Greater Des Moines officials related to services-consolidation opportunities in the region. Formalizing these conversations through the creation of a Shared Services Task Force charged with identifying high-value consolidation opportunities could lead to tangible results. As one stakeholder commented, “Allow local things to be local, but all other services should be coordinated, consolidated and optimized.”





- Empanel the Task Force and provide members with detailed information related to existing services, annual budgets, staff resources, and other important data.
- Inform Task Force discussions with fiscal projections as to potential savings from consolidation of certain services.
- Reach out to Iowa State researchers for assistance in developing these projections.
- Based on consensus reached by the Task Force, proceed with consolidations of agencies and services with the highest-value returns for area taxpayers.
- If certain consolidations prove infeasible, consider leveraging Iowa's statutory 28-E financing tool to collectivize the funding of these services.

**9.2.2: IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES TO DEVELOP REVENUE-SHARING PROJECTS BETWEEN GREATER DES MOINES AND CENTRAL IOWA GOVERNMENTS. (BP)**

Revenue-sharing can be a means to alleviate conflict and competition among local governments. A frequently utilized model is the development of industrial or commercial business parks that overlap governmental boundaries and accrue benefits to each. Other opportunities include tax sharing; retail developments; sports stadiums, and planned-unit development residential and mixed-use projects.



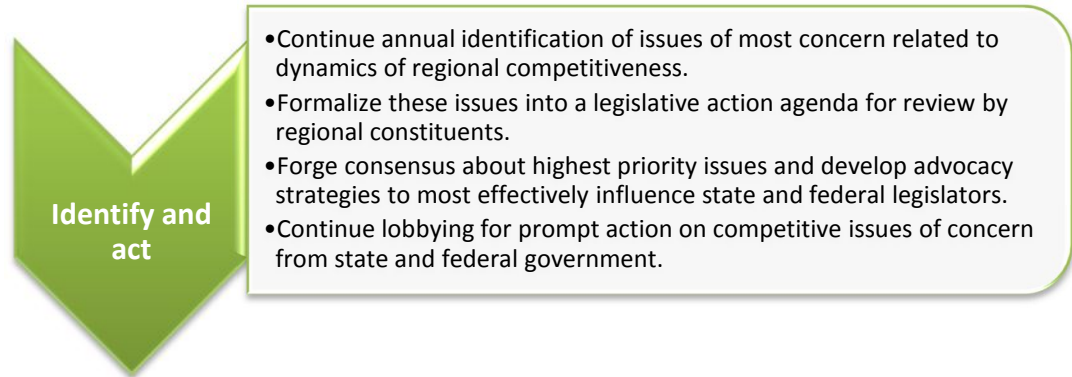
- Leverage existing entities such as the Greater Des Moines Partnership, the Ames Chamber of Commerce, MAC, and the Iowa Department of Economic Development to facilitate discussions among member EDOs, chambers, businesses and governments on potential revenue-sharing opportunities in Central Iowa.
- Identify a list of highest-value opportunities for further discussion.
- Move forward with investigation of the accrued benefit to partner organizations and entities of recommended revenue-sharing efforts.
- Prioritize project implementation based on consensus benefits and use as a pilot project for further revenue-sharing partnerships.

**9.3: ADVOCATE**

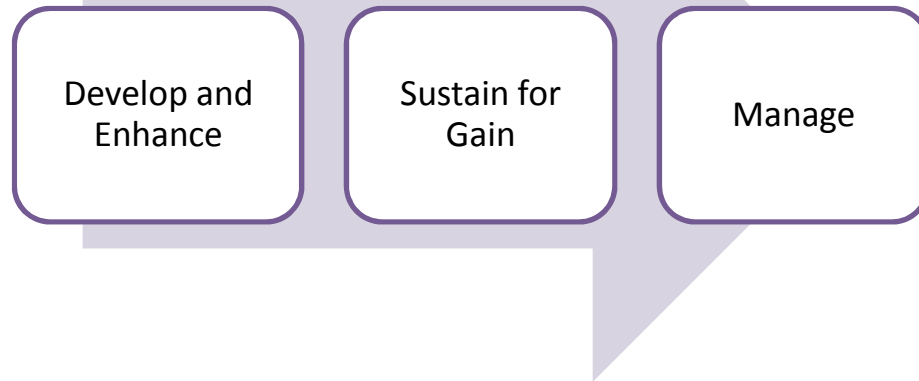
Assembling a multi-governmental coalition of leadership to lobby at the state or federal level for project funding or policy issues is always more effective than representatives approaching elected officials singly or in pairs. There is strength in numbers when it comes to advocacy, a reality that Central Iowa has embraced and leverages effectively.

**9.3.1: CONTINUE TO LEVERAGE COALITIONS OF CENTRAL IOWA GOVERNMENTS TO ADVOCATE AT THE STATE AND FEDERAL LEVEL FOR KEY ISSUES, POLICIES, AND PROJECTS.**

Regional organizations and governments were said to partner effectively on annual lobbying missions to Washington, D.C. Likewise, coalitions of top Greater Des Moines and Central Iowa leadership work in tandem to advocate at the statehouse for issues of shared interest.



## 10. Environmental Capital



### Justification

Central Iowa's natural resources have served as critical contributors to the region's economy and quality of life for over a hundred years. Exciting opportunities exist to leverage these assets in even more dynamic ways by developing more capacity in passive and active recreation such as parks, trails and river-sports, considering new ways to consolidate the management of critical environmental resources, and capitalizing on a revolution in sustainability practices that not only makes the region more livable, but has the potential to create hundreds of good-paying jobs.

### 10.1: DEVELOP AND ENHANCE

Central Iowa is already home to a wealth of environmental assets, both built and natural. Expanding these resources through the development of new capacity will continue to bolster the region's quality of life and enhance its competitive position for talent and investment.

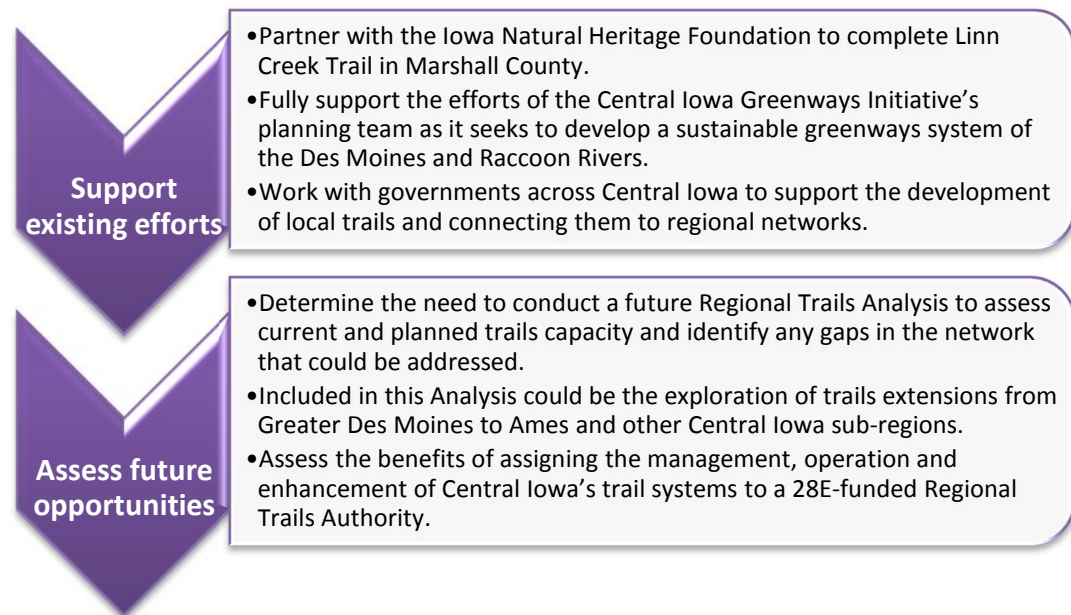
#### **10.1.1: CONTINUE THE ENHANCEMENT OF GREATER DES MOINES' SUPPLY OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND RECREATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE.**

Existing resources and entities should be leveraged and new funding and partnerships sought to significantly and consistently expand the region's supply of active and passive recreation space and environmentally-focused assets. The practice of integrating environmental infrastructure into all aspects of Greater Des Moines life should be propagated.



**10.1.2: ADVANCE EFFORTS TO MAKE CENTRAL IOWA THE “TRAILS CAPITAL OF THE WORLD.”**

Central Iowa has been very aggressive both regionally and locally in the funding and construction of new bicycle, walking and hiking trails. When regional trails currently under development are eventually completed, Central Iowa will have the two largest trail loops in North America. As new capacity is developed, it must be managed effectively and coordinated both in terms of use and marketing of assets.




**10.2: SUSTAIN FOR GAIN**

While “sustainability” is nothing but a buzzword in many communities, Greater Des Moines has moved forward with a number of efforts to promote and celebrate sustainability and determine its potential to improve companies’ profitability.

**10.2.1: LEVERAGE AND PROMOTE EXISTING AND EMERGING TOOLS TO ADVANCE SUSTAINABILITY PRACTICES IN GREATER DES MOINES AND CENTRAL IOWA.**

Greater Des Moines and Central Iowa are in the vanguard of efforts to develop new capacity to encourage and facilitate sustainable practices and leverage these assets to market the region to environmentally-conscious companies and talent. Better unifying – and potentially branding – these efforts into a comprehensive regional sustainability initiative will further Central Iowa’s advance as a national best-practice region. Building awareness among environmentally friendly and socially responsibly businesses that the Capital Region incorporates these principals into its growth framework could greatly increase the likelihood that firms will invest in the area.



- Assign a regional organization as the lead entity for cataloguing and assessing all available sustainability-focused efforts and unifying them under a single brand and point-of-access.
- Leverage this organization as the coordinator for discussions on potential new sustainability programs and tools.
- Work through Central Iowa’s full network of partners to realize the implementation of these new efforts and their integration into the branded sustainability initiative.
- Market this branded program to existing and external companies and organizations interested in the dynamics of sustainability.
- Incorporate environmental, recreational and trails assets into the sustainability marketing program.


Among Greater Des Moines current sustainability-focused efforts are:

- ⇒ The Greater Des Moines Partnership's Sustainability Committee’s efforts to examine opportunities to implement green/sustainable practices for businesses to realize cost savings and increase energy efficiency;
- ⇒ The awarding of regional Environmental Impact Awards to local organizations and leaders for their sustainability efforts;
- ⇒ The Green Plus assessment tool that leverages a Diagnostic Survey to assist small businesses and non-profits in optimizing management practices in business, environmental, employee and community areas;
- ⇒ The Green Infrastructure Valuation Guide that leverages current research to calculate benefits of the implementation of green and sustainable practices;

- ⇒ Iowa State’s full universe of sustainability-focused efforts such as the annual Symposium on Sustainability, the Council on Sustainability, the Live Green! initiative and website, numerous sustainability courses, and many others;
- ⇒ Multiple efforts originating from Drake University’s Agricultural Law Center<sup>3</sup>, including a Certificate in Food and Agricultural Law, a new course on Sustainability and Its Application, the Summer Agricultural Law Institute, the Drake Forum on America’s New Farmers, the nation’s only course on “wind law,” work related to local food systems, the Sustainable Agricultural Land Tenure Project, and others;
- ⇒ The City of Des Moines’ recent selection as a beta community for the STAR Community Index sustainability rating system; and
- ⇒ The City of Des Moines’ new state-funded Sustainability Learning Circle program allowing a group of businesses to meet monthly for six months with experts to create sustainability action plans for their operations.

**10.2.2: PROCEED WITH EFFORTS TO HAVE GREATER DES MOINES SELECTED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CLIMATE PROSPERITY PROJECT (CPP). (BP)**

Developed and overseen by Climate Prosperity, Inc., the CPP seeks to advance community and regional efforts to address the challenges of climate change from the perspective of economic development opportunities. Launched in 2009, only a handful of regions, among them Denver, St. Louis, San Antonio, Silicon Valley, and Portland, have participated in CPP and its process of assessing and defining local green economies and developing Sustainable Economic Development Strategies for the region.



- Support regional efforts to secure Greater Des Moines’ selection as a Climate Prosperity Project designee.
- Leverage leaders from across the spectrum of Central Iowa’s research institutions, colleges and universities, private agriculturally-focused companies, governments, environmental associations and coalitions, and other entities to contribute to discussions with and submissions to Climate Prosperity in favor of CPP designation.
- Upon declaration of Central Iowa’s CPP status, integrate related programs into the region’s target development efforts and external marketing programs.

**10.3: MANAGE**

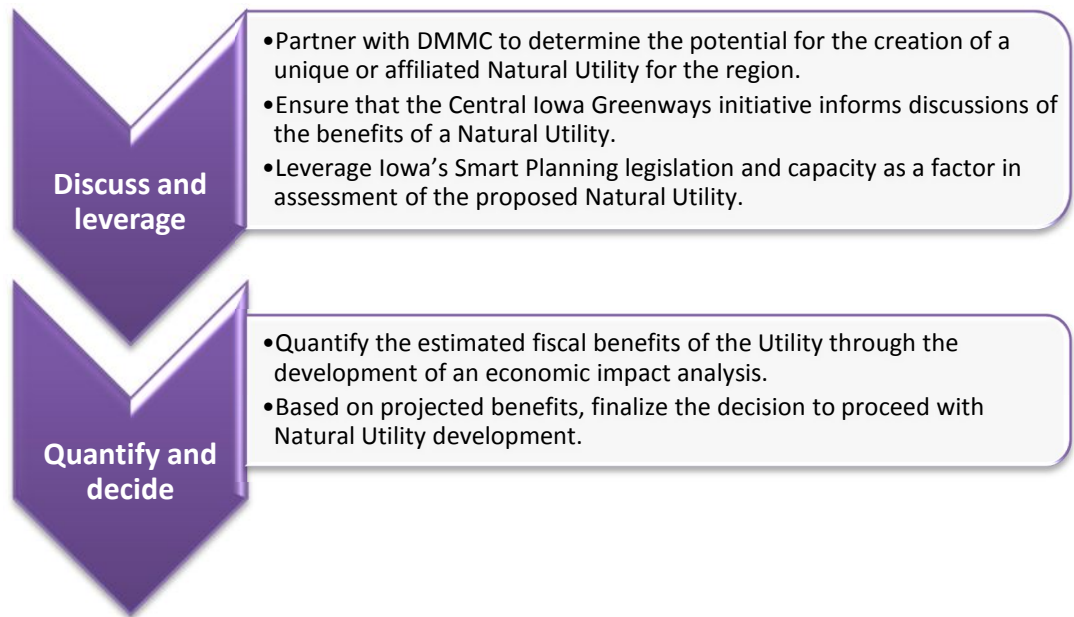
As with consolidation of services, applying a more coordinated approach to environmental resource management will benefit regional governments, residents and businesses and ensure that these systems are more sustainable into the future.

<sup>3</sup> The Center focuses on the role of law in shaping society’s relation to food, agriculture and rural issues.

**10.3.1: CONSIDER THE DEVELOPMENT OF A “NATURAL UTILITY” IN CENTRAL IOWA.**

The creation or enhancement of an entity to deliver environmental services to constituents, users and customers through the management of river systems and stream and creek-side corridors in a watershed could enhance sustainability practices and generate revenue for management of forest, prairie, trail, bankside and water velocity/volume.

DMWW has included the pursuit of biogenic-related services in its 2010-2014 Strategic Plan through a Sustainability/Stewardship Key Result Area. A component action of this Area is to “work with other regional public entities to pursue biogenic-related environmental services through the management of parks and river greenways for the improvement and protection of air and water quality.”





## CONCLUSION

In the economic development world, Greater Des Moines is considered a community on the rise. List after list from major publications and websites identifying the “best place” for business, careers, economic sustainability, quality of life, raising a family, and other indicators invariably shows the Des Moines region in the top percentile of U.S. midsize regions and, often, regions of any size. These rankings are not a fluke; Greater Des Moines has benefitted from strong and visionary public and private leadership, dynamic, growing and philanthropic corporations, and education and training institutions that have prepared generations of Central Iowans to succeed in the region’s top companies.

To a certain degree, this Capital Crossroads process entails jumping on an already fast-moving train. Yet there is also new capacity needed to remain viable in an irrevocably changed competitive national and global landscape as a result of the Great Recession and long-emerging structural changes to the global economy. No community regardless of its past success can afford to rest on its laurels. Today’s economy demands that Greater Des Moines and Central Iowa do more than ever before to stay competitive for the highest-value employment and most skilled talent the country has to offer.

The over 4,500 Central Iowans who contributed to the region’s strategic process have created a Capital Crossroads plan that challenges regional leaders to do more, invest more, think bigger, and work together in new and dynamic ways. The result could be a strategic legacy that positions the Capital Region to ascend even higher among the top-tiers of U.S. metropolitan areas.

Development of the strategy, however, was simply the “end of the beginning.” The real work starts when Capital Crossroads transforms from a planning process to an exercise in effective implementation. It is work that will require Central Iowa to regionalize in ways it never has before. Based on the tremendous participation in this planning effort from across Central Iowa, stakeholders seem ready to join the team and get moving.

## APPENDIX: BEST PRACTICES

Market Street maintains an extensive library of best practice programs, processes, organizations, and efforts for application to key competitive opportunities and challenges identified through our comprehensive research process. Best practices recommended to inform Capital Crossroads were selected based on their specific relevance to actions and efforts Central Iowa can pursue. Ultimately, Greater Des Moines and Central Iowa's leadership should utilize these best practices as guidelines and potential programmatic models to inform strategic efforts custom-tailored to the Capital Crossroads region.

### I.I.I

#### PHOENIX PROJECT (DAYTON, OH)

[www.phoenixprojectdayton.org](http://www.phoenixprojectdayton.org)

Understanding the importance of strong city neighborhoods and creating a safe and attractive gateway into downtown, the City of Dayton partnered with the 3,500-employee Good Samaritan Hospital to create the Phoenix Project, a formalized plan to achieve comprehensive community development in the geographic area surrounding the hospital. The Phoenix Project has four key components: commercial and economic revitalization of the major street adjacent to the hospital; expansion of homeownership opportunities through physical development; creating partnerships to provide social supports which enhance quality of life for residents; and strengthening the civic infrastructure of the community through resident engagement and organization. For its part, Good Samaritan understands the importance to its future in keeping the areas surrounding its campus secure and attractive for hospital employees, patients and visitors. The first phase of the Phoenix Project focuses on increasing homeownership, encouraging existing homeowners to invest in their property, tearing down dilapidated structures, improving traffic flow along the area's main street, and providing recreational and educational programs for residents of the area, especially youth. Later phases will focus on the possible development of a community center in the neighborhood, improving rental properties, and rehabbing homes.

### I.I.2

#### FULTON COUNTY/CITY OF ATLANTA LAND BANK AUTHORITY

[www.fccalandbank.org](http://www.fccalandbank.org)

Land banks are public authorities created to efficiently hold, manage and develop tax-foreclosed property. They act as legal and financial mechanisms to transform vacant, abandoned and tax-foreclosed property back to productive use. In addition, a land bank is a locational incentive that encourages redevelopment in older communities with little available land and/or neighborhoods that have been blighted by an out-migration of residents and businesses. The Fulton County/City of Atlanta Land Bank Authority's mission is:

- To return nonrevenue generating, non-tax producing property to an effective utilization status in order to provide housing, new industry and jobs for the citizens of the County.
- To acquire title to certain tax delinquent properties for the purpose of inventorying, classifying, managing, maintaining, protecting, renting, leasing, repairing, insuring, altering, selling, trading, exchanging, or otherwise disposing of under such terms and conditions.
- To extinguish past due tax liens from property foreclosed upon by Fulton County and the City of Atlanta in their tax collection capacities.

## I.I.3

**HOME IMPROVEMENT LOANS (MINNEAPOLIS)**

[www.housingresourcecenter.org/loan\\_programs](http://www.housingresourcecenter.org/loan_programs)

Minneapolis' suite of home-improvement loans are administered by the Greater Metropolitan Housing Corporation (GMHC), formed in 1970 by the Minneapolis business community with a mission of preserving, improving, and increasing affordable housing for low and moderate income individuals and families and assisting communities with housing revitalization. GMHC offers the following programs to all qualifying Minneapolis residents:

- Minnesota Housing Finance Agency (MHFA) Fix Up Fund Loan: This is a home improvement loan offered to credit-worthy owner-occupants for up to \$35,000 with a maximum term of 20 years. The interest rate is fixed for the term of the loan. To qualify for the loan, gross household income cannot exceed \$96,600. Most improvements qualify except for luxury items such as swimming pools.
- MHFA Rehabilitation Loan: This loan is a zero-percent interest, 20-year loan for financing up to \$15,000 for permanent repairs to the home. The loan is deferred so homeowners have no interest or monthly payments. Eligible homeowners must have incomes at 30 percent of the area median. Eligible properties include single-family homes, duplexes and manufactured housing taxed as real or personal property. In addition, homeowners with a disability and/or lead abatement issues can qualify for a maximum loan of \$20,000.
- Minneapolis Basic Home Improvement Loan: Applicants must live in their homes. Maximum loan amounts are \$25,000 depending upon the home's price and owner's amount of equity in the home. This program has an interest rate of 1 percent and is available to homeowners with past credit issues.
- Minneapolis City Code Abatement Loan: Available to owner-occupants of properties that have received orders from the Minneapolis Department of Inspections to make repairs. Owner-occupants must not be eligible for other loans available through GMHC.

GMHC and its affiliated Housing Resource Centers also offer home-improvement advice through free construction consultations. Services include site visits with homeowners, provision of contractor information, creation of a list of work for contractors to bid

from, reviews of contractor bids, proposals, and estimates, development of plans for accessibility modifications, and identification of health and safety issues.

## 2.1.2

### **NASHVILLE HEALTH CARE COUNCIL**

[www.healthcarecouncil.com](http://www.healthcarecouncil.com)

The Nashville Health Care Council was founded in 1995 as an initiative of the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce. Since that time, the Council has evolved into one of the nation's top industry-specific councils and led to the creation of dozens of new companies employing thousands of workers. A staff of seven works with the Council's nearly 200 member organizations to foster a supportive operating environment for existing, start-up, and relocating health care businesses. Through educational programs, the Council also provides executives with information on key operational and policy challenges facing health care companies, as well as networking and mentoring activities. Sub-sectors represented by member companies include hospital management, outpatient services, disease management, pharmaceutical services, academic medicine, medical technology and health information technology. Also represented are professional services firms with wide-ranging expertise in the health care industry.

## 2.2.2

### **CINCYTECH (GREATER CINCINNATI)**

[www.cincytechventures.com](http://www.cincytechventures.com)

CincyTech is a public-private partnership with a mission of investing in high-growth startup technology companies in Southwest Ohio. This is accomplished through management assistance, seed-capital investments, and connections to key community partners. CincyTech also serves as an incubator to nearly 20 companies in the life sciences and information technology sectors. Out-of-state firms are recruited to CincyTech and provided start-up funding based on the pledge that they will move their operations to Greater Cincinnati. CincyTech's staff of 10 includes a number of entrepreneurs-in-residence. Together, they provide:

- Connections to a network of resources for assistance.
- Management assistance to help accelerate the growth of promising technology companies.
- Seed-stage investments through a \$10.4 million seed fund.
- Capital formation assistance provided by an investment development director who works with clients to access follow-on rounds of capital from Angel and private-equity investors regionally and nationally.
- Imaging Grants to prove the potential of technologies developed at regional research centers to be commercialized by startup companies.
- Grants to launch new companies based on orphaned technology at established regional companies.

CincyTech works with client firms throughout the start-up process, including building out a detailed due-diligence plan, capitalization strategies summarized in a term sheet, review of legal documents, assistance in employee recruitment, business planning, introductions to prospective customers and business partners, and other support services.

### 2.2.5 UPSTART (UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA)

[www.ctt.upenn.edu/upstart](http://www.ctt.upenn.edu/upstart)

Created in Spring 2010 by the University of Pennsylvania's (Penn) Center for Technology Transfer (CTT), the UPSTART company-formation program is designed to commercialize Penn intellectual property by helping faculty form new companies based on their inventions and technological innovations. The program offers a suite of services to connect entrepreneurs, investors, and funding organizations with Penn researchers and combine the business-creation capacity of CTT and its New Ventures Team with the entrepreneurial interests of faculty founders and regional investors. UPSTART representatives partner directly with Penn faculty and staff to complete the steps required to legally form a company, raise funds, and recruit employees to manage the company. The program provides access to business planning, advisory, and support resources through its network of relationships with entities such as the University Science Center, Penn's Wharton Small Business Development Center, and the Commercialization Acceleration Program at Penn. Once a marketing and business plan is established, UPSTART develops strategies and timelines for the pursuit of external funding through outreach to Angel investors, economic development funds, seed stage venture capital funds, and government grant programs. UPSTART representatives also introduce company founders to local entrepreneurs with the capabilities necessary to build a management team and corporate infrastructure.

### 2.3.3 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CODE OF ETHICS (DENVER, CO)

[www.metrodenver.org/about-metro-denver-edc/code-of-ethics](http://www.metrodenver.org/about-metro-denver-edc/code-of-ethics)

To ensure that standards of conduct are advanced and adhered to by Metro Denver's full complement of collaborative economic development organizations as they seek to promote the region as a single economic entity, the groups developed a Code of Ethics to follow. Components of the Code include the following pledges:

- "When representing the Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation (EDC), we shall endeavor to sell "Metro Denver First" and our individual communities and projects second."
- "We shall honor the confidentiality requested by both our fellow members of the Metro Denver EDC and our prospects."
- "We are committed to the concept of competition for locations and expansions among our individual communities and projects, provided that the prospect has asked for specific proposals or has settled on a Metro Denver location."

- “At no time shall any member of the Metro Denver EDC solicit a fellow member's prospects.”
- “We are committed to sharing among our membership as much information as is necessary and prudent on any activity undertaken by or in the name of the Metro Denver EDC.”
- “At no time shall any economic development organization member of the Metro Denver EDC advertise or promote its respective area to companies within another member's geographic area in a manner that is derogatory or insulting to the other geographic area.”

### 3.2.1

#### **KC ANIMAL HEALTH CORRIDOR (METRO KANSAS CITY)**

[www.kcanimalhealth.com](http://www.kcanimalhealth.com)

The KC Animal Health Corridor is a marketing initiative spearheaded by the Kansas City Area Development Council to leverage a concentration of research, training and corporate animal health and science capacity between Manhattan, Kansas and Columbia, Missouri (though the vast majority of companies are clustered around the Kansas City metro area). Touted as the world’s most concentrated animal health cluster, the Corridor offers member firms services including: networking, specialized education and training resources, research collaboration, legislative advocacy, specialized tax and incentive programs, and business relocation assistance. The corridor is supported by the KC Animal Health Initiative, a coalition lead by the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce, the Kansas City Area Life Sciences Institute, and the Kansas City Area Development Council designed to foster a climate of opportunity for the animal health and nutrition industry. In addition, the Kansas Bioscience Authority announced in March 2011 that it will fund the new Animal Health Center of Innovation, a public-private consortium that will accelerate job creation, research and development, and commercialization in the industry by bringing together key partners including regional universities, government agencies, and area animal health companies.

#### **CEDAR RAPIDS/IOWA CITY TECH CORRIDOR**

[www.tech-corridor.com](http://www.tech-corridor.com)

A marketing partnership between the Priority One economic development organization in metro Cedar Rapids and the Iowa City Area Development Group (ICAD Group), the Tech Corridor attempts to leverage its location at the crossroads of Interstates 80 and 380 for growth in high-value technology companies. The Corridor's proximity to the University of Iowa, Kirkwood Community College and other public and private educational institutions is promoted by economic developers as a source of education, training, research and development support necessary to innovate change. According to the Tech Corridor website, “Both the Iowa City Area Development Group and Priority One of Cedar Rapids are dedicated to creating a vital regional economy through strong partnerships, cooperation and collaboration among business and community leaders, educators, and municipal and state governments.”



## 4.2.1

### LIVE WELL OMAHA

[www.livewellomaha.org](http://www.livewellomaha.org)

Live Well Omaha is a staffed community-wide partnership charged with cultivating a physical and cultural environment that helps Omaha-Douglas County residents make healthy life-choices. The program's vision is to make healthier food options available in the region and support more opportunities for physical activity. To that end, Live Well Omaha is supported by Partners for a Healthy City, a group working with businesses, faith-based organizations, physicians' offices and community organizations to secure commitments to implement at least one internal policy change related to creating opportunities for physical activity and/or making healthy food and beverage choices available. In addition to Partners for a Healthy City, Live Well Omaha is advanced by initiatives creating routes for children to get to and from school safely; enhancing bicycle/pedestrian infrastructure; collaborating with neighborhood stores to stock more healthy food options; working with local food producers to get fresh, local food to schools and businesses; and supporting programming that encourages students to engage in physical activity after school. Another supportive effort, Activate Omaha, encourages physical activity and advocates for the importance of designing communities for active lifestyles. The five-year Activate Omaha initiative was funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Active Living by Design program.

### ACTIVE DESIGN GUIDELINES (NEW YORK CITY)

[www.nyc.gov/html/ddc/html/design/active\\_design](http://www.nyc.gov/html/ddc/html/design/active_design)

Designed to create buildings and environments that facilitate healthy behaviors and reduce obesity, "active design" is reflected in recent regulations approved by New York City's government. New York City's Active Design Guidelines encourage physical activity through environmental design. Developed by a partnership of the New York City departments of Design and Construction, Health and Mental Hygiene, Transportation, City Planning, and Office of Management and Budget, the Active Design Guidelines provide architects and urban designers with a manual for creating buildings, streets, and urban spaces that facilitate healthy behavior.

## 5.1.2

### STRIVE PARTNERSHIP (CINCINNATI)

[www.strivetogether.org](http://www.strivetogether.org)

With a motto of "Every Child, Every Step of the Way, From Cradle to Career," the Strive Partnership in Metro Cincinnati is a staffed 501(c)3 coalition of early childhood advocates, district superintendents, college and university presidents, community funders, business leaders and service providers united around shared issues, goals, measurements and results. The Partnerships seeks to serve as a catalyst for working together across sectors and along the entire educational continuum to drive better results in education. The guiding principles of the Strive Partnership include a focus on



data driven decision-making, facilitating and sustaining coordinated action, and advocating for and aligning funding around what works. To measure success, the Strive Partnership tracks its progress relative to seven priority outcomes: kindergarten readiness, 4th grade reading proficiency, 8th grade math proficiency, high school graduation rates and ACT scores, and postsecondary enrollment and completion. Programs run by the Strive Partnership include Be the Change, a collaborative tutor recruitment effort, and Stand for Kids, a student-focused advocacy group.

### **ALIGNMENT NASHVILLE**

[www.alignmentnashville.org](http://www.alignmentnashville.org)

Funded by public and private entities in Metro Nashville, Alignment Nashville is a community-wide collaboration among schools, non-profits, businesses, and the public sector designed to effectively align organizations to help public schools succeed and youth live healthier lives. The program serves as a scalable framework for school improvement that brings community organizations and resources into alignment to coordinate support of Nashville's youth health and education outcomes, public school success, and the success of the community as a whole. A board of directors was created to provide oversight and an Operating Board, consisting of Metro Nashville Public Schools administrators and community organization executives, was formed to develop direction and processes for the initiative's working committees. Program goals include: greater returns on investment; higher quality services; enhanced capacity; and better leveraging of local funding. Alignment Nashville was leveraged in the creation of the Metro Nashville Public Schools' 2007-14 Strategic Plan developed by the Cambridge Group.

### **55,000 DEGREES (LOUISVILLE)**

[www.55000degrees.com](http://www.55000degrees.com)

The public-private 55,000 Degrees organization emerged from the work of a Greater Louisville Education Roundtable commissioned in 2008 to look at strategies to raise educational attainment and create transformational change. The Business Higher Education Forum was hired to facilitate a retreat for Roundtable members that resulted in the May 2010 signing of the Greater Louisville Education Commitment. The Commitment's five goals are to: 1) Create and support a college-going culture; 2) use the business community's leverage to accelerate attainment; 3) prepare students for success in college, career, citizenship and life; 4) make post-secondary education accessible and affordable; and 5) increase educational persistence, performance and progress. In October 2010, 55,000 Degrees was created to help realize the Commitment's goals of adding 40,000 bachelor's degrees and 15,000 associate's degrees by 2020. Led by a board of directors from the education and business communities, 55,000 Degrees seeks to connect the community by working to reform Louisville's and Kentucky's schools. It collects data about current academic achievement to advise policymakers on the best methods for reforming education systems.

## 5.1.9

**GRADUATE! PHILADELPHIA**

[www.graduatephiladelphia.org](http://www.graduatephiladelphia.org)

Graduate! Philadelphia is a joint initiative of the Philadelphia Workforce Investment Board and the United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania that works with adults who have completed some college to return to school and get their degrees. To do this, Graduate! Philadelphia provides free in-person and online guidance and support to help clients fill out and file financial-assistance forms, get academic support, balance school with work and family schedules, access a computer, complete paperwork, and improve study skills. Graduate! Philadelphia has partnered with 15 local accredited colleges and universities to help transition adults back into the college and degree that work best for them. Six staff persons manage the program.

## 5.3.1

**MAIN SOUTH PROMISE NEIGHBORHOOD (WORCESTER, MA)**

[www.promiseneighborhoodsinstitute.org/in-action](http://www.promiseneighborhoodsinstitute.org/in-action)

After receiving a federal planning grant, Worcester's Main South Promise Neighborhood has started laying the groundwork for the initiative. United Way of Central Massachusetts is leading the effort along with partners Clark University, Worcester Public Schools, the Main South Community Development Corp., and several other agencies and community-based organizations. Clark University is working to develop a comprehensive data system, including working with youth to collect information from the community. Main South has held a number of town-hall meetings with leaders, community members, youth and others to ensure that the community contributes to the planning and development of the initiative. Main South has also done community outreach using social media like Facebook. The next step is for the partnership to come up with a strategic plan and apply for implementation funding. Promise Neighborhoods follow a "place-based" social concept modeled after Harlem Children's Zone in New York City.

## 5.3.2

**PATHWAYS CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (CHICAGO)**

[www.pmatch.org](http://www.pmatch.org)

Founded in 1985 in Chicago, Project Match is a staffed 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation funded through grants from foundations, corporations, individuals, and government that conducts program development and research related to low-income populations. Developed by Project Match for agencies operating a welfare-to-work program, the Pathways Case Management System provides tools and protocols for case workers to develop and monitor customized, self-sufficiency plans for clients. The Pathways system considers the many elements welfare recipients must learn to balance, including serving as worker, parent, partner, and community member. Pathways has been implemented at sites in several states, primarily California and New York.

## 6.1.6 MULTICULTURAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAM (MCLEAN COUNTY, IL)

[web.extension.illinois.edu/mclean/mlp](http://web.extension.illinois.edu/mclean/mlp)

Run by a partnership between the University of Illinois Extension-McLean County, Heartland Community College, and local businesses, the Multicultural Leadership Program prepares participants for increased service in public, private, educational, political, and non-profit sectors in McLean County. The program develops leadership skills that enable participants to address specific community needs and promote inter-community unity. Participants are selected by a panel based on their commitment to community issues, desire to learn and willingness to contribute to the community at large. Once selected, participants attend bi-weekly sessions for eight months. During these sessions, program members participate in exercises and attend panel discussions on issues such as public speaking, mentoring, crisis management and communication skills. Participants will also work in groups on a non-profit project designed to benefit all of McLean County.

## 6.2.1 MULTI-CULTURAL CENTER OF SIOUX FALLS (SD)

[sfmcc.org](http://sfmcc.org)

With a staff of 13 professionals, the Multi-Cultural Center of Sioux Falls is located in a refurbished downtown building and serves as the principal supportive resource for Sioux Falls large immigrant and refugee population. With a stated mission to “provide opportunities for all people to learn, celebrate, and share though cultural experiences,” the Center’s goals include:

- Offering clients orientation services to the Sioux Falls community and to the American culture.
- Providing the resources for English language proficiency and life skills education.
- Serving as a resource center for the culturally diverse community through assistance with housing, health services, adult services and youth services.
- Developing and supporting programs to address the needs of youth.
- Educating the community regarding diversity.

Additional programs include the hosting of an annual Festival of Cultures and Ethnic Youth Day, driver’s education classes, small business education, health programs, housing partnerships, and self-defense classes.

## 7.1.4 MEMPHIS MUSIC RESOURCE CENTER (MRC)

[www.memphismeanismusic.com/programs/music-resource-center](http://www.memphismeanismusic.com/programs/music-resource-center)

The core program of the non-profit Memphis Music Foundation, the MRC is a business-solutions workspace and information center for musicians and music industry professionals in Greater Memphis. The Center provides educational and networking

opportunities for musicians and music businesses, offers workshops and in-house tutorials on everything from publishing to recording, and has professional staff available for personalized consultations on how to advance clients' careers. Membership is available to everyone in the music community; there are no fees to join. At the MRC facility, members can access graphic design software to make show posters, read top industry publications, learn how to design social media pages and web sites, and use digital audio workstations and video equipment.

## 7.2.1

### **ARTS INCUBATOR OF KANSAS CITY**

[artsincubatorkc.org](http://artsincubatorkc.org)

The Arts Incubator of Kansas City (AIKC) is a nonprofit organization with a staff of eight people dedicated to working with emerging artists in the development of their careers. In addition to business workshops and consulting, facility resources include individual studio space, an art gallery, event loft, conference room, administrative offices, a library, common workspaces, shops and equipment for working in various media. Among the currently active 47 studio artists are painters, illustrators, writers, sculptors, photographers, videographers, graphic artists, fashion and furniture designers, and jewelry makers. The third floor event space hosts fundraisers, wedding receptions, concerts and theatrical performances.

## 7.3.2

### **COCABIZ (ST. LOUIS)**

[www.cocabiz.com](http://www.cocabiz.com)

COCAbiz is the training arm of St. Louis' Center of Creative Arts (COCA), the fifth largest multi-disciplinary community arts institution in the nation. COCAbiz's mission is to build a more creative, engaged and effective workforce by delivering classes, workshops and events that employ arts teaching to improve business results. Each COCAbiz engagement pairs at least one of COCA's 250 instructors (artists, designers, dancers, musicians, writers, actors or directors) with a business-focused facilitator to design and deliver experiential training to business clients. Since the program began, it has used haiku, improvisation and dancing sessions to train employees at four companies and organizations. Artists from COCA teach the classes either at COCA's facility or at the company's boardrooms and conference facilities.

## 8.3.4

### **AIR SERVICE DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVE FUND (MOBILE, AL)**

The Mobile Airport Authority and Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce submitted a proposal for a \$15 million Air Service Development Investment Fund to the commission charged with disbursing renewal funds provided by BP in response to the Gulf of Mexico oil spill. The proposal could potentially inform future Des Moines strategies. Because of high airfares and a lack of non-stop flights, Mobile Regional Airport created an Air Service Development Task Force in 2007. One of the initiatives of the Task Force was to attract a low-fare air carrier to Mobile. Officials believed the Incentive Fund would

attract air service that would then become self-sustaining. Per the proposal, a revolving fund of \$5 million per year would be established and administered for three years by the Mobile Chamber of Commerce Foundation to recruit new low-fare air service.

## 9.1.2

### **FORM BASED CODE STUDY (GRAND VALLEY, MI)**

[www.gvmc.org/landuse/formbasedcode](http://www.gvmc.org/landuse/formbasedcode)

The Grand Valley Metro Council's Land Use Department funded and developed a Form-Based Code Study to provide local governments with a template for zoning ordinances that emphasize the urban design of places. This approach supports traditional town and city forms such as main streets, village greens, and neighborhood centers. The Study provides land-use and street standards that can be utilized used by any local government or organization in the GVMC region to inform local zoning ordinance variances and new code development.

## 9.2.1

### **GLOUCESTER COUNTY (NJ)**

[www.co.gloucester.nj.us/government](http://www.co.gloucester.nj.us/government)

Gloucester County is the first county in New Jersey to provide regionalized County EMS services for its towns. Currently, Gloucester County's EMS serves 14 of its 24 municipalities, saving those towns over \$2.8 million. Gloucester is also serving as a New Jersey Pilot County for provision of Regionalized Assessing for its municipalities. It is estimated that the County's Regionalized Pilot Assessing program would save taxpayers \$1.5 million annually by eliminating the need for town-by-town revaluations and creating an assessment system that maintains a fair equalization ratio by reassessing every town on a three year schedule. Gloucester County has also regionalized its 911 dispatching center, Storm Water Management program, Medical Examiner's Office, and has combined the administration of its Special Services School District and Institute of Technology. Together, these programs save taxpayers over \$30 million annually.

## 9.2.2

### **TWIN CITIES FISCAL DISPARITIES PROGRAM (MINNEAPOLIS-ST. PAUL, MN)**

[www.metrocouncil.org/metroarea/FiscalDisparities](http://www.metrocouncil.org/metroarea/FiscalDisparities)

The Twin Cities is well known for its tax-base-sharing program. Under the fiscal disparities program, taxing jurisdictions in the seven-county area contribute 40 percent of the growth in commercial-industrial (CI) property tax base into an area-wide shared pool. Shared tax base is then redistributed back to jurisdictions with the intent of reducing fiscal disparities in the region. Redistribution is based on population and the value of all property relative to the metro average. The smaller the per capita property value compared to the metro average, the larger the distribution. Conversely, the larger the per capita property value compared to the metro average, the smaller the distribution. Shared tax base totaled \$421 million for taxes payable in 2011. This represented 39 percent of total commercial-industrial tax base in the Twin Cities. After

redistribution of the shared area-wide pool of tax base, 120 communities covered by the Twin Cities fiscal disparities program received more tax base than they contributed.

## IO.2.2

### CLIMATE PROSPERITY PROJECT (ST. LOUIS)

[www.climateprosperityproject.org/StLouis](http://www.climateprosperityproject.org/StLouis)

The Climate Prosperity Project (CPP) was established in 2009 in order to promote community efforts to address climate change from the perspective of economic development. The national 501(c)3 nonprofit Climate Prosperity Project organization joined with the St. Louis region in order to support a growing green business cluster and clean-tech research hub, and build a regional “green” talent pool. The project is led by the St. Louis Regional Chamber and Growth Association (RCGA) in collaboration with the St. Louis Chamber of Commerce. To begin the project, CPP conducted extensive research on the national and St. Louis economies to estimate the number of “green jobs” in the region. This report, the Green Economy Profile, looked into the opportunities for green venture capital and green technology innovation in Greater St. Louis. In early 2010, the RCGA launched the St. Louis Green Business Challenge aimed at reducing waste and water consumption, improving energy efficiency and indoor air quality, and increasing clean transportation options. More than 40 area companies are participating in this challenge. A regional Green Talent Strategy, the product of collaboration between regional workforce investment boards, businesses, colleges, universities, and union training centers, was also developed and led to an action plan designed to help the region align job training with the growing talent needs of the region’s green economy.