



## SUMMARY

## CAPITAL CROSSROADS 2.0 STRATEGY

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## INTRODUCTION

The ten strategic Capitals confirmed in the first Capital Crossroads process continue to resonate. Leaders of the initiative feel the current Capitals remain viable for the five-year implementation period of Capital Crossroads 2.0 and should be maintained. **The existing and planned work of these Capitals forms the base of strategic activities for the 2.0 plan.** However, Central Iowa finds itself in a different place in 2016 with opportunities to leverage the region's tremendous recent momentum to aim higher and dream bigger with Capital Crossroads 2.0. Ambitious **enhanced and new programs and projects** have emerged from research and extensive feedback from stakeholders across the public and private spectrum in Central Iowa that warrant incorporation in to the Capital Crossroads framework.

## Strategic Framework

Capital Crossroads leaders believe that the ten strategic Capitals approved in 2012 remain valid for the 2.0 vision plan. As such the strategic Capital framework is unchanged from the first plan. The following headings comprise the structure of the draft Capital Crossroads 2.0 strategy. Below the strategic Capitals are Objective Areas, followed by Strategic Priorities, and Tactical Opportunities and Information. Each successive structural level provides additional detail on the Capital Crossroads recommendations.

## STRATEGIC CAPITALS

### Objective Areas

#### STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

#### *Tactical Opportunities and Information*

## CAPITAL CROSSROADS 2.0 PRIORITIES

Capital Crossroads has ten strategic Capitals and dozens of tactical actions driving implementation results. However, some of these actions have a larger impact on Central Iowa's success and serve as catalysts for associated strategic activities. The Capital Crossroads 2.0 Steering Committee confirmed the following catalyst actions through multiple rounds of voting and discussion. Combined, the priorities represent policies, projects, and programs that generate the highest implementation value for regional stakeholders. Rather than diminish the importance of the full Capital Crossroads vision plan, the catalysts act as pillars to support the plan's operational infrastructure.

The implementation catalysts found below are listed by their placement in the plan and not by priority; their strategic Capitals are noted parenthetically. They are all important and will be focused on as Capital Crossroads 2.0 is launched and advanced. They include:

- ✓ **Support downtown Des Moines growth and neighborhood revitalization (Capital Core)**
- ✓ **Maintain an effective Central Iowa business climate and entrepreneurial ecosystem (Business Capital)**
- ✓ **Implement coordinated strategies to optimize Central Iowa's workforce (Human Capital)**
- ✓ **Make Central Iowa a national model of leadership, diversity and inclusion, social equity, and civility (Social Capital)**
- ✓ **Create an integrated regional transportation system, including public transit and a network of land (bicycle and pedestrian) and water trails (Physical Capital, Natural Capital)**
- ✓ **Ensure regional diversity in neighborhood and housing costs, styles, and locations (Physical Capital)**
- ✓ **Assess opportunities for regional governance (Governance Capital)**
- ✓ **Implement comprehensive approaches to position Central Iowa as a global leader in water quality and soil health (Natural Capital)**

## CROSS-CAPITAL INITIATIVES

Recurring themes from public input, partner organizations, and the Steering Committee highlighted the opportunity for many Capital Crossroads activities to be pursued as cross-Capital initiatives with inputs and impacts across a host Central Iowa strategic categories. In reality, just about every Capital Crossroads activity has at least one or more cross-Capital interaction or partnership. However, initiatives that were intentionally approached from a cross-Capital perspective like the Iowa Soil and Water Future Task Force, the Transit Future Work Group, and the Community Health Needs Assessment demonstrated most clearly the benefit of cross-functional work teams collectively approaching opportunities and challenges.

Leaders would like to see additional strategic activities called out as cross-Capital partnerships. Whether these are existing efforts formalized into more purposeful collaborations or new initiatives designed and launched from the outset as cross-Capital programs, stakeholders want a focus on “things that impact lots of Capitals so as to have a ‘waterfall’ effect.” Indeed, the most transformative impacts of a coordinated implementation framework of nearly 700 volunteers will come from harnessing their collective knowledge bases, expertise, and influence in pursuit of local and regional goals.

The following comprise cross-Capital initiatives recommended by regional leaders and stakeholders:

- Active Wellness
- Central Iowa Food Initiative
- Civility
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- Housing

In addition to broad cross-Capital partnerships, there are a number of complementary strategic efforts in Central Iowa with specific tactical cross-Capital applicability. One of the most impactful of these initiatives is the OpportUNITY Plan profiled throughout Capital Crossroads 2.0. Its ambitious anti-poverty agenda and performance targets position it as a transformational program for Central Iowa’s future.



## CAPITAL CORE

Capital Crossroads 2.0 continues the initiative's attention on the City of Des Moines's core through a holistic focus on the city's downtown and central neighborhoods. Above all, leaders would like to see more aggressive, bold, and innovative strategies applied to downtown's core districts and a "culture of yes" fostered among stakeholders to realize transformative projects and events in Des Moines's core.

### **OVERARCHING GOAL**

*The urban core of Central Iowa will continue to enhance its role as the region's principal activity, hospitality, and employment hub and benefit from safe, dynamic, desirable, and affordable neighborhoods.*

## Downtown Vitality

More than any part of the region, Central Iowa's years-long period of sustained growth can be seen in downtown Des Moines. While many cities across the country have seen downtown reinvestment and revitalization, Des Moines stands out for the breadth and diversity of its projects for a community of its size and the transformational impact of these investments on internal and external perceptions of the region.

### **DESIRED OUTCOME**

*Establishment of downtown Des Moines as a true 24-7-365 district for workers, residents, and visitors.*

## INCREASE THE CAPACITY AND DIVERSITY OF DOWNTOWN AMENITIES.

More can be done to help prime the pump for downtown retail and assess the key trigger points to spur additional investment. All development classes will be supported by increased capacity in downtown amenities that help attract new investment, visitors, residents, and companies to the district.

### **TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

#### ***I. Conduct a downtown Des Moines retail analysis and attraction study.***

- ✓ A comprehensive assessment of the downtown retail climate will identify unmet demand, goods and services purchased outside the district that could be offered downtown, and include potential strategies to attract new brands to downtown Des Moines and grow existing businesses. Analysis should focus on leakage **outside Central Iowa** and desired brands specifically interested in downtown environments. Recommendations must not lead to intra-regional relocation of retailers.

***II. Support the aggressive marketing of downtown for tourism, entertainment, meetings, and conference/convention activities.***

- ✓ The Greater Des Moines Convention and Visitors Bureau's (CVB) continued efforts to market the Iowa Events Center (IEC) will be greatly bolstered by the future presence of the Convention Center Hilton Hotel. Economic development partners should pursue all opportunities to work with the CVB to support the identification and attraction of industry-specific shows and events, and other opportunities to use Events Center space.

***III. Enhance downtown Des Moines activity and event programming.***

- ✓ Many existing programs like the Downtown Farmers' Market already have been implemented to engage downtown residents, workers, and visitors. These programs should continue to be assessed, optimized, and supplemented with new opportunities to populate downtown streets and businesses.

***IV. Continue advancing projects to bring additional workers, residents, and visitors to downtown Des Moines.***

- ✓ Availability of the former Riverfront YMCA facility and other key parcels provide opportunities to foster additional development of all types and bring more businesses, workers, residents, and visitors into the district.

***V. Assess potential opportunities to complement downtown Des Moines river recreation projects.***

- ✓ Downtown Des Moines segments of the proposed water trail system (see Physical Capital) will create dynamic opportunities to complement these attractions with follow-on developments in multiple categories, including retail, recreation, beautification, activity programming, and others.

***VI. Study the viability of construction of a major downtown sports stadium.***

- ✓ Based on the interest of key downtown and metro partners, a study could be initiated for a downtown stadium/event facility. Based on the results of the analysis, formal efforts to fund, construct, and market the facility, as well as pursue franchise agreements, should commence.

**BUILD AND SUSTAIN DOWNTOWN HOUSING AT MULTIPLE PRICE POINTS.**

The provision of quality, diverse housing products for residents at all income levels is best supported by a collection of tools and programs; no single solution will be sufficient. Strongly informing these efforts will be Housing Tomorrow, Central Iowa's first-ever regional plan for affordable housing.

**TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

***I. Continue aggressive efforts to support mixed-use, mixed-income housing downtown.***

- ✓ Officials marketing downtown should continue efforts to target new housing for prioritized growth districts and ensure product is consistent with downtown's vision for walkable, mixed-use urbanism. Stakeholders would like to see housing product at mid-level price points front-of-mind for downtown officials when they market the district to developers.

***II. Develop a Downtown Des Moines Workforce Housing Plan.***

- ✓ Creation of a downtown Workforce Housing Plan under the framework of the Housing Tomorrow strategy would identify the magnitude of the current gap in downtown's housing supply and provide targeted income levels and housing rates for the expected surge in downtown workers. If pursued, recommendations would focus on best practice tools to address downtown's specific workforce housing needs and issues.

***III. Support transportation options that promote urban living and increased affordability.***

- ✓ Residential affordability can be enhanced through capacity-building in bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, transit accessibility and frequency, car-sharing programs, partnerships with transportation network companies (TDS), the elimination or reduction of parking minimums beyond downtown and the introduction of parking maximums, and other opportunities.

**FOSTER DEVELOPMENT OF CONNECTED, PEDESTRIAN-FRIENDLY DOWNTOWN ENVIRONMENTS.**

Des Moines already has taken steps to advance walkability and urbanity in its downtown and should continue to ensure that growth meets these criteria.

**TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

***I. Implement strategies to encourage downtown mobility alternatives.***

- ✓ Urban Land Institute (ULI) Iowa, the Greater Des Moines Partnership, the City of Des Moines, and a number of other community partners are supporting a mobility study branded **Connect Downtown**. Approved Connect Downtown strategies to make the district more pedestrian friendly and improve overall mobility and walkability should be advanced to enhance the district's appeal to talent, businesses, and visitors.

***II. Expand downtown Des Moines skywalk system planning in the context of broader downtown walkability and mobility initiatives.***

- ✓ In 2010, the City of Des Moines commissioned a Skywalk Assessment Study that provided an overview of current conditions of the system’s structural and mechanical components and interior finishes and openings. A new **Skywalk Activation Plan** complementing the 2010 study with specific programmatic and activity strategies would provide valuable benefit for downtown Des Moines. The Activation Plan should be incorporated into overall efforts to improve downtown walkability and mobility, including Connect Downtown.

***III. Ensure that parking structures and policies are consistent with downtown urbanism goals.***

- ✓ The City of Des Moines has hired a consultant to assess the condition of all city parking structures. Strategies ultimately could involve formalizing shared parking agreements with private and institutionally-operated lots and structures, continuing to relax on-street parking restrictions, and real-time parking availability software for smart phones and tablets. The PlanDSM zoning update also will formalize parking requirements for new and redeveloped properties.

***IV. Launch an initiative to reconnect neighborhoods bisected by infrastructure construction.***

- ✓ A **coordinating committee** of downtown stakeholders, neighborhood leaders, public officials, and social services providers could be empaneled to determine project scope and geography, confirm research findings, and oversee the development of an actionable plan to reconnect selected neighborhoods for the benefit of their residents and businesses.

## Neighborhood Improvement

While downtown Des Moines is thriving, certain downtown-adjacent and close-in neighborhoods have not seen equivalent levels of investment. Leaders believe there must be a critical mass for neighborhood change cultivated in Des Moines that converts “eyesores to opportunities” and actively leverages private-sector partners to advocate for and make investments in core neighborhood revitalization.

***DESIRED OUTCOME***

*A Des Moines urban core with thriving, mixed-income, diverse, safe, and economically sustainable neighborhoods.*



## LEVERAGE EFFECTIVE STRATEGIC MODELS FOR NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT.

In May 2014, the Des Moines City Council endorsed the **Capital Core Neighborhood Improvement Implementation Plan** as official city policy and has made progress implementing many of its recommendations. Though the plan components remain valid, identification of sufficient resources to fully implement its strategies has been a challenge.

### **TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

#### ***I. Continue to seek resources to advance the Neighborhood Improvement Implementation Plan (NIIP).***

- ✓ Public input noted that stronger private sector partnerships leading and championing the neighborhood work and advocating for increased investments would help advance neighborhood-based initiatives. In addition to neighborhood and corridor-specific action plans, leaders should leverage the NIIP as a blueprint for improvements across the Capital Core.

#### ***II. Use the Viva East Bank! program as a model for additional neighborhood improvement initiatives.***

- ✓ The Viva East Bank! initiative should be formalized into a **Model Program Toolkit** for use and application to interested neighborhoods. A pending City of Des Moines update of protocols to determine the best path forward for neighborhood revitalization could help inform the identification of additional neighborhoods or clusters of neighborhoods to prioritize for implementation under the Viva East Bank! model.

#### ***III. Implement effective corridor-improvement strategies.***

- ✓ Implementation of action plans for the revitalization of Des Moines's **SW 9<sup>th</sup> Corridor**, **6<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor**, and **Drake Neighborhood commercial corridor** are ongoing, Assessment and identification of additional City of Des Moines corridors to target for revitalization initiatives should be incorporated under the Capital Crossroads framework.

#### ***IV. Launch an anchor-based community wealth building (CWB) initiative. (BP5)***

- ✓ Community wealth building strategies partner with "anchor" institutions to establish a network of cooperative enterprises in surrounding neighborhoods. Local officials should pursue the development of a **pilot CWB initiative** in an underserved Des Moines central city neighborhood. This initial corporation then could serve as a model for additional enterprises across Central Iowa.

## CREATE AND LEVERAGE A DIVERSE ARRAY OF NEIGHBORHOOD-IMPROVEMENT TOOLS

The availability and use of programs, policies, and funds to support neighborhood revitalization is a key component of the district and corridor plans detailed in the previous section.

### **TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

#### *I. Continue use of key nonprofit neighborhood revitalization resources, tools, and personnel.*

- ✓ The Neighborhood Finance Corporation (NFC) and Neighborhood Development Corporation (NDC) are important nonprofit entities investing in neighborhood revitalization. The NIIP calls for soliciting additional private sector funding to match the City of Des Moines' investment and support expanded activities by these agencies.

#### *II. Support and create district-based financing and investment tools.*

- ✓ Work continues to identify funding and establish policies and priorities for the development of the **Des Moines Land Bank** that would complement supplemental taxing districts called Self-Supported Municipal Improvements Districts (**SSMIDs**) and other tools. Greater Des Moines leaders should also support and promote efforts in 2017 to seek state legislative approval for individual localities to propose and approve a **Local Option Sales Tax** (LOST).



## BUSINESS CAPITAL

Central Iowa's employment base in financial services, manufacturing, and agriculture continues to provide economic stability, while sectors such as healthcare, information technology, logistics, and tourism have grown to provide diverse counter-balances to potential future declines in one or more of the base industries. Long known as a corporate region, Central Iowa has also experienced notable advances in its entrepreneurial ecosystem.

### **OVERARCHING GOAL**

*Central Iowa will remain a regional leader in economic growth.*

## Targeted Industry Growth

The Greater Des Moines Partnership currently targets the following priority employment sectors, which align with the region's key industry clusters: **Insurance and Financial Services; Data Centers; Bioscience; Advanced Manufacturing;** and **Logistics**. Development efforts involve a holistic focus on existing business retention and expansion as well as attraction of new employers. The growth of the Iowa Events Center and

pending completion of an attached convention hotel also positions **Central Iowa's tourism industry** to make even greater contributions to the regional economy.

### **DESIRED OUTCOME**

*The pursuit of a diverse set of high-value target business sectors to help drive sustainable economic growth.*

## **EFFECTIVELY RETAIN AND EXPAND EXISTING BUSINESSES.**

The Greater Des Moines Partnership was an early adopter of so-called business retention and expansion (BRE) programming – visiting and surveying employers on their top competitive concerns and providing assistance with growth ambitions. More recently, industry leaders have been empaneled on Target Industry Councils to guide and inform action planning to grow these employment categories. Local economic development organizations (EDOs) lead the outreach to support existing business expansion.

### **TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

#### ***I. Use Target Industry Councils to inform sector-based action planning.***

- ✓ Top leaders in Financial Services; Information Solutions; Advanced Manufacturing; Agribusiness Bioscience; and Logistics should be leveraged in the creation and ongoing implementation of **sector-based action plans**. These should be developed for all Target Industry Council sectors and sustained as roadmaps for growth in these categories.
- ✓ Economic development officials and Greater Des Moines CVB officials should consider the creation of a CVB-led **Hospitality Collaboration Council**. This group of leaders from multiple regional sectors, including top hospitality and tourism executives, would work with staff to identify ways for traditional economic development to support the CVB in growing the region's tourism economy and assets.

#### ***II. Leverage BRE visits to inform business expansion and attraction efforts.***

- ✓ Existing business staff should continue to assess the most effective survey techniques necessary to identify a company's principal competitive challenges and opportunities and leverage the Synchronist Business Information System to track assistance activities in support of business expansion.

#### ***III. Continue to advance economic activities with local small businesses.***

- ✓ All opportunities should be pursued to estimate, track, and measure the impacts of the Greater Des Moines Partnership's **Look Local First** campaign, which encourages the public to use both business-to-business (B2B) and business-to-consumer (B2C) spending within Greater Des Moines. All Capital Crossroads partners should explore and promote opportunities to spend dollars locally, whenever possible.

***IV. Connect Central Iowa employers to the state's economic gardening program.***

- ✓ **Advance Iowa** is the State of Iowa's consulting program designed to work with mid-sized companies to enhance their growth by overcoming their obstacles and identifying key market opportunities. More robust outreach and communications are needed to reach executives of mid-sized firms and promote the benefits of collaboration with Advance Iowa.

***V. Continue to partner with local EDOs to retain and expand businesses.***

- ✓ Regional development professionals should continue to rely on local practitioners to communicate local firms' issues and opportunities that would benefit from attention at the regional scale.

**PROMOTE GREATER DES MOINES AND CENTRAL IOWA IN TARGETED EXTERNAL MARKETS.**

Building brand awareness and proactively influencing potential corporate prospects, investors, entrepreneurs, and talent is accomplished through a multi-platform initiative leveraging electronic communications, person-to-person visitation (both outbound and inbound), and public relations strategies. As with existing business programming, it is crucial that external marketing be targeted on a finite number of priority sectors, key industries, and markets.

**TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

***I. Promote Central Iowa through multi-media platforms and technologies.***

- ✓ All websites that market Central Iowa should be reflective of the region and promote its key attributes, in accordance with the website's primary focus. Social media, E-newsletters and publications can also be powerful mediums for disseminating regional news and building awareness.

***II. Conduct targeted outbound promotional trips to priority markets and events.***

- ✓ Conducting regular out-of-market trips to priority target geographies and industry events continues to be helpful for building brand awareness, identifying and soliciting prospect companies, selling Central Iowa's competitive advantages for business, and ultimately securing a relocation to and/or an expansion in Central Iowa.

***III. Host influential site location consultants and corporate executives at prominent Central Iowa events.***

- ✓ Building relationships with site selectors and corporate real estate professionals at out-of-market events is a core component of most economic development programs. Central Iowa economic developers must consistently assess the most desirable incentives to draw key decision-makers to the region.

***IV. Leverage public relations investments to secure earned-media placements.***

- ✓ As economic growth continues in the region, public relations strategies among partner organizations should work to share these stories with national and international audiences via electronic and traditional media, as resources allow; this is a vital component of Central Iowa's holistic marketing efforts.

***V. Encourage synergies between economic development and hospitality marketing.***

- ✓ Top economic development, hospitality, and tourism officials should partner to seek opportunities for co-marketing, coordination of messages, and cross-pollination of outreach strategies when beneficial for the region. The focus should be on key industry-specific events and economic development relationship-building with business leaders.

***VI. Collaborate effectively with state and local economic development partners.***

- ✓ Whenever possible, Central Iowa EDOs should accompany State of Iowa economic development partners on domestic and international travel in order to allay expenses and capitalize on the presence of elected officials or top corporate executives.

**MAINTAIN AN EFFECTIVE CENTRAL IOWA BUSINESS CLIMATE.**

Multiple inputs help inform the identification of Central Iowa's most important policy issues for pursuit at the state and federal level. The region also makes its voice heard in large numbers during official advocacy missions to the state capitol and Washington, D.C.

**TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

***I. Continue to work with all necessary local, regional, and state partners to inform and promote state and federal policy agendas.***

- ✓ The creation of the region's annual state and federal legislative agendas is the result of months of information gathering, discussions, and confirmation of top issues by Central Iowa leaders. This process culminates with the official release of annual legislative priorities as a precursor to travel by top regional public, private, and nonprofit leaders to the state capitol in Des Moines and Washington, D.C., to visit with elected officials from across Iowa.

***II. Redouble efforts to increase Des Moines International Airport's (DSM) direct connectivity to key markets.***

- ✓ In addition to new direct service to destinations such as Las Vegas, St. Louis, and Salt Lake City, business leaders feel that more nonstop flights to key markets will be important to fostering domestic and international growth in Central Iowa companies. Economic development officials should pursue more aggressive strategies to incentivize new direct destinations and ensure they are sustainable.

# Entrepreneurial Dynamism

Central Iowa is making purposeful efforts to support the launch and growth of startups in the region's most concentrated economic sectors. While much work is being done to seed new enterprises in Central Iowa, supporting them through the numerous phases leading to fiscal stability will be critical.

## **DESIRED OUTCOME**

*A thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem attracting talent and investment nationwide.*

## SUPPORT AND ENHANCE KEY FACETS OF CENTRAL IOWA'S DIVERSE ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEM.

Central Iowa's ecosystem has a number of key assets and is building more capacity and momentum every year. Established entrepreneurs and economic development staff are working to ensure that an enterprising entrepreneur with a viable new business idea receives the support and guidance necessary to take his or her company to profitability in Central Iowa.

### **TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

#### ***I. Maximize the benefit of startup acceleration services and facilities.***

- ✓ To complement industry-specific accelerators, Central Iowa should launch a **startup commercialization program** focused on partnering established companies with technology entrepreneurs across multiple sectors to help them build businesses through tactical training and commercial guidance.

#### ***II. Fully leverage entrepreneurial support spaces, programs, and events.***

- ✓ Expanding the entrepreneurial ecosystem will involve supporting existing and future co-working spaces and incubators; evolving the Area 515 makerspace into a best-practice model; effectively leveraging entrepreneurial networking events, and best using entrepreneurial and small business support programs.

#### ***III. Capitalize on enterprise-development opportunities at Iowa State University.***

- ✓ To compete with the top ag-bio focused commercialization centers, the ISU Research Park must continue to add capacity in shared lab and plant-cultivation space, in-house mentoring, and cost-competitive speculative office suites for short term and long term use.

#### ***IV. Facilitate the provision of seed and growth capital.***

- ✓ What Central Iowa has done, and must continue to do on the capital front, is leverage existing groups like **Plains Angels**, identify governmental and institutional sources of capital, and connect local startups to regional funds focusing on the Midwest geography and national funds investing in specific markets or technologies.

## PROMOTE A DIVERSE, NETWORKED CULTURE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP.

Enhancing Central Iowa's entrepreneurial culture will require a full commitment from education and training providers, businesses, governments, institutions, and economic development organizations to partner on coordinated and consistent outreach and program development for targeted audiences.

### **TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

#### ***I. Encourage intrapreneurship in Central Iowa companies.***

- ✓ Intrapreneurship is defined as the process of engaging in entrepreneurial activities while still employed at a larger organization. Supportive resources should be developed to assist Central Iowa companies interested in implementing intrapreneurship programs in their firms.

#### ***II. Effectively nurture the full diversity of potential entrepreneurs.***

- ✓ Every attempt should be made to institutionalize the teaching of entrepreneurship in all Central Iowa schools and enhance and leverage entrepreneurship programs in higher education.
- ✓ Programming should be developed to greatly expand the region's capacity to support women entrepreneurs, "encore" entrepreneurs (mid- and late-career businesspeople, military veterans, etc.) and immigrant and refugee entrepreneurship.

## International Expansion

Through its participation with the Brookings Institution in its **Global Cities Initiative**, Greater Des Moines got a leg up on regions that must develop export-assistance programs on their own. The Brookings partnership ultimately led to the development of the **Global DSM Trade and Investment Strategy**, a roadmap for opening up new foreign markets for regional businesses and increasing foreign-direct investment opportunities in Central Iowa.

### ***DESIRED OUTCOME***

*Substantial export-fueled job creation in Central Iowa companies leading to strong economic growth and wealth building.*

## ACCELERATE GROWTH OF KEY INDUSTRY CLUSTERS THROUGH GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT.

Central Iowa's long-term economic competitiveness will be maximized by aligning economic development efforts around foreign-direct investment opportunities in key target clusters, focusing on the opportunities and impacts of globalization, and strengthening the global mindset in the region through the creation of an export culture and attraction of international talent.

**TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

***I. Use the Cultivation Corridor to elevate Central Iowa as a global leader in agricultural bioscience.***

- ✓ The Cultivation Corridor initiative will serve as the region's principal branding and marketing program to support domestic and international growth in agricultural bioscience.

***II. Increase the region's global identity through growth in the insurance and financial services cluster.***

- ✓ In addition to fully leveraging the international potential of the annual **Global Insurance Symposium**, efforts will focus on attracting international entrepreneurs to the Global Insurance Accelerator and participating in global trade shows and industry events.

***III. More effectively incorporate export assistance into BRE activities.***

- ✓ Following the creation of the 2013 **Regional Export Plan**, economic development practitioners will implement multiple tactics to connect export companies and foreign-owned enterprises (FOE) with resource partners, collaborate with state and federal export agencies, swiftly respond to merger and acquisition (M&A) transactions, and expand export reach through use of Synchronist BRE software.

***IV. Focus on the attraction of foreign talent to Central Iowa.***

- ✓ The Business Capital will be charged with supporting foreign-born entrepreneurs and educating employers about the advantages of foreign-born workers and how best to manage these employees. Certain components of the entrepreneurial support focus could be applied to the immigrant and refugee entrepreneurship hub proposed earlier in this Capital.



## CULTIVATION CORRIDOR

Nearing the conclusion of this initial three-year term, the Cultivation Corridor Board of Directors developed a new strategic framework to inform the organization's work for its next three-year cycle. Following Board approval, the new work plan was unveiled to the public in fall 2016 as the **Cultivation Corridor Strategic Framework 2019**. This work plan serves as the Capital Crossroads 2.0 Cultivation Corridor strategy.

**OVERARCHING GOAL**

*Central Iowa will become the global center for agricultural technology and associated employment.*



## IMPLEMENT THE CULTIVATION CORRIDOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY.

Collaborations with partner entities will continue to be key mandates of Cultivation Corridor work. Principal partners include the Greater Des Moines Partnership, Ames Economic Development Commission, Iowa Economic Development Authority, and the Iowa State University Office of Economic Development and Industry Relations.

### **TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

#### ***1. Continue to leverage partnerships with public and private entities to bring agbio and agtech capital, jobs, and research to the Corridor.***

- ✓ Strategic implementation activities will focus on generating qualified investment leads for Central Iowa (supported by investments in new technology), attending targeted trade shows and conferences where the region is not represented already, establishing additional lead-handling protocols with partner EDOs, leading or co-leading an international trade mission, and establishing a regional performance dashboard.

## ACTIVELY PROMOTE THE CULTIVATION CORRIDOR BRAND.

Building upon the communications apparatus established in the first three years of the Cultivation Corridor's history, the organization will increase awareness of the Corridor brand and Central Iowa's value proposition as a global center of agbio and agtech investment, talent, and research. Efforts will seek to diversify Corridor membership while broadening access to regional resources.

### **TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

#### ***1. Increase brand awareness among targeted audiences.***

- ✓ Cultivation Corridor branding will be directed at the North American market and have a primary focus on digital content, including electronic and social media, trade publications, and sponsorships outside of Iowa. Digital media will be supplemented by brand-supportive collateral, with co-branding opportunities inside and outside the Corridor pursued selectively.
- ✓ Brand alliances will be strengthened with the Iowa Economic Development Authority, the Greater Des Moines Partnership, the Ames Chamber of Commerce, and Iowa State University. A paid media strategy will focus on targeted audiences, while public relations investments will seek to secure earned-media placements. The organization also will organize and execute two Cultivation Corridor-branded events annually.

## SUPPORT AGBIO AND AGTECH INNOVATION.

Innovations in products, processes, and services will help transform the production of food and fuel in the coming decades, and the Cultivation Corridor will play a selective, targeted role in advancing these discoveries and then marketing them domestically and internationally.

### **TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

#### ***1. Develop and execute programming that fosters the development of high-value ag technologies.***

- ✓ Though it will not conduct research, the Cultivation Corridor will support the development of shared innovation infrastructure such as the **ISU Research Park** and **BioCentury Research Farm**, lead select programs and initiatives that advance Iowa's competitiveness for value-added agtech, add web-based spatial capabilities to the Iowa Ag/Bioscience Asset database, develop tools that enable companies and economic developers to better compete for ag capital and talent, and opportunistically support research endeavors that reinforce its core mission.



## WELLNESS CAPITAL

For Capital Crossroads 2.0, leaders of the initiative want to take the Wellness Capital a step further to address regional issues of mental health and emotional well-being. This approach has been informed by repeated meetings with companies and institutions where representatives said wellness programs are moving from a focus on physical health – physical activity and nutrition – to a more holistic approach. Above all, Wellness Capital leaders want to emphasize that they are focused on advancing strategies that enhance community well-being across the region.

### **OVERARCHING GOAL**

*Wellness Capital will lead in elevating the conversation and giving voice to the vast number of opportunities to improve the overall social and emotional well-being of the community through advocacy and awareness.*

## Prescriptive Assessment

With its evolving focus on social and emotional well-being, the Wellness Capital will seek to understand more about how Central Iowa employers are incorporating these components into their wellness programming.

### **DESIRED OUTCOME**

*Consistently updated storehouse of information to customize social and mental health programming.*

## OPTIMIZE THE USE OF DATA TO INFORM WELLNESS PLANNING.

Wellness Capital partners regularly outreach to residents and businesses to identify wellness needs, challenges, and opportunities, and this should continue into Capital Crossroads 2.0.

### **TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

#### ***I. Participate in regular community health assessments and tracking.***

- ✓ Regional **Community Health Needs Assessments** should continue to inform the design of programming eligible for state and federal funding as well as efforts across the full spectrum of health and wellness. Leaders should emphasize the need for using existing resources and pushing collaboration among partners to most effectively advance strategies driven by assessment findings.

#### ***II. Partner with businesses to assess and improve their workers' social and emotional well-being.***

- ✓ The Wellness Capital will partner with Iowa State University Extension to survey businesses on employee productivity, the mental health of workers, and companies' responsibilities with respect to these issues. Results of the survey will help inform opportunities to improve the overall social and emotional well-being of the community through advocacy and awareness.

## Programs and Services

The Wellness Capital's identification of the benefits of more holistic wellness programming and forthcoming assessment of its use in Central Iowa companies will inform its advocacy and awareness-building of existing, enhanced, and new programs.

### ***DESIRED OUTCOME***

*Awareness and use of comprehensive programs and services optimizing the social and emotional well-being of Central Iowans.*

## RAISE AWARENESS OF THE NEED FOR INTEGRATED MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.

Though there are currently programs and services offered to improve the mental and emotional well-being of Central Iowa children and adults, healthcare leaders feel that the issue needs to be elevated to a higher priority by changing the community conversation around the topic. Leaders are seeking to determine the best use of local expertise and resources, how to better advocate for funding, what regulatory changes are needed to improve outcomes, and ways to increase awareness of mental health issues in the community at large.

**TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

***I. Convene partners to inform coordinated mental health programming.***

- ✓ Wellness Capital should develop a **targeted communications strategy** to raise the profile of mental health issues and programs in Central Iowa and the need to address identified gaps and services challenges. This would complement the leveraging of all existing local and regional programs and services.

**SUPPORT IMPROVED REGIONAL SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING**

Wellness Capital will help inform dialogues on wellness programming and outcomes to focus partners, providers, and the public on the potential for more holistic community wellness strategies.

**TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

***I. Advocate for holistic Central Iowa wellness programs.***

- ✓ Multiple programs at the state, regional, and local level with positive impacts on Central Iowa health and wellness outcomes should continue to be effectively advanced. These include Iowa's Healthiest State Initiative, Age-Friendly Greater Des Moines, Healthy Homes Des Moines, Get Active DSM, and initiatives from Familywise and Visiting Nurse Services of Iowa, among others.



## HUMAN CAPITAL

The creation of a cradle-through-career coalition was recommended in Capital Crossroads 1.0, with the development of **EDGE (Education Drives our Great Economy)** in Central Iowa serving as a signature implementation accomplishment. The EDGE campaign is managed by the Greater Des Moines Partnership. The **United Way of Central Iowa** also implements a collective impact-based education initiative. Through collective impact, the EDGE campaign and the United Way are able to incorporate and coordinate the education and training work of all local and regional institutions and the partners that support them under a common framework and vision.

**OVERARCHING GOAL**

*Central Iowa will feature a workforce with the skills and training necessary to support optimal economic development.*

## Workforce-Supportive Policies

The Greater Des Moines Partnership's EDGE and policy team members work together to ensure that talent development advocacy priorities are incorporated into state and federal legislative agendas and lobbying.

**DESIRED OUTCOME**

*A regulatory and assessment climate conducive to meeting Central Iowa's talent development goals.*

**IDENTIFY AND LOBBY FOR EDUCATION POLICIES BENEFITTING CENTRAL IOWA.**

In addition to incorporating education and workforce policy priorities into annual state and federal agendas, Central Iowa should be prepared to act quickly to work with elected officials to discuss pending votes.

**TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

***I. Leverage partners to inform policy priorities.***

- ✓ Top education-related education issues should continue be identified through regular discussions between Greater Des Moines Partnership's EDGE campaign staff and Central Iowa public school superintendents and private school administrators, information gathered by the United Way through its collective impact initiative, and business retention and expansion meetings with top employers.

***II. Consider the promotion of education-specific policy issues.***

- ✓ Because of the importance of talent and skills development to the Central Iowa economy, it may be beneficial to highlight education and training policy priorities in a separate legislative agenda from regional issues as a whole.

## Cradle through Career Pipeline

In Central Iowa, the EDGE campaign embodies the complete cradle through career pipeline, but the United Way of Central Iowa manages key initiatives of the cradle to college process. Capital Crossroads is acknowledging the principal role the United Way plays in the birth to college talent development process by incorporating its **Targeted Education Strategies** into the 2.0 vision plan.

**DESIRED OUTCOME**

*Graduates at all levels prepared for the demands of the Central Iowa workplace.*

**PARTNER WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO MAXIMIZE THEIR IMPACT ON TALENT DEVELOPMENT.**

Even with sustained and robust interactions between the demand (companies) and supply (institutions) sides of talent development, Central Iowa stakeholders say even more can be done to ensure that the private sector is engaged in, informs, and leverages the work of education and training providers.

**TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

***I. Conduct a private sector-led Community Needs Assessment for higher education.***

- ✓ Educational stakeholders, including private colleges, should lead a community needs assessment, funded by its stakeholders, for post-secondary education that (a) aligns employer demand with student interest and with current capacity in existing educational programs, (b) identifies and quantifies the gaps and/or misalignment of program offerings, student demand, and employer needs, (c) convenes employers to work with the higher education community to identify what specific cognitive abilities and/or technical skills are needed, and (d) asks prospective students – traditional age and post-traditional learners – where and in what learning modality they prefer to access their education.

***II. Optimize coordination and communication with private sector partners.***

- ✓ Through the EDGE campaign, interactions of individual institutions and organizations with private sector volunteers should be coordinated, as necessary, to ensure that business perspectives are understood and leveraged by all partners. Information sharing about ongoing results of programs and partnerships with the private sector should be formalized to optimize the regional training pipeline.

**ENSURE SCHOOL-READINESS IN YOUNG CENTRAL IOWA CHILDREN.**

The early childhood period is critical to the future educational success of all youth. Beyond care for newborns and infants, studies have found that children who participate in preschool classes or programs enter elementary school better prepared for success.

**TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

***I. Support early childhood development through access to preventive health services.***

- ✓ Multiple local programs are offered by government agencies and nonprofit providers across Central Iowa. Families must be aware of these programs and also how to access them. This often means providing transportation assistance or child care services.

***II. Optimize the provision of early childhood and preschool learning.***

- ✓ Central Iowa should strive to identify resources to support additional hours of preschool education for all eligible students. While resource intensive, the benefits are significant. In addition to funding, ensuring that parents are aware of and using preschool programs is critical.

**PROVIDE SUPPORT FOR EARLY-GRADE SUCCESS.**

Support for children and families during elementary school will lay the groundwork for success in middle school and beyond.

**TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

***I. Offer services and support to improve student health, attendance, and performance outcomes in early grades.***

- ✓ Healthy school lunches, exercise, and other benefits greatly improve educational performance in the elementary grades. These efforts should be complemented by encouraging and supporting literacy elementary school literacy programs like READ to SUCCEED, Book Buddy, Power Read, and Starfish Academy.

***II. Dedicate capacity to providing quality, engaging out-of-school opportunities for elementary school children.***

- ✓ Central Iowa must continue to implement programs that reinforce and enhance academic, social, and emotional learning during out-of-school hours.

**EFFECTIVELY BRIDGE STUDENTS FROM ELEMENTARY TO HIGH SCHOOL.**

Though the intent of the programs is similar, strategies to engage and enhance academic performance in middle school become more challenging as students approach their teenage years.

**TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

***I. Implement programming supportive of middle-school student needs.***

- ✓ As with programs targeting elementary school children, students in the middle grades benefit from services that promote learning, reduce school absence, engage them during out-of-school periods, optimize their physical and mental health, and help reduce summer learning loss.

**GRADUATE CENTRAL IOWA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS COLLEGE AND CAREER READY.**

At the most basic level, high school students should be provided the tools necessary to enter college or the workplace primed to succeed. United Way of Central Iowa, the Greater Des Moines Partnership, Central Iowa Works, and numerous other partners are collaborating to achieve these goals, but changing demographics in the region are necessitating the creation of new and ever-evolving strategies.

**TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

***I. Successfully advance students to graduation.***

- ✓ Through collective impact processes, school administrators, counselors, faculty, and other influencers of student performance should be effectively supported to ensure that Central Iowa high school students receive their diplomas on time and are prepared to move forward to college or the workplace.

## ***II. Support college and career readiness in Central Iowa high schools.***

- ✓ It is incumbent on EDGE partners, The Partnership, the United Way, and other organizations dedicated to improving educational outcomes to work with schools to support them however necessary to provide best-in-class career-focused programming for students.

## MAXIMIZE THE OUTPUT OF POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION AND TRAINING.

Data showing subpar completion rates for many two- and four-year colleges are highlighting an important realization: it is not just enough to get kids into college; they must be supported with the same wrap-around services as in high school to ensure that they receive their degrees.

### **TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

#### ***I. Leverage higher education institutions and programs to fulfill employer demand.***

- ✓ Students enrolled in two- and four-year programs at Central Iowa public and private colleges and universities can be prepared for degrees satisfying the hiring requirements of regional companies. As a cradle-through-career campaign, EDGE is responsible for coordinating this training pipeline from postsecondary education to the Central Iowa workplace through metric-driven assistance to training providers and other partners.

#### ***II. Support the development and sustainability of programs that are required to fill critical workforce needs.***

- ✓ In areas where the Community Needs Assessment identifies a shortage of academic offerings to meet student and employer demand, the region should consider the development of programs offered by the Iowa Board of Regents. If there is sufficient need for campus-based programs (versus online programs) to fill those shortages, support for a Regent Resource Center in Greater Des Moines may be warranted.

## Lifelong Learning

The potential to upskill employed workers and bring adults who have dropped out of the system into the workforce through acquisition of high school equivalency degrees, college degrees, certificates, or credentials should be pursued aggressively as Central Iowa's ongoing workforce shortage demands holistic and comprehensive solutions.

### ***DESIRED OUTCOME***

*Seventy-five percent of Central Iowa adults possessing a college degree or credential by 2025.*



## HELP CENTRAL IOWA ADULTS ADVANCE THEIR EDUCATION AND CAREER OPPORTUNITIES.

Multiple programs, providers, and support entities currently comprise the adult education landscape in Central Iowa. Reaching ambitious attainment goals will require the EDGE campaign, the United Way, and partners to use all potential connection points with adults who could benefit from available training.

### **TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

#### *I. Support local adults seeking to complete high school and college degrees.*

- ✓ The **Bridges to Success** program launched by the United Way of Central Iowa and multiple partners focuses on four key strategic elements to help adults attain high school diplomas or their equivalent. For Central Iowa adults who have taken some college courses but never completed their degrees, a public-private consortium of regional institutions, organizations, and companies should launch a program to enable these “non-completers” to secure a degree, credential, or certification.

## ENHANCE ADULTS’ ABILITY TO ACCESS JOBS AND TRAINING.

To maximize degree, certificate, and credential attainment, corresponding efforts to enable adults to access these programs will be necessary.

### **TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

#### *I. Develop a comprehensive Affordable Child Care Action Plan.*

- ✓ Though it will be logistically challenging and require significant public, private, nonprofit, and/or philanthropic resources to develop and sustain, a far-reaching Affordable Child Care Action Plan – ideally for the full Central Iowa region – was identified as a priority by area leaders. A **Task Force** of key stakeholders should be named to oversee the development of the plan and a lead coordination entity identified and approved.

#### *II. Improve transportation access to jobs and training.*

- ✓ Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority (DART) is Greater Des Moines’ publicly funded transit agency. Through its **DART Forward 2035 plan update**, the agency will continue to enhance route and schedule planning to support worker mobility.

## Talent Retention and Attraction

Complementing talent development efforts, talent retention and attraction is an important strategy for enhancing Central Iowa’s workforce capacity and external perception.

**DESIRED OUTCOME**

*Effective retention and attraction of skilled talent with a choice of multiple destinations.*

**RETAIN SKILLED RECENT GRADUATES AND INTERNS.**

There already is significant activity around connecting students to companies and working to retain graduates and interns in the region. However, stakeholders said that more could be done to differentiate Central Iowa among interns and enhance talent retention incentives.

**TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

***I. Leverage tools and relationships to support talent retention.***

- ✓ Efforts will be made to expand the use of the **CarpeDM (Seize Des Moines)** talent portal managed by the Greater Des Moines Partnership as a tool to engage individuals interested in Central Iowa. Members of the **Young Professionals Program (YPC)** could also be valuable stewards and ambassadors for Central Iowa along with existing college students and recent graduates.

***II. Provide comprehensive internship and intern-support programs.***

- ✓ Programs like **Seize the City** and **Internships 101** help connect interns to companies and the community. Short- and longer-term affordable housing options for interns will help ensure they choose Central Iowa for their internships.

***III. Capitalize and promote a Debt Forgiveness Program to incent graduates to remain in Central Iowa to live and work.***

- ✓ By offering qualified talent a program to forgive a portion or all of their debt if they remain in Central Iowa to live and work for a set period, the region would create a powerful talent retention incentive.

**ATTRACT TOP TALENT TO CENTRAL IOWA.**

Significant effort and resources currently are invested to promote Central Iowa to external talent through multiple media outlets, events, and on-campus visits across the upper Midwest.

**TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

***I. Promote Central Iowa through external events and visitation.***

- ✓ **Recruitment trips** to college campuses across the upper Midwest have provided venues to tell the Central Iowa story to current students. They are complemented by programs such as the **Des Moines Embassy** and **Home Base Iowa**. To further this promotion capacity, consideration could be given to complementing corporate recruitment activities at **industry-specific events and conferences** with talent attraction efforts targeting skilled professionals.

## **II. Enhance targeted outreach and engagement with talent prospects.**

- ✓ Data analytics could be leveraged for more targeted outreach to Central Iowa expatriates through the dissemination of information on recent developments and opportunities in the region. Research also could identify markets with large numbers of former Central Iowa residents that could be used to build on previous “**Come Back**” campaign events in previously targeted and newly identified communities.

## **III. Work to attract international talent to the region.**

- ✓ An Immigration Integration Initiative Task Force comprised of key Central Iowa leaders oversaw the development of the **Global DSM: International Talent Strategy**, a collaborative effort of the Greater Des Moines Partnership and the Partnership for a New American Economy that aims to make Central Iowa a premiere destination for foreign-born talent. The Strategy’s ten recommendations prescribe actions that position Central Iowa as a welcoming home for the foreign born and a community where they can thrive.



## **SOCIAL CAPITAL**

Those engaged in implementing Social Capital goals suggest tenets be applied across all Capitals<sup>1</sup> and be positioned as the catalyst for driving community conversations on topics that will define the region’s future. As one leader put it, the Social Capital can be the framework for Central Iowa to “figure it out, together” by asking the hard questions necessary to tackle social and infrastructure issues that are challenging communities at rapid rates. This would entail identifying common concerns around leadership, diversity, equity, inclusion, and civility; defining shared goals and strategies; and determining how success will be tracked and measured. Approaching these issues with intentionality is key to enhancing leadership, fostering diversity, equity, and inclusion, and embedding civility in the fabric of the community.

### **OVERARCHING GOAL**

*Central Iowa will become the gold standard of the successful 21<sup>st</sup> century region.*

## **ESTABLISH COMMUNITY GOALS FOR LEADERSHIP, DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION, AND CIVILITY.**

The Social Capital has and should continue to inform and advance the three critical drivers of success in Capital Crossroads’ implementation: 1) leadership, 2) diversity, equity, and inclusion, and 3) civility. The first step in this process should be building grassroots consensus through systems-based conversations to drive deep understanding of key issues before positive and lasting progress can be made.

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<sup>1</sup> Cross-Capital elements of civility, diversity, equity, and inclusion are detailed later in this plan.

***I. Assess and confirm a conceptual framework for Social Capital action.***

- ✓ In order to arrive at actionable tactics to positively affect the drivers of success for the Social Capital, a process for assessing issues and identifying strategic tactics should be agreed upon. This will entail partner entities coming together and brainstorming procedural designs to achieve goals.

***II. Reach agreement on priorities affecting Social Capital focus areas.***

- ✓ Social Capital leaders will conduct constituent outreach to determine a prioritization of issues and identify gaps impacting leadership, diversity, equity, inclusion, and civility trends in Central Iowa.

***III. Set community goals around leadership, diversity, equity, inclusion, and civility to drive strategic activities.***

- ✓ The top priorities and identified gaps will be used as the foundation for goal setting. The results of goal setting will directly inform the ultimate strategies prescribed to enhance leadership, diversity, equity, inclusion, and civility in Central Iowa.

**LEVERAGE AND ENHANCE EXISTING EFFORTS.**

As Central Iowa continues to have a heightened focus on the importance of the drivers of success for Social Capital, it is critical that the community recognizes, celebrates, and continues to lift up successes since Capital Crossroads' inception. This includes staff's and volunteers' efforts to ensure Social Capital initiatives are complementary, non-duplicative, and allow for positive impact in growth of the individuals and groups that participate.

***I. Formalize strategies to achieve established goals.***

- ✓ Leaders feel that intentionality of efforts will be important, including clearly stated engagement of people of color, students, young professionals, women, LGBTQIA persons, all faith perspectives, persons with disabilities community, immigrant and refugee populations, and other historically underserved communities. The implementation team will ensure the Social Capital drivers of success are included in all Capitals of Capital Crossroads with specific tactics identified in each.

**CONFIRM STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION DYNAMICS AND OUTCOMES.**

As with the implementation of Capital Crossroads and other regional plans, successfully advancing a coordinated effort to improve leadership, diversity, equity, and inclusion, and civility in all aspects of the Central Iowa community and professional life will require organizational engagement, identification of implementation resources, and tracking of performance on goal-attainment.

***I. Define a framework for implementing the Social Capital action plan.***

- ✓ Engaged partners should work together to determine implementation roles and responsibilities and potential resources to support strategic activities. As a cross-Capital initiative, it is assumed that existing

Capital Crossroads partner entities will be leveraged in current and expanded roles for implementation of a strategy directed at the Social Capital's drivers of success.

**II. Determine desired outcomes and metrics of coordinated leadership, diversity, equity, inclusion, and civility strategic implementation.**

- ✓ Short- and long-term outcomes of strategies advancing Social Capital focus areas should be discussed, confirmed, and reported to guide implementation efforts and tracking of progress toward goals. When possible, previously identified community measures should be used as part of the Social Capital.



## CULTURAL CAPITAL

As Capital Crossroads enters its next strategic cycle with the 2.0 plan, Greater Des Moines is proceeding with the development of a new **Regional Cultural Assessment**, funded by Bravo and guided by an independent steering committee of top area leaders. The process will give the community a comprehensive view of the current state of the region's cultural assets and identify specific actions and priorities to leverage arts and culture to enhance quality of life and regional economic development. Capital Crossroads acknowledges that recommendations included in the Cultural Assessment will reflect current data profiles and feedback from the principal arts and cultural stakeholders in Greater Des Moines and represent the approved blueprint for development of the region's arts and cultural community, assets, and economy. **As such, Cultural Capital strategies in Capital Crossroads 2.0 will defer to the final approved actions and tactics in the Cultural Assessment.**

### OVERARCHING GOAL

*Recommendations emerging from the forthcoming Regional Cultural Assessment will be effectively implemented to maximize the role of arts and culture as vital contributors to Greater Des Moines' quality of life and economy.*

## Regional Arts Sector

Greater Des Moines' arts and cultural sector already has a strong influence on quality of life and economic activity in the region. A recent Bravo-commissioned study found that organizations funded by Bravo had a combined regional economic impact of \$120.9 million in 2015, were responsible for the direct and indirect employment of 2,336 people, and engaged over 3.7 million attendees and participants.

### DESIRED OUTCOME

*Attainment of arts and culture goals approved through the Regional Cultural Assessment process.*

## PROVIDE ONGOING SUPPORT FOR ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS AND PRODUCERS.

Supported by patrons and a number of funding and coordinating organizations, Greater Des Moines's arts and culture sector is comprised of multiple museums, theaters, arts centers, galleries, performance venues, and arts companies and thousands of employees and sole practitioners. Before and after the delivery of the Regional Cultural Assessment, these entities will continue to require funding, patronage, and support.

### **TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

#### ***I. Ensure arts entities contribute effectively to the cultural ecosystem.***

- ✓ Through the Cultural Capital framework, leaders from across the spectrum of Greater Des Moines arts entities – including funding, support, and coordination organizations – must continue to come together regularly to discuss how they can best support each other's goals and programs.

#### ***II. Support arts-related facilities, programs, and events.***

- ✓ Tactical strategies to address the full breadth of issues and opportunities identified through Regional Cultural Assessment planning will be proposed and affirmed by the approval of the project's Steering Committee.

## DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A CULTURAL ASSESSMENT FOR THE REGION.

Working closely with a Steering Committee led by Drake University's president, Bravo will coordinate the Regional Cultural Assessment to serve as Greater Des Moines' and the Cultural Capital's strategic plan for the duration of its implementation cycle.

### **TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

#### ***I. Effectively support and implement the region's Cultural Assessment.***

- ✓ All potential ideas and opportunities to enhance arts and culture in Greater Des Moines will be up for consideration in the Regional Cultural Assessment development process. Once approved, the need to fund and support outcomes of the Assessment will be essential.



## PHYSICAL CAPITAL

Sound planning and development in Central Iowa will yield equitably, universally accessible communities that are vibrant, resilient, and continue the region's position of being among the best places to live and work. Current blueprints like The Tomorrow Plan, Mobilizing Tomorrow, the Ames Mobility 2040 Long-Range Transportation Plan, Housing Tomorrow, PlanDSM, and the DART Forward 2035 update (upon approval) make clear connections between land use planning, zoning, housing policy, and transportation infrastructure to achieve preferred development patterns. Bringing these established plans together under a more unified framework to inform and advance Central Iowa's future growth will be critical to fulfilling goals for a more sustainable and human-scale built environment.

### **OVERARCHING GOAL**

*Smart planning, timely infrastructure development, and implementation of state-of-the-art technologies will sustain Central Iowa population growth for the present and future.*

## Transportation and Mobility

Central Iowa must invest in a complete transportation system, beyond one geared solely towards automobiles, if it is to become a more sustainable region. New and enhanced infrastructure should advance an integrated, multimodal transportation system that provides mobility benefit while contributing to improved health and well-being, equity, talent development, economic development, smart growth land uses, and other factors.

### **DESIRED OUTCOME**

*A fully efficient transportation network with complete and connected mobility options.*

## OPTIMIZE TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

Regional transportation officials encourage a "fix-it first" mentality for roads, encouraging governments to prioritize the protection of prior investments and to improve upon their safety and reliability. Maintenance is not limited to roads and bridges. Some expense goes into maintaining and replacing transit infrastructure, particularly vehicles. Additionally, the freight and goods movement network within Greater Des Moines should be safe, reliable, and efficient.

### **TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

#### ***1. Create a non-partisan Mobility Alliance as a business-led partnership to advance multimodal mobility in Central Iowa.***

- ✓ These advocacy groups – often private-led – develop capacity to communicate the benefits of multimodal regional transportation and mobility planning, funding, and implementation, help prioritize projects and identify potential resources, engage in government relations to ensure accountability for

project and programmatic results, and underwrite studies to help inform and prioritize advocacy efforts. Central Iowa should pursue development of a Mobility Alliance that can own the issue regionally, help bring established plans together, inform project prioritization and funding opportunities, and address any disconnects between key private, governmental, institutional, and resident constituencies.

## ***II. Ensure efficient use of existing transportation investments.***

- ✓ In order to maintain regional traffic operations and capitalize on significant investments made in the last decades, Greater Des Moines should invest in the rehabilitation of existing infrastructure. This would be implemented through a systematic, collaboratively developed, regional approach providing for the safe and effective management and operation of new and existing transportation facilities.

## **FOSTER DEVELOPMENT OF CONNECTED, BICYCLE- AND PEDESTRIAN-FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENTS.**

Along with The Tomorrow Plan and Mobilizing Tomorrow, Capital Crossroads envisions shifting back to a more historical transportation and land-use model due to changing demographics, travel patterns, and rates of car ownership. This goal supports a greater mix of transportation choices, including a robust transit network, an active carpool culture, and land use and design that support walkability.

### **TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

#### ***I. Implement strategies to encourage mobility alternatives.***

- ✓ Transportation funding should be reprioritized to maintain the existing system but increase resources to improve transit, pedestrian, and bicycle networks. A multimodal focus will provide additional mobility options, especially for non-drivers.

#### ***II. Manage parking to ensure efficient use of existing parking, market demand, and impacts on travel behavior.***

- ✓ Parking supply should be managed as a comprehensive system. On-street, off-street, public, and private resources should be managed collectively. Efforts also should continue to assess the viability and value of demolishing underused public parking ramps for conversion into mixed-use developments.

#### ***III. Advance and swiftly transition key policies into implementation mode.***

- ✓ Transportation projects, especially related to road building, typically have long development timeframes. Timelier activities can be pursued to enhance mobility, especially if supportive policy frameworks are in place.

## **ENHANCE REGIONAL TRANSIT CAPACITY.**

Projections for continuing comparatively higher regional population growth, selectively densifying nodes and corridors (and promotion of transit-oriented densification in local and regional plans), and local



preferences are elevating transit as a major issue in Central Iowa. Guiding transit investments in the Des Moines region will be the approved update of the **DART Forward 2035 Transit Services Plan**, which recommends route alignments based on existing and planned densities of residents and employees.

**TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

***I. Provide ongoing support for implementation of DART Forward 2035.***

- ✓ An established Transit Future Work Group will be a critical voice affecting the DART Forward 2035 update. Operational and funding solutions as well as coordinated advocacy efforts will be needed to ensure that local governments buy into the importance of transit in the region and continue investing in DART services.

***II. Support development patterns and land uses necessary for public transit to thrive.***

- ✓ The success of public transportation is directly tied to land use patterns, density, and urban form.<sup>2</sup> Matching transit service and accessibility with where people live and work is the best way to maximize usage and operate the system most efficiently.

***III. Embrace emerging technologies and opportunities to coordinate with other modes.***

- ✓ The DART Forward 2035 update calls for the development of mobility hubs that would co-locate transit stops, B-Cycle stations, and possibly car share stations. Opportunity also exists to use technology to streamline the use of multiple transportation services, including DART, B-Cycle, parking facilities, and future car share services.

***IV. Facilitate transit connectivity of key local, regional, and external nodes and markets.***

- ✓ Promotion of employment and residential infrastructure along transit corridors will help develop a critical mass of riders. As downtown Des Moines and other activity nodes densify, it will be necessary to think about desired mobility options (transit, B-Cycle, inter-city rail, car share, etc.) to reduce parking requirements and providing non-auto mobility options.

**CONSTRUCT A STATE-OF-THE-ART PASSENGER TERMINAL AT DES MOINES INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT.**

In its current configuration, the 68 year old passenger terminal at the Des Moines International Airport (DSM) is not sufficient to accommodate today's modern aircraft or the airport's ever-increasing passenger volume. After multiple studies and iterations, the Des Moines Airport Authority Board voted unanimously in October 2016 to build a new \$500 million, 14-gate terminal on the east side of the airport adjacent to the current facility, roughly \$140 million cheaper than the originally proposed south side location.

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<sup>2</sup> Additional information about the transportation/land use connection can be found in the Land Use, Zoning, and Sustainability subsection in Natural Capital.

**TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

***I. Proceed with the timely construction of the new passenger terminal.***

- ✓ A new DSM terminal has been included in each recent Central Iowa federal legislative priority agenda. With a plan and location for the new terminal approved, lobbying now will support its timely funding and construction. Because the terminal has regional economic impact, support for its development also should be regional.

***II. Consider efforts to regionalize the Des Moines Airport Authority.***

- ✓ Capital Crossroads volunteer leaders feel that the time is right to consider regionalizing the Airport Authority Board to reflect DSM's critical impact on regional economic development and the need for broader support for the facility.

**DEVELOP KEY FREIGHT INFRASTRUCTURE.**

A study by the Des Moines Area MPO and its Freight Roundtable confirmed the need for a regional transloading logistics facility and recommended a 20-acre city-owned site in southeast Des Moines. Initial cost estimates show a price of at least \$8 million for the facility, which would serve businesses within a 150 to 200-mile radius and cut transport costs by up to fifty percent for some companies.

**TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

***I. Design and promote a regional multimodal transload facility.***

- ✓ Upon completion, the transload facility could be branded and marketed to potential regional and external users. Creating a brand for Central Iowa's clustered logistics infrastructure would follow the inland ports model designated by shipping hubs such as Kansas City, Dallas, St. Louis, and Memphis.

## Destination Amenities

As lines blur between economic and community development, the availability of amenities that can support tourism and provide assets supportive of talent retention and attraction becomes a critical component of today's community infrastructure.

***DESIRED OUTCOME***

*Enhanced recreational capacity to benefit communities and support Central Iowa tourism.*

**DEVELOP A WORLD-CLASS SYSTEM OF LAND AND WATER TRAILS.**

Central Iowa's ambition is to be the "parks and trails capital of the world." Expansion is following the blueprint developed by the Des Moines Area MPO's Central Iowa Bicycle and Pedestrian Roundtable through its plan, "**Connect: The Central Iowa Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan.**" Recent efforts have also sought

to complement the region's aggressive construction of land trails through development of a comprehensive network of water trails to be guided by the MPO's **Greater Des Moines Water Trails and Greenways Plan**, the state's first regional blueprint for water trails.

**TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

***I. Develop and connect Central Iowa's network of land trails.***

- ✓ Multi-pronged strategies will be necessary to effectively enhance Central Iowa's trail system. In addition to developing new trails, gaps between existing segments as outlined in the Des Moines Area MPO's Mobilizing Tomorrow plan must be bridged. To coordinate Central Iowa's trail needs, leaders support the establishment of a **Regional Trails Authority** to oversee development of a unified network.

***II. Build an extensive system of regional water trails.***

- ✓ While the Greater Des Moines Water Trails and Greenways Plan provides recommendations for water trail development, an engineering study is necessary to determine project feasibility, cost estimates, strategies, and implementation priorities. Governments should be encouraged to integrate the Plan's recommendations into their short- and long-range planning and capital improvement budgets.

**REFURBISH DRAKE STADIUM TO OLYMPIC STANDARDS.**

Despite recent renovations, Drake Stadium in Des Moines requires additional refurbishment in order to be legitimately considered as a host for the U.S. Olympic Trials in track and field. Raising Drake Stadium to world-class standards would be a boon for Drake University, the Drake Relays, and the prospects for sports tourism in Central Iowa.

**TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

***I. Continue major renovations to Drake Stadium.***

- ✓ An **economic assessment** of the direct and indirect impacts of hosting the U.S. Olympic Trials in track and field in Des Moines would help justify the investment in further renovations. A private fundraising campaign to support construction could be supplemented by public funds based on the projected impact on the region and state from hosting additional major national and international events.

**CONSTRUCT A MAJOR INDOOR SPORTS COMPLEX.**

Youth sports tournaments are big business for communities across the country. In order to even be in consideration for many of the largest tournaments, a region must possess suitable infrastructure to accommodate the needs of the organizer. There also are major benefits to the general public of a tournament-caliber indoor sports complex.

**TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

***1. Secure commitments and resources to develop a tournament-caliber indoor sports facility in Central Iowa.***

- ✓ Working with a lead organization, a **Task Force** comprised of regional leaders in tourism, government, and business should be charged with assessing the need, viability, and development options for an indoor sports facility. Assessment findings then would inform and direct strategies to site, fund, design, build, and promote the complex.

## 21<sup>st</sup> Century Technologies

Cities quickly are becoming the country's most dynamic test beds for cutting-edge technologies that promise to forever change people's lifestyles, mobility, and interactivity with their communities. Facilitating these advancements are lightning-fast internet-connectivity speeds and capacities necessary to not only accommodate smart urban infrastructure but also the communications needs of businesses and residents.

***DESIRED OUTCOME***

*High-speed connectivity enabling Central Iowa communities to become forerunners of the Smart City movement*

## SECURE COMPETITIVE BROADBAND SPEEDS FOR ALL REGIONAL COMMUNITIES.

A key strategy incorporated into Capital Crossroads during the mid-course review process was the implementation of gigabit internet connection speeds across the region. It is likely that different strategies will be pursued by individual communities. However, the end goal should be the development of best-in-class broadband infrastructure for use by all Central Iowa companies and residents.

**TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

***1. Identify viable means to secure gigabit internet for Central Iowa communities.***

- ✓ Local governments, in partnership with Physical Capital leaders, should assess the opportunities that make the most sense for implementation of gigabit internet strategies, keeping in mind the need for equitable access across a variety of neighborhoods. There also is the potential for communities to form alliances to fund and construct the necessary infrastructure for high-speed connectivity.

## PURSUE SMART CITY STRATEGIES IN CENTRAL IOWA.

Transportation for America envisions Smart City technology infrastructure and data analytics as tools to combat urban challenges such as congestion, economic inequality, and pollution in new and more efficient ways to create vibrant, attractive, inclusive, and prosperous communities. They recommend that cities launch

pilot projects, test ideas, learn from those experiments, and be willing to share the results, even when they fail.

**TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

***I. Launch a coordinated Smart City initiative.***

- ✓ The Des Moines Area MPO applied for the U.S. DOT Smart City Challenge Grant and already has identified, with input from City of Des Moines and DART, a set of Smart City concepts to undertake. To the extent possible, leaders should pursue coordinated Smart City initiatives to ensure that technologies are consistent across governmental borders.

## Neighborhoods and Housing

Greater Des Moines's quality of life is being challenged by impediments to fair housing, the area's car-centered transportation system, and decreasing levels of physical activity. For residents to be able to truly enjoy the benefits for which Greater Des Moines is known, health and well-being, in all senses of those terms, need to be actively promoted throughout the region.

***DESIRED OUTCOME***

*Resilient communities with affordable housing options for all residents wishing to call Central Iowa home.*

### ENSURE REGIONAL DIVERSITY IN NEIGHBORHOOD AND HOUSING COSTS, STYLES, AND LOCATIONS.

Greater Des Moines already contains many different kinds of neighborhoods – from agricultural homestead areas, to suburban neighborhoods, to urban areas, to downtowns comprised of apartments. The region as a whole benefits from this range because people prefer different lifestyles. The **Housing Tomorrow** plan developed by Polk County Housing Trust Fund focuses on diverse housing choices, existing inventory, location, collaboration, resources, and community dialogues to ensure “all Central Iowans have access to safe, stable, and affordable housing options now and in generations to come.”

**TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

***I. Build “missing middle” housing types.***

- ✓ Central Iowa communities should promote the development of a diverse housing stock that provides choices for individuals of all races, cultures, ages, and economic backgrounds. To support the diversification of housing types, zoning ordinances should be created and adopted that allow for the development of multiple dwelling options.

## **II. Implement Housing Tomorrow to address regional affordable housing needs.**

- ✓ Housing Tomorrow is Central Iowa's approved regional housing plan and includes specific suggestions related to workforce housing. A regional dialogue on housing issues, needs, and solutions should be also continued among housing agencies, transportation organizations, developers, municipalities, and other stakeholders to ensure that affordability is prioritized as a key concern.

## **III. Promote infill development and the rehabilitation of vacant structures.**

- ✓ As Des Moines and other Central Iowa cities age and certain districts experience disinvestment, opportunities for the redevelopment and rehabilitation of existing structures and infill projects become more viable. These projects can be supported by the adoption of existing building codes that promote safety and adaptive reuse and financial incentives that make redeveloping old structures and building infill projects more feasible and profitable.

## **IV. Develop vibrant neighborhoods and communities.**

- ✓ Neighborhood resiliency should be institutionalized through development guidelines such as comprehensive plans, zoning codes, and subdivision regulations. These tools can prescribe the consideration of regulatory elements that foster neighborhood resiliency such as housing and transportation choice, recreation and retail opportunities, education and jobs, health and safety, sense of community, and environmental impact.



## **GOVERNANCE CAPITAL**

Local government collaboration has been embedded in Central Iowa through the Governance Capital's **Local Government Collaboration (LGC) Project** and the **Central Iowa Code Consortium (CICC)**. Collaboration in these and other forums occurs despite the absence of a Council of Governments (COG), a common form of regional governance. Capital Crossroads 2.0 presents an opportunity to identify more efficient and lasting solutions for intergovernmental cooperation. Along with any discussions of new entities, expanded roles furthering regional coordination and cooperation should be actively pursued.

### **OVERARCHING GOAL**

*Central Iowa governments will sustain partnerships to optimize process coordination and regional governance.*

## **Coordinated Operations and Governance**

The Governance Capital team has provided informal oversight for initiatives focused on intergovernmental collaboration and process improvement. However, a more formalized structure is necessary to ensure that the positive work being done on the operations side by the Local Government Collaboration Project and Central Iowa Code Consortium is validated and sustainable.

**DESIRED OUTCOME**

*Pursuit of all viable opportunities to leverage existing organizational structures to coordinate local government operations in coordination with Capital Crossroads.*

**PURSUE OPERATIONAL COORDINATION.**

The Local Government Collaboration (LGC) Project was established in partnership with fifteen cities and three counties in Central Iowa to better collaborate on public services for reducing costs, redundancies, complexity, and time commitments. The process since has been used by public safety, fire, police, parks and recreation, libraries, and human resources departments from metro area governments. Born out of the work of the LGC, the Central Iowa Code Consortium (CICC) is a collaborative effort to improve uniformity and consistency in the adoption and enforcement of local building codes in Central Iowa.

**TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

***I. Continue the evolution of the Local Government Collaboration Project.***

- ✓ The Collaboration Project should remain focused on assessing regional needs and capacities around government services and operations to identify opportunities for **shared-services agreements** based on national best practices.

***II. Adopt and sustain the work of the Central Iowa Code Consortium.***

- ✓ Code Consortium volunteers have assessed building code elements to develop a model for a uniform building code for consideration and adoption by local governments. Because code development is a cyclical process, the Consortium will need to start again soon for 2018 codes. To ensure sustainability, more permanent venues for the Central Iowa Code Consortium should also be explored.

***III. Restructure the Des Moines Metropolitan Area Utility Coordination Committee.***

- ✓ The City of Des Moines convenes utility representatives regularly to discuss projects, though regional participation is inconsistent. This group could be restructured to better include all of the Des Moines metro.

**ASSESS OPPORTUNITIES FOR REGIONAL GOVERNANCE.**

To date, the Governance Capital has focused on operational improvements. Volunteers feel that an official governance structure to oversee process improvement work is needed. Local and regional officials in Capital Crossroads 2.0 focus groups and interviews proposed the development a regional COG or similar entity that will fit the needs of all members.

**TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

***I. Pursue the development of a regional COG or similar entity.***

- ✓ An identified challenge of regional governance is that all issues are not applicable to all localities. If a COG is developed, officials said operations staff would need to acknowledge that the council is the de facto entity overseeing certain operational processes.

***II. Determine the long-term viability of existing regional coordination committees.***

- ✓ Numerous regional volunteer and staff coordination entities continue to meet to be apprised of and discuss regional issues, challenges, and opportunities. An ultimate decision on the future of these organizations and how they could be streamlined will be part of an analysis conducted on the feasibility of a regional COG or the repurposing of an existing entity.



## NATURAL CAPITAL

In the time since implementation began on Capital Crossroads 1.0, environmental issues have risen in priority in Central Iowa and now regularly rank among the top concerns for residents across the state. While water and soil issues are important to Natural Capital volunteers, the objectives and actions contained under the Capital are broad and diverse, encompassing an array of components contributing to the region's environmental and recreational health and vitality. This includes a focus on the policy and regulatory frameworks that affect how the natural and public realms are governed as well as strategies to engage the public in dialogues on these issues. Expansion and regionalization of green space in Central Iowa also is a key charge of Natural Capital.

### **OVERARCHING GOAL**

*Central Iowa will be recognized nationally as a best practice community for its environmental sustainability and diverse array of natural amenities.*

## Land Use, Zoning, and Sustainability

Existing land use in Greater Des Moines follows a roughly radial pattern, with denser uses clustered centrally and less dense uses spreading outwards, particularly to the north, west, and south. As outlined in **The Tomorrow Plan**, the Des Moines metro area must strive to maximize the efficiency of development patterns, ensure an appropriate range of housing opportunities, understand the impact of rural residential development in unincorporated areas, and provide adequate regional and sub-regional recreation facilities.

### **DESIRED OUTCOME**

*Leveraging of current assets while strategically addressing threats to the region's long-term sustainability.*



## IMPLEMENT POLICY AND RESOURCE FRAMEWORKS SUPPORTING CENTRAL IOWA'S SUSTAINABLE GROWTH VISION.

Central Iowa leaders and stakeholders have prioritized a future in which land uses are effectively managed to encourage efficient use of existing infrastructure investments, contiguous development, multimodal transportation, a prevalence of concentrated mixed-use population centers, and preservation of natural spaces and amenities. The Tomorrow Plan already has outlined numerous policy initiatives that support strategic growth frameworks.

### **TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

#### ***I. Prioritize development in targeted nodes and corridors.***

- ✓ Smart growth frameworks like The Tomorrow Plan and its nodes and corridors initiative have identified and mapped out targeted areas for development that leverage existing infrastructure to increase employment opportunities, expand housing options, and enhance overall community health and services while leaving neighborhood character intact.

#### ***II. Zone for preferred land use patterns.***

- ✓ In 2016, the City of Des Moines began work to update its zoning code to incorporate node and corridor growth management elements from PlanDSM and form-based codes into binding policy. The code updates could one day serve as a model for other Central Iowa communities.

#### ***III. Identify effective growth management tools for potential incorporation into Iowa code.***

- ✓ Based on research, proposals to formally propose the adoption by the Iowa legislature of one or more growth management tools into code should be developed. Coalition building and advocacy then would be necessary to ensure the passage of these bills.

## Outdoor Recreation

Central Iowa has aggressively developed parks, trails, and connections between these assets and local activity nodes. Still, stakeholders acknowledge that more work is necessary to enhance Central Iowa's Natural Capital capacity and sustainability.

### ***DESIRED OUTCOME***

*A best-in-class, coordinated system of regional parks and greenspaces.*

## ENHANCE CENTRAL IOWA'S NETWORK OF PARKS AND GREENWAYS.

Development of new park space and ambitious planned expansions of existing facilities promise to further raise the profile of Central Iowa as a parks capital. Leaders feel that the development and enhancement of parks can be advanced even more effectively under a coordinated regional framework.

### **TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

#### ***I. Develop and implement a regional parks plan.***

- ✓ Leaders feel that Central Iowa would benefit from regionalizing the planning and development of green spaces through a coordinated regional parks plan and implementation framework overseen by a regional parks authority. Multiple ongoing planning and resourcing initiatives would need to be incorporated into the regional parks plan.

## Resource Conservation

Significant ongoing work and stakeholder feedback warrant expanding the Natural Capital's previous focus from air, water, and soil to reflect resource conservation issues and policies for not only air, water, and soil, but also energy. Consistent with this holistic conservation focus, tactics related to water quality, stormwater management, and flood protection have been incorporated under the Natural Capital framework.

### ***DESIRED OUTCOME***

*Comprehensive, complementary, and linked approaches to ensure that Central Iowa's natural resources are sustainable and protected.*

## OPTIMIZE WATER QUALITY AND DISTRIBUTION.

The Iowa Soil and Water Future Task Force believes that public-private investment in Iowa's **Nutrient Reduction Strategy** through creation of an **Iowa Soil and Water Health Revolving Loan Fund** will be the principal pathway to success in soil and water quality improvement. The Nutrient Reduction Strategy was intentionally woven through Central Iowa watershed management plans.

### **TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

#### ***I. Continue expanding watershed-management capacity and impacts.***

- ✓ Recommendations of the Iowa Soil and Water Future Task Force include an emphasis on the importance of adopting and implementing a watershed approach in Iowa. The recommendations also propose supporting the role of WMAs as valuable leaders and affirming the value of targeting resources to watersheds of greatest need balanced against those that are poised for action.

## ***II. Regionalize drinking water distribution and management.***

- ✓ A **Regional Drinking Water Study** led to discussions about communities' projected water needs and costs by 2050 and what it would entail for Des Moines Water Works to satisfy those needs. Capital Crossroads officials continue the conversation on regional water with stakeholders across the region.

## ***III. Improve stormwater runoff through the implementation of water infiltration strategies during road rehabilitation projects and the construction of new roadways.***

- ✓ Some area communities, including the cities of Ankeny and Johnston, have begun to use **green street strategies** to infiltrate stormwater at its source. Green street designs incorporate various green stormwater infrastructure tools, including stormwater tree trenches, stormwater planters, stormwater bumpouts, and pervious pavement.

## ***IV. Establish local, state, and federal financial resources at scale.***

- ✓ Sufficient, permanent, and dedicated funding sources should be allocated to meet infrastructure needs for point and non-point sources that are targeted and prioritized by watershed with annual accountability for the state's investment. This investment should be used to leverage other public and private dollars through public-private partnerships.

## **PROTECT COMMUNITIES FROM FLOOD EVENTS.**

Central Iowa has seen significant damage from floods, including the 2008 event with water levels that exceeded hundred-year projections. Floodplain management can help the region prepare for more extreme weather events that cause flooding and increase water flow along creeks and rivers.

### **TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

#### ***I. Coordinate strategies to limit Central Iowa's flood risk.***

- ✓ Central Iowa governments should complement state-level efforts by regulating allowable development on floodplains through adoption of the Des Moines Area MPO's model No Adverse Impact floodplain management policy.

## **PARTNER ON CONSERVATION AND ADVOCACY EFFORTS TO SUSTAIN CENTRAL IOWA'S NATURAL RESOURCES.**

The Iowa Soil and Water Future Task Force is testament to the output and impact that can result from coalitions of public and private leaders and practitioners coming together behind a shared vision for Central Iowa's natural environment. These efforts must continue across a broad spectrum of resource categories, including soil, water, air, and energy.

***I. Continue building coalitions to develop and implement natural resource protection and enhancement initiatives.***

- ✓ The Natural Capital should continue to serve a key role as a convener of stakeholders and as a partner to complementary regional efforts focused on sustaining Central Iowa's natural resources.

***II. Secure conservation status for critical natural environments.***

- ✓ In 2016, projects in Ames, Des Moines, and West Des Moines received funding for urban conservation districts. As additional opportunities to preserve sensitive natural spaces arise, they should be supported to secure approval and funding.

***III. Foster discussions on energy efficiency and renewable energy issues and opportunities.***

- ✓ Stakeholders feel that dialogues on programs and projects focused on energy efficiency and renewable energy are missing from the Natural Capital's implementation framework. They would like to see this topic incorporated into regular meetings of the Natural Capital implementation teams and pursued as potential strategic initiatives.

## Marketing and Education

The Natural Capital has advocated for the need for marketing and education since its inception. Statewide and regional support for investments in the natural environment likely will be the deciding factor behind the approval of funds to implement Natural Capital priorities.

***DESIRED OUTCOME***

*Public support necessary to enable effective implementation of environmentally-supportive strategies.*

## ACTIVELY PROMOTE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN CENTRAL IOWA.

Enhancing the awareness of Central Iowa's environmental challenges, future opportunities, and the public's role in affecting them will continue to be a charge of Natural Capital implementers.

**TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

***I. Develop compelling and effective public outreach campaigns.***

- ✓ As Capital Crossroads 2.0 launches, Natural Capital will be finalizing and promoting an **Environmental Educators Plan** while also raising the profile of the Capital itself through the use of graphics, video, and public relations. Stakeholders also feel that an honest, dynamic story must be told about planning for

the future through a consistently articulated **public-private campaign** targeting the general population but also the voice of “average” younger residents.

## CONCLUSION

Capital Crossroads 2.0 is an aggressive plan asking even more of its implementation teams in the coming years than was required in the previous five. Central Iowa therefore has a three-fold challenge as it prepares to activate and advance the 2.0 vision plan: 1) Existing activities must be sustained, 2) strategies that have languished due to lack of capacity must be reenergized, and 3) new actions must be accommodated.

As with the first Capital Crossroads plan, strategic components will be prioritized, some will fall away, and some will be added. The benefit of the comprehensive implementation framework built to support Capital Crossroads is the flexibility provided to evolve the plan as conditions and resources allow.

The lasting commitment of volunteers, staff, and partners to the initiative and calls to take on even more in the second iteration are testament to Central Iowa's determination to be a national destination of choice for jobs and talent.

## Cross-Capital Initiatives

Capital Crossroads officials already have created schematics demonstrating cross-Capital impacts and interactions and plan to formalize these interactions in greater detail through implementation of the 2.0 strategy. Ultimately, detailed and actionable work plans spelling out the roles and programmatic responsibilities of cross-Capital partners will be the most effective way to activate, advance, and monitor collaborative implementation efforts.

NOTE: **Not included** are cross-Capital frameworks for soil and water quality, transit, the green and blue network, and health assessment. Frameworks for these initiatives have been designed and pursued and will receive further attention through 2.0 implementation.

### ACTIVE WELLNESS

With over 80 percent of illnesses caused by chronic conditions that can be improved by affecting changes to three lifestyle choices – exercise, nutrition, and smoking – Central Iowa leaders feel that significant progress could be made on regional health outcomes by addressing the exercise component through a comprehensive, coordinated regional program bundled under an “Active Wellness” brand. Campaign components would include incorporation of many existing and future programs implemented by the United Way of Central Iowa, the Des Moines Area MPO, Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield, Mid-Iowa Health Foundation, Telligon, Polk County Health Services (nonprofit organization), city and county governments, and other partners.

### CENTRAL IOWA FOOD INITIATIVE

Numerous strategic activities related to the full spectrum of food cultivation, sale, consumption, and its potential to revitalize neighborhoods and enhance quality of life have been proposed for Capital Crossroads 2.0. There are numerous **potential** activities that could be incorporated into a cross-Capital food initiative, many of which are listed in the below matrix. It is recommended that implementation of a comprehensive initiative include a **planning phase** – perhaps overseen by a coordinating committee or task force similar to soil and water – to confirm the highest-value strategies.

This also would provide the opportunity to incorporate **existing activities** like Hunger Free Polk County, Eat Greater Des Moines, the Iowa Hunger Summit, and many others into the Central Iowa Food Initiative. Many Central Iowa leaders feel that local food should be the region’s identity and a “big umbrella” for bringing together urban and rural interests.

### CIVILITY

Leaders in Social Capital and other Capital work teams feel that civility is a concept that has applicability across multiple public and private spheres and should be focused on as a cross-Capital initiative. Indeed,

people must interact and work together in nearly every aspect of human life, so incorporation of civility principles and practices into as many of these contexts as possible will help advance Central Iowa's strategic vision, goals, and activities. Ultimately, the concept of civility and civil discourse should be embraced by all community organizations and is embedded in all of the Capitals.

## DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

While Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion will remain a primary focus of the Social Capital, regional leaders want to emphasize that truly achieving a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive Central Iowa will require commitment and action from all components of society. As such, they have strongly recommended using a diversity, equity, and inclusion lens when envisioning, designing, and implementing a variety of projects across the region.

## HOUSING

As Central Iowa continues its impressive growth trajectory and housing costs are impacted in downtown Des Moines and other popular activity centers, housing-related issues will become more prevalent. This will be especially true as the region's growth gradually exhausts available greenfield residential development sites and redevelopment and infill housing opportunities become more necessary, desirable, and viable.

In recent years, Central Iowa has demonstrated that it is committed to promoting and pursuing sustainable land use policies. These will include prescriptive scenarios, planning, and regulation of housing in the context of overall regional growth and development.



# Capital Crossroads 2.0: New Strategic Actions

In response to stakeholders who ask, “What is new in Capital Crossroads 2.0?,” the following list details the actions that were not contained in the 1.0 strategy or the mid-course strategic update documents.

## CAPITAL CORE

- ✓ Development of a downtown Des Moines retail analysis and attraction study
- ✓ Redevelopment assessment of Iowa Events Center district
- ✓ Analysis of feasibility of downtown sports stadium
- ✓ Creation of Downtown Des Moines Workforce Housing Plan
- ✓ Implementation of Connect Downtown mobility plan
- ✓ Research and development of Skywalk Activation Plan
- ✓ Launch of neighborhood reconnection initiative
- ✓ Creation of Model Program Toolkit for neighborhood revitalization based on Viva East Bank!
- ✓ Securing membership for Viva East Bank! in Purpose Built Communities network
- ✓ Launch of an anchor-based community wealth building initiative
- ✓ Support and promotion for local option sales tax legislation

## BUSINESS CAPITAL

- ✓ Development of sector-based action plans based on Target Industry Council expertise
- ✓ Creation of a Hospitality Collaboration Council
- ✓ Creation of additional sector-specific accelerators based on demand
- ✓ Startup commercialization program partnering established companies with technology entrepreneurs
- ✓ Enhancement of Area515 as best in class makerspace
- ✓ Launch of intrapreneurship support program
- ✓ Creation of entrepreneurship program for military veterans
- ✓ Development of physical and programmatic hub for immigrant and refugee entrepreneurship

## CULTIVATION CORRIDOR

- ✓ Confirmed strategic focus areas and actions in approved 2016 Cultivation Corridor Strategic Framework

## WELLNESS CAPITAL

- ✓ Partnership with business to assess and improve their workers' social and emotional wellbeing
- ✓ Coordinated initiative focused on enhancing mental health programming, including targeted communications strategy raising the profile of mental health issues and programs in Central Iowa
- ✓ Formal outreach to Broadlawns Medical Center on opportunities to expand its mental health services capacity

## HUMAN CAPITAL

- ✓ Private sector-led Community Needs Assessment for higher education in Central Iowa
- ✓ Direct incorporation of United Way of Central Iowa Community Education Goal and strategies as well as OpportUNITY Plan initiatives into EDGE cradle through career campaign
- ✓ Formal engagement system for parental involvement in preschool to 12 schools
- ✓ Creation of Coding Academy in Central Iowa
- ✓ Development of worksite-based program to support degree attainment for adults that have completed some college coursework
- ✓ Development of comprehensive Affordable Child Care Action Plan
- ✓ Creation of Debt Forgiveness Program to incent college graduates to remain in Central Iowa
- ✓ Housing placement assistance for summer-only and yearlong Central Iowa interns

## SOCIAL CAPITAL

- ✓ Development of comprehensive, coordinated, cross-Capital assessment and strategy to make Central Iowa a national leader in inclusive, equitable, and civil communities driven by engaged, diverse leadership

## CULTURAL CAPITAL

- ✓ Incorporation of approved tactics resulting from the Regional Cultural Assessment

## PHYSICAL CAPITAL

- ✓ Creation of a non-partisan Mobility Alliance as a business-led partnership to advance multi-modal mobility in Central Iowa

- ✓ Incorporation of the Des Moines Area MPO's Congestion Management Process under Capital Crossroads framework
- ✓ Activation of parking demand, management, and use assessments and strategies
- ✓ Implementation of the DART Forward 2035 Transit Services Plan update recommendations supported by Transit Future Work Group
- ✓ Leveraging of emerging transportation technologies and models to support regional mobility
- ✓ Funding and construction of approved new terminal at Des Moines International Airport
- ✓ Regionalization of Des Moines Airport Authority
- ✓ Development of regional system of water trails and greenways, with signature multi-use segment in downtown Des Moines
- ✓ Refurbishment of Drake Stadium to Olympic standards
- ✓ Construction of major indoor athletic complex to support sports tourism and local use
- ✓ Development and launch of a Smart City initiative in Central Iowa
- ✓ Incorporation of regional housing strategies under Capital Crossroads framework, including development of initiative to build "missing middle" housing types

## GOVERNANCE CAPITAL

- ✓ Restructure of the Des Moines Metropolitan Area Utility Coordination Committee
- ✓ Incorporation of the Mid Iowa Association of Local Governments under Capital Crossroads framework
- ✓ Formal recommendation to create regional council of governments or similar entity in Central Iowa

## NATURAL CAPITAL

- ✓ Formal inclusion of The Tomorrow Plan's Nodes and Corridors Initiative into Capital Crossroads
- ✓ Assessment of potential to secure approval for transportation improvement districts and other transportation/land use management tools under Iowa code
- ✓ Development and implementation of Regional Parks Plan under the auspices of a new regional parks authority
- ✓ Incorporation of recommendations from Iowa Soil and Water Future Task Force recommendations under Natural Capital
- ✓ Proposed creation of watershed management authorities for North and Middle Rivers
- ✓ Use of green street strategies to improve stormwater management
- ✓ Fostering of discussions and strategies to address energy efficiency and renewable energy issues and opportunities in Central Iowa

- ✓ Development and launch of public-private communications campaign

## CROSS-CAPITAL INITIATIVES

### *Central Iowa Food Initiative*

- ✓ Comprehensive, unified, multi-platform, multi-functional initiative to position Central Iowa as the nation's capital of food-related programming
- ✓ Assessment to identify needs and opportunities, leading to the confirmation of projects to pursue under the food initiative banner

### *Active Wellness*

- ✓ Aggregation of existing and potential cross-Capital efforts around exercise and wellness supported by physical activity

### *Additional Focus Areas*

- ✓ Continued execution of cross-Capital soil and water quality, transit, community health, and green and blue network initiatives
- ✓ Aggregation of new cross-Capital focus areas, including housing, civility, and diversity, equity, and inclusion