



## STRATEGY

### CAPITAL CROSSROADS 2.0

Submitted by Market Street Services, Inc.  
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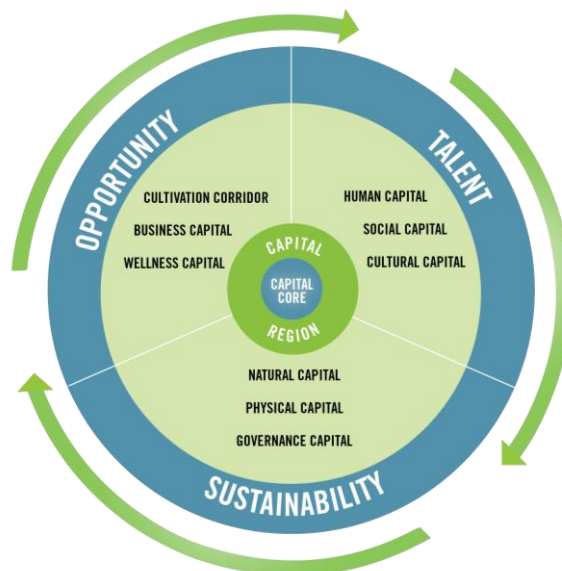
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*Cover photos sourced from previously provided materials and used solely for of this report.*

## OVERVIEW

Five years ago, leaders from throughout Central Iowa engaged in a dynamic strategic planning process that would become known as Capital Crossroads. Developed with key partners Bravo Greater Des Moines, the Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines, the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, the Greater Des Moines Partnership, Iowa State University, Prairie Meadows, and the United Way of Central Iowa, Capital Crossroads was the culmination of an intensive research study that included feedback from thousands of Central Iowa residents and the hard work of a very thoughtful and exacting Steering Committee of top regional leaders. The framework of guiding principles and strategic Capitals is shown in the graphic to the right.



Since project launch, Capital Crossroads has experienced hundreds of laudable implementation successes and receives consistent attention in the local press, social media, and the words and actions of regional public and private leadership. National rankings and accolades for Greater Des Moines and Central Iowa have become a regular occurrence, declaring the region best in class for overall business climate as well as for constituencies ranging from entrepreneurs to families, young professionals to retirees, summer interns, and foodies.

Central Iowa is a region with serious momentum. As Market Street has shared with others around the country, initial Capital Crossroads implementation has been the most ambitious, aggressive, comprehensive, and effective we have seen in our nearly twenty-year history. However, communities must not become complacent in their success as the competition for jobs and investment has never been more intense than right now. At the same time, Capital Crossroads 2.0 provides an opportunity for regional partners to more formally align existing plans. The Tomorrow Plan sets forth a forty-year vision for sustainable growth for Greater Des Moines, while several other topic-specific plans, including the DART Forward 2035 Transit Services Plan, Housing Tomorrow, and Mobilizing Tomorrow, lay out specific strategies for achieving the goals set forth in both Capital Crossroads and The Tomorrow Plan. The OpportUNITY Plan, a comprehensive poverty-reduction initiative, aims to tackle the multiple issues affecting Central Iowans' ability to build and sustain wealth.

Central Iowa leaders have positioned Capital Crossroads 2.0 as the initiative that will take the region to even greater levels of achievement. Because of the success of the first strategy, the bar is raised for Capital Crossroads 2.0, with opportunities to pursue "next level" strategies to complement past efforts to make Central Iowa a top destination for companies and talent.

## CAPITAL CROSSROADS 2.0 PROCESS



## STEERING COMMITTEE

Like Capital Crossroads 1.0, a diverse Steering Committee of public and private leaders from across Central Iowa oversaw the process, discussed and approved all deliverables, and ensured that the Capital Crossroads 2.0 strategy laid out here addresses the region's most critical issues and seeks to capture its highest value opportunities for the next five years.

## STAKEHOLDER INPUT

Talking directly with leaders, partner organizations, business owners, and other stakeholders throughout the region provided a solid foundation for Capital Crossroads 2.0 strategic recommendations. The breadth of community input gathered over the last five years served as a springboard for Capital Crossroads 2.0 and allowed for a more streamlined input process than in 2011. Perspectives from a broad group of the region's constituencies were gathered through three days of interviews and focus groups and an online survey that received nearly 3,000 responses. Two open-invitation town halls also were held to secure additional stakeholder feedback on assessment findings and potential strategies. The goal of the input component was to identify new and/or emerging issues, concerns, and opportunities that need to be addressed during this process, as well as to update implementation perspectives since the Capital Crossroads mid-course review process in 2014.

## REGIONAL ASSESSMENT

The Assessment presented a narrative examination of the trends and issues facing Central Iowa seen through the lens of Capital Crossroads' ten strategic Capitals. Quantitative and qualitative research combined to paint a picture of Capital implementation and regional issues as well as to inform the development of the Capital Crossroads 2.0 strategy. Central Iowa was compared to the regions of **Indianapolis, Indiana, Kansas City, Missouri, and Nashville, Tennessee**, to provide perspective on Capital trends against these very strong benchmark communities.

## CAPITAL CROSSROADS 2.0 STRATEGY

This Capital Crossroads 2.0 draft strategy is the culmination of all the research and input gathered since May 2016. It renews the 2011 plan and ongoing work of the Capital Crossroads Capital teams and their organizational partners. Essentially, the basis of Capital Crossroads 2.0 emerged from quantitative analysis, qualitative input, and feedback from the Steering Committee, staff, and implementation partners. Ongoing and planned Capital activities were captured in the 2.0 blueprint in addition to any new efforts suggested by research and confirmed by the Steering Committee.

## STEERING COMMITTEE

The Capital Crossroads 2.0 Steering Committee has been critical to the success of this initiative, shaping the strategy through various feedback channels and meeting sessions. Representing a broad group of community leaders from the public and private sectors, the Committee was responsible for reviewing project deliverables, providing feedback, and participating in discussions about the future direction of Central Iowa.

The following individuals served on the Capital Crossroads 2.0 Steering Committee:

<b>Tom Ahart</b>	Des Moines Public Schools
<b>Bob Andeweg</b>	City of Urbandale
<b>Todd Ashby</b>	Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization
<b>Joshua Barr</b>	City of Des Moines
<b>Joe Benesh</b>	Shive-Hattery Architects + Engineers and The Ingenuity Company
<b>Rona Berinobis</b>	Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield
<b>Glennnda Bivens</b>	Iowa State University Extension and Outreach
<b>Jim Brannen</b>	FBL Financial Group
<b>Eric Burmeister</b>	Polk County Housing Trust Fund
<b>Jay Byers</b>	Greater Des Moines Partnership
<b>Teree Caldwell-Johnson</b>	Oakridge Neighborhood Services
<b>David Chivers</b>	Register Media
<b>Jake Christensen</b>	Christensen Development
<b>Angela Connolly</b>	Polk County
<b>Frank Cownie</b>	City of Des Moines
<b>Russ Cross</b>	Wells Fargo Home Lending
<b>Mike Crum</b>	Iowa State University
<b>Dan Culhane</b>	Ames Chamber of Commerce & Ames Economic Development Commission
<b>Marvin DeJear</b>	Evelyn K. Davis Center for Working Families
<b>Rob Denson</b>	Des Moines Area Community College
<b>Angela Dethlefs-Trettin</b>	Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines
<b>Tej Dhawan</b>	Mango Seed Investments
<b>Sally Dix</b>	Bravo Greater Des Moines
<b>Greg Edwards</b>	Greater Des Moines Convention & Visitors Bureau
<b>Jan Glendening</b>	The Nature Conservancy
<b>Paul Gregorie</b>	Fisher Controls/Emerson
<b>Jami Haberl</b>	Healthiest State Initiative
<b>Kent Henning</b>	Grand View University
<b>Fred Hubbell</b>	Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines
<b>Larry James</b>	Faegre Baker Daniels
<b>Jody Jenner</b>	Broadlawns Medical Center

<b>Kristi Knous</b>	Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines
<b>Izaah Knox</b>	Urban Dreams
<b>Sharon Krause</b>	Kum & Go and Dalla Terra Ranch
<b>Kathryn Kunert</b>	MidAmerican Energy Company
<b>Tom Leners</b>	Madison County Development Group
<b>Todd Linden</b>	Grinnell Regional Medical Center
<b>Colleen MacRae</b>	Nyemaster Goode PC
<b>Justin Mandelbaum</b>	Mandelbaum Properties
<b>Zachary Mannheimer</b>	Iowa Business Growth
<b>Marty Martin</b>	Drake University
<b>Ben McLean</b>	Ruan Transportation Management Systems
<b>Gene Meyer</b>	Greater Des Moines Partnership
<b>Anita Norian</b>	Kemin Industries
<b>Karen Novak</b>	Francis & Associates
<b>Elizabeth Presutti</b>	Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority
<b>Mark Putnam</b>	Central College
<b>Scott Raecker</b>	The Robert D. and Billie Ray Center
<b>Sid Ramsey</b>	UnityPoint Health
<b>Ruth Randleman</b>	City of Carlisle
<b>Jeff Russell</b>	Delta Dental of Iowa
<b>Rob Sand</b>	Iowa Attorney General's Office
<b>Scott Sanders</b>	City of Des Moines
<b>Justin Schoen</b>	Emerge Growth Strategies
<b>Mary Sellers</b>	United Way of Central Iowa
<b>Jimmy Small</b>	Iowa Speedway
<b>Julie Stewart</b>	Prairie Meadows
<b>Rick Tollakson</b>	Hubbell Realty
<b>Georgia Van Gundy</b>	Iowa Business Council
<b>Mike Wegner</b>	Mercy Medical Center
<b>David Wilkerson</b>	Waukee Community School District
<b>Brent Willett</b>	Cultivation Corridor
<b>Connie Wimer</b>	Business Publications

Market Street would like to recognize and thank all the partner staff and volunteer leaders who worked with us closely during the Capital Crossroads 2.0 process. We would like to especially acknowledge the support of Capital Crossroads Director **Bethany Wilcoxon**, who was the “glue” that held the process together and ensured that project logistics, review processes, and public engagement contributed to the timely and effective completion of the 2.0 vision plan.



## INTRODUCTION

Implementation of Capital Crossroads has been aggressive, comprehensive, and sustained since its launch in 2012. Building from the strategic template of the initial plan, nearly 700 volunteers working on implementation under the coordination of lead and partner staff and the Capital Crossroads Director have incrementally adjusted, enhanced, and added strategic activities based on competitive issues and opportunities. Hundreds of actions have been completed or are currently being pursued.

The ten strategic Capitals confirmed in the first Capital Crossroads process continue to resonate. **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 today, 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 into the Capital Crossroads framework.

With so much going on under the rubric of Capital Crossroads and more activities coming online as the 2.0 initiative is confirmed and launched, there is the real potential for even the most engaged stakeholder to be overwhelmed by the sheer number of "things" tied to the initiative. Prioritization of existing and new tactics will highlight those with higher impact value, but the full breadth of Capital Crossroads activities is what defines the initiative as the comprehensive framework for the important work being done to make Central Iowa an even more compelling destination for companies and talent. Implementation will therefore continue to focus on the support beams of the vision plan as well as the buttresses that further stabilize and sustain its foundation.

## Regional Assessment Findings

The first phase of Capital Crossroads 2.0 leveraged research into Central Iowa's competitive position against high-performing benchmark regions as well as comprehensive public input through focus groups, interviews, public town hall meetings, and an online survey with nearly 3,000 responses to identify priority issues and opportunities affecting Central Iowa's future. The key findings of the report are summarized below:

- ✓ Central Iowa is a top performing metro area, not only in the Midwest but against any measurable regional criteria. Still, persistent and deeply rooted challenges in the City of Des Moines and certain rural counties continue to limit these areas' capacity to enjoy the same level of success as other regional cities and counties. These trends often do not emerge in regional data.
- ✓ While Central Iowa's population growth continues to increase at a healthy rate and most local school districts are seeing positive performance trends, workforce availability remains the region's top competitive challenge. Consensus has not been reached on whether these are issues of talent

availability, a mismatch between worker skills and those required by regional employers, or a combination of the two.

- ✓ For multiple criteria, the urgency for change expressed by Central Iowa Millennials and older generations often differs. Young leaders feel that Central Iowa must reconcile its multiple high rankings on national lists with the reality that much work remains to make the region truly equitable and inclusive and a true national destination for talent.
- ✓ Though issues of sustainable growth related to transportation, land use, public services, and housing affordability are key stakeholder concerns, water and soil quality has emerged as a top-tier issue for Central Iowa residents. This contrasts with a lower profile in Capital Crossroads 1.0 and the mid-course review process.
- ✓ Despite Central Iowa stakeholders' concerns about aspects of the community's future, by far the most common sentiment is that the region continues its ascent as a top-tier metro area in the Midwest and nation. When asked what qualities differentiate Central Iowa in this regard, survey respondents feel the region's people, sense of community, and the opportunities it provides to residents are its most compelling assets.

## Strategic Framework

The framework of ten strategic Capitals approved in 2012 is unchanged from the first iteration of Capital Crossroads. The following headings comprise the structure of the 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*

**NOTE:** Strategies/tactics with associated best practices in Appendix B are indicated by a **BP** in their titles.

## 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. 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

**See Appendix A for matrices detailing Capital Crossroads 2.0 Cross-Capital Initiatives.**

In addition to broad cross-Capital partnerships, there are several 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. Recognizing not only its holistic focus but also its seamless integration with this vision plan’s strategic Capitals, a comparative analysis of areas of potential collaboration between Capital Crossroads 2.0 and the OpportUNITY Community Plan is also included in **Appendix A**.



## CAPITAL CORE

A key outcome of the initial Capital Crossroads process was the acknowledgement by leaders across Central Iowa that the health of the City of Des Moines's core was vital to the prosperity of the entire region. The establishment of Capital Core as one of the initiative's ten Capital work platforms and its positioning at the center of the strategy graphic seen in the Overview was testament to the importance Central Iowa leaders placed on the vitality of the region's core city and its downtown and adjacent neighborhoods. This belief that the region is only as strong as its center was confirmed by the Capital Crossroads mid-course review and sustained through the five years of strategic implementation. The tremendous investment in downtown Des Moines and slow-but-steady revitalization of adjacent neighborhoods has provided great benefit to Central Iowa through the attraction of events such as the NCAA men's college basketball tournament and the lasting impression made on journalists and visitors during the 2016 Iowa Caucuses.

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.

While public safety was a strategic objective area of the Capital Crossroads mid-course review, tactics directed towards this issue have been integrated into the many activities targeting neighborhood revitalization and support for improved educational outcomes.

### 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. Some have quipped that the building crane is now the city's "official bird." 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. Greater Des Moines regularly tops "best of" lists for young professionals; much of this appeal is attributed to downtown growth and the amenities it has attracted.

### 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.

Residential and hospitality development have been the most prominent recent investment categories in downtown Des Moines. As the number of people living and visiting downtown increase, along with the thousands of downtown workers, it can be reasonably assumed that additional retail investment will be attracted to the district. However, 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.
  - The assessment would be informed by a Gibbs Planning Group analysis of additional retail and restaurant opportunities on Walnut Street. Robert Gibbs joined other members of the Walnut Street streetscape and revitalization strategy consultant team to make a presentation to the public in 2013.
- ✓ The recommendations in the retail study and strategy almost certainly would affect multiple Tactical Opportunities in the Capital Core and, potentially, additional Capitals.

#### ***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. As will be discussed in the Business Capital, 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.
  - The hotel development likely will lead to investor interest in the IEC district. As such, an assessment of opportunities to foster additional redevelopment of underused sites adjacent to the Events Center, improve streetscapes and the pedestrian environment, and enhance connectivity between IEC and other downtown districts could further support tourism in the area. The assessment should be guided by PlanDSM and GuideDSM. **(BP1)**
  - There are also opportunities to customize a marketing brand and identifier for the area, such as the "NoLo" (North of Locust) district.

- ✓ IEC and convention hotel growth also will improve prospects for construction of a new Des Moines International Airport (DSM) terminal and potential direct transit connection from the airport to downtown. These will be discussed later in this vision plan.

### ***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.
- ✓ Targeted consideration should be given to more effectively activating Cowles Commons and other downtown public spaces through programmatic expansion.

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

- ✓ Creative efforts to secure land and make it available for new investment have led not only to the construction of the Convention Center Hilton Hotel but also the development of the Wellmark YMCA and new downtown courthouse facilities.
- ✓ 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.
  - Potential projects such as a floating river café and Port of Des Moines already have been announced. Stakeholders envision key stretches of the Des Moines and Raccoon Rivers enhanced via San Antonio Riverwalk-style water-facing stores, restaurants, landscapes, activities and events, and other uses.
  - A regulatory tool to support projects of this type is already in place via **D-R Downtown Riverfront District** zoning. The D-R category supports redevelopment that enhances the concept of the "riverfront as main street," attracts residents and visitors, and establishes the district as an interconnected pedestrian-oriented cultural and recreation destination.

### ***VI. Study the viability of construction of a major downtown sports stadium. (BP2)***

- ✓ Many public input participants felt that Greater Des Moines's next stage of evolution should include the launch or attraction of a major league professional sports franchise to the region. Though near-term viability to house a team from the "big four" leagues (MLB, NBA, NFL, and NHL – with MLS essentially serving as number five) is extremely limited until Central Iowa's population threshold meets

the leagues' expectations,<sup>1</sup> there is the opportunity to build a speculative stadium either for a minor league franchise or to host major performance events and festivals.

- ✓ 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.

Thousands of new housing units and hundreds of millions of dollars have been invested in recent years in downtown Des Moines residential development. As the area's popularity has increased, rents are rising. This provides good and bad news. On the positive side, rents are nearing the point where they can support capital costs of new construction without hefty public incentives. The challenge is that lower-income buyers and renters are finding it increasingly difficult to afford staying in or moving to downtown Des Moines.

A strong ingredient to the region's success is downtown's roles as the regional center for jobs, cultural facilities, and transit. With approximately 80,000 workers and growing, downtown continues to be a regional jobs center. Many of these jobs are office professionals across the wage spectrum from entry level to senior management. As rents increase, professional entry level salaries do not support rising downtown rents. Moreover, the recent growth in population and investment in downtown includes multiple service-related businesses such as restaurants and hotels, which historically pay low wages. Downtown enjoys the best transit access in the region, solidified by the implementation of DART Central Station in recent years. It is imperative that downtown continue to provide housing that meets the wide spectrum of regional demands and especially the needs of all employees working in this diverse job center.

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:**

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

- ✓ Downtown Des Moines is a hot investment market, but developer interest should not be taken for granted. 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.

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<sup>1</sup> The smallest metro area with a "big five" franchise awarded in the modern era is Salt Lake City at roughly 1.15 million. However, its combined statistical area (CSA) population is nearly 2.5 million. Memphis, with a CSA population of roughly 1.4 million, is the smallest to house a top U.S. franchise. In contrast, the Des Moines CSA population is 782,390 as of the latest Census estimates.



- ✓ Underperforming, high-vacancy office buildings should continue to be viable candidates for market-rate and subsidized-unit conversion to residential uses.
- ✓ Stakeholders noted that, in addition to a scarcity of housing units for low-income residents, there is a shortage of product at mid-level price points. They stressed that this category also should be front-of-mind for downtown officials when they market the district to developers.

## ***II. Develop a Downtown Des Moines Workforce Housing Plan. (BP3)***

- ✓ A lack of downtown workforce housing was one of the principal themes to emerge from public input. Historically, downtown has served a key role in providing affordable housing. When the over 2,700 units currently under construction are complete, there will be nearly 3,000 affordable units in downtown Des Moines, representing over 41 percent of all downtown units.
- ✓ 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, potentially including land banking, workforce housing incentives, support for existing renters, special zoning categories, and others.
  - The new City of Des Moines zoning ordinance that will implement PlanDSM will be an important building block for this Plan.
  - The Plan could formalize an **infill development toolkit** for use by developers seeking approval for projects incorporated into the existing urban fabric.
  - The potential to expand a Workforce Housing Plan to the full Des Moines region under an updated Housing Tomorrow framework should be pursued as warranted by feedback from local and regional leaders.
- ✓ Downtown leaders suggested that a high-profile **pilot project** could be an outcome of the Workforce Housing Plan. This would serve as a model for additional developments fostering mixed-use, mixed-income projects supportive of workers' mobility, health, and lifestyle needs.
- ✓ Recommendations to support workforce housing maintenance and development should be incorporated into the PlanDSM zoning development process.

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

- ✓ Housing costs are typically higher in dense urban activity centers such as downtown. This cannot be entirely offset by focusing on lower rents. Rather, higher costs can often be mitigated by reductions in other spending categories. Therefore, 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. These amenities contribute to lower total resident expenses and higher quality of life for the region.

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

Multiple studies of individual preferences in built environments have shown that people are increasingly seeking pedestrian-scale, walkable neighborhoods and activity districts as their communities of choice; this is true of both urban and suburban districts. Des Moines already has taken steps to advance walkability and urbanity in its downtown and should continue to ensure that growth meets these criteria.

Certain districts also have suffered disproportionately from the construction of freeway interchanges that often divided neighborhoods and led to disconnections and disinvestment. Across the country, several cities have launched ambitious plans to “stitch together” these communities through multimodal strategies and, in some cases, the construction of “caps” bridging highway gaps and enhancing parks and recreation capacity.

### **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 several other community partners are supporting a mobility study branded **Connect Downtown**. The process is exploring how to make downtown Des Moines safer, more comfortable, and more convenient by improving access to and within downtown for people walking, bicycling, driving and using public transportation. 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.
  - The City of Des Moines already has experimented with removing rush-hour parking restrictions on key downtown streets to improve pedestrian accessibility to adjacent businesses. The City also is moving forward with an analysis of the conversion of high-volume one-way streets downtown into two-way thoroughfares.
- ✓ Walkability efforts also should be informed by the **Age-Friendly Greater Des Moines** initiative led by AARP to make Greater Des Moines an inclusive and accessible urban environment that promotes active aging. The Age-Friendly initiative also supports the Wellness Capital.

#### ***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. While improvements were recommended, the Study context did not include overall reactivation or reprogramming of the system.

- ✓ With the Kaleidoscope at the Hub currently under 50 percent leased and other skywalk sections also experiencing high vacancy, a new **Skywalk Activation Plan** complementing the 2010 study with specific programmatic and activity strategies would provide valuable benefit for downtown Des Moines.
  - Recently, a coalition of business and civic leaders announced their intention to build a year-round market in the Kaleidoscope space. Still in its earliest stages, the effort is designed to build on the success of Des Moines's Downtown Farmers' Market and revitalize an aging shopping center. This initiative should be captured under the broader Skywalk Activation Plan.
- ✓ The Activation Plan should be incorporated into overall efforts to improve downtown walkability and mobility, including Connect Downtown. The Plan could then leverage recent and future efforts to better connect the skywalk and street network such as the Wells Fargo office complex, and projects at 7th and Grand and 701 Walnut, among others.
  - The City of Des Moines installed signage indicating street level entrances to the skywalk system, but the opportunity remains for the installation of additional concepts.

### ***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. Transportation needs are changing rapidly, and the need for parking may change drastically during the lifespan of these structures. Additionally, studies showing a glut of downtown parking at different times of day and locations present the opportunity to rethink parking dynamics in downtown Des Moines.
- ✓ 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.
- ✓ Efforts also should continue to assess the viability and value of demolishing underused public parking ramps for conversion into mixed-use developments.

### ***IV. Launch an initiative to reconnect neighborhoods bisected by infrastructure construction. (BP4)***

- ✓ Urban renewal and other redevelopment programs often resulted in the construction of physical barriers within and between urban neighborhoods. An increasing number of cities are seeking to repair these divisions through multi-plank strategies fostering physical and virtual connectivity. Many of these initiatives have incorporated landscaped "caps" over freeway sections or other multimodal connectivity projects.
  - Caps over the sunken sections of Interstate 235 could provide better connections between downtown and Mercy and Lutheran Hospitals, the 6th Avenue corridor, and several northern neighborhoods.

- The recent construction of the Martin Luther King, Jr., Parkway on former railroad right-of-way provides opportunities to better connect neighborhoods south of downtown, and existing pedestrian bridges and trail connections also can be leveraged.
- ✓ 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.
- ✓ The initiative also will be informed by Connect Downtown, as its study area extends to Martin Luther King, Jr., Parkway, University/East University Ave, and East 14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> Street.

## Neighborhood Improvement

Economically healthy neighborhoods are the lifeblood of any community. While downtown Des Moines is thriving, certain downtown-adjacent and close-in neighborhoods have not seen equivalent levels of investment and continue to face challenges related to poverty, crime, negative perceptions of schools, lack of retail diversity, and “food deserts.” The Capital Core **Neighborhood Improvement Committee** has served as the gathering place for stakeholders and ideas focused on enhancing the vitality of Des Moines’s urban core neighborhoods. Corridor and district-level strategies have launched and shown results, while numerous tools have been applied to support these efforts. Progress has been made and positive results have been seen; the reality is that neighborhood issues arise over generations, and it often takes generations to effectively address them. Ultimately, reshaping urban neighborhoods as destinations of choice will enhance the desirability of all Greater Des Moines. It will be critically important to effectively engage neighborhood leaders to ensure they serve as advocates, ambassadors, and facilitators of successful implementation.

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. Strategies will by necessity be inclusive of multiple tactics across a full spectrum of Capitals.

### **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. Even so, much work has been done to stabilize and revitalize Des Moines's inner core neighborhoods. Public input noted that the Viva East Bank! program for the Capitol Park, Capitol East, and Martin Luther King, Jr., Park neighborhoods has been especially effective and could serve as a model for additional neighborhood improvement efforts.

**TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

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

- ✓ The tenets of the Plan remain viable and include such diverse strategies as addressing blighted properties, building value-added housing, revitalizing commercial areas, upgrading infrastructure, and improving perceptions and connections of Des Moines neighborhoods and schools.
- ✓ 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.
  - The NIIP recommends programs for employers to offer housing incentives to employees living near their workplace. This opportunity could be leveraged to support neighborhood improvement efforts.
  - The private sector also can play a key role in countering negative perceptions some stakeholders have of City of Des Moines neighborhoods and schools. Providing business executives with talking points, presentation slides, and other information on positive Des Moines trends for inclusion in public talks and meetings could help change people's understanding of local issues and institutions.
- ✓ In addition to neighborhood and corridor-specific action plans, leaders should leverage the NIIP as a blueprint for improvements across the Capital Core and continually seek staff and fiscal resource appropriations through budgetary processes and grant applications.
- ✓ The City of Des Moines is investigating ways to strengthen policies, regulations, and procedures for more effectively addressing vacant and blighted properties. Recommendations should be incorporated into the NIIP framework.
- ✓ Stakeholders also have expressed concern that gaps in mid-priced housing product occurring in downtown Des Moines could be repeated across city neighborhoods. The City of Des Moines should be sensitive to these concerns by consistently assessing its housing stock, prices, and demand to identify shortages in product types and determine how they can be addressed.
  - The infill development toolkit proposed earlier in Capital Core also should be leveraged for core neighborhood projects.

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

- ✓ Viva East Bank! is an ongoing initiative and, as such, requires continued support for existing, enhanced, and any new programming. The Capital Core Neighborhood Improvement Committee could support implementation efforts through a cataloguing of tactical activities and oversight agencies and determination of requisite Capital coordination opportunities through the Capital Crossroads framework.
  - Inspired by the national Step It Up walkability program, Viva East Bank! has committed to piloting a replicable process to improve walkability around three neighborhood schools. Results will help update city policies and develop a health and transportation model to inform local transportation decisions.
- ✓ The Viva East Bank! narrative, development process, implementation tactics, and contact information should be formalized into a **Model Program Toolkit** for use and application to interested neighborhoods.
- ✓ The City of Des Moines currently has a process to identify neighborhoods for planning work and soon will be updating its protocols to determine the best path forward for neighborhood revitalization. This could help inform the identification of additional neighborhoods or clusters of neighborhoods to prioritize for implementation under the Viva East Bank! model.
  - It will be critical that activities be coordinated and targeted to make visible change. Linkages between organizations across multiple Capitals working to improve Des Moines's core neighborhoods must be fostered through the Capital Core Neighborhood Improvement Committee and Capital Crossroads framework to ensure that desired results are achieved. Business participation – in terms of both financing and corporate resourcing – also will be critical.
- ✓ Consider seeking membership for Viva East Bank! in the **Purpose Built Communities** (<http://purposebuiltcommunities.org>) network. The organization welcomes a select group of new members every year and provides benefits to those initiatives that meet their holistic criteria for community revitalization.

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

- ✓ Community, civic, and private sector leaders have developed 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**. These efforts are ongoing, with new tools and programs coming online to facilitate commercial and residential investment and redevelopment. As with Viva East Bank!, corridor initiatives should be supported by all means necessary through the coordination function of the Capital Core Neighborhood Improvement Committee.
- ✓ Assessment and identification of additional City of Des Moines corridors to target for revitalization initiatives should be incorporated under the Capital Crossroads framework. This will be informed by an updated City of Des Moines process for prioritizing corridor planning as part of its overall refresh of

neighborhood planning and revitalization processes and likely will overlap with Business Capital efforts to support small businesses and entrepreneurial development.

- ✓ Existing and future corridor planning should inform – and be informed by – development and implementation of the new zoning code associated with PlanDSM.

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

- ✓ Community wealth building strategies partner with “anchor” institutions such as hospitals, universities, and government centers to divert a portion of their annual expenditures to establish a network of cooperative enterprises in surrounding neighborhoods. These employee-owned corporations help build individual assets, replace non-local vendors with Des Moines area sources, and create living-wage jobs, often for the community’s hardest-to-employ workers.
- ✓ 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.
  - The Viva East Bank! neighborhoods could serve as a compelling pilot location. Iowa Lutheran Hospital is an existing local anchor, while the State of Iowa also could be a partner.
  - The CWB initiative could be aligned with corridor planning and other revitalization efforts.

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

The availability and use of programs, policies, and funds to support neighborhood revitalization of course is a key component of the district and corridor plans detailed in the previous section. Still, the identification of the need for and development and implementation of these tools often is a process independent of revitalization strategies themselves.

### **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. NFC offers multiple loan programs, including a recent tool targeting exterior home improvements. NDC leverages monies and has significantly advanced implementation of the SW 9<sup>th</sup> Corridor Plan through development of three projects along the corridor.
  - 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**. Once created, the land bank will be an important tool to acquire and improve blighted properties and parcels. These will be assembled into plots and marketed to private or nonprofit developers.
- ✓ Several Des Moines neighborhoods have established supplemental taxing districts called Self-Supported Municipal Improvements Districts (**SSMIDs**). Before approval by City Council, at least 25 percent of affected property owners must provide signatures of support for the tool, which assesses an additional levy to support district improvements.
- ✓ Greater Des Moines leaders should support and promote efforts in 2017 to seek state legislative approval for individual localities to propose and approve a **Local Option Sales Tax** (LOST). This tool would support neighborhood improvement efforts by identifying specific local projects for funding through short-term tax increases approved by the community's voters. Leaders should seek unity on the priority uses for LOST prior to any public vote on tax appropriations.





## BUSINESS CAPITAL

Central Iowa is a regional leader in economic growth. Data shows that the region's economy continues to outperform all Midwestern comparison areas and is among the strongest in the nation. Its 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 experienced notable advances in its entrepreneurial ecosystem, fueled by research and commercialization linkages to Iowa State University, programs at Drake University, the University of Iowa's John and Mary Pappajohn Education Center downtown, the Global Insurance Accelerator, Square One DSM, Plains Angels, and individual, technology-focused entrepreneurs and innovators. A new focus on export opportunities to key foreign economies also has the potential to further enhance high-value job creation. Among business leaders, top concerns involve availability of talent to sustain growth and ensuring that Iowa's business climate remains competitive.

### 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.** Targeted sectors emerged from research in the Capital Crossroads 1.0 process. Bioscience efforts are concentrated in the Cultivation Corridor economic development initiative, a collaborative effort of the Greater Des Moines Partnership, Ames Economic Development Commission, Iowa State University, and private-sector investors. Because of the stability of current priority industries, target sector assessment, identification, and confirmation were not components of the Capital Crossroads 2.0 process. Development efforts involve a holistic focus on existing business retention and expansion as well as attraction of new employers. Opportunity exists for current employers in these key industry clusters to align with the Greater Des Moines Partnership, which, as an economic development and regional chamber of commerce organization, promotes Greater Des Moines as the best place to build businesses.

In relation, the growth of the Iowa Events Center and pending completion of an attached convention hotel positions **Central Iowa's tourism industry** to make even greater contributions to the regional economy. As it stands, hospitality and tourism attract more than 3 million annual visitors to Greater Des Moines, which then fuels even more job creation through distributed impacts of visitor spending. As noted in the Capital Core, the potential exists for Central Iowa economic development organizations and companies to more closely partner with the Greater Des Moines CVB to strategically attract industry-specific trade shows and events to the region.

## **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.**

With over 80 percent of local job creation coming from current employers, facilitating growth of existing businesses is a critical economic development strategy. 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 helping 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.***

- ✓ Councils currently are empaneled for the following sectors: Financial Services; Information Solutions; Advanced Manufacturing; Agribusiness Bioscience; and Logistics.
- ✓ Having top industry leaders around the table regularly to discuss competitive issues and opportunities gives economic development professionals the chance to leverage these top minds 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.
- ✓ Importantly, BRE conversations should continue to identify and inform external marketing programming through determination of priority markets to visit and the most viable attraction prospects to focus on for one-on-one meetings.
- ✓ BRE visits should cultivate relationships with top executives to enable these leaders to serve as key ambassadors in negotiations with business-attraction prospects and on external marketing trips.

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

- ✓ Business-to-business opportunities that keep regional spending within metro-area companies whenever possible is encouraged. One example of this is 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.
  - All opportunities to estimate, track, and measure the impacts of the program should be pursued.
- ✓ Many regional firms still have major service providers out of state and could be better informed about opportunities to source through local companies.
- ✓ Communication with corporate representatives about opportunities to source goods and services locally also should be a component of the BRE program.

### ***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. Advance Iowa partners with local and regional EDOs, including the Greater Des Moines Partnership, to offer its economic gardening services to local firms.
- ✓ Mid-sized employers eligible for economic gardening assistance likely fall through the cracks between BRE visitation and entrepreneurial-support services. Therefore, more robust outreach and communications are needed to reach these executives and promote the benefits of collaboration with Advance Iowa.

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

- ✓ Even the most robust regional BRE programs cannot visit all companies of size in the community. Regional development professionals must 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.**

While the vast majority of new jobs are created by existing businesses, it still is important for regions to maintain an external presence to build brand awareness and proactively influence potential corporate prospects, investors, entrepreneurs, and talent. This is accomplished through a multi-platform initiative leveraging electronic communications, person-to-person visitation (both outbound and inbound), and public relations strategies. The latter is especially valuable because so-called "earned" media placements in prominent media are the most influential to corporate decision-makers and site selection professionals.

As with existing business programming, it is crucial that external marketing be targeted on a finite number of priority target sectors, key industries, and markets.

One example of this regional branding is the Cultivation Corridor, a specifically branded initiative for biosciences that is a key component of Central Iowa's economic portfolio. Of note, the Greater Des Moines Partnership markets the region specifically to overarching economic development and talent audiences. The Greater Des Moines CVB markets the region to tourism markets. While the three mentioned carry this charge as part of each individual organization's priorities, all Capital Crossroads partners are encouraged to think holistically about how they can market and promote the region through their own companies and organizations to further support efforts to attract economic development, talent, and tourism audiences to the region.

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

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

- ✓ All websites that promote the region should be reflective of the region and promote its key attributes, in accordance with the website's primary focus. For example, the Greater Des Moines Partnership's website will be user-friendly for site consultants and corporate relocation officials that use websites as their first point of contact. In addition, such websites should be current and compelling and incorporate multi-media, as budgets allow.
- ✓ With the proliferation of **social media** and the ubiquity and volume of content and platforms, more opportunities are available to tell the region's story on a national scale. It is important to maintain a presence for Central Iowa on the top social media platforms. Capital Crossroads partners are encouraged to promote the region through their own social media channels and cross-promote one another's messaging to further collaborate, amplify, and uplift the region's voice when possible.
- ✓ E-newsletters and publications can be powerful mediums for disseminating regional news. For example, the Greater Des Moines Partnership deploys various newsletters to targeted audiences. In addition, the CVB and others disseminate informational newsletters. Partners are encouraged to distribute newsletters to targeted audiences via clean distribution lists with specific, strategically identified target audiences and aligned content for those specific audiences.

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

- ✓ Face-to-face relationship building is key in the economic development industry. 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.
- ✓ Research must be done both before and after travel to ensure that marketing missions are efficient, effective, and help inform future external trips.

***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. Securing face-time with these influencers and showing them local assets and amenities within the region is even more impactful.
- ✓ Most EDOs use prominent local events to attract top site evaluators. Because there is tremendous competition to secure travel commitments from these professionals, 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.***

- ✓ Greater Des Moines is a mainstay on “top community” lists across a multitude of assessment criteria. This is both a result of measurable economic growth that has been tracked via census data as well as strategic public relations initiatives from several partner organizations. In addition, the region has been prominently featured in many national publications. 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.***

- ✓ The Greater Des Moines Partnership and Greater Des Moines CVB are the most prominent organizations marketing the region externally. Though their audiences are different, there may be opportunities for collaboration when considering prospective talent needs to visit Greater Des Moines prior to relocation.
- ✓ 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 to allay expenses and capitalize on the presence of elected officials or top corporate executives.
- ✓ Capital Crossroads partner organizations are encouraged to work closely with regional organizations to disseminate holistic information about Central Iowa to these organizations through marketing tools whenever possible. For example, in addition to continuing its effective partnership with local EDOs on lead distribution and prospect and project management, the Greater Des Moines Partnership should continue to work closely with local practitioners to disseminate such information. These professionals

also may be solicited to accompany the region as desired on outbound prospecting trips, both domestically and internationally.

## 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. Certainly, the existing business outreach described in this plan provides regular opportunities to solicit employer feedback on business climate concerns that may impede their companies' growth. So, too, will meetings of the many Capital Crossroads implementation teams as well as any mechanisms for stakeholders to gather and discuss perceived constraints to achieving optimal economic growth and wealth creation. The challenge – and one that Central Iowa always has tackled in a collaborative, regional manner – is to formalize processes to identify policy issues and opportunities and act on them collectively. A great example is the Iowa General Assembly's recent passage of a biorenewable chemical tax credit supporting Cultivation Corridor efforts. 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.
- ✓ Policy work is critical to the success of many Capital Crossroads initiatives in that resources to support them often are provided fully or in part by the state and federal government. Because of this, demonstrations of regional unity on legislative priorities continue to be Central Iowa's most important contribution to the enhancement of the regional business climate and the efficacy of the strategic advancement of Capital Crossroads and many other important efforts.

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

- ✓ Passenger traffic at DSM has grown steadily for years and continues to set records for total number of enplanements, or boardings. Current and projected demand is a prime factor for the airport's proposed new terminal (see Physical Capital).
- ✓ 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. This may include the need to apply additional public-private funds to secure new and expanded service.

## Entrepreneurial Dynamism

Steve Case, former CEO of AOL and one of the biggest success stories of the early internet age, has a new mission through his “Rise of the Rest” movement: shine a spotlight on high-growth companies in emerging technology ecosystems to demonstrate that these firms now can start and scale anywhere, not just in a few coastal cities. One of the stops on Case’s first Rise of the Rest tour was Des Moines.

Central Iowa is taking this philosophy to heart through purposeful efforts to support the launch and growth of startups in the region’s most concentrated economic sectors. The Global Insurance Accelerator and a soon-to-launch business accelerator focused on agricultural technology are examples of aligning tech strategies with industry clusters to improve entrepreneurs’ chances of lasting success. In addition, initiatives like the Greater Des Moines Partnership’s Square One DSM, Plains Angels, and the University of Iowa John and Mary Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center create a culture of entrepreneurship. Work also is ongoing to better understand Central Iowa’s technology landscape to identify current gaps, opportunities, and solutions.

The greatest challenge for most entrepreneurial “ecosystems” is that starting a business is the beginning, not the end, of the process. Where most new startups fail is in the so-called “valley of death” between launch and the first significant funding round. Still, receiving these “series A” funds is not a guarantee of success; typically, multiple rounds of funding are necessary. 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.

The process of effectively nurturing a startup from idea to launch to sustainable success has been called a “conveyor belt” because the company is moved purposefully through a series of evolutionary stages, with each one requiring customized support and resources. Rather than being comprised by a single entity, an ecosystem of support programs, facilities, established entrepreneurs, and organizational staff typically advances companies from dependence to independence. Central Iowa’s ecosystem has many 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.***

- ✓ Because Des Moines area accelerators house non-local startups and do not require graduates to remain in the region long-term, efforts must be made during their residency to connect them with the community and provide compelling reasons to grow their business in Central Iowa. Building partnerships between accelerator graduates and local training institutions also could support firms' talent development needs as they grow.
  - Studies have shown that high-performing accelerator programs give entrepreneurs more time to work on their own rather than receiving program content. Successful programs also put less emphasis on finance, accounting, or formal business planning, instead helping develop presentation and communication, network building, and organizational structure and design skills.
- ✓ Greater Des Moines currently features the following acceleration programs:
  - An initiative of the Greater Des Moines Partnership, **Square One DSM** provides advice and mentoring to startups and entrepreneurs from the idea stage to capital formation and beyond. An on-site acceleration program works with select clients for one year to provide more hands-on guidance. Recently awarded a \$200,000 grant to increase its support capacity, the Square One DSM office also hosts networking opportunities and events. The program also is focusing on opportunities for women, minority, and military veteran entrepreneurs.
  - The **Global Insurance Accelerator (GIA)** is a mentor-driven, privately-funded 100-day program designed to foster innovation and support insurance technology ("InsureTech") startups. Participating companies are given \$40,000 in seed capital in exchange for a six percent equity stake. Full support should be provided to GIA in the form of promotional assistance and leveraged connections with established and graduated firms to advance their growth through multiple funding rounds.
  - Modeled after GIA, a new **business accelerator focused on agricultural technology** will be launched in Central Iowa with the support of industry investors including DuPont Pioneer, Farmers Mutual Hail Insurance Company, John Deere, and Peoples Company. The Accelerator is designed to build upon one of the state's key industries and the entrepreneurial activity that can advance agricultural technology.
  - Central Iowa now can provide acceleration services for its two most prominent employment sectors. The creation of **additional sector-specific accelerators** should be carefully considered and pursued only if the region can claim a true competitive advantage in the industry.
- ✓ 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. Participating startups – selected through a competitive process – would receive



in-depth training, access to experienced mentors, and connections to companies' networks. As with most acceleration programs, startups would present their businesses at a showcase event upon graduation. **(BP6)**

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

- ✓ **Incubators and co-working spaces** are different than accelerators in that they are facilities more so than programs and do not offer time-limited, high-level support designed to advance firms from seed to launch. However, they are no less important and provide dynamic spaces for collaboration, networking, subsidized workspace and technology, and informal mentorship and business assistance.
  - Central Iowa's many co-working spaces, such as **Gravitate**, and incubators always can benefit from event and program sponsorships and promotion, connections to capital and mentorship resources, and inclusion in business networks.
  - General support for small businesses can be found at the **Small Business Development Centers** in Ames and Des Moines.
  - To further advance an incubator culture in Central Iowa, all efforts to establish co-working and incubation spaces beyond the region's population centers should be pursued.
- ✓ **Makerspaces** are special types of entrepreneurially focused facilities leveraging tools, technology, and support resources to create minimum-viable manufactured products. They have proliferated along with the greater affordability and accessibility of small-scale production technologies and software. **Area515**, an existing Des Moines Makerspace, is a nonprofit community of makers, artists, and hobbyists housed in a shared workspace with tools, technology, and support resources. **(BP7)**
  - To evolve Area 515 into a robust center for prototyping, invention, and creation in Central Iowa, support should be provided to diversify its funding model and dedicate full-time staff to manage its day-to-day operations. An enhanced Area 515 also could serve as a location for K-12 education, adult learning, and professional engagement.
- ✓ Various **support programs** for entrepreneurs and small businesses also are provided by statewide organizations. These include the Iowa Sourcelink, the Technology Association of Iowa, and VentureNet Iowa.
- ✓ **Entrepreneurial networking events**, or meetups, are the lifeblood of most ecosystems. They typically are hosted at accelerators, incubators, co-working spaces, makerspaces, or tech worker hangouts like coffee shops. Greater Des Moines offers numerous opportunities for these interactions, either annually or on a more regular basis. These include Gravitate educational events, 1 Million Cups, Accelerate DSM, CodeDay, the Global Insurance Symposium (site of GIA's "demo day"), TechBrew, Startup Drinks, Startup Weekend, and Celebrate! Innovation Week, which is sponsored by Des Moines Area Community College.
  - Leaders feel that a more robust interdisciplinary version of **Accelerate DSM** could become a signature annual event for Central Iowa's ecosystem.

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

- ✓ As arguably the top agriculturally-focused research institution in the world, Iowa State University (ISU) offers a wealth of potential commercialization and business-development opportunities. To better achieve these goals, the University recently has created an economic development hub for commercialization and business startup resources at the ISU Research Park's \$12 million **Core Facility**.
  - In addition to being the new home for the Cultivation Corridor, the Core Facility co-located the University's Center for Industrial Research and Service, Office of Economic Development & Industry Relations, Office of Intellectual Property and Technology Transfer, Research Foundation, Research Park administration offices, Iowa Small Business Development Center, Iowa State University Pappajohn Center for Entrepreneurship, and CyBIZ Lab.
  - Also housed at the Research Park is ISU's new **Startup Factory**, a program for students, faculty, and staff to create technology-based businesses. Entrepreneurs at the Startup Factory will receive formal training, resources, and access to a network of business mentors, advisers, counselors, and investors in two 26-week blocks.
- ✓ 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.
  - To this point, ISU recently created the **Ag Startup Engine**, a development program for agricultural technology companies. The Startup Engine will serve as a business acceleration resource for startups across the agricultural innovation spectrum
- ✓ As a vital partner in the Cultivation Corridor initiative and Business Capital efforts, Iowa State University is intrinsically linked with Capital Crossroads economic development activities. These connections should be leveraged to provide the University with all necessary support to achieve its goals of commercialization and startup development, including prioritizing ISU issues in annual state and legislative agendas.

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

- ✓ Sourcing seed, venture, and growth capital is not only the top concern of all startup businesses but of all startup communities. Even entrepreneurs in capital-rich regions like Austin, Texas, frequently lament the lack of investment capital available for their enterprises. There is no easy solution to the challenges of startup capital formation.
- ✓ 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.
  - Though NestMint, an earlier attempt to create a fund for early-stage startups, was closed due to lack of sufficient investment, additional attempts to create **seed and proof-of-concept**

**funds** should be pursued. These funds likely will require public, philanthropic, and nonprofit as well as private capital to become viable.

- Pitching specific Central Iowa startup company opportunities to venture capital firms looking to satisfy the goals of one or more of their funds could lead to capitalization of one or more series rounds and enable the new business to expand in the marketplace.

## PROMOTE A DIVERSE, NETWORKED CULTURE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP.

Many participants in Capital Crossroads 2.0 input noted that, for technology entrepreneurship to become more established in Central Iowa, those with the skill set to be successful startup founders must see entrepreneurship as a viable career path. This includes young people, women, military veterans, and the foreign born. While not everyone has the requisite qualities to become successful entrepreneurs, working for a startup is a path available to everyone.

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. (BP8)***

- ✓ Supportive resources should be developed to assist companies interested in implementing intrapreneurship programs in their firms. Intrapreneurship is defined as the process of engaging in entrepreneurial activities while still employed at a larger organization. Intrapreneurs focus on transforming ideas into profitable ventures for their own and the company's gain.
- ✓ Instilling entrepreneurial principles in Central Iowa corporations would help advance the concept of and benefits from enterprise development in existing employees, their networks, children, and extended families.

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

- ✓ Regional preschool to 16 students already are exposed to entrepreneurship through multiple programs, including a strong focus on the concept at the Waukee Community School District's **APEX** campus and the Des Moines Public Schools' **Central Campus**. While a curriculum of this type is the province of Human Capital, its contribution to economic vitality cannot be overlooked.
  - Every attempt should be made to institutionalize the teaching of entrepreneurship in all Central Iowa schools, even at the middle and primary levels.
- ✓ Entrepreneurship education is more established at higher educational levels. Multiple programs and degrees across Central Iowa campuses currently provide students the skills to start and manage their own businesses. Iowa State is working to launch a **Student Innovation Center** where students from various schools can work together on real problems and projects.

- ✓ Ascent Iowa, an organization founded to support female entrepreneurs and women-owned businesses, and Iowa Women Lead Change (IWLC) partnered to sponsor Invest in She female “pitch” events in Central Iowa. Complementary programming could be developed to greatly expand the region’s capacity to support **women entrepreneurs**.
- ✓ Capital Crossroads input participants suggested developing a program to support **“encore” entrepreneurs** – business people starting companies later in their careers – as a “next generation” (i.e., new to the world of small business development) entrepreneurship cohort. This also could include programming specific to exiting **military veterans**, potentially integrated into the Home Base Iowa program. (BP9)
- ✓ Though many immigrants and refugees were small business owners in their home countries, in America they often work in low-paying service industry jobs. By creating a physical and programmatic **hub for immigrant and refugee entrepreneurship**, these residents can be encouraged to start and grow businesses and help showcase Central Iowa as a region where non-native populations can thrive. (BP10)
  - Housed in a strategically located facility, the immigrant and refugee entrepreneurship program could include core components such as business plan advising, assistance navigating government licensing and permitting requirements, financial education and support, networking events, and co-location of social services entities and personnel. New businesses could be placed in currently vacant retail spaces or aggregated “international markets” of goods and services firms.
  - Existing capacity could be incorporated into the hub per the determination of project leaders. An example is **Solidarity Microfinance**, a program of Iowa Community Capital that provides small loans and support to small business owners and aspiring small business owners in Des Moines.

## International Expansion

Recent economic development theory has centered on expansion of export markets and support for local companies’ international growth ambitions as among the most impactful programs that can be implemented to foster high-value job and wealth creation. This is not traditional economic development work; EDO staff must act more as facilitators than marketers and help make connections between local firms and potential international markets and customers.

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 new foreign markets for regional businesses and increasing foreign-direct investment opportunities in Central Iowa. The initiative strives to leverage regional strengths in agriculture bioscience and insurance and financial services to support international and export growth, optimize the global competitiveness of existing employers, and address labor needs through recruitment of foreign talent and

training of existing workers to meet the needs of global firms. Global DSM is the centerpiece of the Business Capital's international programming and, as such, serves as the template for the International Expansion objective.

### **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.***

- ✓ As will be detailed in the next Capital, the Cultivation Corridor initiative will serve as the region's principal branding and marketing program to support domestic and international growth in agricultural bioscience.
- ✓ In addition to direct engagement with foreign partners and governments, the Corridor will represent Central Iowa at internationally-based and/or focused conventions and events.

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

- ✓ Referenced earlier in Business Capital, external marketing will prioritize domestic and international markets to promote Central Iowa's competitive advantages in this 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**, the Greater Des Moines Partnership and local EDO business retention and expansion activities expanded to better address export activity and opportunities.
- ✓ 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.***

- ✓ To support the talent development goals of the Trade and Investment Strategy, a Task Force was empaneled to oversee the creation of the **Global DSM International Talent Strategy**. Implementation of this plan will require cross-Capital activity and coordination. Most prominently, work on the Des Moines **Immigration Integration Initiative** will be the province of Human and Social Capital.
- ✓ 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. These elements could include micro-loan and mentor match programs.
  - These efforts also are critical components of the OpportUNITY poverty-reduction strategy for Central Iowa.
- ✓ Actions to support expansion of Central Iowa's foreign-born workforce should include advocating for immigration and H1B visa reform in the region's federal legislative agenda.



## CULTIVATION CORRIDOR

Since its inception as the “Capital Corridor” in the initial Capital Crossroads plan through its official branding as Iowa’s Cultivation Corridor and the subsequent development and implementation of its first Strategic Vision framework, the initiative has become Central Iowa’s and the State of Iowa’s signature agricultural biosciences marketing program. The first three years of Cultivation Corridor strategic activity focused on building awareness, economic development, strategic innovation, resource aggregation, and policy leadership.

Major accomplishments of the Cultivation Corridor to date include the passage by the Iowa General Assembly of a first-in-the-nation Biorenewable Chemical Tax Credit (strongly informed by a Cultivation Corridor-commissioned report, *Biobased Chemicals: The Iowa Opportunity*), several significant corporate expansions, the securing of more than \$700 million in new capital investment, and the creation or retention of more than 850 jobs.

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 and is summarized in the following strategic priorities and tactical actions.

Though not components of its official program of work, the Cultivation Corridor will pursue opportunities, as feasible, to support and develop beneficial policy development and build Central Iowa’s startup ecosystem in alignment with the Corridor’s mission. However, the organization will not lobby, take positions on federal or state policies that do not directly impact Corridor constituents, or publish a policy agenda. While the Cultivation Corridor will participate in startup programs, judge competitions and awards, and develop relationships with ag-focused venture capital funds and managers, it will not invest capital in private ventures.

### 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. Lead-generation will be achieved through external travel to trade shows, conferences, and priority target markets, with the management of leads coordinated with partner EDOs in Central Iowa.

**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.**

The presence of Iowa State University and multiple research-intensive corporations in the Cultivation Corridor is a key component of the region's globally competitive position for ag-based companies and talent.

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** and lead select programs and initiatives that advance Iowa's competitiveness for value-added agtech.
- ✓ Cultivation Corridor also will add web-based spatial capabilities to the Iowa Ag/Bioscience Asset database and develop other tools that enable companies and economic developers to better compete for ag capital and talent.
- ✓ Like its role in commissioning the influential *Biobased Chemicals* report, the Cultivation Corridor opportunistically will support research endeavors that reinforce its core mission.



## WELLNESS CAPITAL

Like the State of Iowa, wellness is important to Central Iowa leaders. In 2011, stakeholders felt so strongly about the benefits of wellness that they made it a strategic Capital in the initial Capital Crossroads vision plan. Since that time, work has been done on numerous fronts of Wellness Capital, from community-wide assessments to the development of toolkits for workplace wellness to the leveraging of the diverse programming of the Healthiest State Initiative. More than 900 regional businesses participated in a **Wellness and Community Study** that helped inform programs to improve local health and wellness outcomes.

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 that incorporates social and emotional well-being, including financial management, stress, relationships, etc. Program operators have found that, in several instances, there is a greater response and support from employees to this approach. However, research has shown that relatively few organizations, whether for-profit, nonprofit, academia, or governments currently offer these types of programs.

The Wellness Capital will devote much of its upcoming focus to further assessing and helping to address these issues. 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

To design and implement pervasive wellness strategies, it will be necessary to continue to survey residents and businesses on their current conditions and priorities. In addition to assisting with the Affordable Care Act-mandated Community Health Needs Assessment for Polk, Dallas, and Warren Counties, the Wellness Capital conducted the Wellness and Community Study to inform the toolkit developed to support workplace wellness. The United Way of Central Iowa also has selected the Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index as its measure of health in the region.

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. These surveys and assessments not only reveal important information used to develop programming but can serve as ongoing quantitative and qualitative records of overall health outcomes and trends.

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

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

- ✓ The Wellness Capital has leveraged the process and findings of the **Community Health Needs Assessment** for Polk, Dallas, and Warren Counties as a key opportunity to engage with the public and media on local health issues.
  - 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 services in tandem with public and nonprofit partners. It will be critical that leaders work effectively to prioritize Assessment findings to improve program implementation.
- ✓ Health is one of the United Way of Central Iowa's three principal program areas. Following extensive research and input from the community, in 2014, United Way of Central Iowa selected the **Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index** as its measure of health in Central Iowa. The Gallup Index should be incorporated into Wellness Capital data profiles to assess and communicate Central Iowa health and wellness trends.
- ✓ 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. Capital committee members will convene to review survey language before distribution to Central Iowa firms.
- ✓ 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

Data have shown that Central Iowa is one of the most philanthropic regions in the country, and the State of Iowa has demonstrated a lasting commitment to improving the health of its residents. Therefore, in addition to the usual collection of local, state, and federally funded programs, Central Iowa has leveraged philanthropic and grant monies to develop and implement a more comprehensive array of wellness programming than most, if not all regions, of its size. As an example, the United Way of Central Iowa – the highest per capita funded United Way in the country – has identified health as one of its three principal focus areas and integrates multiple initiatives under its funding umbrella.

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. Officials would like to see more candid public discussions about how mental health touches the lives of all residents.

In May 2015, the United Way of Central Iowa, in partnership with the Mid-Iowa Health Foundation and the Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines, solicited a study on behavioral health services in Central Iowa. The resulting report, **Challenges and Opportunities for Mental Health and Substance Use Service Delivery in Central Iowa**, identified positive trends in the region's capacity to address behavioral health services and funding issues, but also challenges. Eleven recommendations were made to resolve service gaps and barriers.

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

#### ***I. Convene partners to inform coordinated mental health programming. (BP11)***

- ✓ To support the 2015 Community Health Needs Assessment, the Wellness Capital should raise the profile of mental health issues and programs in Central Iowa and the need to address identified gaps

and services challenges. This could involve the development of a **targeted communications strategy** focused on this issue.

- ✓ Capital Crossroads input participants said an elevated focus on mental health could foster partnerships between health departments and hospitals to conduct community mental health assessments, identify key leaders and influencers in mental health services, establish a mental health diagnosis spectrum, determine additional hospital training needs, make connections to the criminal justice system and drug and alcohol treatment programs, and retain and attract enough clinicians to provide services at full capacity.
- ✓ All **existing local and regional programs and services** should be leveraged to improve Central Iowa's social and emotional wellness outcomes. Among these are:
  - The United Way of Central Iowa works to coordinate **targeted health strategies** focused on, 1) increasing opportunities for vulnerable populations to reduce social isolation and increase healthy social interactions and experiences, 2) supporting healthy brain development, and 3) improving access to behavioral health services for children and adults.
  - **Iowa ACEs 360 Policy Coalition** unites business, education, and nonprofit leaders working to raise awareness about the lifelong impacts of childhood trauma. In 2015, United Way successfully advocated for improved Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) data collection, and, in 2016, United Way advocated for statewide children's crisis response systems.
  - The statewide **Connections Matter** community initiative focuses on building relationships to develop healthy brains and strong communities. More than 200 advocates will be trained to deliver this message and receive tools and materials to enhance relationship building in their communities.
  - Through its Integrated Health Program, **Orchard Place** is leading Central Iowa's efforts to enable children facing behavioral and emotional challenges to be successful at home, school, and in the community.
- ✓ The Wellness Capital could elevate the awareness of mental health issues by supporting a comprehensive **communications initiative** to combat public stigmas about seeking mental health services.
- ✓ Capital Crossroads leaders also advocate for fostering a partnership with **Broadlawns Medical Center** to expand its mental health services capacity.

## SUPPORT IMPROVED REGIONAL SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

Multiple providers and programs support the improvement of Central Iowans' wellness outcomes. In addition to county public health departments, local and regional nonprofit service providers and funding organizations either directly implement programs or support them through resource provision or coordination. Hospitals, education and training providers, and economic development organizations also apply capacity to wellness efforts.

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.***

- ✓ Most local governments maintain public health programs and facilities. The following are additional programs available to Central Iowans. Whenever possible, programs implemented locally should be pursued regionally as resources allow.
  - Iowa's **Healthiest State Initiative** is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization striving to make Iowa the healthiest state in the nation. The Initiative engages communities, businesses, communities, schools, organizations, and institutions through multiple programs focused on increasing the number of Iowans living active lifestyles, improving physical and emotional well-being, and decreasing statewide tobacco use.
  - **Age-Friendly Greater Des Moines** works to make the region an inclusive and accessible urban environment that promotes active aging through infrastructure, social capital, communications, and health services. The Age-Friendly Greater Des Moines initiative is guided by a thirty-member Advisory Committee and administered through a collaborative effort that includes the City of Des Moines, Des Moines University, Aging Resources of Central Iowa, and AARP Iowa.
  - **Healthy Homes Des Moines** is a collaboration of numerous local organizations working to identify and repair household childhood asthma triggers like leaky plumbing and old carpet. Local officials also are applying for a grant to fund a screening tool for prevention of in-home health threats. Program leaders would like the City of Des Moines to make its code inspectors Healthy Homes certified as it updates its zoning code.
  - The Greater Des Moines Partnership introduced the **Get Active DSM** mobile application to encourage exercise and created a toolkit for businesses to implement wellness programs.
  - **Familywize** provides free prescription savings cards to anyone in need of assistance affording medications.
  - **Visiting Nurse Services of Iowa** provides medical and social services for women, children and families, adults, and seniors. Services include home visits, family support, parent education, and transportation.



## HUMAN CAPITAL

Talent capacity is the number one competitive issue in economic development today. Successful regions are those that can supply the skilled talent necessary to meet the demands of the technology-focused businesses creating the economy's best, highest-paying jobs. Because the competitive primacy of talent has become gospel for most every U.S. community, billions of dollars are being applied to institutions, programs, and services to support the education and training of students of all ages. The reality, however, is that very few strategies have proven effective to significantly improve local academic performance of the populations most vulnerable to falling behind in school.

Among the most promising – and increasingly ubiquitous – strategies to foster effective talent development are so-called collective impact **cradle-to-career (or cradle-to-retirement) partnerships** between business, education and training institutions, government, social service entities, and economic development organizations. The largest of these – the Strive Partnership in Greater Cincinnati and Advance Nashville in Tennessee – have worked for years to coordinate all facets of the education and training pipeline under a unified framework and to inform improvement strategies through the consistent use of fine-grained, disaggregated performance data.

The creation of a cradle-through-career coalition was recommended in Capital Crossroads 1.0, with the development of **EDGE (Education Drives our Greater 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. The efforts of the two organizations are intrinsically linked and self-supporting. Through collective impact, the EDGE campaign and the United Way can 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. For EDGE, that vision calls for increasing the percentage of Central Iowa adults with high-quality degrees, certificates, and other credentials to 75 percent by the year 2025, an outcome reinforced by the United Way's goals of improving the percentage of Central Iowa students who graduate from high school to 95 percent by the year 2020 and helping 10,000 more people earn their high school equivalency degrees by 2020 through the Bridges to Success program.

Many of the programs helping to drive these accomplishments are components of a comprehensive poverty-reduction plan called **OpportUNITY** being overseen by the United Way and a coalition of hundreds of community partners. OpportUNITY, a community-driven approach to reduce Central Iowa poverty by 20 percent, encompasses multiple components of the Human Capital through its four focus areas: 1) education and employment readiness, 2) housing, homelessness and transportation, 3) system and policy changes for new Iowans and those facing the child care cliff effect, and 4) food insecurity. Successful implementation of OpportUNITY is critical to ensuring that all Central Iowans available to work are provided the support needed to attain quality employment.

EDGE aggregates data produced by local school districts and Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) and enhances it with business surveys focused on accessing information on worker degrees and credentials. Meanwhile, the Greater Des Moines Partnership has included questions on worker education in

its Synchronist BRE surveys. The Partnership currently is piloting a new Synchronist talent-specific survey which with a full-scale launch to occur in 2017. United Way also relies on partners and publicly available databases to compile information driving its collective impact strategy processes.

*Capital Crossroads 2.0 will focus its Human Capital strategies on the coordinated networks managed by the EDGE campaign and the United Way for all facets of talent development except worker attraction. EDGE has been designed to bring stakeholders – including the United Way – together to identify and address challenges that have arisen and are hindering goal attainment.*

As with the Wellness Capital and so many other strategic Capitals, there are far too many individual entities and programs to effectively list in this plan. Therefore, it should be assumed that the EDGE campaign and the United Way will optimize talent development and capacity through the data-driven, iterative, and coordinated strategic process of **collective impact**. Of course, theory and practice are two different beasts. To advance the theory of collective impact in practice, the EDGE campaign and the United Way will require the personnel and resource capacity to manage a network of hundreds of partner organizations and thousands of practitioners and volunteers. Benchmark communities have shown that this necessitates significant staff and budgetary capacity. Managed by the Greater Des Moines Partnership, EDGE is administered by significantly fewer staff than comparative initiatives.

#### **OVERARCHING GOAL**

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

## Workforce-Supportive Policies

State and federal regulations, policies, and performance requirements have significant impacts on education and training processes and providers' ability to effectively educate local students. 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. Its connections to all relevant Central Iowa education and training entities and partners positions EDGE to be a go-to tool for identification of policy-related issues, opportunities, and strategies to address or capitalize on them.

#### **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. This was the case during a recent legislative session when EDGE built a coalition of partners, including district superintendents and the state's teachers' union, to engage in conversations with elected officials about the school funding bill.

**TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

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

- ✓ The Greater Des Moines Partnership's EDGE campaign staff meets with every Central Iowa public school superintendent and most private school administrators quarterly. It also had education and workforce leaders represented on its founding Board of Directors. The function of this Board and the work of the EDGE campaign have been integrated into The Partnership's newly formed Business/Education Advisory Council, whose membership will consist of Central Iowa business, education, workforce, and nonprofit leaders. These conversations, along with information gathered by the United Way through its collective impact initiative, should serve as key avenues to identify the region's top education-related legislative issues.
- ✓ Work by economic development organizations through their existing business programs is useful to inform industry-specific education policy issues. Target Industry Councils empaneled by the Greater Des Moines Partnership also are rich veins for discussion of state and federal policy that could impact talent availability. A key current issue for technology businesses is the expansion of the federal H1B visa program.

***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.
- ✓ Education-related trends and legislative priorities have been and will continue to be promoted and discussed at The Partnership's **Annual Excellence in Education Summit**. The Summit shines a spotlight on the top policy concerns and best practice initiatives of the region's education community, supported by local business.

## Cradle through Career Pipeline

As noted in the introduction, recent talent improvement trends have seen the creation of expansive and well-capitalized partnerships coordinating the development of students from birth through college, careers, or retirement. In Central Iowa, the EDGE campaign embodies the complete pipeline, but the United Way of Central Iowa manages key initiatives of the cradle to college process. It also has recently increased its investment in Central Iowa talent development through its leadership in the Bridges to Success program. With education as one of its three focus areas, the United Way has dedicated considerable capacity towards developing strategy maps prescribing the necessary actions to ensure that students

graduate from high school college-ready. The United Way even funds a full-time Community Impact Officer to manage its education initiative.

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. However, recommendations from Central Iowa stakeholders to further enhance the region's education and training capacity with new programs and projects also will be incorporated into tactical opportunities.

While effective talent development in Central Iowa of course is critical to its future, local leaders emphasize that the region also must pursue education and training programs and policies in the context of statewide efforts. Most prominent among these is the recently announced **Future Ready Iowa Alliance**. Overseen by a governor-appointed public-private board, the Alliance will develop and recommend a strategic plan to accomplish the Future Ready Iowa goal of 70 percent of Iowa's workforce having education or training beyond high school by the year 2025, including postsecondary degrees, certificates, and other credentials.

### **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.**

Central Iowa employers have long been engaged in talent development through roles on workforce boards, Central Iowa Works, the Business/Education Alliance (BEA) of Greater Des Moines, the Greater Des Moines Partnership efforts, the United Way of Central Iowa board and other directorships, partnerships with one or more schools and institutions, and now, the EDGE initiative. Even with such sustained and robust interactions between the demand (companies) and supply (institutions) sides of talent development, 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:**

#### ***1. Conduct a private sector-led Community Needs Assessment for higher education. (BP12)***

- ✓ Education leaders feel that insufficient measurement of student interest or preparation for various professions rather than lack of programmatic capacity is contributing to local talent shortages. Challenges are compounded by misalignment between managerial and professional positions and the programs and/or academic majors training for them. Shifts to online programs for working adults and other post-traditional leaders also are complicating effective workforce development.
- ✓ Recognizing that Iowa is best served by a healthy ecosystem of public and private institutions of 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. This Assessment will build on the existing Iowa Board of Regents study.

- ✓ Recommendations should be incorporated into the EDGE campaign's implementation framework.

## ***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.
- ✓ Both public and private leaders feel that businesses could more effectively engage with training providers to better educate students on Central Iowa career pathways. Participation in existing career-focused programs and partnering on the development of future initiatives will ensure that the business community's voice fully informs student-support processes.
- ✓ To effectively educate and train students to fulfill employer needs, it is critical that those needs are clearly communicated, understood, and acted on. Often, there are disconnects within companies themselves related to articulating talent demands. Educational institutions, training providers, and support organizations should work with firms to ensure that feedback from human resources personnel and senior management on companies' workforce needs are aligned. This information will be critical to best matching student skillsets with education and training programs.
- ✓ It also is important that educational institutions and training providers stay current on the job posting terminology used by businesses to advertise open positions on job search websites. Institutions must fully comprehend the occupational dynamics of locally available positions in order to effectively create and implement programs.

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

The early childhood period is critical to the future educational success of all youth. Because the brain is fully developed at age three, any deficiencies from birth to that time can lead to developmental delays and long-term challenges in school. Many families, especially those headed by single parents, are at a disadvantage for early childhood services because of resource limitations or a parent who is in school or working full-time. 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.
- ✓ Communicating with eligible families should be pursued through all effective channels, including neighborhood associations and faith-based organizations.

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

- ✓ Resources and support that strengthen parents' interactions with their children and promote early learning in home environments are available to Central Iowa families. This is especially true for at-risk children, who often enter school less prepared than youth from higher-income households. Parents and early care and education providers benefit from training and professional development related to the most effective strategies for working with young children.
- ✓ The State of Iowa provides funding for ten hours of preschool per week for all four year olds. The availability of preschool slots is dependent on district-by-district resources. 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.**

Elementary school years can establish learning patterns that stay with children throughout their educational lives. These often are the years when young children become socialized and begin to grasp the concepts of teamwork and personal responsibility. 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.***

- ✓ Positive physical and mental health are key to a child's ability to learn and perform in school. Healthy school lunches, exercise, and other benefits greatly improve educational performance in the elementary grades. At-risk early grade students and families require more specialized support services to promote learning and to reduce absenteeism.
- ✓ Encouraging and supporting literacy in elementary school students provides tremendous lasting benefit. In fact, 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading proficiency is the number one predictor of high school success. The United Way of Central Iowa has set a goal of 90 percent reading proficiency for all Central Iowa 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students by the end of 2020. Programs that support this outcome include:

- **READ to SUCCEED** provides resources for parents and caregivers to help children learn to read, information on how to advocate for summer reading programs, and volunteer opportunities for community members.
- **Book Buddy** pairs volunteers with children weekly to increase literacy skills. Fifty sessions with a volunteer and at least 25 books are offered to participating students.
- **Power Read** is a literacy and mentoring program where volunteer reading partners are matched with elementary school students. Volunteers meet students at their schools each week to read books and do skills-building activities.
- Complementing the United Way work, the Des Moines YMCA's **Starfish Academy** works with three Des Moines Public Schools to help reduce the summer learning loss. The Starfish Academy encourages literacy skills, teaches healthy behaviors, and introduces new activities.
- **Boys & Girls Clubs of Central Iowa** provides a safe, supportive place for kids and teens to be after school and during the summer, with structured programs and caring staff role models in place to address the most difficult challenges facing young people today.

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

- ✓ Time spent in school is important for the development of young children, but the periods out of school are often more damaging to their educational prospects as risks for destructive behavior are more prevalent. Central Iowa offers programs that reinforce and enhance academic, social, and emotional learning during out-of-school hours.
  - **Summer in the City**, an intensive summer education and enrichment program for students in three Des Moines elementary schools and in Urbandale already has served 10,000 children. Des Moines Public Library also offers a **Summer Reading Program** for children of all ages.
- ✓ Central Iowa youth benefit from interactions with **Academic Coaches**, who work with elementary and middle-grade students out of school to improve behavior, academics, and school engagement.

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

Middle school is the period where many children permanently disengage from academics. If you do not reach a child by middle school, many experts claim, the chances that he or she ever will be successful academically plummet. Many of the same strategies for supporting elementary school students extend into their middle school years. Though the intent of the programs is similar, the strategies to engage and enhance academic performance become more challenging as students approach their teenage years.

**TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

***1. 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.
- ✓ However, middle school children – especially those from at-risk families – require more specialized support adjusting to the move from elementary to middle grades and then from middle to high school. Many districts have implemented **“trigger” systems** where faculty and advisors can flag students they feel are at risk of disengaging from school. These children then are provided more individualized support to ensure they stay on the path to high school.

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

The talent and skills crisis in America has transformed many high schools into laboratories for new training models and programs designed to effectively transition students to college and careers. Thousands of campuses and entire districts are being transformed into feeder systems for local employers dependent on enhanced workforce availability to be able to grow their businesses. In Central Iowa, the APEX campus of the Waukee Community School District is on the cutting edge of linking student experiences with the business world. Des Moines Public Schools’ Central Campus also is a successful model for introducing students to different career opportunities.

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:**

***1. Successfully advance students to graduation.***

- ✓ Programs supporting the successful transition to high school, particularly for at-risk students, are necessary to ensure that graduation rate goals are reached. Support services focused on time spent at school, out-of-school, and during the summer also are still important to optimizing performance and student mental and physical health.
- ✓ More specific attention and programming is necessary to address issues that are particular to high school students. In Des Moines, the **Graduation Walk** brings volunteers to the homes of youth who have dropped out of school or are at risk of dropping out to convince them to return to class. Thousands of Central Iowa students also have participated in **Academic Support Labs** and programs to help them graduate.

- ✓ 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.
  - Stakeholders also have recommended that Central Iowa develop a **formal engagement system** for parents of regional students. Leveraging and incorporating existing parental engagement programs at area schools, the regional initiative would synthesize outreach into a unified strategy and provide capacity and support to campus administrators to allow for effective implementation. Best practice designs from other communities could inform the new program. (BP13)

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

- ✓ A key United Way of Central Iowa education strategy is the requirement that all Central Iowa students graduate or complete high school with a **post-secondary plan** in place. Local school districts are laser-focused on this goal as state and federal assessment protocols are increasingly requiring exit exams and other confirmation that students are prepared for life beyond high school.
- ✓ There are dozens of programs in Central Iowa to introduce high school students to careers or even prepare them for a job upon graduation. Partnerships with two- and four-year colleges and between schools and companies are prevalent, most notably in the APEX high school and career academies with direct partnerships with businesses. Internships, apprenticeships, "2+2" programs, job shadowing, career days, and numerous other programs enable students to experience work environments or receive direct training for specific jobs. DMACC also offers an online **College and Career Planning System**, while the Greater Des Moines Partnership's **Connect 2 Business** portal enables students to develop career portfolios to simplify decisions about education and careers.
  - Capital Crossroads volunteer leaders and stakeholders also expressed a strong preference for the creation of a **Coding Academy** and **career-pipeline programs** – ideally offered across the region – to position students for success in this critical 21<sup>st</sup> Century technology. Preliminary planning on Central Iowa programming opportunities is underway between the Iowa Economic Development Authority, the Technology Association of Iowa, the Greater Des Moines Partnership, and business leaders. (BP14, BP15)
  - The Partnership should strengthen its collaboration with the **Iowa College Access Network (ICAN)**, a nonprofit agency whose Student Success Advisors work with schools, groups, and businesses to help Iowa secondary students achieve their educational and career goals. ICAN assists nearly 800,000 individuals per year with college and career planning, filing for financial aid, and developing individual college and career access programs.
- ✓ 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 programming for students. Collective impact is designed to optimize strategy based on data-supported trends and outcomes. These protocols should be followed to create defensible and effective tools to meet Central Iowa's ambitious workforce development goals by 2025.



## 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. Though resources to accomplish this goal are always at a premium, many of the same organizations supporting high school completion also are dedicated to working with colleges and universities to best prepare regional graduates for careers in Central Iowa companies.

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

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

- ✓ The thousands of students enrolled in two- and four-year programs at Central Iowa public and private colleges and universities represent opportunities to prepare them for degrees satisfying the hiring requirements of regional companies. Though this should not be the sole charge of four-year institutions, they nevertheless have created multiple programs tied to regional workforce demand.
  - The private sector-led **Community Needs Assessment** for higher education detailed earlier in this section will provide valuable input to inform higher educational programming.
- ✓ As a cradle-through-career campaign, EDGE is responsible for coordinating the training pipeline from postsecondary education to the Central Iowa workplace through metric-driven assistance to training providers and other partners. Principal among these is **Central Iowa Works**, a workforce intermediary that strives to close the skills gap and meet the needs of employers by helping them recruit and hire qualified workers in advanced manufacturing, healthcare, business services and operations, construction, and transportation, distribution, and logistics.
  - The **Central Iowa Workforce Development Board** (CIWDB) also has strategy and oversight responsibility for the workforce development system in the eight Central Iowa counties of Boone, Dallas, Jasper, Madison, Marion, Polk, Story, and Warren, and should be a fully engaged partner.
- ✓ Optimization of two and four-year degree pipelines is a constantly shifting challenge. With a mission of workforce development, **Des Moines Area Community College** can be more responsive and flexible to employer needs. But even for DMACC, resource availability is always a concern and it must provide compelling evidence that new programs are needed. When operating effectively, the EDGE collective impact campaign should stay abreast of employer demands and training capacity and calibrate strategic activities accordingly.

#### ***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

A key emerging issue in Central Iowa is the need for mid-level skills in current and prospective employees. 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. Formalizing career "ladders" through coordinated partnerships between providers and institutions would increase the portability of regional workers and enable them to be trained for open positions more rapidly. Coordination of lifelong learning programs and processes also is the role of the EDGE campaign and supports its 75x25 goal.

### **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. Central Iowa's well-established history of collaboration across public, private, and nonprofit sectors improves the likelihood that the projected number of completions will be accomplished.

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

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

- ✓ For many adults who never finished high school, the lack of a degree is the most significant obstacle to entering or re-entering the workforce or improving their employment prospects. 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: 1) a contextualized curriculum tied to areas of greatest job potential, 2) development of strong study habits, 3) full-time specially trained instructors, and 4) extensive wrap-around and support services.
- ✓ DMACC is the principal training entity in Central Iowa supporting adult degree attainment. DMACC operated a **Workforce Training Academy** and has campuses across the region, including a presence at the **Evelyn K. Davis Center for Working Families**, an innovative one-stop training and services

shop in the core of Des Moines for underserved populations. The Evelyn K. Davis Center could serve as a model for additional neighborhoods and communities in Central Iowa.

- ✓ Central Iowa Works and the Central Iowa Workforce Development Board also play roles in working with adults to direct them to appropriate training providers. Also engaged in these activities are **Iowa Workforce Development** and its affiliates, the **Drake University Adult Literacy Center** and **Project Iowa**.
  - **Skills2Compete** is a coalition serving as a voice for adult education and workforce advocacy that helps increase financial stability for working families to grow Iowa's economy.
  - In November 2016, United Way of Central Iowa was awarded a \$2.25 million grant from the U.S. Department of Labor to provide job training to 380 central Iowans seeking careers in health care through Central Iowa Works.
- ✓ Many Central Iowa adults 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. (**BP16**)
  - The program can focus on working adults to help them access the post-secondary system, increase the affordability of education, and help participants balance the demands of school, home, and the workplace to successfully earn their degrees. Employers would play a key role by connecting candidates to the program and supporting their goals.

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

Many Central Iowa residents who could benefit from participation in training programs or are interested in seeking employment are unable to do so because of externalities, including limited transportation access and lack of affordable child care. To maximize degree, certificate, and credential attainment, corresponding efforts to enable adults to access these programs will be necessary.

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

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

- ✓ Lack of reliable, affordable child care was cited in Capital Crossroads 2.0 input as one of the region's greatest workforce development liabilities. Stakeholders told of year-long waitlists for preschools, paying significant percentages of monthly incomes for child care, overcrowded in-home daycares, and inflexibility of child care pick-up and drop-off hours for working parents. Addressing system and policy changes for those facing the child care cliff effect also is one of the focus areas of the Opportunity 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** – to be discussed in greater detail in the Physical Capital – the agency will continue to enhance route and schedule planning to support worker mobility. Transportation accessibility also is a priority of the OpportUNITY plan.

# 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. Because talent attraction is becoming as well funded and aggressive as business attraction for local and regional economic development organizations, competition for top talent is fierce. Mid-sized, cold-weather regions like Central Iowa – despite its desirability as a destination to live and work and placement on numerous "best of" lists – only should pursue attraction of expatriates and individuals with some type of history or connection with the region. Far more viable are efforts to retain the thousands of college students graduating from higher educational institutions in Central Iowa every year.

## ***DESIRED OUTCOME***

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

## RETAIN SKILLED RECENT GRADUATES AND INTERNS.

Central Iowa residents attending regional colleges and universities and students from elsewhere in Iowa, the U.S., and overseas represent a captive audience for talent retention activities. While it cannot be assumed that local or non-local graduates will choose to remain in Central Iowa, the chances for retention are much greater when presented with a compelling job opportunity. 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.***

- ✓ The **CarpeDM (Seize Des Moines)** talent portal managed by the Greater Des Moines Partnership is a dynamic tool to engage individuals interested in Central Iowa. Efforts will be made to expand the use of the site as a connection point for students and companies looking to engage with teachers and students about opportunities for internships, apprenticeships, and job shadowing. Linkages will be made with information from the in-development Iowa Career Planning System.
- ✓ The **Young Professionals Connection (YPC)**, managed by the Greater Des Moines Partnership, is the region's largest network of YPs and counts as its mission connecting young professionals to the

community through social, civic, charitable, and professional development opportunities. YPC members could be valuable stewards and ambassadors for Central Iowa along with existing college students and recent graduates.

- ✓ Des Moines area corporations often look to partner with entities like the YPC or Des Moines Social Club to host talent prospects in town to visit the company, see the region, or interview for a job.

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

- ✓ Typically, it is difficult for economic development organizations to coordinate internship programs because they involve internal vetting and hiring processes at participating companies. However, it is possible to populate databases of available internships for use by talent and firms or potentially identify and pre-screen possible internship candidates. As mentioned, CarpeDM soon will have more robust listings and match opportunities for aspiring interns and interested companies.
  - For seven years, the Greater Des Moines Partnership also has implemented the **Seize the City** program, a series of community engagement and professional development opportunities for summer interns.
- ✓ For employers, the Greater Des Moines Partnership has launched a new internship toolkit called **Internships 101**. The free, online guide for employers provides information on key areas for implementing internship programs in their companies, including establishing a plan, recruiting and hiring, and management tips. Also included are resources such as a sample job description, local college and university contacts, sample interview questions, and legal considerations.
- ✓ To attract more interns from outside the region, Central Iowa must have an inventory of affordable and reliable housing options. For more than five years, Grand View University has offered student housing units as summer housing options for interns. While this has provided a solution to many summer interns, the region needs to increase the inventory of units for summer-only interns and provide inventory that is available year-round to expand internship experiences in Central Iowa.

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

- ✓ Nearly every college graduate now leaves school owing thousands of dollars in student loans. This reality strongly influences graduates' choice of profession and, often, their post-college destination. By offering qualified talent a program to forgive a portion or all 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. Work then could be done to connect recipients to local networks and resources like intern-support programs.

## **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. Public relations programs

have led to high-profile earned media placements and awards that improve awareness and external perceptions of Central Iowa.

While some young leaders feel that these rankings are not as impactful as peer-to-peer promotion of tangible local assets and advantages, the region has nevertheless increased its profile for talent looking at the Midwest as a potential landing spot. As mentioned earlier in this section, talent attraction ultimately will be more successful directed at candidates with prior experience with Central Iowa.

### **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. Offering talent prospects connections to companies hiring in their field or invitations to speak with CarpeDM ambassadors or young talent sharing their interests could spark greater interest in Central Iowa.
- ✓ Establishing a Central Iowa presence at the internationally renowned SXSW festival in Austin, Texas through the **Des Moines Embassy** venue has provided opportunities to showcase the many attributes and opportunities in Central Iowa, including the region's burgeoning tech ecosystem and live music industry.
- ✓ Consideration could be given to complementing corporate recruitment activities at **industry-specific events and conferences** with talent attraction efforts targeting skilled professionals.
- ✓ An alternative talent pipeline from graduating students is retired military personnel or soldiers transitioning from service. Greater Des Moines has implemented the **Home Base Iowa** program in the region. The program provides veterans and transitioning service members and their families with opportunities and benefits for a successful transition in Central Iowa.

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

- ✓ Data analytics technologies now provide marketing organizations the opportunity to customize searches to identify alumni of specific high schools, colleges, and universities and their degree awards. This information 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. (BP17)
- ✓ The CarpeDM talent portal is an effective way to expose prospects to Central Iowa resources and networks. More targeted talent prospect outreach could include customized links to CarpeDM content or facilitated connections with site ambassadors from their former cities, alma maters, or degree programs. The Greater Des Moines Partnership already has begun a large-scale integrated social media and engagement campaign to increase content creation and expand the pool of contributors through a newly launched #SeizeDesMoines Facebook group.

***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. Though tactics focus on foreign-born residents already located in Central Iowa, these programs and engagements should be widely promoted as testament to the commitment of Central Iowa to becoming a globally inclusive region.



## SOCIAL CAPITAL

In its work across the country, Market Street has found that leadership capacity is the single most prominent determinant of community success. Many feel that Central Iowa's culture of collaborative leadership is the "secret sauce" that has driven the region's ascendance as an increasingly prominent destination of choice.

Social Capital is more than networking; it is about creating relationships that build upon the strengths of the community members from all backgrounds. Social Capital is about ensuring the leadership capacity in Central Iowa transcends generations and reflects the current and future face of the community – a face that is increasingly diverse. It is about acknowledging that leadership is often learned and not a birthright. It is about today's generation the next, and the next. It is about civility and the ability to have conversations and create solutions that address inequities that are not always comfortable. Social Capital is about becoming a community that sees its future in the lives of its residents, works to acknowledge their contributions, and aids in their success in both in formal and informal places and public and private spaces.

Those engaged in implementing Social Capital goals suggest tenets be applied across all Capitals<sup>2</sup> and positioned as the catalysts for driving community conversations on topics that will define the region's future. Better integration of the Social Capital with other Capitals could include more outward-facing collaboration offerings, a centralized collection of efforts that detail how the efforts of the Social Capital could benefit the needs of the other Capitals, leveraging next generation leadership for positive and sustained community effort, and lowering barriers to entry of certain key leadership-development opportunities.

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. This certainly is consistent with the broader vision of Capital Crossroads as a coordinated framework to achieve equitable, transformative change.

The challenge will be to translate high level, broad themes into actionable, tactical work with clearly defined roles and responsibilities for implementation partners. 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.*

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<sup>2</sup> Cross-Capital elements of civility, diversity, equity, and inclusion are detailed later in this plan.

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

Capital Crossroads represents a comprehensive initiative inclusive of Central Iowa's principal strategic focus areas. 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.

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

- ✓ 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.
- ✓ Explicit in this exercise must be identifying and incorporating the vast amount of existing work taking place to assess and enhance leadership, diversity, equity, inclusion, and civility in Central Iowa.

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

- ✓ Grassroots community dialogues will be cultivated and supported to identify community issues, opportunities, and challenges germane to the Social Capital. It is important that formal and informal efforts are engaged to provide input into this process.
- ✓ 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. Community partners – both currently engaged and those not yet involved – will be invited to participate and set goals to ensure progress toward implementation.
- ✓ The implementation team will ensure the Social Capital drivers of success are included in all Capitals of Capital Crossroads.
- ✓ 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 many in the community have said, the desire to establish Central Iowa as a national best practice in leadership, diversity, equity, inclusion, and civility should be balanced with the acknowledgement that these are challenging, complicated, and far-reaching concepts that could take generations to achieve lasting change. Patience, persistence, and a sustained, coalition-based collaboration will be necessary for success.



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.

Key Social Capital efforts include, but are not limited to, the following:

✓ **Leadership:**

- The **Greater Des Moines Leadership Institute** recently conducted a survey to better understand the strengths and challenges facing the community and to help shape community leadership development in the region. Results are forthcoming.
- **Community Connect** was created as part of Capital Crossroads 1.0. This program sustains and expands leadership throughout the region by inspiring future leaders and givers through self-discovery and meaningful mentoring connections. Community Connect has transitioned to become a program of the Greater Des Moines Leadership Institute.
- The **Regional Leadership Council** (RLC) emerged from Capital Crossroads as a connection opportunity and collaboration tool for the 19 community-based, curriculum-based leadership development programs in Central Iowa. An annual convening called Converge was launched by the RLC to create opportunities for program alumni to come together and talk about collective action.
- The **Emerging Leaders Collaborative** (ELC) is an effort to link Central Iowa young professional programs in a network for collaboration and cross-pollination of ideas and activities. Twenty-five groups currently participate.
- The **Building Better Boards** initiative has launched to provide training and support to diverse communities to increase representation on nonprofit boards in Central Iowa.
- A volunteer-driven program for seasoned professionals, **GAP (Greater Des Moines Area Experienced Professionals)** is seeking to formalize a platform to extend leadership development from young professional groups into a more holistic continuum.

✓ **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion:**

- The **Inclusion Council** (formerly the Diversity and Inclusion Council) works to improve the diversity and inclusivity of the regional economy through education, promotion, and public awareness practices. The Council acts as a catalyst to mobilize the business community toward a broad economic development vision that incorporates all people as valued contributors and valuable customers. The Inclusion Council works to provide access to inclusive educational resources to all organizations in the metro.
- The **Refugee Planning Alliance Des Moines** is an organization that recently has emerged as a voice for the region's refugee community.

✓ **Civility:**

- The **Civility Initiative** provides resources on civility to 75 city councils, 50 school boards, ten county boards of supervisors, and 31 chambers of commerce. It developed the “Show Some Respect” campaign and provided messaging to the Iowa Caucus Consortium for integrating the concept of civility into the 2016 Iowa Caucuses and has identified strategic priorities for 2017, including continued grassroots engagement of individual actions.

***I. Formalize strategies to achieve established goals. (BP18)***

- ✓ Despite this impressive breadth of existing programming, regional leaders believe that more must be done to enhance leadership, diversity, equity, inclusion, and civility. Leaders feel that intentionality of efforts will be important, including clearly stated engagement of racially and ethnically diverse communities, students, young professionals, women, LGBTQIA persons, all faith perspectives, persons with disabilities, immigrant and refugee populations, low-income, 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 itself as well as comprehensive and ambitious strategies such as The Tomorrow Plan, OpportUNITY Plan, and others, successfully advancing a coordinated effort to improve leadership, diversity, equity, inclusion, and civility in all aspects of the Central Iowa community and professional life will be daunting. Organizations must engage in the overall initiative as well as its components. Implementation resources must be identified and sustained, and activities must be tracked, measured, reported, and enhanced as work proceeds on the action plan.

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

- ✓ Engaged partners should work together to determine implementation roles and responsibilities. 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.
- ✓ As with much of Capital Crossroads implementation, identification of resources to sustain enhanced strategic efforts for leadership, diversity, equity, inclusion, and civility improvement will be the principal challenge of implementation partners and the community at large. Because the goals of the initiative are so exemplary, the potential exists to secure significant local, regional, state, and national support to advance the tactics.

***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 and confirmed 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.
- ✓ Progress should be reported internally among implementation partners and externally to highlight Central Iowa's focus on – and advancement toward – becoming a national leader in leadership development and the incorporation of diversity, equity, inclusion, and civility into the community.



## CULTURAL CAPITAL

The Cultural Capital has been focused on three components during the first Capital Crossroads implementation cycle: communication, collaboration, and sustainable funding and capacity. These categories sought to capture the recommendations of a 2012 Community Cultural Plan prepared for Bravo Greater Des Moines. Seventeen partner communities commit a portion of their hotel-motel tax revenue to fund Bravo, which administers a competitive grantmaking program to support arts, culture, and heritage nonprofits in the region; the organization awarded \$2.3 million in grants to 58 arts and culture organizations in 2015.

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. During a focus group with arts and culture stakeholders held to inform the Capital Crossroads 2.0 Regional Assessment, participants identified the need for a shared vision and blueprint for arts and culture in Greater Des Moines as one of the sector's top strategic priorities. Possessing a wealth of arts and cultural capacity for a community of its size, Greater Des Moines is poised to leverage these resources more fully with the release and implementation of the Regional Cultural Assessment.

As with the 2012 Cultural Plan, 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, scheduled for release in mid-2017.** In the interim, Cultural Capital activities will continue as they have for the past five years of implementation. Much has been accomplished and more will be done during the lead up to the Cultural Assessment launch.

The timing of the Regional Cultural Assessment is critical because of the growth of entities like the Des Moines Social Club, the continued success of foundational institutions like the Des Moines Arts Center and Des Moines Performing Arts, the prominence and impact of the Des Moines Arts Festival, and construction of Mainframe Studios, a 160,000-square foot facility with space for over 180 affordable arts studios accommodating a variety of disciplines.

Many leaders – especially young professionals – are looking to the arts to elevate Greater Des Moines to the status of a national destination for creative talent in the vein of Portland or Austin. These are very high expectations and will no doubt be discussed during Regional Cultural Assessment outreach and development. The ambitions of its young leaders reflect the ascendance Greater Des Moines already has made to a community that can support the best and brightest talent in the Midwest and beyond.

**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.

Multiple museums, theaters, arts centers, galleries, performance venues, and arts companies and thousands of employees and sole practitioners comprise Greater Des Moines' arts and culture sector. Several funding and coordination organizations also exist to support the vitality of the arts and culture economy and community. 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.
- ✓ Through the Regional Cultural Assessment process, strategies to further enhance arts-supportive entities in Greater Des Moines may be discussed, proposed, and confirmed. These will be integrated into the Cultural Capital and advanced through Capital Crossroads implementation.

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

- ✓ There are far too many entities in Greater Des Moines' arts ecosystem to list here. Many of them struggle to survive in a very competitive funding environment for the arts and culture. Questions related to the optimal mix of content producers, facilities, and events may be addressed through the Regional Cultural Assessment plan.

- ✓ Market Street expects that certain Cultural Assessment feedback themes will echo perspectives from Capital Crossroads 2.0 arts and culture focus group participants. These stakeholders spoke of the need for greater collaboration and coordination among arts entities, improved access and outreach to existing and potential arts patrons, and greater awareness of local arts and culture assets among Central Iowans as key regional issues.
  - 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.***

- ✓ While the Capital Crossroads 2.0 plan will not prescribe specific actions for strategic implementation, there were nevertheless many suggestions made to enhance Central Iowa's arts and cultural sector. The recommendation that seemed to receive the most traction was the development and implementation of an action plan to grow the region's music sector.
- ✓ Stakeholders also mentioned the possibility of a regional arts entrepreneurship program, opportunities for a comprehensive public art initiative, and the need for a signature winter festival like those seen in many other cold weather communities.
- ✓ 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. Capital Crossroads can provide a useful framework to ensure that these needs are communicated to existing and potential regional partners.



## PHYSICAL CAPITAL

Sound planning and development in Central Iowa will yield equitably, universally accessible communities that are vibrant, resilient, and continue Central Iowa's position of being among the best places to live and work. Central Iowa must consider how to maintain and improve existing resources, how to fund and develop new infrastructure, and how to proactively embrace emerging technologies that could fundamentally change how one moves throughout their community. To support the rapid growth anticipated in Central Iowa, the region must ensure that smart and coordinated infrastructure investments are made and that development policies result in the type of built environment Central Iowans desire.

Central Iowa has made strides to ensure transportation infrastructure meets current and future demands, yet challenges persist. An increased Iowa fuel tax and selected federal funding of local projects provide capacity, but there have been no additional enhancements of transportation budgets. Funding needs still far outweigh availability per Greater Des Moines' **Mobilizing Tomorrow** plan and other research. The Des Moines Area MPO has determined the region requires at least \$10 million more annually to maintain the current condition of roads; this figure does not include funds needed for bridge work or other maintenance issues. Officials say that development of transportation capacity in Central Iowa must be more coordinated to ensure sustainable growth.

Leaders feel that transportation investment should be prioritized on fixing current issues and optimizing the existing system as opposed to capacity expansion. They advocate for a holistic view of transportation and mobility focused on multimodal systems to enhance accessibility, better link transportation to housing and jobs, enhance social justice and equity, and provide benefits for young talent looking for more transit-enabled mobility and dense, walkable urban nodes and corridors. These themes are consistent with priorities in the Opportunity Plan as well as efforts to retain and attract top talent to Central Iowa.

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

An analysis from the Des Moines Area MPO shows that nearly 98 percent of the region's roads are uncongested during peak commute hours. Traffic generally flows at or above the posted speed limit with mobility for motorists between lanes and few physical and psychological stresses. Though the region

expects to see a significant population increase by 2050, the road network is not expected to experience unstable or broken flows even without any future capacity enhancements to the roadway system; nearly 90 percent of the roadways still would operate at uncongested levels during peak hours.

While the road network provides efficient commutes and creates conveniences for motorists, this oversupply of capacity hinders the further development of other transportation modes. Poor bridge conditions, a growing yet underused transit system, an aging public transportation fleet, deteriorating pavement conditions, and freight impediments counter the short travel times in Greater Des Moines. The region 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:**

#### ***I. Create a non-partisan Mobility Alliance as a business-led partnership to advance multimodal mobility in Central Iowa. (BP19)***

- ✓ Many U.S. communities have created advocacy groups to advance regional transportation and mobility visions. Often business-led, these alliances 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.***

- ✓ 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.

- In accordance with the Des Moines Area MPO's **Congestion Management Process**, demand-reduction and operational management strategies should be evaluated before capital intensive mobility solutions are pursued. Examples of operational improvements include traffic signalization, managing access through driveway spacing, intelligent transportation systems, and ramp metering.
- ✓ Recognizing the proven connection between land use policy and mobility, policies to encourage compact, mixed-use development should be prioritized to make the most efficient use of existing transportation investments. Shorter block lengths in new developments would create a finer-grained street network with more intersections. Connectivity also would be enhanced by minimizing the use of cul-de-sacs in residential projects.
- ✓ To complement federally-funded Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) projects, stakeholders recommended that the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) partner effectively with the Ames Area and Des Moines Area MPOs and local governments on the selection and development of Iowa DOT projects in Central Iowa.

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

Multiple studies of individual preferences in built environments have shown that people are increasingly seeking pedestrian-scale, walkable neighborhoods and activity districts with access to public transportation as their communities of choice; this is true of both urban and suburban districts. Along with The Tomorrow Plan and Mobilizing Tomorrow, Capital Crossroads envisions shifting back to a more historical 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. Walkability efforts should be informed by the **Age-Friendly Greater Des Moines** initiative led by AARP to make Greater Des Moines an inclusive and accessible urban environment that promotes active aging and the Step It Up program mentioned in the Capital Core.

### **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. These could include an expanded B-Cycle system in the region or the development of new car-sharing services.
- ✓ Mobility alternatives also could be facilitated by incorporating pedestrian, transit, and bike amenities into cities' upcoming resurfacing projects and implementing "quick-build" projects – those that allow cities to experiment and implement projects fast while achieving immediate benefits for mobility and

safety – across the region. Rapid implementation methods realign and reassign space on streets using paint and simple physical objects that can be purchased cheaply and installed quickly.

- ✓ Urban Land Institute (ULI) Iowa, the Greater Des Moines Partnership, the City of Des Moines, and several other community partners are supporting a mobility study branded **Connect Downtown**. Recommended strategies to make downtown more pedestrian friendly and improve overall mobility and walkability should be advanced to enhance the district’s appeal to talent, businesses, and visitors. Enhanced connections to adjacent neighborhoods also should be considered.
- ✓ On-street and protected bicycle lanes are becoming increasingly prevalent in U.S. communities as biking and walking continue to increase in popularity as modes for commuting and mobility. Central Iowa should explore opportunities to plan for and support these facilities through the development of an action plan like those for off-street trails, water trails, and other amenities. The existing **On Street Bicycle Feasibility Study** could help establish a blueprint for enhancement of this capacity. Expanding the on-street bike network would help relieve some of the congestion frequently experienced on urban trails.
  - Projects like the Art Route in downtown Des Moines should be promoted as experiential, healthy strategies to encourage walkability.

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

- ✓ The City of Des Moines has hired a consultant to assess the condition of all city parking structures. With studies showing a glut of downtown parking at different times of day and locations and the rise of autonomous vehicles, the opportunity exists to rethink parking dynamics in downtown Des Moines. In mixed use areas, different land uses have different peak demand periods; thus, shared parking accommodates peaks for both uses.
- ✓ 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.
  - Strategies ultimately could involve formalizing shared parking agreements with private and institutionally-operated lots and structures, relaxing on-street parking restrictions, and real-time parking availability software for smart phones and tables.
  - Zoning codes can include design standards for parking facilities to reduce parking garage blank walls and large parking lots in front of buildings, and to increase pedestrian access. Communities also have pursued opportunities to commission public art to help mitigate the effect of blank building walls. Zoning codes also can help ensure parking structure designs accommodate future reuse and can eliminate parking minimums while establishing parking maximums.

### ***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.
  - Following the lead of the City of Des Moines' recent adoption of National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) standards, local governments can adopt nationally-accepted standards on bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
  - Cities also can leverage the Des Moines Area MPO's Complete Streets policy template and develop systems to implement it. This includes but is not limited to assessment of current procedures, documents, and codes and ordinances used in transportation decision-making.

## **ENHANCE REGIONAL TRANSIT CAPACITY.**

Though transit usage is increasing in Greater Des Moines, the region's largely suburban and rural orientation and relative lack of congestion makes implementation of large-scale transit improvements a constant challenge. The simple fact is that Greater Des Moines currently does not have the densities necessary to significantly leverage transit in regional mobility strategies. However, 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 the community. Key leaders, including many millennials, argue that transit expansion is key to Greater Des Moines' ability to retain and attract top talent.

Guiding transit investments in the Des Moines region will be the approved update of the **DART Forward 2035 Transit Services Plan**. The DART Forward 2035 Plan recommends route alignments based on existing and planned densities of residents and employees. Matching transit service with where people live and work is the best way to maximize access and to operate a system most efficiently. It also is important that the transit stops are accessible by bicycle and by foot. In both the short- and long-term, the geography of future development across the region should align with the region's transit routes and link to bicycle and pedestrian networks.

A **Transit Future Work Group** empaneled by Capital Crossroads and comprised of regional business, community, and civic leaders also was launched to discuss and recommend transit development opportunities and priorities in the region.

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

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

- ✓ The Transit Future Work Group will be a critical voice affecting not only the DART Forward 2035 update but also the incorporation of transit into strategies for evolving Greater Des Moines' built environments based on modern preferences for mixed-use, multimodal, walkable urbanism.

- ✓ 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.
- ✓ Operational and funding solutions will be necessary for DART's and the region's long-term success. As Central Iowa looks to recruit and retain employees and businesses; connect people to jobs, education and economic development; and ensure age-friendly communities, it is essential to provide funding for a variety of mobility options to ensure the region's competitiveness.

## ***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>3</sup> The Tomorrow Plan and PlanDSM identify nodes and corridors that communities can use as priority locations for transit-oriented development, while the DART Forward 2035 Plan recommends route alignments and service frequencies based on existing and planned growth and densities.
  - Matching transit service with where people live and work is the best way to maximize access and to operate the system most efficiently. It is also important for transit stops to be accessible by bicycle and by foot, which may entail the need to develop sidewalks at these sites.
  - PlanDSM, the City of Des Moines' recent comprehensive plan, advocates for "nodes and corridors" planning. This planning strategy was developed in coordination with DART and will support higher densities at key locations, a key to transit success. Other communities should model updates and rewrites of their comprehensive plans with nodes and corridors principles.

## ***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.
- ✓ The DART Forward 2035 Plan Update notes that the potential exists for transportation network companies such as Uber to supplement transit service for certain trips. Successfully coordinating all services can provide a comprehensive mobility solution for those wishing to use public transportation.

## ***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, car share, etc.) to reduce parking requirements and providing non-auto mobility options. Transit planning must also accommodate existing key jobs locations throughout the metro.

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<sup>3</sup> Additional information about the transportation/land use connection can be found in the Land Use, Zoning, and Sustainability subsection in Natural Capital.

- ✓ An August 2014 Feasibility Study of transit opportunities in the **Ames-Des Moines I-35 commuter corridor** conducted by the Des Moines Area MPO found sufficient demand for an alternative transportation mode between Ames and Des Moines. Though the study failed to elicit a strong push to act on its recommendations, regional leaders still feel the connection would provide benefit. It could potentially be branded as the “Cultivation Corridor Connector,” or another unique identifier.
- ✓ Pursuit of **passenger rail** connectivity for Central Iowa was included in the region’s 2016 federal legislative priorities. The agenda proposed extending passenger service connecting Chicago, the Quad Cities, Iowa City, Des Moines, Council Bluffs, and Omaha, studying the extension of passenger rail service from Minneapolis/St. Paul to Des Moines to Kansas City, and continued enhanced federal investment in passenger rail funding.

## 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.

Tourism officials believe a new terminal is critical to Central Iowa’s competitiveness for leisure travelers and major conventions and trade shows.

### **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.
- ✓ Stakeholders noted that considerations should not only be made for predicted air travel needs but also transportation to and from the terminal, which could potentially involve autonomous vehicles soon. This would affect the need for and design of parking facilities at the airport.
- ✓ Options to integrate DART transit services into the new terminal should be considered to facilitate seamless connections for travelers.

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

- ✓ The Des Moines Airport Authority Board is composed of five residents appointed by the Mayor of Des Moines and approved by the Des Moines City Council. Since its implementation, city officials believe it has improved the management and performance of DSM.

- ✓ 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. This would require expanded governance. Because regionalization of the Board may be divisive, any efforts to pursue its implementation should be fully supported by impacted local governments.

## DEVELOP KEY FREIGHT INFRASTRUCTURE.

Following a recommendation in the original Capital Crossroads plan for a multimodal transload facility in Central Iowa to significantly enhance the region's competitive position for the logistics industry, the Des Moines Area MPO and its Freight Roundtable received a grant from the Iowa DOT to conduct a study for a Des Moines area rail port facility. The study confirmed the need for a transloading facility and recommended a 20-acre city-owned site in southeast Des Moines. Recently, the City requested a federal grant to help build the new rail yard. 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. The site enables the facility to access four different rail lines: BNSF, Iowa Interstate, Norfolk Southern, and Union Pacific.

Freight networks also impact the overall efficacy of the regional transportation system. Several transportation-related impediments prevent the freight distribution system from operating at peak efficiency and should be considered in holistic mobility strategies.

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

#### ***1. 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.
- ✓ The inland port initiative and Central Iowa's logistics industry also would benefit from the container coordination project led by the Des Moines Area MPO with assistance from CyBIZ Labs at Iowa State University.

## 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. While the following strategies and tactics are incorporated under the Physical Capital, they have equivalent applicability to the Natural Capital framework and should be pursued.

### **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.**" The Des Moines Area MPO has identified trail gaps in the region, which should be priorities for funding allocation.

Recent efforts have sought to complement the region's aggressive construction of land trails through development of a comprehensive network of water trails. The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) commissioned the Des Moines Area MPO to develop the **Greater Des Moines Water Trails and Greenways Plan**, the state's first regional blueprint for water trails. The Plan envisions an abundant network of water recreation along 150 miles of the region's creeks and rivers, including places for tubing, birding, hiking, paddling, boating, and fishing, the establishment of area greenways, floodplain protection, and improved habitats. The plan covers the Des Moines, Raccoon, South Skunk, North and Middle rivers, as well as Beaver, Fourmile, Mud and Walnut creeks.

The Water Trails and Greenways Plan puts forth numerous recommendations based on community input and stakeholder discussions. They encompass a broad range of impacts, including Des Moines River activation in downtown Des Moines, improved waterway access, branding three regional parks by connecting existing park networks, expanded programming opportunities, economic development nodes, and many others.<sup>4</sup>

Capital Crossroads has also launched a cross-Capital effort to address Central Iowa's trails, greenways, and parks and recreation system. The effort aims to make Central Iowa the Trails Capital of the World and to bring the existing network of parks, trails, streams and more together to help bridge the gap between our natural, cultural and agricultural assets. This is a two-pronged approach: Mapping and analysis of creeks, streams, parks, trails, buffers, and parcel ownership supported by a Growing Green Communities grant, and a regional branding effort.

### **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. Provision of on-street bike infrastructure will help relieve congestion on urban trails.
  - Stakeholders also have advocated for a pedestrian-bicycle bridge connection between Gray's Lake and Gray's Landing as a key local opportunity.

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<sup>4</sup> The full Water Trails and Greenways Plan can be accessed here: <https://dmampo.org/water-trails/>.



- ✓ To coordinate regional trail needs to expand tourism and ensure targeted use of limited maintenance funding, regional leaders support the establishment of a Regional Trails Authority to oversee development of a unified network in Central Iowa.

## ***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.
- ✓ The centerpiece of **the water trails system** could be activating the Des Moines River in downtown Des Moines through dam mitigation and shoreline improvements to create opportunities for water recreation. (BP20)
  - Development could lead to transformative follow-on projects and investments, potentially including ziplines, a boathouse facility, and associated mixed-use development along both shores of the river.
  - A proposed multi-purpose ferry boat terminal and dock at the Principal Riverwalk Hub branded the **Port of Des Moines** could add capacity for water transit and riverside dining to the water trails system.
  - Stakeholders identified opportunities to tie Des Moines River amenities downtown back to Water Works Park to create a recreational "circuit" for public access.

## **REFURBISH DRAKE STADIUM TO OLYMPIC STANDARDS.**

Originally opened in 1925, Drake Stadium in Des Moines has been renovated regularly since that time, most significantly in 2005-2006. In summer 2016, new turf was installed and the track surface was replaced. Despite these renovations, the stadium requires additional refurbishment 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. Each event brings families to the area from across the state and, potentially, nation to spend multiple days watching matches, staying



at local hotels, and patronizing area businesses. Because they are so lucrative, the competition to host these tournaments is fierce. To even be in consideration for many of the largest tournaments, a region must possess suitable infrastructure to accommodate the needs of the organizer. Of course, there also are major benefits to the public of a tournament-caliber indoor sports complex. When not hosting tournaments, the facilities typically are made available for public use.

**TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

***1. Secure commitments and resources to develop a tournament-caliber indoor sports facility in Central Iowa. (BP21)***

- ✓ Three key questions related to the development of a major indoor athletics complex are: 1) is it needed?, 2) are there any existing facilities that could be renovated to serve this purpose?, and 3) if not, where should the new facility be built? Then, of course, there are the realities of identifying and securing the resources necessary to construct the complex.
- ✓ A **Task Force** comprised of regional leaders in tourism, government, and business could be charged with answering these questions and more in partnership with staff from a local or regional department or agency. Assessment findings then would inform and direct strategies to site, fund, design, build, and promote the indoor athletics complex for youth sports tournaments.

## 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.

Still in its infancy, the Smart City movement has yet to be formalized into systems and technologies that can be replicated and implemented by all communities. Columbus, Ohio, recently was awarded a major federal grant to pursue Smart City strategies that could become models for other U.S. cities. Des Moines competed for this grant, as did hundreds of cities; the conversations and lessons from that experience have laid groundwork for ongoing investigation of Smart City opportunities.

***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. This effort received a considerable

boost when Mediacom Communications announced it plans to start rolling out 1 gigabit-per-second (Gbps) internet speeds to its residential customers. Typically, the pattern is for dense urbanized areas to have access to gigabit connectivity before more spread out suburban and rural communities. The country's largest cities also have advantages over smaller areas because their customer base is high enough to warrant gigabit-speed investments by for-profit communications providers.

Central Iowa cities either could wait for private providers to develop high-speed infrastructure or pursue public-private or fully publicly funded gigabit internet. 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:**

***I. Identify viable means to secure gigabit internet for Central Iowa communities. (BP22)***

- ✓ Most U.S. cities and counties receive access to high-speed internet when a private company installs the necessary infrastructure locally. However, some communities tired of waiting for private providers to make these investments have pursued alternative strategies, including paying for the service themselves.
- ✓ 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.**

An August 2016 post<sup>5</sup> by Transportation for America asked the question, "What does it mean to be a Smart City?" It seems the answer is that there is no answer yet. They note: "We start with the concept that a Smart City uses technology to discover where people are going and where they want and need to go, and learns from that information to create safer, more efficient, and affordable transportation options that accelerate access to opportunity for all of their residents." 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 be willing to launch pilot projects, test ideas, learn from those experiments, and be willing to share the results, even when they fail.

The challenge for Central Iowa communities seeking to research and implement Smart City strategies is that they are tremendously expensive. The areas that are proceeding with development of these systems are leveraging public-private partnerships to fund assessments and, ultimately, construction and operation of new technologies and processes.

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<sup>5</sup> <http://t4america.org/2016/08/24/what-does-it-mean-to-be-a-smart-city/>

**TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:**

***I. Launch a coordinated Smart City initiative. (BP23)***

- ✓ 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. Officials believe these will be focused initially on intelligent transportation system (ITS) technologies such as traffic signal synchronization. Multiple Central Iowa cities have plans to undertake ITS studies in 2017. The Iowa DOT also is conducting hyperspectral imaging of interstate corridors for autonomous vehicles. Iowa State University and the City of Des Moines also have partnered on a big data project that integrates data-driven science and human behavior to address environmental and social challenges.
  - To the extent possible, leaders should pursue coordinated Smart City initiatives to ensure that technologies are consistent across governmental borders. Public outreach to assist stakeholders with understanding and growing comfortable with the Smart City concept also will be critical to building momentum for these strategies.
- ✓ Project officials should leverage the Heartland Civic Collaborative – a super-regional partnership of Des Moines, Kansas City, Omaha, and St. Louis – to inform Smart City initiatives. Kansas City already has formed a \$15.7 million public-private partnership with Cisco Systems, Inc. and its partners to develop the most comprehensive Smart City network in North America.
  - As in Kansas City, involvement from Central Iowa’s private sector to provide resources and make the economic development case for Smart City projects will be necessary to effectively advance efforts.
- ✓ Past, current, and future studies of walkability, transit accessibility and development, autonomous vehicle technologies, and other issues and opportunities will be important Smart City inputs. Equally important will be building on the existing tech culture in the region.
- ✓ The potential exists to develop and incorporate eGovernment programs under the Smart City framework. These strategies use information and communication technologies (ICTs) to improve the activities of public sector organizations.
  - The City of Des Moines plans to adopt an Open Data Policy and will establish an open data portal providing public access to city data set as a part of Bloomberg Philanthropies’ What Works Cities initiative.

## Neighborhoods and Housing

One of Greater Des Moines’s key competitive advantages is its high quality of life. The region is consistently recognized for its affordability, access to the outdoors, and family-friendly atmosphere. However, this way 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

high quality of life 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 kinds of neighborhoods – from agricultural homestead areas, to suburban neighborhoods, to urban areas, to downtowns comprised of apartments. Each neighborhood offers a different set of housing options, amenities, economic opportunities, and general character. The region benefits from this range because people prefer different lifestyles. Having this range ensures that Greater Des Moines can accommodate many different lifestyle preferences.

Thus, national experts repeatedly recognize the Greater Des Moines region for its high quality of life and moderate cost of living. A portion of the area's perceived affordability is the low price of housing compared to other regions of the country. Another portion of the region's affordability is typically identified as the low cost of transportation, partly due to short commute times and low levels of congestion. The desire to maintain affordability for all residents in the face of anticipated growth necessitates equal access to housing opportunities and consideration of housing location in relation to the job centers they serve.

Developed by Polk County Housing Trust Fund, **Housing Tomorrow** 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." Its six overarching principles are supported by twelve specific strategies ranging from regulatory reform to prevention of resident displacement to reducing cost barriers to development of affordable housing. The Plan contains a strong focus on development of a wide range of affordable housing located across the region, especially near low-wage job centers and near public transit routes. Recommendations call for creation of incentives and reduction of barriers for developers to provide units for households earning less than 30 percent of the region's median income. The Plan also prescribes the use of funds to enhance transportation choice near affordable housing.

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

#### ***I. Build "missing middle" housing types.***

- ✓ Often, sufficient housing supply is found as traditional single family detached structures at the moderate and high ends of the cost spectrum. Missing is a different style of housing that offers an alternative to the traditional style. This issue was noted in public input to be a local concern, especially in downtown Des Moines.
- ✓ 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. These housing types

include cottages, townhouse, duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, small apartment buildings, mansion apartments, live-work units, and apartments above shops.

- These building types have actual densities ranging from 16 to 35 dwelling units per acre – a rate that helps make walking and transit more viable. Because they are *perceived* to be lower, however, stakeholders are often more willing to support them.
- ✓ To support the diversification of housing types, zoning ordinances should be created and adopted that allow for the development of such options as accessory dwelling units, cottage housing, shared or co-housing sites, and live-work units.
- ✓ Often these middle housing types can provide much needed units that are more affordable for lower wage households who will necessarily be migrating into the region for lower or middle wage jobs.

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

- ✓ As referenced in the introduction to this section, Housing Tomorrow is Central Iowa's approved regional housing plan. Some specific suggestions related to workforce housing include:
  - Review and amend subdivision ordinances and parking requirements as necessary to lower construction costs and facilitate development of more affordable housing.
  - Consider policies that encourage mixed income housing near job centers that are affordable to all employees of the job center.
  - Provide local incentives to developers that leverage state and federal resources locate affordable housing in key locations.
  - Prepare an examination of future housing needs by region and by community.
    - These Workforce Housing Plans should encourage that new commercial construction be analyzed to determine the number and type of permanent jobs created. Surrounding residential developments should be designed to accommodate the workforce created by the commercial development. Employee access to job centers should be judged on the fastest and most economical means of transportation including walking, biking or public transportation.
  - Ensure all Central Iowa is covered by a local housing trust fund. Five of the seven counties currently unaffiliated with a housing trust fund border Polk County.
- ✓ Through its income focus area, the United Way of Central Iowa coordinates and supports strategies to improve access to food, shelter, and other work supports as well as helps low-income working families and individuals obtain and maintain affordable, stable housing. Multiple action steps also address issues of homelessness and access to quality workforce housing in the OpporTUNITY plan.
- ✓ The **Polk County Continuum of Care** leverages federal dollars to coordinate a centralized approach to addressing the needs of individuals and families experiencing homelessness.

- ✓ A regional dialogue on housing issues, needs, and solutions should be 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 for developers.
- ✓ Reinvestment and revitalization also can be fostered through stepped up enforcement of code violations on vacant and abandoned buildings. Officials should explore the option of local codes setting a maintenance standard for all buildings, vacant or occupied. Tools such as community land trusts (CLTs) and land banks enable governments to acquire blighted and vacant properties, prepare them for redevelopment, and maintain ownership of land and structures to ensure long-term affordability.
  - As noted previously, work on the formation of the Des Moines Land Bank is ongoing.

### ***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.
- ✓ Resident engagement and empowerment are key to creating lasting neighborhood change. The **Invest Health** initiative seeks to create a model process for engaging residents to create healthier, more vibrant neighborhoods that include public space, safe and affordable homes, locally-owned businesses, and opportunities for active transportation.
- ✓ Studies show that a person's zip code can impact their health more than their genetic code. A new program — **Healthy Hometown, powered by Wellmark** — aims to engage communities of all shapes and sizes to improve their overall well-being. The Healthy Hometown program offers new evidence-based interventions and tools that communities can use to make sustainable changes at the local level. Communities can transform the places where individuals live, work, and play by making the healthy choice the easy choice.



## GOVERNANCE CAPITAL

Most regions offer some type of forum or process for elected officials, city and county administrators, and/or department staff from local governments to come together on a regular basis to discuss key issues. Very often, these sessions simply are opportunities to provide updates on what each community is doing.

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)**. These efforts have improved local process dynamics and are testament to the region's spirit of collaboration. Participants acknowledge occasional disagreements and stalemates within the teams but insist that their spirit of collegiality and commitment to identify and pursue coordination opportunities remains steadfast.

Local government collaboration occurs despite the absence of a Council of Governments (COG), a common form of regional governance that provides a forum for local government representatives to meet regionally. In the Capital Crossroads region, only a few counties are members of a COG. Further, Central Iowa is the only area in the state that does not have a COG and is the largest metropolitan area in the country not served by a regional commission<sup>6</sup>.

Formal organizations like the Ames Area and Des Moines Area MPOs offer staff resources to provide forums and functions supporting regional collaboration among governments. More informal organizations also exist to bring local government leaders together. The **Metro Advisory Council (MAC)** is a regular meeting of mayors and administrators designed to foster regional collaboration and identify opportunities for shared advocacy. The **Mid Iowa Association of Local Governments (MILAG)** is a group of elected officials from Central Iowa that meet monthly to share ideas on how to improve their respective communities. In many cases, the same local representatives attend each of these meetings, leading to possible inefficiencies in time and resources.

Beyond local government collaboration, an ongoing role of the Governance Capital has been to reinvigorate the MAC. While acknowledging it remains a valuable tool, Governance Capital volunteers expressed frustration over their inability to harness the MAC to become a leader in collaboration. Capital Crossroads 2.0 presents an opportunity to refocus regional governance efforts 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.*

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<sup>6</sup> *An Absent Space: The Story of the Central Iowa Regional Association of Local Governments*. Carlton Basmajian, Iowa State University, 2014.

## 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. This more recent work could be wrapped into more established governance efforts to make efficient use of time and resources among all parties.

### **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 to identify opportunities for collaboration. The LGC already has resulted in numerous advances, including common testing days for police recruits, limiting of human resource duplication and improved employer training, libraries sharing resources and circulation systems, and the development of uniform standards for Central Iowa trails.

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. Consortium volunteers have assessed building code elements to develop a model for a uniform building code for consideration and adoption by local governments.

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

#### ***1. Continue the evolution of the Local Government Collaboration Project.***

- ✓ Initial LGC efforts tackled low-hanging fruit opportunities for process coordination with clear benefit for participating governments. As the project has progressed, reaching consensus on systems to pursue has become more challenging, but members have committed to continuing their intergovernmental partnerships.
  - 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.
- ✓ Success in initial projects enables the LGC to move on to more challenging efforts. Members said it would be helpful to LGC teams to see metrics tracking benefits of past and ongoing coordination initiatives. The next project to be pursued by LGC is identifying coordination opportunities in finance



and in planning and development departments. Following work with these two areas, f focus then will potentially return to fire, public works, police, and parks and recreation to determine how those teams can build on past accomplishments.

- ✓ The **Uniform Trail Standards** team will continue to meet quarterly to focus on developing unified signage systems and ensuring localities adopt the shared standards. Work also will continue with Bike Iowa to share events.

## ***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. Members also have identified statewide codes that need to be improved and warrant being addressed by the CICC.
- ✓ A challenge of the Code Consortium is that future work will require increased time and resources as more people are involved and additional communities come onboard. Administrative requirements like scheduling meetings, keeping track of minutes, communications requirements, and public outreach are time intensive. This reality makes getting volunteers to serve on the Consortium challenging, a member said, because it is “thankless” work prone to burnout.
  - More permanent venues for the Central Iowa Code Consortium should be explored. A future COG, or existing organizations like the Ames Area and Des Moines Area MPOs, may be suitable given the existing staff capacity and already established relationships with local governments.
- ✓ Support must be provided to encourage local governments to adopt the uniform building code and potentially dedicate administrative capacity to sustainably manage Consortium efforts.
- ✓ In addition to the CICC, Central Iowa governments often come together to partner formally and informally on short-term projects and longer-term initiatives. The Governance Capital must ensure that efforts are recognized, supported, and incorporated under the Capital Crossroads framework as necessary.

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

- ✓ Public and private utilities regularly interact with local communities, leading to the potential for inefficiencies in project delivery and community growth when inconsistent or uncoordinated information is provided.
- ✓ Sharing and coordinating utility work across the region could allow for more thoughtful community development and ultimately make for more efficient use of resources.
- ✓ 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 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 would provide a needed framework to better unify these projects, improve the likelihood that they would be supported and approved, and offer guidance on how operational coordination efforts can be applied to an overall regional vision and implementation networks.

Emerging from The Tomorrow Plan, the Regional Infrastructure Coordinating Committee (RICC) sought to bring coordination across a range of infrastructure types and recognize the interrelatedness of infrastructure and land use to inform decision-making. RICC discussion topics included projected population growth areas, telecommunications needs, public-private partnerships, and funding. After holding a series of quarterly meetings, the RICC proved to be unsustainable. However, officials said its purpose of fostering regional coordination to inform partnerships and decision-making around issues of governance, land use, and infrastructure still 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. This tool could help smaller communities benefit from the expertise and support of larger cities and formalize tools for intergovernmental conversation, coordination, and partnerships.

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

#### ***I. Pursue the development of a regional COG or similar entity. (BP24)***

- ✓ Feedback on the potential creation of a COG lauded opportunities for smaller governments to share resources and benefit from the expertise of larger communities.
- ✓ However, an identified challenge of regional governance is that all issues are not applicable to all localities. Membership dues for participating governments also would be an additional expense on top of payments to other regional entities. 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.
- ✓ The function of existing regional entities in a Central Iowa COG would be determined as the council is developed. The Des Moines Area MPO could play an important role in the COG, including potentially staffing it.

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

- ✓ Numerous entities such as the MPOs, MAC, and MILAG 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 for this purpose.
- ✓ In the interim, other options for the MAC and MILAG should be explored.



## 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. Members of the Capital Crossroads 2.0 Steering Committee voted water and soil quality as a top three competitive challenge in Central Iowa. This prioritized focus was evidenced by the work of the **Iowa Soil and Water Future Task Force**, an influential group of subject-matter experts and concerned residents assembled to assess Central Iowa's soil and water issues and identify solutions.

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. Focus group participants said that all components— soil and water quality, watershed management, flood control infrastructure, water trails, drinking water, etc. — are connected. As such, coordinated and regional solutions will be necessary to effectively protect Central Iowa residents from resource contamination now and in the future.

Expansion and regionalization of green space in Central Iowa also is a key charge of Natural Capital, with calls from leaders to better connect and coordinate efforts around park development as well as funding, signage, and marketing. More broadly, the Natural Capital will focus on resource conservation at all levels, including working to ensure Central Iowa's air, water, soil, and energy resources are maintained and renewed.

### 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

Central Iowa has grown quickly in the past two-plus decades as robust job creation has attracted new residents from elsewhere in Iowa and, gradually, other U.S. states as well. 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.

Continued urbanization brings forth several regional challenges. At the forefront is competition among jurisdictions to capture growth, which expands the tax base, impacting municipal revenue. Further, with downtown Des Moines office employment and the state government presence, there are efficiencies in

accessibility to the metro center with a more evenly distributed development pattern. Any decisions about future growth policies will need to address this inherent tension between growth that is concentrated in just a few municipalities and growth that is distributed more evenly throughout the metro. Other potential opportunities presented by ongoing urbanization are guiding growth to minimize needed infrastructure expansion and identifying large unbuilt areas that could be preserved to provide habitat and recreational space.

### **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.**

During development of The Tomorrow Plan, four growth scenarios were modeled to show the impact of various development models. The Tomorrow Plan already has outlined numerous policy initiatives that support strategic growth frameworks. To better understand and leverage national best practices as well as bring together like-minded Central Iowans advocating for the incorporation of smart growth, walkable, and context-sensitive urbanism, local leaders successfully created the **Urban Land Institute Iowa**.

A vision for strategic growth does not mean that Central Iowa should mandate all communities implement land use policies formalizing dense urban nodes and corridors. There will continue to be Central Iowa cities and counties that foster suburban style and rural development patterns. However, 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.

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

#### ***1. 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.
  - Benefitting from quality transit and other corridor improvements, prime opportunities include auto-oriented shopping centers like Southridge Mall and commercial strips along key corridors throughout the region that can be redeveloped into more street-focused, pedestrian-oriented environments.
  - New and redeveloped mid-rise, mixed-use projects in these nodes and corridors also would substantially increase the tax base of local communities.

- ✓ To effectively facilitate prioritized development, bank loan officers, developers, real estate professionals, and appraisers should be educated about infill opportunities in prime nodes and corridors.

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

- ✓ The City of Des Moines' **PlanDSM** outlines a growth strategy that focuses development at key nodes and along transit-supportive corridors. In 2016, the City began work to update its zoning code to incorporate the node and corridor 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.
  - Capital Crossroads volunteer leaders also would like to see the **Connect Downtown** study expanded to include other Central Iowa districts and cities interested in assessing their potential to be more pedestrian-oriented.
- ✓ The development of vibrant, mixed-use, walkable environments would benefit from the design and approval of model form-based code and transit-oriented development zoning overlays. Again, PlanDSM code updates could serve as a regional template.
- ✓ Implementation of Smart City policies recommended in Physical Capital will have significant impact on urban development processes and regulations. Development codes will need to be updated to reflect the prescriptions of Smart City technologies and practices. For example, building codes could call for the installation of conduit necessary for electric vehicle charging infrastructure, which would minimize the cost to retrofit buildings later.

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

- ✓ With more sustainable patterns of development that better incorporate land use and transportation gaining in popularity, states have enhanced or adopted policies to provide policy and fiscal resources to advance this type of growth.
- ✓ Partners including the American Planning Association, ULI Iowa, the Iowa League of Cities, the Iowa Association of Counties, Central Iowa MPOs, and other entities could conduct a holistic review of growth management tools not currently available in Iowa.
- ✓ 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.
  - One potential tool currently not available in Iowa is the **Transportation Improvement District** (TID). A TID is a geographically defined taxing district that provides resources for required improvements to transportation facilities located within its boundaries. The purpose of a TID is to comprehensively coordinate land use and transportation within a specific geographical area.

# Outdoor Recreation

The communities most attractive to talent in today's economy increasingly offer a dynamic collection of natural and man-made recreational amenities that provide access to the outdoors for individuals and families. Consequently, 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.

Central Iowa parks already are well used and loved amenities for residents. 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. (BP25)*

- ✓ Central Iowa cities and counties have invested millions of dollars to maintain and enhance their networks of parks and greenways. While this new capacity enhances the livability of local communities, 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.
  - Regionalizing park and greenway development provides options to leverage multi-jurisdictional funding and administration tools. This would necessitate the creation of a new **regional parks authority** to oversee the planning, funding, development, and maintenance of existing and new facilities.
  - A **wayfinding system** highlighting and connecting Central Iowa parks and trails assets also would need to be developed, incorporating and potentially redesigning existing trails signage.
- ✓ Multiple ongoing planning and resourcing initiatives would need to be incorporated into the regional parks plan. Most prominent among these are the **Des Moines Water Works Park Master Plan**, the capital campaign supporting the **Jester Park Nature Center**, and master plan for the **Clive Greenbelt**, an economic driver for redevelopment, natural resource restoration, recreation, and public health. The City of Des Moines will be updating its parks master plan in 2017.
  - The green and blue network effort through Capital Crossroads will benefit the plan through asset mapping and analysis as well as regional branding of Central Iowa's complement of parks and greenways.

- The Walnut Creek, Fourmile Creek, and Mud, Camp, and Spring Creeks Watershed Plans recommend creating a connected greenway system through the protection and restoration of the 100-year floodplain.

## 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. Even so, Natural and Physical Capital issues and activities remain closely interwoven. Partnerships and coalitions between actors and entities working on these strategies will continue to be hallmarks of Capital Crossroads' implementation network and administration.

### **DESIRED OUTCOME**

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

## OPTIMIZE WATER QUALITY AND DISTRIBUTION.

As the Iowa Soil and Water Future Task Force noted in its January 2016 report, the state has a tremendous opportunity to find common ground solutions to fund its soil and water infrastructure as effectively as its transportation infrastructure. The 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. Its implementation is expected to continue for over thirty years and can be coordinated regionally by WMAs working with state and federal department officials. Leaders say water quality issues are inherently a problem of "rural versus urban – dirty water and loss of topsoil plus too much flow." While governments know how to fix the problem at the micro-level, it is too expensive for large property owners and farms to address. Politics also come into play when strategies are proposed and come up for vote.

### **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.
  - In addition to ensuring sufficient funding for WMAs to implement the Nutrient Reduction Strategy, the Task Force recommends growing an effective implementation structure,



developing monitoring and measurement systems to allow for adaptive strategies, emphasizing practices with multiple long-term, significant benefits, and engaging the private sector to supplement public sector outreach and implementation.

- ✓ A newly established Council of Watershed Management Authorities, a group of executive committee members from area watershed management authorities, serves an important role by sharing best practices and enabling officials to work better together. The Council should be strongly leveraged to inform and support soil and water improvement issues. One potential output of the Council could be prescribing and advocating for consistent stormwater standards throughout Central Iowa.
- ✓ Complementing already established WMAs, stakeholders said that the **North and Middle Rivers** would benefit from the creation of a watershed management authority.
- ✓ Recognizing the need to formalize stormwater ordinances across jurisdictions, discussions are underway to apply the Central Iowa Code Consortium model to this issue to achieve a unified regulatory framework.

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

- ✓ The potential to create a regional drinking water authority and governance board was a component of Capital Crossroads 1.0 but did not gain significant traction. 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. However, stakeholders said that analysis has yet to address long-term benefits of a regionalized system.
- ✓ 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 bump outs, and pervious pavement.
  - Streets are the largest single category of public impervious cover, accounting for roughly 32 percent of the impervious cover in metro Des Moines.
  - Green streets can be combined with complete street designs to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety, improve air quality, and enhance the right of way aesthetics.

## ***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.



- Support should be provided for Iowa's Water and Land Legacy's (IWILL) work to capitalize the voter-approved Iowa Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund through a sales tax increase ballot initiative that voters approved in 2010.
- Another potential funding source is the creation of an Iowa Soil and Water Health Revolving Loan Fund, advocated for by the Iowa Soil and Water Future Task Force.
- ✓ The priority of the Raccoon River Watershed should be validated through advocacy to secure line-item appropriations for the watershed at the state and federal level.

## 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. Floodplains provide beneficial natural functions essential for water resources, wildlife habitat, and human interaction. Some of these functions include temporarily storing flood waters, filtering sediments and nutrients to improve water quality, recharging the groundwater supply, supporting natural vegetation that reduces soil erosion, and providing fish and wildlife habitat.

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

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

- ✓ The State of Iowa received a \$97 million federal grant to address water quality and flood challenges in key watersheds across the state. Funding will enable WMAs to make hydrological assessments, develop watershed plans, and implement pilot projects.
- ✓ Complementing these efforts, Central Iowa governments should regulate allowable development on floodplains through adoption of the Des Moines Area MPO's model No Adverse Impact floodplain management policy. This approach ensures the actions of any community or public or private property owner do not adversely impact the property and rights of others while protecting natural and beneficial functions of floodplains.
- ✓ Investment in upstream solutions to promote water infiltration also should be prioritized over downstream infrastructure construction, such as levees and dams.

## 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 – likely through ongoing partnerships between Physical and Natural Capital implementation teams – 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.
- ✓ Though soil and water quality issues are currently top of mind in Central Iowa, the Natural Capital should ensure that air quality and energy conservation concerns do not fall off the regional radar. As necessary, ad hoc or sustained initiatives like the Soil and Water Future Task Force should be pursued to bring these issues into the public spotlight.
  - The Iowa Department of Natural Resources Air Quality Bureau is the state's principal agency monitoring and improving air quality. The Bureau hosts regular Air Quality Client Contact Meetings and seeks agenda topics for discussion.
- ✓ Waste management strategies complement efforts to foster regional sustainability. Increasingly, cities and counties are seeking to become net-neutral producers of waste. Coordinated recycling, food rescue, biodegradable product use, and other tactics are being used to limit communities' levels of solid waste. Efforts already are underway in the Des Moines area to make public events "zero waste."

***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.
- ✓ Area leaders have petitioned the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services to designate the Greater Des Moines region as an **Urban Wildlife Refuge**. This would create a connected conservation community by engaging urban neighbors and fostering a sense of stewardship for sensitive lands.

***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.
  - Adoption and implementation of electric vehicle readiness programs can support increased use of these technologies. This includes the deployment of both public and private charging infrastructure by Central Iowa cities and counties.
  - Electric vehicle usage also can be advanced by installing publicly sited electric vehicle supply equipment, incentivizing its installation at workplaces and multi-use residential facilities, and integrating electric vehicle infrastructure into comprehensive plans.
- ✓ A recently announced effort by the City of Des Moines can serve as a model for Central Iowa communities looking to reduce energy use and climate pollution caused by buildings. Des Moines has

joined the City Energy Project, a joint initiative of the Natural Resources Defense Council and the Institute for Market Transformation to make buildings more efficient.

- The City of Des Moines also has partnered with Iowa State University on a big data research project designed to improve sustainability and mitigate climate change, particularly in marginalized neighborhoods. Like the City Energy Project, this big data effort has applications for the Smart City initiative proposed in the Physical Capital.
- ✓ With Iowa's leading output of wind energy and robust production of biofuels, many public entities and private companies focus on this space. Dynamic opportunities to engage and leverage this expertise to advance energy sustainability discussions and initiatives should be explored under the auspices of the Natural Capital through Capital Crossroads 2.0 implementation.
  - In partnership with regional experts, the Natural Capital should research best practices and case studies in terms of both projects and policies that can enhance energy efficiencies.
  - MidAmerican Energy offers a variety of programs and rebates to help residents save money and conserve energy.

## Marketing and Education

The Natural Capital has advocated for the need for marketing and education since its inception. Public officials ultimately are only responsible to the will of those who elect them, so 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. While promoting the role of the Natural Capital team itself is important, stakeholders feel that an outreach campaign also could be directed more broadly at the need to plan and invest in the capacity necessary to ensure that Central Iowa growth can be sustainable and sensitive to the natural environment.

**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 using graphics, video, and public relations. IWILL **Train the Trainer** events being held across Central Iowa will help inform this outreach by providing useful narratives on soil and water priorities. For energy efficiency efforts, leaders should work through area colleges and universities, when possible, to share case studies on work that already is underway. Officials also have suggested enhancing awareness of the **Energy Usage Index**, which denotes a building's energy use as a function of its size or other characteristics.
- ✓ Stakeholders commenting in Capital Crossroads public input 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. This could be accomplished through forums, events, newspaper editorials, social media, etc. The segmentation of the campaign is important as are the ambassadors leveraged to promote and disseminate its message.

## 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.

## APPENDIX A: CROSS-CAPITAL INITIATIVE MATRICES

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. For the purposes of this Capital Crossroads 2.0 strategy, Market Street has created matrices for the top current and potential cross-Capital initiatives.

NOTE: **Not included** are cross-Capital frameworks noted above 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. So as not to influence the assessment, content, or recommendations of the Regional Cultural Assessment, **Cultural Capital tactics are not included** in cross-Capital initiative matrices. Initiatives are listed alphabetically and do not imply priority.

## 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, Telligen, Polk County Health Services (nonprofit organization), city and county governments, and other partners.

Capital Core	Business Capital	Wellness Capital	Human Capital	Social Capital	Physical Capital	Natural Capital
Downtown activity programming	Company-based programs promoted through BRE	Inclusion of activity metrics in wellness assessment	Pre- and post-natal activity programs for mothers	Leadership training inclusive of active wellness	Separated bike and pedestrian paths	Policy and zoning changes favoring walkability and pedestrian-scale development
Recreation amenities, equipment, spaces, including changing stations for bike commuters	Marketing Active Wellness as benefit for existing and prospective companies	Corporate wellness programs with activity components	School-based activity programs and playground equipment	Young professional focused programming	Green and blue network infrastructure	Development and promotion of new park and play spaces
Walkability, active mobility modes		Activity-based programs in wellness toolkits	Safe routes to school programs		Universal provision of sidewalks	
			Degree programs in Active Wellness		Age-friendly infrastructure	
			Active wellness as talent retention and attraction asset		Ballfield development and Drake Stadium renewal	

## 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 like 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. **(BPs 26-31)** 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.

Component	Strategic Capital(s)	Action(s)	Existing Effort(s) / Notes	Potential Model
<b>Education</b>	Business/ Cultivation Corridor	Events	World Food Prize – Iowa Hunger Summit	
	Human	Health and wellness education	Food Corps service members in Des Moines Public Schools (DMPS)	
		Career development	DMPS Central Campus Culinary program DMACC programs	
		Food Academy for at-risk youth		Detroit Food Academy
<b>Entrepreneurship/ Innovation</b>	Capital Core	Farmers/public markets	Downtown Farmers Market Potential for year-round public market	Multiple
	Business	Food incubator/food entrepreneurship program		Grand Rapids Downtown Market incubator kitchen Cincinnati Findlay Kitchen program
	Business/	Locally sourced food initiative	Eat Greater DSM – Local Foods focus area	REV Birmingham (AL) –



Component	Strategic Capital(s)	Action(s)	Existing Effort(s) / Notes	Potential Model
	Natural			Urban Food Project
	Cultivation Corridor	Food technologies	Work with Iowa State and member companies – inform and support opportunities to apply to Central Iowa Food Initiative	
<b>Addressing food insecurity</b>	Business	Healthy corner store initiative	Could potentially have program specific to Capital Core and/or food entrepreneurship strategy	Healthy in a Hurry (Louisville)
	Wellness	Hunger prevention	Food Insecurity Initiative – Hunger Free Polk County	
	Human	Accessibility	United Way of Central Iowa Health Focus Area- Physical Well-Being: 1.1 Increase the availability of and access to healthy foods and fresh fruits and vegetables  OpportUNITY Plan Priority – Food Insecurity  Eat Greater DSM – Food Access focus area  Move the Food – Des Moines Area Religious Council Mobile Food Pantry (Food Pantry Network)	Multiple
	Human/ Natural	Food rescue program	East Greater Des Moines's ChowBank app connects those with excess food to local social service organizations	412 Food Rescue (Pittsburgh)
<b>Green infrastructure</b>	Capital Core	Green corridor	2015 RDG Design Residency – Farms on Fifth  A Downtown Greenhouse project and other green strategies	
	Natural	Urban farming, community gardens, green roofs, greenhouses	Eat Greater DSM – Gardening focus area  Iowa Homeless Youth Center rooftop shipping container hydroponic farms  Multiple others	Multiple
<b>Logistics and distribution</b>	Business	Construction of an urban “food port”		

## 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 the Capitals.

Capital Core	Business Capital	Cultivation Corridor	Wellness Capital	Human Capital	Social Capital	Physical Capital	Governance Capital	Natural Capital
Relationships between core advocates and regional stakeholders	Business policies, attitudes, and networking	Interactions among Corridor firms and institutions	Incorporation into mental health services	Interactions between companies and training institutions	Leadership development curricula	Physical spaces supportive of interaction	Intra- and inter-governmental interactions – staff, elected, and appointed	Interactions and negotiations between environmental advocates and agencies
Intra- and inter-neighborhood interactions	Interactions between rival firms in target clusters			Formal and informal student guidance	Full breadth of diversity, equity, and inclusion programming	Inter-agency interactions		
	Policy and advocacy priorities and interactions			Integrating civility into curricula	Civility objective			
	Tenor and practice of international marketing			Integrate into talent retention and attraction messaging				

## 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.

Capital Core	Business Capital	Wellness Capital	Human Capital	Social Capital	Physical Capital	Governance Capital	Natural Capital
Downtown activity programming and amenities	Targeted job growth in sectors with opportunity 'ladders	Health and wellness assessment, tracking, and enhancement	Early childhood services, programs, and support	Diversity, equity, inclusion, civility, and leadership, assessment and programming	Multimodal mobility planning and projects	Representative government	Regulations supporting equitable growth and development
Workforce housing	Advocacy and lobbying	Integrated mental health services	Full breadth of K-12 pipeline development		Transit capacity and accessibility	Budget savings enabling lowered tax rates	Recreation capacity and access
Mobility, walkability, and accessibility	Entrepreneurial programs and support		College and career readiness		Broadband access and affordability		
Neighborhood and corridor strategies and tools	International marketing and talent initiatives		Degree completion		Smart City technology		
Community wealth building initiative			Upskilling and lifelong learning				
			Affordable child care initiative				
			Job and training access				
			Workforce housing				
			Talent retention and attraction				

## 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 Core	Business Capital	Wellness Capital	Human Capital	Social Capital	Physical Capital	Governance Capital	Natural Capital
Multiple types at multiple price points	Executive housing	Housing types supportive of the Active Wellness initiative	On- and off-campus student housing	Diversity, equity, and inclusion issues around housing	Transit-accessible housing	Residential construction codes and policies	Residential zoning <i>vis a vis</i> environment
Workforce housing programs and policies	Leveraging company perspectives on housing	Programs through Healthy Homes Des Moines	Quality workforce housing	Equity of access to housing choice	Residential soil and water quality		Recreation capacity, access to homes and neighborhoods
Housing renovation funding tools and support programs	Live-work models		Homeless alleviation programs and support		Flood control		Residential water conservation
			Intern housing assistance, talent retention and attraction		Smart City technologies and programs		Residential access to and use of renewable energy sources
			Affordable housing for a diverse workforce				

## OpportUNITY Plan

The Following is a comparative analysis of areas of potential collaboration between Capital Crossroads 2.0 and the OpportUNITY Community Plan.

Capital Crossroads	CAPITAL CORE
<b>OpportUNITY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transportation, Homelessness, Housing</li> <li>• Place-Based Change</li> </ul>
<b>Collaboration Areas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Downtown transportation affordability, pedestrian-friendly</li> <li>• Downtown housing diversity and homelessness</li> <li>• Downtown recreation diversity</li> <li>• Neighborhood improvement</li> <li>• Financing and investment tools</li> <li>• Pilot CWB initiative</li> </ul>
Capital Crossroads	BUSINESS CAPITAL
<b>OpportUNITY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adult Education and Employment Readiness</li> <li>• New Iowans</li> </ul>
<b>Collaboration Areas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entrepreneurial Dynamism, start-up accelerators, incubators and networking events inclusive of businesses launched by or serving low-income populations and diverse populations</li> <li>• Workforce development and employer alignment for refugee and immigrant populations</li> <li>• Workforce development and employer alignment for low-income populations</li> </ul>
Capital Crossroads	WELLNESS CAPITAL
<b>OpportUNITY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual Change</li> </ul>
<b>Collaboration Areas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health assessments, Healthways Well-Being Index</li> <li>• Mental health needs, employee mental health and individual connectedness (ACES, Connections Matter)</li> </ul>
Capital Crossroads	HUMAN CAPITAL
<b>OpportUNITY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education: Early Childhood through Grade 12</li> <li>• Adult Education and Employment Readiness</li> <li>• Transportation</li> <li>• Individual Change</li> <li>• System Change: Child Care Cliff Effect</li> <li>• New Iowans</li> </ul>
<b>Collaboration Areas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment readiness via high-school equivalency – Graduation Walk, Bridges to Success</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment readiness via high-quality degrees, certificate programs – Re-Entry Task Force, ESL, Career Pathway Maps, Skills2Compete</li> <li>• Student health, attendance and performance – READ to Succeed, Book Buddy, Power Read, Summer in the City, Summer Reading Program, Summer Feeding Program, chronic absence initiatives</li> <li>• Affordable child care</li> <li>• Workplace transportation</li> <li>• Diverse and inclusive talent retention programs - Young Professionals Program, Leadership Institute, African-American Leadership Forum, Latina Leadership Institute, 40 Under 40, Refugee Rise, One Iowa, etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Capital Crossroads</b>	<b>SOCIAL CAPITAL</b>
<b>OpportUNITY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual Change</li> <li>• New Iowans</li> </ul>
<b>Collaboration Areas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diverse and inclusive leadership programs - Young Professionals Program, Leadership Institute, African-American Leadership Forum, Latina Leadership Institute, 40 Under 40, Refugee Rise, One Iowa, etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Capital Crossroads</b>	<b>PHYSICAL CAPITAL</b>
<b>OpportUNITY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Place-Based Change</li> <li>• Transportation</li> </ul>
<b>Collaboration Areas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Targeted infrastructure development and redevelopment</li> <li>• Transportation linking affordable housing, education institutions, recreational areas and employers</li> <li>• Place-based recreation development</li> </ul>
<b>Capital Crossroads</b>	<b>NATURAL CAPITAL</b>
<b>OpportUNITY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Place-Based Change</li> </ul>
<b>Collaboration Areas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Place-based outdoor recreation development</li> </ul>
<b>Capital Crossroads</b>	<b>CENTRAL IOWA FOOD INITIATIVE</b>
<b>OpportUNITY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food Insecurity</li> </ul>
<b>Collaboration Areas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multi-faceted food insecurity system change – research and data collection, food-site network development, food rescue programs, SNAP / WIC, summer feeding programs, retail access to healthy food</li> </ul>

## APPENDIX B: BEST PRACTICES

Market Street maintains an extensive library of best practice programs, processes, organizations, and efforts for application to key competitive opportunities and challenges identified through our comprehensive research process. Best practices recommended to inform the Capital Crossroads 2.0 strategy were selected based on their specific relevance to actions and efforts the community can pursue. Ultimately, local leadership should use these best practices as guidelines and potential programmatic models to inform strategic efforts custom-tailored to Central Iowa. In some cases, best practices represent potential initiatives that have yet to be developed but can help inform designs of Capital Crossroads efforts.

### BP1: CONVENTION CENTER DISTRICT PLAN – NEW ORLEANS, LA

The planned Convention Center expansion site in New Orleans offered the city an opportunity to generate new Convention Center value by creating authentic New Orleans experiences. To accomplish this goal, a



60-acre vision plan was developed to incorporate a mix of uses within the project site and generate new economic demand to aid in the convention bookings for the city. These uses include a major attached convention hotel, a range of retail offerings, food service opportunities, and a variety of

smaller meeting spaces for specific convention needs. Features of the plan include a boulevard reimagined as a linear park, with a people mover from Canal Street to the power plant, and substantial retail, entertainment, residential, and lodging components.

<http://www.mccno.com/about-us/visionplan/>

<http://www.eskewdumezripple.com/projects/morial-convention-center-vision-plan>

### BP2: DOWNTOWN SOCCER STADIUM – OKLAHOMA CITY, OK

As a precursor to seeking to secure a Major League Soccer franchise, the owner of the Oklahoma City Energy soccer team confirmed plans to work with the city on a long-term effort to build a stadium in a mixed-use development that would include housing, retail, hotels, parks, fountains, and structured parking. The owner sees the development as the key link to creating a seamless connection between the Oklahoma River and its boathouses and recreational venues, Bricktown and the Bricktown Canal, the new boulevard, Deep Deuce, the new convention center and park, the Chesapeake Arena, and Myriad Gardens.

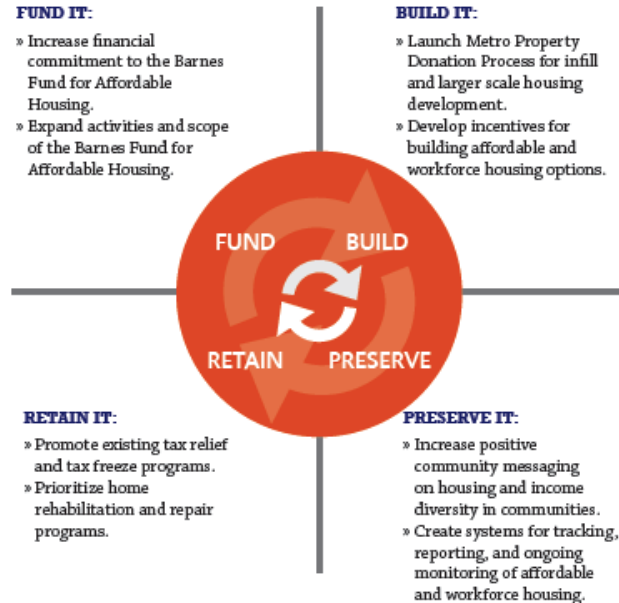
<http://newsok.com/article/5515660>



## BP3: WORKFORCE HOUSING PLAN – NASHVILLE, TN

Facing cost pressures for local housing, Nashville-Davidson Mayor Megan Barry developed a list of housing priorities focused on how Metro Nashville can fund, build, preserve, and retain affordable housing options. The Mayor's Office will use this approach in setting housing policy initiatives each year, allowing the city to track benchmark data and progress. Ultimately, these efforts seek to ensure access to affordable and workforce housing options near transportation and employment opportunities, enhancing quality of life for all Nashvillians.

This graphic demonstrates the components of the mayor's affordable housing plan.



<http://www.nashville.gov/Mayors-Office/Economic-Opportunity-and-Empowerment/Affordable-Housing.aspx>

<http://www.nashville.gov/Portals/0/SiteContent/MayorsOffice/AffordableHousing/docs/HousingPrioritiesandActionPlan.pdf>

## BP4: RECONNECTING NEIGHBORHOODS – SPOKANE, WA



A design-driven workshop event took place in mid-July 2016, when Spokane hosted the U.S. DOT's first Every Place Counts workshop with planning and design assistance from the Congress for the New Urbanism (CNU). The US DOT also brought the design challenge to three other locations: Nashville, Philadelphia, and Minnesota's Twin Cities. Initially focused on mitigating the highway impacts and reconnecting neighborhoods around I-90, the Spokane event suggested complete streets, conversions of one-way streets to two-way, roundabouts, and a bicycle/green infrastructure network to mitigate the impacts of the highway,

which divided the city in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. During the workshop, strategies for improving connectivity around the unbuilt Interstate 395 corridor also were generated.



The preceding image shows a freeway “cap” providing a potential greenspace link between neighborhoods cut off by interstate development.

<https://www.cnu.org/publicsquare/design-solutions-suggested-reconnected-spokane-neighborhoods>

## BP5 COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING INITIATIVE – CLEVELAND, OH

The Evergreen Cooperatives of Cleveland is an initiative championed by a conglomeration of Cleveland-based institutions, including the Cleveland Foundation, the Cleveland Clinic, University Hospitals, Case Western Reserve University, and the municipal government, that work together to create living wage jobs in six low-income neighborhoods known as Greater University Circle. Five key strategic pillars drive the Evergreen Cooperative’s mission:

1. Leverage a portion of the multi-billion-dollar annual business expenditures of anchor institutions into the surrounding neighborhoods;
2. Establish a robust network of Evergreen Cooperative enterprises based on community wealth building and ownership models designed to service these institutional needs;
3. Build on the growing momentum to create environmentally sustainable energy and green collar jobs;
4. Link the entire effort to expanding sectors of the economy, many of which are recipients of large-scale public investment; and,
5. Develop the financing and management capacities that can take this effort to scale.

Evergreen Cooperatives of Cleveland currently operates three business lines: Evergreen Cooperative Laundry, GreenCity Growers Cooperative, and Evergreen Energy Solutions.

<http://evergreencooperatives.com/>

## BP6: ESTABLISHED COMPANIES SUPPORTING STARTUPS – ATLANTA, GA

Partnering with the Metro Atlanta Chamber, five Atlanta-based companies are shrinking the gap between startup entrepreneurs and established businesses. Coca-Cola, Capgemini, Cox Enterprises, Intercontinental Hotel Group, and The Weather Company combined forces to create The Bridge: Atlanta, a startup commercialization program focused on mentoring up-and-coming technology entrepreneurs that can help solve challenges one or more of the sponsoring companies may face. The Chamber helps connect enterprise-level companies with the region’s most promising startups. Ten startups were chosen for the six-month program, which is focused on early-stage software technology solutions in one of five business areas: consumer engagement, consumer retail, supply chain, marketing innovation, or health and wellness. During the program, startups receive mentoring and connections to people and resources within the five sponsor companies’ businesses.

<http://www.metroatlantachamber.com/news/items/2016/08/10/mobile-atlanta-innovators-august-2016>

## BP7: MAKERSPACE – COLUMBUS, OH

The Columbus Idea Foundry, a 65,000-square foot makerspace in the heart of Columbus, is billed as “the largest community ‘makerspace’ on the planet.” Built in a 100-year-old shoe factory, the Foundry charges a monthly membership fee of \$35 and then an hourly fee to use a multitude of different tools like 3D printers, a Computer Numerical Control (CNC) cutting machine, design software, and others. Users also can pay a fee to have the facility make the prototype for them. With 200 members of varying interests and expertise, the mix reflects the founders’ collaborative vision of a place where artists, engineers, web developers, entrepreneurs, and everyday hobbyists mingle, ask for advice, and – after a viable product or idea takes shape – launch profitable businesses.

<http://www.columbusideafoundry.com>

## BP8: INTRAPRENEURSHIP – DELOITTE WHITEPAPER

The consulting firm Deloitte wrote an informative white paper guiding corporations in understanding the concept behind intrapreneurship and how to integrate it into the DNA of their organizations. The paper concluded with five insights on how to start thinking about intrapreneurship in an organization: These include:

- Insight 1: Intrapreneurship describes a people-centric, bottom-up approach to developing radical innovations in-house;
- Insight 2: Intrapreneurship pays off many times over in terms of company growth, culture, and talent;
- Insight 3: It’s not about creating Intrapreneurs; it’s about finding and recognizing them;
- Insight 4: Intrapreneurs know the rules and break them effectively; and,
- Insight 5: Intrapreneurship requires a different management approach.

Ultimately, intrapreneurship programs can be useful tools not only for corporate interests but overall regional job creation as well.

[https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/de/Documents/technology/Intrapreneurship\\_Whitepaper\\_English.pdf](https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/de/Documents/technology/Intrapreneurship_Whitepaper_English.pdf)

## BP9: MILITARY VETERAN ENTREPRENEURSHIP – BUNKER LABS

Bunker Labs is a national nonprofit organization built by military veteran entrepreneurs to empower other military veterans as leaders in innovation. Through local chapters organized in twelve different cities, Bunker Labs provides educational programming, mentors, events, and thriving local networks to help military veterans start and grow businesses. The organization works to inspire, educate, and connect veterans with the right people and the right resources to be successful as entrepreneurs and as innovators. Its online platform, Bunker in a Box, gives active duty personnel and veterans worldwide access to entrepreneurship education, complete with dozens of interviews with military veterans who have started a

diverse array of successful businesses. Bunker Labs has programs in Austin, Chicago, Columbus (OH), Jacksonville, Kansas City, Madison (WI), Minneapolis, Nashville, New York City, Philadelphia, Raleigh-Durham, Silicon Valley, and Washington, D.C.

<https://bunkerlabs.org>

## **BP10: IMMIGRANT ENTREPRENEURSHIP – PHILADELPHIA, PA**

Working from a belief that immigrants were more likely to be entrepreneurial in starting businesses, the Mt. Airy neighborhood in Philadelphia created the Philadelphia Immigrant Innovation Hub (I-Hub) to serve as an immigrant magnet for both immigrants already in Philadelphia and those outside it. I-Hub is run by Mt. Airy USA, the neighborhood's community development corporation, in partnership with Finanta, a nonprofit community lender, and the Welcoming Center for New Pennsylvanians. Besides being a co-working space, the I-Hub offers members education, financial advice and assistance, and help in creating business plans and navigating the city licensing and permitting requirements. Finanta provides financial assistance through both loans and workshops, and the Welcoming Center for New Pennsylvanians provides education and support through workshops and one-on-one business plan advising. The facility also promotes networking with other members and members of the local business community with the hope that some of the entrepreneurs will plant roots in Northwest Philadelphia.

<http://www.piihub.org>

## **BP11: BEHAVIORAL HEALTH INITIATIVE – BERNALILLO COUNTY, NM**

Bernalillo County, the City of Albuquerque, and the State of New Mexico recognized that their behavioral healthcare system was fragmented, difficult to navigate, and lacked a full complement of care options. Together, they committed to improving residents' lives and the public's safety by strategically evaluating and enhancing resources for mental health and substance abuse treatment. Supported by voter approval of a gross receipts tax, the partners developed a Behavioral Health Initiative plan for a cohesive, regional system of behavioral healthcare, with an emphasis on coordinated crisis services and sufficient funding streams. The plan presents specific recommendations, explanations, and anticipated costs for creating an effective and coordinated crisis care system, with priorities and targeted populations determined by the community. Wherever possible, the plan points out opportunities for leveraging current services, resources, potential partnerships, and funding streams. Bernalillo County took the lead to initiate collaboration with the adjoining counties, including establishing a monthly forum to discuss these efforts and agree upon strategic actions.

<http://www.bernco.gov/Public-Safety/behavioral-health.aspx>

## **BP12: HIGHER ED NEEDS ASSESSMENT – FREDERICK COUNTY, MD**

The Maryland Higher Education Commission, on behalf of the Frederick Regional Higher Education Advisory Board, conducted a study of higher education needs and capacity in the region. They identified businesses' concerns about the talent pipeline of available workers with appropriate skill sets and

credentials to be hired. Local higher education institutions do not have the resources to meet all identified needs, and current courses and degree programs are not easily accessible or affordable to residents and employees in Frederick County. The study recommended education programming of need that should be explored and implemented in Frederick County.

<http://docplayer.net/5581304-Frederick-county-higher-education-needs-assessment.html>

## BP13: PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM – HAMPTON, VA

Hampton City Schools strives to develop and maintain partnerships with parents and community members through its Family Engagement Program, an effort that engages parents and community partners in all aspects of children's learning experiences. Every Title I Hampton school has a Family Engagement Specialist on staff, leading the school's Family Engagement Program and managing the Family Resource Center. On-campus Family Resource Centers enable parents to talk to other parents and school staff, access materials on assisting their child's at-home learning, get updates on current programs and events, take home educational games, books and DVDs, and receive information about cultural and community services and agencies to help families with educational, health, and social service needs. A key component of the Family Engagement Program is the provision of numerous volunteer and leadership opportunities for parents/guardians and community/business partners to be engaged in the school community.

<http://mac.hampton.k12.va.us/parent-involvement>

## BP14: CODE ACADEMY – LOUISVILLE, KY

Code Louisville is a one-stop shop for people interested in learning how to develop software and for tech sector employers looking to hire local talent. Code Louisville provides coding classes for aspiring software developers, opportunities for employed developers to mentor current students, and opportunities for local employers to connect with and hire talent. Code Louisville is a collaboration between the Metro Louisville Department of Economic Growth and Innovation, Greater Louisville, Inc., EnterpriseCorp, the Louisville Free Public Library, KentuckianaWorks, and additional local employers.

<http://www.codelouisville.org/about/>

## BP15: COMPUTER PROGRAMMING PATHWAY INITIATIVE – ST. LOUIS

LaunchCode is a nonprofit organization based in St. Louis that supports the technology sector by creating career pathways to the tech sector through apprenticeships and job placement opportunities. LaunchCode offers prospective tech workers the opportunity to test their technical abilities, receive career mentorship, connect with companies that fit their interests and skillset, and transition to paid apprenticeship opportunities with a company. Founded in 2013, LaunchCode helped fill 140 new jobs in computer programming in St. Louis in its first year and allowed over 1,000 people to take advantage of available mentorship and education programs for career advancement.

<https://www.launchcode.org/>

## BP16: ADULT COLLEGE DEGREE COMPLETION – LOUISVILLE, KY

Part of a larger community commitment to increase regional post-secondary degree attainment by 55,000 residents by the year 2020, Degrees At Work has a goal of helping 15,000 working adults in Greater Louisville complete Bachelor's degrees by 2020. To accomplish this, Degrees At Work will improve the ease with which working adults access the post-secondary system, increase the affordability of education, promote the adoption of education-friendly programs, policies, and practices among Louisville employers, and measure and report the completion rates of working age adults that return to school. The program helps participants apply to college, transfer credits, secure financial aid, balance the demands of school, home, and the workplace, and maintain momentum towards their degree.

<http://www.greaterlouisville.com/DegreesAtWork/AboutUs/>

## BP17: HOMECOMING EVENTS – DETROIT, MI

Detroit Homecoming aims to reconnect Detroit expats with their hometown by providing news, events, and opportunities to live, work, or invest in Detroit. Recently, the program hosted its third class of expats back home to participate in and celebrate the city's rebirth. More than 200 Southeast Michigan expats attended the invitation-only event, with speakers that included former Microsoft Corporation CEO Steve Ballmer. Over the past two years, the event has resulted in more than \$260 million in pending investments in metro Detroit by participating expats.

<http://www.detroithomecoming.com>

<https://www.facebook.com/detroithomecoming/>

## BP18: DIVERSITY INITIATIVE – CINCINNATI, OH

The Cincinnati Regional Chamber's Diverse by Design initiative aims to attract, develop, and retain diverse, high potential talent and move Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky toward full inclusion. The program was based on evidence that diversity and inclusion are bottom-line imperatives embraced by successful businesses and regions. Diverse by Design efforts reach across multiple program areas, including CinciGlobal, a workforce initiative promoting engagement, internships, and co-op opportunities for international students to retain more of them in Cincinnati after they graduate. CONNECT, another Diverse by Design initiative, reaches out broadly to strengthen a culture of inclusion. It connects employee resource groups that attract, grow, and retain diverse talent at area companies and nonprofits. Nearly sixty companies participate in CONNECT, ranging from the region's largest employers such as Procter & Gamble and Kroger to universities, healthcare, banks, law firms, and nonprofits. A partnership with regional social service organizations, the Center for New Cincinnatians will be a virtual – and, potentially, physical – one stop shop for immigrants, refugees, and international students coming to the region to access information, services, and assistance.

<http://www.cincinnatiachamber.com/Connect/Diverse-by-Design/Diverse-by-Design.aspx#.WBYhzjX57IU>

## BP19: BUSINESS-LED TRANSPORTATION ALLIANCE – NORTHERN VIRGINIA

Founded in 1987 by a group of regional businesspeople and residents, the Northern Virginia Transportation Alliance is a non-partisan, private sector organization focused on improving transportation for residents and businesses in Northern Virginia. The Alliance has grown to represent more than twenty major business organizations in the region that are dedicated to making transportation a critical policy objective. Metro Washington D.C. and Northern Virginia have some of the nation's most congested traffic corridors; the Alliance draws attention to and lobbies for the projects it believes will do the most to relieve traffic congestion and move people throughout the region cost effectively within a regional framework of smart land use decisions. The Alliance's website lists the highest priority mobility initiatives with maps and project descriptions. Since its inception, the Alliance has been successful in advancing projects it deemed important, including commuter rail service, limited access parkway projects, highway widenings, bridge replacements, a rail line to the Dulles airport, and a comprehensive regional land use and transportation plan.

<http://www.nvta.org/>

## BP20: RIVER RECREATION DISTRICT – OKLAHOMA CITY, OK

The Boathouse District is a riverfront destination for athletes, metro area families, and visitors to Oklahoma City. Amenities include a world-class 4,000-meter race and training course, a whitewater rafting and kayak center, over 13 miles of bike trails, and activities such as waterslides, zip lines, climbing walls, a bicycle pump track, bouncing pillow, and youth zone. The \$57.1 million project was funded by a regional sales tax referendum called MAPS.

<http://boathousedistrict.org>

## BP21: SPORTS TOURISM COMPLEX – FOLEY, AL

Located in the coastal Alabama city of Foley, the Sports Tourism Complex is a mixed-use development combining recreation facilities with shopping, dining, hospitality, and entertainment amenities. The facilities at Foley Sports Tourism Complex include multiple state-of-the-art playing fields and the Foley Events Center, a 90,000-square foot multi-use indoor facility located adjacent to the sports fields. The indoor facility offers space for basketball, volleyball, cheerleading, and dance and gymnastics competitions, and can accommodate concerts, banquets, conventions, and trade shows.

<http://foleysportstourism.com>

## BP22: PUBLIC HIGH-SPEED INTERNET CONNECTIVITY – NORTHEAST OHIO

Unable to find a private-sector provider to partner with to procure super high-speed internet connectivity, Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland and several other large, publicly funded regional institutions, including hospital systems, the regional transit authority, public broadcasters, and others, created their own gigabit fiber network. The network was incorporated as a nonprofit known as OneCommunity that sought out universities, schools, hospitals, local governments, and other large nonprofits as their initial customer base. Demand led to capital infusions necessary to expand into a \$200 million fiber optic network. Eventually, OneCommunity found an investor that understood the complexity of the nonprofit network and how they could receive a healthy rate of return. The resulting partnership, branded as Everstream, shares infrastructure and support teams with OneCommunity to provide over 2,500 miles of fiber connectivity across a 34-county region at 10 gigabit speeds.

<http://www.onecommunity.org/>

## BP23: SMART CITY INITIATIVE – KANSAS CITY, MO

Though the City of Kansas City, Missouri, did not win the federal government's Smart City Challenge, its application has become the blueprint for future Smart City innovations pursued by public-private partnerships. Smart City investments of \$3.8 million by Kansas City over the next decade are being matched and exceeded by nearly \$12 million in private investment by Cisco, Think Big Partners, and other partners. Smart City initiatives will help the city use real-time data to deliver basic services more efficiently through the development of interactive kiosks, free public WiFi, smart streetlights and sensors, and other technologies. The city expects the Smart City project to attract technology startups looking to test their concepts in an open data living lab.

<http://kcmo.gov/smartcity/>

## BP24: COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS – PORTLAND, OR

Metro is the regional government for the Oregon portion of the Portland metropolitan area. It is the only directly elected regional government in the United States. Metro is nonpartisan and comprised of a president, who is elected region-wide, and six councilors that are elected by district every four years. The Council works together with community leaders and constituents on long-range plans that cross local boundaries in a region of 1.5 million people in 24 cities and three counties. Metro, in its current form, evolved from Columbia Region Association of Governments and was created by voters statewide in a 1978 ballot measure.

<http://www.oregonmetro.gov>

## BP25: REGIONAL PARKS PLAN – GREATER MINNEAPOLIS, MN

The Twin Cities metropolitan area is comprised of nearly three million people living in 186 communities across seven counties. The Regional Parks Policy Plan, developed as a component of the overall Thrive MSP 2040 plan, puts forward policy direction to ensure outdoor recreation benefits for all metropolitan region residents, now and into the future. The parks plan strives to build upon the existing work of partners to advance equity by committing to several strategies designed to strengthen equitable use of the Regional Park System. Goals of the plan include:

- Expand the Regional Parks System to conserve, maintain, and connect natural resources identified as being of high quality or having regional importance;
- Provide a comprehensive regional park and trail system that preserves high quality natural resources, increases climate resiliency, fosters healthy outcomes, connects communities, and enhances quality of life in the region;
- Promote expanded multimodal access to regional parks, regional trails, and the transit network, where appropriate; and,
- Strengthen equitable usage of regional parks and trails by all the region's residents, such as across age, race, ethnicity, income, national origin, and ability.

<https://metro council.org/Parks/Planning/Parks-Policy-Plan.aspx>

## BP26-31 – FOOD-RELATED PROJECTS

### ***Urban Food Project – Birmingham, AL***

REV Birmingham, a local revitalization agency, launched the Urban Food Project to build a robust local food economy while creating healthy food access. The program assists corner store owners in the purchasing, marketing, and selling of fresh produce. Quality produce is delivered weekly to Birmingham restaurants and corner stores located in food deserts. The Project also helps farmers plan their crops and create access to new markets by distributing their goods. Ultimately, this addresses the need for healthy food access for the 88,000 Birmingham residents living in food deserts.

<http://www.rev birmingham.org/rev-biz/the-urban-food-project/>

### ***Year-Round Farmer's Market – Grand Rapids, MI***

The Grand Rapids Downtown Market is a public space and a location for local food that fosters food entrepreneurship and community health and creates jobs. The Market is a mixed-use facility that brings together production, distribution, marketing, and education about local produce. The indoor facility features a 23-vendor market hall with two full-service restaurants, a rentable incubator kitchen, rooftop greenhouses, and the nation's first kid-friendly demonstration kitchen. The Market is LEED Gold certified, featuring a green roof, live walls, geothermal wells, a rain garden, and other innovative, sustainable features. The Market continues to spark the redevelopment of nearby properties.

<http://downtownmarketgr.com>



***Kitchen Incubator – Cincinnati, OH***

Findlay Kitchen is an 8,000-square foot, shared-use kitchen space located in the historic Findlay Market district in Cincinnati. The Kitchen is a nonprofit organization that supports new and existing food entrepreneurs by providing affordable access to commercial-grade kitchen equipment and ample storage space, all within a licensed kitchen facility. As a food business incubator, the facility partners with external programs and organizations to provide the necessary training, mentorship, and resources to aid business growth. Findlay Kitchen also serves as a conduit to wholesale and institutional customers, helping local entrepreneurs get their products in more places.

<http://findlaykitchen.org>

***Food Academy – Detroit, MI***

Detroit Food Academy is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that works with local educators, chefs, and business owners to inspire young Detroiters – between the ages of 13 and 24 – through self-directed entrepreneurial experiences rooted in food. Students learn by transforming their ideas into reality and grow as leaders by affecting change within and beyond the local food system. The Food Academy's programming is based on the Achieve-Connect-Thrive (ACT) Skills Framework, which evidence suggests prepares students to succeed in school, college, and careers.

<http://detroitfoodacademy.com>

***Reducing Food Waste – Pittsburgh, PA***

412 Food Rescue is a community-wide effort in metro Pittsburgh to end hunger and reduce food waste by collecting fresh, healthy food that otherwise would be discarded and directly distributing it to community organizations serving those in need. 412 Food Rescue works with food retailers, wholesalers, restaurants, caterers, universities, and other food providers to rescue unsellable but edible food, then uses multiple modes of retrieving and delivering food directly to organizations. Technology is used to efficiently match donors and beneficiaries, optimize operations, and mobilize vehicles and volunteers.

<http://412foodrescue.org>

***Healthy Corner Stores – Louisville, KY***

The YMCA of Greater Louisville partnered with the Louisville Department of Public Health and Wellness and the Center for Health Equity to launch the Healthy in a Hurry Corner Store initiative that addresses the lack of fresh produce and vegetables in low income areas of the community. The initiative is grant funded and has provided the infrastructure and expertise for six stores to carry fresh fruits and vegetables. Interested markets apply to become a Healthy in a Hurry Corner Store, market and promote healthy foods in their stores, and potentially join an Association of Healthy Corner Store Owners.

<http://www.ymcalouisville.org/social-responsibility/social-services/healthy-in-a-hurry-corner-stores.html>

## APPENDIX C: PERFORMANCE METRICS

Capital Crossroads leaders have indicated that the initiative would benefit from comparing Central Iowa against high-performing benchmark regions across a more expansive group of performance measures than previously tracked. Proposed data indicators were confirmed by Steering Committee members as the most valuable to assess implementation progress and success. While some will be reported publicly and others tracked internally, the data will help the vision plan's partners consistently enhance and adjust strategic components based on evolving market conditions and competitive realities.

Because data reporting from government agencies often lags by a year or more and future economic conditions are almost impossible to accurately predict (as the Great Recession showed), Market Street does not recommend that our client communities establish specific five-year performance goals for strategic implementation. Instead, we counsel clients to assess performance more broadly against benchmark regions, the state and nation to determine local progress in the context of macro trends affecting all communities. Specific performance expectations can also be applied. For instance, if Central Iowa ranks in the bottom quartile among a set of 10 comparison counties on a hypothetical measure, a goal could be set to move into the second quartile within five years.

Research teams from Capital Crossroads partners such as the Greater Des Moines Partnership, the United Way of Central Iowa, the Des Moines Area MPO, and others can work together to provide implementation teams with updated data for their Capitals and strategy-wide metrics. Annually reported trends as well as internal tracking measures will inform both external communications efforts as well as internal tactical adjustments. The following matrix includes performance indicators and the Steering Committee's determination whether they should be tracked and reported externally or internally.

Performance Indicator	Publicly Reported	Internally Tracked
Net job growth	X	
Total visitor spending		X
Total population growth	X	
Growth in 25-34 age group		X
Per capita personal income growth	X	
Total and youth poverty rates	X	
Pre-K enrollment		X
High school graduation rate	X	
Percentage of adults with a college degree	X	
GDP	X	
Violent and property crime trends		X
Airline passenger traffic	X	
Transit ridership	X	
Water contamination rates	X	
Total on- and off-street bike trail miles		X

## APPENDIX D: CAPITAL CROSSROADS 2.0: NEW STRATEGIC ACTIONS

Capital Crossroads 1.0 contained dozens of recommended actions steps; some were new, some reflected planned endeavors, and many attempted to capture ongoing work. Since the initiative's launch in late 2011, the list of activities housed under the strategic Capital framework has come into clear focus, although the inventory always is evolving based on new opportunities and challenges that arise in Central Iowa.

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. For most Central Iowans without in-depth knowledge of Capital Crossroads' vast interconnected network of tactical actions, this inventory will hopefully provide perspective on the continuing ambition of the initiative's work to take Central Iowa to even greater levels of competitiveness and success.

### 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

## APPENDIX E: ACRONYM DICTIONARY

The following table includes descriptions of the acronyms featured in the Capital Crossroads 2.0 vision plan.

Acronym	Description
ACE	Adverse Childhood Experiences
B2B	Business to business commerce
B2C	Business to consumer conference
BEA	Bureau of Economic Analysis
BP	Best practice
BRE	Business retention and expansion program
CICC	Central Iowa Code Consortium
CIWDB	Central Iowa Workforce Development Board
CLT	Community land trust
COG	Council of governments
CVB	Convention and Visitors Bureau
CWB	Community wealth building initiative
DART	Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority
DMACC	Des Moines Area Community College
DMPS	Des Moines Public Schools
DNR	Department of Natural Resources
DOT	Department of Transportation
DSM	Des Moines International Airport
EDGE	Education Drives our Great Economy
EDO	Economic development organization
ELC	Emerging Leaders Collaborative
Gbps	Billions of bits per second
GIA	Global Insurance Accelerator
H1B	Non-immigrant U.S. visa under the Immigration and Nationality Act
ICAN	Iowa College Access Network
ICT	Information and communication technologies
IEC	Iowa Events Center
ISU	Iowa State University
ITS	Intelligent transportation systems
IWILL	Iowa's Water & Land Legacy Coalition
IWLC	Iowa Women Lead Change
LEED	Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design

Acronym	Description
<b>LGC</b>	Local Government Collaborative
<b>LOST</b>	Local option sales tax
<b>M &amp; A</b>	Merger and acquisition
<b>MAC</b>	Metro Advisory Council
<b>MILAG</b>	Mid Iowa Association of Local Governments
<b>MPO</b>	Metropolitan planning organization
<b>NACTO</b>	National Association of City Transportation Officials
<b>NDC</b>	Neighborhood Development Corporation
<b>NFC</b>	Neighborhood Finance Corporation
<b>NIIP</b>	Neighborhood Improvement Implementation Plan
<b>RICC</b>	Regional Infrastructure Coordinating Committee
<b>RLC</b>	Regional Leadership Council
<b>SSMID</b>	Self-Supported Municipal Improvements Districts
<b>TID</b>	Transportation improvement district
<b>TIP</b>	Transportation improvement program
<b>TNC</b>	Transportation network company
<b>ULI</b>	Urban Land Institute
<b>WMA</b>	Watershed management authority
<b>YP</b>	Young professional
<b>YPC</b>	Young Professionals Connection