

# PRIORITY ACTIVITIES PROGRESS REPORT

## *FEBRUARY 2019*

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Capital Crossroads is a **bold but achievable vision** pushing Central Iowans to dream big, not settle for good enough, think long term and work together.

## BUSINESS CAPITAL

*Kathryn Kunert and Kraig Paulsen*

Central Iowa will remain a regional leader in economic growth

### TARGETED INDUSTRY GROWTH

#### **Effectively retain and expand existing businesses**

Leverage BRE visits to inform business expansion and attraction efforts

- The Partnership is leading a task force to reevaluate and enhance regional Business Retention & Expansion (BRE) efforts. The task force, comprised of local economic development professionals, had its initial meeting on January 10.
- Fifteen BRE meetings were held between November 1 and January 31.

Continue to advance economic activities with local small businesses

- The Partnership launched a new small business hub on its website that offers links to key contacts and resources at the Partnership and specific help by topic, including: accounting and taxes; events and networking; finance, banking and capital; information technology and data; legal issues; marketing and sales; how to start a business; staffing and hiring; success stories; and successful planning.
- The Partnership hosted *Top Five for Small Business* events in December and January. Cassie Edgar, an Intellectual Property & Regulatory Attorney from McKee, Voorhees & Sease, PLC presented in December on “Don’t Get Gobbled Up: Top Five IP Tips You Need To Know.” In January, Tiffany Tokarz, CEO of Modern Muse Consulting, spoke on the Top Five Customer Service Tips for Small Businesses. The Partnership also held a First Friday Series event on February 1 with Sally Cooper Smith, who specializes in marketing and business strategy for small businesses.
- The Partnership hosted “Meet the Buyers: Small to Big Business” on Feb. 5. The half-day program was designed to help small businesses begin or expand their business with larger companies. A total of 11 large businesses and more than 60 attendees registered for the event.
- The results of the Small Business Jobs Report were recently announced. The report shows there have been more than 8,000 jobs created each year in Greater Des Moines since 2013 by firms that are in their first year of business. The accommodations and food services industry is leading this growth. The total number of firms grew each year between 2013 and 2016 to a total of 18,699 in 2016, and the number of self-employed or sole proprietorship firms increased each year in the same

time frame to 51,772 in 2016. Total employment growth in the region from 2000 – 2017 was 17.9 percent, higher than the total U.S. rate of 10.8 percent.

Continue to partner with local EDOs to retain and expand businesses

- Northern Tool and Equipment, headquartered in Burnsville, MN, plans to build a 600,000 square foot facility in Ankeny with the potential to expand an additional 400,000 square feet in the future to serve as a distribution center to service retail centers throughout the country. The \$67 million project will create 183 new jobs.
- Kreg Tool, which manufactures automated and manual woodworking tools, plans to move 230 workers from Huxley to a new 250,000 sq. ft. headquarters in the Crosswinds Business Park in Ankeny. Total estimated project cost is \$34 million. This project will create 20 new jobs.
- Sammons Financial Group plans to build a 200,000 sq. ft. headquarters in West Des Moines. The project has a target start date of Spring 2019 and a target completion date of Fall 2020. This \$65 million project will create 125 jobs.
- Vertex Software LLC, which opened in September 2017, currently employs 58 people at its current site at the Iowa State University Research Park. It has developed a cloud-based software product that enables users to securely share 3D product data, to any computing device. The company is planning to build and lease a 60,000 square-foot facility in the Research Park and add 300 employees.
- Lely North America plans to expand its presences in Iowa with the construction of a new, 150,000 square foot North American headquarters. Lely North America, based in Pella, is part of the Lely Group, which was founded in 1948 in the Netherlands. The company develops innovative robotics and data analytics that improve animal welfare, flexibility and production on dairy farms. With this \$15.7 million expansion projects, products currently manufactured in Europe will now be manufactured in Pella.

### **Promote Greater Des Moines and Central Iowa in targeted external markets**

Promote Central Iowa through multimedia platforms and technologies. Leverage public relations investments to secure earned media placements.

- The Partnership will continue to build on the digital marketing campaign that launched in 2018 to broaden awareness and interest in the region from prospective talent and economic development prospects. In conjunction with the Des Moines Register's LOCALiQ team, the campaign will leverage digital tactics including display ads, site retargeting, geofencing and search engine marketing ads. The goals are to secure

33,050 unique visits to the economic development pages and  
82,820 unique visits to the talent attraction webpages on DSMpartnership.com.

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

- No events were held in the fourth quarter; however, Partnership staff attended *Area Development* magazine's Consultant Roundtable in December.

Conduct targeted outbound promotional trips to priority markets and events. Collaborate effectively with state and local economic development partners.

- The Partnership conducted marketing trips in November 2018 to Atlanta and in January 2019 to Los Angeles, the former in collaboration with IEDA. In addition, the Partnership had a trade show booth at CORFAC International's spring conference (February 20-22) in Scottsdale, AZ. CORFAC International is a network of independently owned commercial real estate brokerage firms. CORFAC currently has offices in 47 U.S. markets, 5 Canadian markets and 17 international markets, including Australia, Colombia, France, Germany, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Mexico, Romania, Russia, South Africa, South Korea, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. Over 400 attendees were at the conference.

## **ENTREPRENEURIAL DYNAMISM**

### **Support and enhance key facets of Central Iowa's diverse entrepreneurial ecosystem**

Facilitate the provision of seed and growth capital

- A total of \$470,000 was invested in nine early-stage companies as a result of the Angel Capital Association's Best of the Midwest regional meeting held in September. The 2018 Best of the Midwest event is the third in an ongoing series for Midwest angel investors.
- In December, Plains Angels held their monthly meeting and hosted presentations from two startup companies: Metamatrix and Stratafolio. The Partnership and BrownWinick Law hosted the Plains Angels for a social gathering at Centro.
- The Global Insurance Accelerator revealed the ten companies in the 2019 cohort. Recently, the Global Insurance Accelerator announced that Nicole Cook will join the GIA full time February 11 and take over as Managing Director on May 1 of this year following the conclusion of the 2019 cohort. During the GIA's 2019 cohort, Cook will work alongside current Managing Director, Brian Hemesath. Her background includes expertise in finance, strategy, sales, technology and raising capital.

- The Pappajohn Center for Entrepreneurship brought two alumni and serial entrepreneurs as guest speakers to campus. Danny O'Neill ('83 political science/international studies) the founder the CEO of The Roasterie Air Roasted Coffee spoke about his journey from Iowa State to Costa Rica, and Guy Barbier ('07 marketing/finance) founding sales team member at Moat, who was the Reiman Speaker, gave an inspiring talk on how life is scary, entrepreneurship is scary, but regrets are even scarier!
- ISU Innovation Pitch Competition is under way. It features seven business pitch competitions in each of the seven colleges at Iowa State. The Innovation Center is also well underway, and students, faculty, and staff are excited and eager to get into the new building in 2020.
- The Iowa State Startup Factory announced twelve new teams for its sixth cohort, which began in January.
- One Million Cups Ames officially launched in February, and weekly meetups will take place every Wednesday morning from 7:30 – 9:00 a.m.

### **Promote a diverse, networked culture of entrepreneurship**

Encourage intrapreneurship in Central Iowa companies and effectively nurture the full diversity of potential entrepreneurs

- Dwolla announced its Monterey event that will take place on May 21 – 22, 2019. Monterey is an event dedicated to connecting those who believe in creating value in the Midwest. The event aims to grow the region's startup ecosystem.

## **INTERNATIONAL EXPANSION**

### **Accelerate growth of key industry clusters through global engagement**

Increase the region's global identity through growth in key services clusters

- The City of Des Moines signed a Sister City agreement with Pristina, Kosovo. The agreement demonstrates another example of the ongoing connectivity between Kosovo and Iowa. Des Moines became the fourth city in Iowa to sign a sister city agreement with a counterpart from Kosovo. Also, the Partnership and the Consulate of the Republic of Kosovo hosted a luncheon on December 6 for Speaker of the Assembly of Kosovo, Mr. Kadri Veseli, to celebrate his first trip to Iowa.

## CAPITAL CORE

*Russ Cross, Colleen MacRae and Scott Sanders*

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

#### **Increase the capacity and diversity of downtown amenities**

Conduct a downtown Des Moines retail analysis and attraction study

- Following the launch of the Downtown DSM Retail 2030 plan in November 2018, work is progressing on the following action items:
  - Creating a data hub to support recruitment of national and local retail;
  - Pursuing technology to provide up-to-date pedestrian counts on both street and skywalk levels;
  - Taking initial steps on developing neighborhood identities;
  - Creating best practices for events.

The task force will reconvene in Q2 to assess progress to-date and assign additional next steps.

Enhance downtown Des Moines activity and event programming

- The first annual DSM Book Festival is planned for March 30, 2019 from 10am – 7pm. Headlining authors include Nnedi Okorafor, author of Marvel's "Black Panther," Garth Stein, author of "The Art of Racing in the Rain," and Susan Orlean, author of "The Library Book." A wide range of activities are planned for children through adults. Admission is free and approximately 7,500 attendees are projected for this new event.
- The Downtown Farmer's Market will open for the season May 4 and summer Out to Lunch events will begin May 22.

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

- Renovation of existing buildings for hotels is progressing. The Renaissance Savery re-opened late 2018 and restoration at the Hotel Fort Des Moines is underway with a 2019 re-opening planned for 2019, to commemorate the hotel's 100-year anniversary. The Fairfield Inn conversion of an office building north of the Iowa Events Center is nearing completion. Aparium Group's conversion of the Midland Building to a boutique hotel is in its early stages with a 2020 opening planned.

- Design and engineering of the Lauridsen Skatepark continues which will create the country's second largest skate park.

### **Build and sustain downtown housing at multiple price points**

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

- The City continues to work with developers on incorporating a portion of units at affordable rent levels into projects receiving TIF incentives in downtown. Approximately 45 units spread among three downtown projects should become available to those in the downtown workforce making approximately 80% of the area's median income. Focus on creating active uses in ground floor spaces continues, with the recent retail study and upcoming new zoning code providing direction on where retail, restaurant and other active uses should be a priority.

Develop a Downtown Des Moines Workforce Housing Plan

- The Workforce Housing study is progressing. Data analysis will be complete this spring at which point stakeholders will be engaged for strategy development. The full plan with data analysis and strategies will be complete Summer 2019.

Support transportation options that promote urban living and increased affordability

- BCycle continues to expand with a new station added at 7th and Laurel, adjacent to the DMACC Urban Campus and United Way. This brings the system to 22 stations and 140 bicycles.

### **Foster development of connected, pedestrian-friendly downtown environments**

Ensure that parking structures and skywalk policies are consistent with downtown urbanism goals

- Final implementation of the PARK downtown Des Moines measures are complete. The year-long strategy changed the hours and rates for on-street parking meters and parking ramps to better align with our mixed-use downtown. Early study of changes to the downtown parking meters is underway to understand costs and benefits of implementing meters with remote payment technologies.

## **NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT**

### **Leverage effective strategic models for neighborhood improvement**

Continue to seek resources to advance the Neighborhood Improvement Implementation Plan

- Resources for neighborhood improvement are pending at this time. The City of Des Moines has funding for neighborhood improvements programmed into its proposed budget for FY20. Also, the LOSST vote is on March 5. If the measure passes, the City of Des Moines will put a substantial portion towards neighborhood improvements in the form of infrastructure work and blight removal.

## CULTIVATION CORRIDOR

*Gage Kent*

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

### **Implement the Cultivation Corridor economic development strategy**

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

- The Corridor continues to find success by lifting up partners and their alliances with other businesses, NGOs and public entities. Over the last six months over \$235 million has been announced for capital investment by private entities to grow the industry in the state. The ISU Research Park and Story county continue to be the driver of investment in the agtech and bioscience industry.
- In the last quarter of 2018, the Corridor hosted the Governor's Reception in conjunction with the World Food Prize which was a great opportunity to work with our partners to raise our industry up on a global stage.

### **Actively promote the Cultivation Corridor brand**

Increase brand awareness among targeted audiences

- During the last quarter of 2018 the Corridor message was shared with eight audiences. A new brand campaign will begin with a soft launch in February and a full launch in April. "America's Cultivation Corridor" highlights this is WHERE science feeds the world. This is WHERE you can have a great career, WHERE you can start your business, this is WHERE you can interact with global leaders that drive the industry.

### **Support agbio and agtech innovation**

Develop and execute programming that fosters the development of high-value ag technologies



- The Corridor’s participation in the Empower Rural Iowa Initiative led by Lt. Governor Adam Gregg, is key to setting the stage. Director Billi Hunt’s work on the rural broadband committee supports adoption of the technology also helps others better understand the opportunity of the innovations.

## CULTURAL CAPITAL

*Sally Dix, Greg Edwards and Myrna Johnson*

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

#### **Provide ongoing support for arts and culture organizations and producers and implement the Regional Cultural Assessment.**

Generate more spontaneous artistic and cultural connections in new and different spaces.

- In March, Bravo will introduce a new public art grant program. Through the Public Art Grant (PAG) program, Bravo will offer financial support to its local government partners for public art projects that generate more artistic and cultural expression in the Greater Des Moines region. Public art master planning as well as project development costs are also eligible. Up to \$100,000 is available for awards in Grant Cycle 2019 and applications will be available on Bravo’s website on March 1, 2019.

Support creative artists and entrepreneurs as part of our creative economy.

- A task force continues exploring strategies to support and promote the region as a music city. Best practices have been identified which will help guide future priorities.
- Bravo Greater Des Moines and the Des Moines Arts Festival collaborated on an effort called “The Creative Economy Initiative (CEI) to connect with individual artists and identify opportunities to strengthen artist resources. A gaps and needs assessment survey was broadly distributed in January and February and several hundred responses were received. Results of the creative economy feasibility study and action plan work should be available by late spring.
- Catch Des Moines launched their popular new beer app, Brew Moines in June of 2018 to support the burgeoning beer scene in Greater Des Moines and to reach those visitors looking for a “brewcation.” With 15 breweries in tow, the app has performed tremendously, receiving over 10,000 downloads and 25,000 brewery check-ins since its launch. It also recently won an award for Outstanding Promotional Material at the

Iowa Tourism Awards. The app has created many brand ambassadors (“Brew Moines-ians”) for the local brewery scene and has not only galvanized local beer aficionados but has also brought in visitors from as far out as Boston and Seattle.

Support arts, culture and heritage throughout Central Iowa in a diverse, accessible, inclusive and equitable manner.

- Bravo Greater Des Moines has been selected as one of two national pilot sites for expanding Americans for the Arts’ Diversity in Arts Leadership (DIAL) undergraduate internship program. This program has been running successfully for 25 years in NYC. DIAL matches undergraduate students from backgrounds traditionally untapped for arts leadership. Applicants can come from anywhere, and the program is designed with Americans for the Arts [Statement on Cultural Equity](#) in mind. Bravo has made a five-year commitment to the program and seeks to place seven interns for the summer of 2019.

Business mentors are a key component to the DIAL program. Bravo is currently recruiting professionals in the business sector who have a passion for the arts, interest in serving the community, and fostering the career development of young people. Mentors guide and advise students throughout the internship and provide insight into the business world and demonstrate how individuals with varied careers in the business sector can include the arts in their lives.

Ensure young people in the region have access to a rich array of creative and cultural experiences, both formal and informal, educational and recreational

- Bravo is partnering with Community Youth Concepts (CYC) to engage youth in a process aimed at increasing youth access to arts education and programs that meet youth where they are physically, economically, developmentally and culturally. The short-term objectives are to learn how youth define arts and culture, learn how we can better connect youth to existing arts and culture and define opportunities for enhanced programming in the region that engage youth and infuse youth voice and perspective across all four Regional Cultural Priorities (Every Day, Everywhere Art; Strengthen the Creative Economy; Cultural Tapestry; and Youth Connections). A long-term outcome of this project may be to develop a youth advisory council to the Bravo Board of Directors to establish ongoing dialogue and input that informs action.

Ten input sessions have been scheduled throughout the metro and CYC is working with staff in the schools who work with diverse students in Norwalk, Urbandale, Johnston, Des Moines, West Des Moines and Ankeny.

Attract arts & culture visitors to Central Iowa.

- This year, Catch Des Moines renewed its focus on digital advertising, particularly during off-peak seasons, in order to tailor messaging and calls to action toward specific verticals, including arts & culture. Each month focuses on two different relevant verticals depending on what makes the most sense of that month (ex: arts & culture and shopping for December). With strong calls to action and more curated, inspirational content on the landing pages, the click-through rates have doubled the industry average, delivering over three million impression per month. Target markets include Iowa (outside of the Greater Des Moines DMA), Omaha, Minneapolis and Kansas City which is a new target market.
- Catch Des Moines selected global professional services firm JLL to facilitate the creation of a ten-year Tourism Master Plan for the Greater Des Moines region. The goal of this plan is to drive stakeholder consensus and collaboration to craft a singular vision that elevates all involved. This will be done through benchmarking, organizational review, a comprehensive destination assessment and priority identification, all of which will result in a final report with short-term executables and a long-term roadmap that provides an organized framework for tourism development and promotion. JLL's first visit to the Greater Des Moines market took place January 28 – 31, 2019. There was a work session with the Catch Des Moines staff as well as 17 other focus group and stakeholder interviews throughout the week with communities, attractions, developers, restaurants, etc. In late spring/early summer JLL will finalize asset inventory and present interim findings to the Catch Des Moines Board.
- Catch Des Moines is working with Scott Siepker the "Iowa Nice Guy" to create fun, sharable brand videos highlighting our food & beverage, arts & culture and outdoor & sports scenes, along with a branded series of shorter social videos highlighting those "authentically, only in Des Moines" experiences including steak de burgo, crab rangoon pizza, the Sculpture Park, Downtown Farmer's Market and Raygun. These videos will be a part of a social and digital campaign that will help give Greater Des Moines the fun, slightly quirky brand that it deserves and needs in order to stand out in a very competitive landscape. Filming for videos will begin in the spring and assets should launch in conjunction with a new branding campaign containing many traditional assets that will launch later in the summer.
- This past quarter, Catch Des Moines launched a new microsite, [desmoinestourism.com](http://desmoinestourism.com), in conjunction with a coinciding relevancy campaign meant to

demonstrate the impact and value that tourism brings to the region, along with calls to action about how to get involved, whether as a partner, an investor, a Catch Champion or a volunteer. The goal is to paint a more holistic picture of tourism: that while tourism and events do bring in dollars and create jobs, it also impacts civic pride, city prestige, future opportunities and the quality of life for those who live here. Launched in November, with the video we created receiving over 42K views during our social campaign; a weekly digital ad is also running in the Business Record, website build-out continues with additional content and supplemental collateral for things like Catch Champions.

## GOVERNANCE CAPITAL

*Bob Andeweg, Sara Kurovski and Gretchen Tegeler*

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

### COORDINATED OPERATIONS AND GOVERNANCE

#### Pursue operational coordination

Continue the evolution of the Local Government Collaboration Project

- The Stormwater Management education series is complete and now work continues on a performance-based approach within the region. A small group working on municipal data collection to assess costs already incurred by cities. Efforts are also underway to engage the Home Builders Association and ICREA in the process. The group will present to regional Councils throughout the spring and summer.

Adopt and sustain the work of the Central Iowa Code Consortium

- The Central Iowa Code Consortium is currently reviewing proposal changes to the 2018 codes and is in the process of finalizing recommendations which will be complete March 31, 2019. Recommended codes will be published in April.

## HUMAN CAPITAL

*Elisabeth Buck, Dr. Angela Franklin and Greg Nichols*

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

### WORKFORCE-SUPPORTIVE POLICIES

## Identify and lobby for education policies benefitting Central Iowa

Leverage partners to inform policy priorities and Consider the promotion of education-specific policy issues

- Nearly 50 legislators visited with advocates on critical skills-based workforce programs, supports and policy recommendations included in the 2019 Skills2Compete Report, as well as the priority areas of OpportUNITY at the February 12 Morning at the Capitol. Skills2Compete policy agenda updates include:
  - Current Investments in Adult Basic Education, GAP/PACE: United Way of Central Iowa and Skills2Compete Coalition partners have discussed the importance of continued investment in programs housed within the Iowa Skilled Worker Fund. Advocates have been positioning adult basic education, in particular, as a prerequisite for the goals of Future Ready Iowa, as Iowans without high school diplomas or equivalencies are unable to pursue postsecondary education or training.
  - Child Care Assistance Cliff Effect: Multiple bills have been filed in both chambers that closely match proposals to expand income eligibility for the Child Care Assistance program. The Senate has been more amenable to work on this issue. Senator Jeff Edler (R-State Center) has been charged with researching the issue, and potentially combining the concepts in SF 163 (Sen. Zaun) and SF 191 (Sen. Ragan/Mathis et al). In the House however, HSB 166 (Rep. Lundgren R-Dubuque, and soon to be renumbered) is an interim study bill that will study the Child Care Assistance Cliff Effect, but potentially also delay action until 2020.
  - Future Ready Iowa: HSB 179 (Rep. Grassley study bill) which provides funds for components of Future Ready Iowa, will be up for subcommittee on February 25. Top lines from this bill include \$17.2million for the last-dollar scholarship, \$400,000 for a volunteer-based mentor program, \$1.2million for the Employer Innovation Fund among other appropriations.
  - Housing Issues: A number of bills targeted at expanding tax credits for affordable housing are active and moving through the process. Focus thus far has been on workforce housing tax credits in rural areas of the state. The Governor included this in her Condition of the State Address, as well as the Governor's Budget for SFY19-20.
- The 2019 Iowa Skills2Compete Coalition, convened by United Way of Central Iowa and chaired by Mary Bontrager, includes statewide representatives from K12, post-secondary, business, labor and non-profit organizations.

- Through the Partnership's Government Policy Council members representing education, business and non-profits, we developed our State agenda for Education, Workforce and Immigration. Partnership representatives served on United Way of Central Iowa's policy committee to assist in developing their agenda, Skills to Compete, which is supported in the Partnership's agenda.

#### **Consider the promotion of education-specific policy issues**

- The education section of the Partnership's 2019 State policy agenda was developed with input from K-12 and higher education representatives to align to and support their policy issues.

### **CRADLE THROUGH CAREER PIPELINE**

#### **Partner with the private sector to maximize their impact on talent development**

- The Partnership continues to solicit and feature blogs highlighting individual, corporate and educational success stories that support the region's EDGE campaign. We are making great progress toward our EDGE goal of 75x25. Our most recent report card shows we are at 65.5% of working-aged adults in central Iowa having completed some post-secondary experience, up from 61.3% in the prior year.

#### **Effectively bridge students from elementary to high school.**

Implement programming supportive of middle-school student needs.

- The OpportUNITY Middle School Education Work Group is partnering with Des Moines Public Schools and out-of-school-time programs to build out strategies to ensure that KUDER assessment information can be leveraged to introduce students to career pathways prior to high school. The focus on this work is to better educate students on their career interests as well as post-secondary education opportunities they might want to consider. There has been an intentional emphasis placed on career exploration that may not fall in a traditional four-year degree program – but rather non-traditional pathways such as trade programs, short-term training certifications, and apprenticeships. This strategy is currently being piloted with students engaged in out-of-school time programming at CFUM.

#### **How have students successfully been advanced to graduation?**

- In the fall of 2018, Des Moines Public Schools (DMPS) enrolled its first cohort to their Virtual Campus. DMPS Virtual Campus is an online high school, designed and taught by DMPS educators, to provide greater equity of access and opportunity for success to all students. Eighty students enrolled in the initial cohort, exceeding the anticipated

target. To date, DMPS are averaging 6-10 inquiries per week from students and/or parents interested in Virtual Campus enrollment.

### **Graduate Central Iowa high school students college and career ready**

Support college and career readiness in Central Iowa high schools

- The Partnership collaborates with ICAN to support their college and career planning workshops offered at every high school in the DSM region. Through these sessions, Partnership representatives provide data on projected job growth and needed skills/education.

## LIFELONG LEARNING

### **Help Central Iowa adults advance their education and career opportunities**

- The OpportUNITY New Iowans Work Group is continuing to push themselves to advocate more for New Iowans in our community, particularly around skill advancement leading to financial stability. The Pre-Apprenticeship Strategic Team (PAST), a subgroup of New Iowans, recently presented their workgroup findings. The report included potential strategies to build pathways for more New Iowans to participate in more traditional apprenticeship programs. The group is currently working on a pilot-project plan with expected implementation in 2019.
- In January, DMACC, in collaboration with the Partnership, launched CodeDSM with 16 students in the inaugural class. CodeDSM is designed to provide foundational coding skills to adults seeking a short-term, intensive learning experience preparing them for entry level IT careers. CodeDSM is a 15-week curriculum developed with input from corporate IT professionals and taught by a corporate IT professional to ensure real world content and experience.

### **Enhance adults' ability to access jobs and training**

Develop a comprehensive Affordable Child Care Action Plan

- Multiple bills have been filed in both chambers that closely match proposals to expand income eligibility for the Child Care Assistance program. The Senate has been more amenable to work on this issue. Senator Jeff Edler (R-State Center) has been charged with researching the issue, and potentially combining the concepts in SF 163 (Sen. Zaun) and SF 191 (Sen. Ragan/Mathis et al). In the House however, HSB 166 (Rep. Lundgren R-Dubuque, and soon to be renumbered) is an interim study bill that will study the Child Care Assistance Cliff Effect, but potentially also delay action until 2020.

Improve transportation access to jobs and training

- Several central Iowa partners are in the process of developing an RFP that will be focused on more specifically identifying challenges in transportation and assessing the collective assets we have to bear across our community to address this important issue. We expect the results of the study to be completed in the next quarter.

## **TALENT RETENTION AND ATTRACTION**

### **Retain skilled recent graduates and interns**

Leverage tools and relationships to support talent retention

- Recognizing the contributions and future potential of our growing foreign-born residents in filling our talent demands, the Partnership, Polk County and the City of Des Moines are working together to grow and retain this population. In February, the three entities hosted a convening of agencies and services providers who support our foreign-born population. The focus of the session was to review and provide input to their recently commissioned study exploring the need for a comprehensive center to welcome and provide guidance for immigrant and refugee communities to support and enhance existing services. Based on feedback from attendees, it was determined to issue an RFP to identify and select one or more partner providers to lead the development and implementation of a Welcome Center and incubation of new ECBOs.
- On February 25 Iowa business and industry leaders launched the Iowa Compact on Immigration, a set of principles outlining the need for smart immigration policies at the state and federal levels to drive Iowa's economy forward. Initial signatories included more than 30 business, industry and economic leaders committed to reforms that strengthen Iowa's economy and attract the talent and business the state needs to grow. The Compact's principles outline six areas of focus for immigration reform legislation and is an initiative of the New American Economy.

### **Attract top talent to Central Iowa**

Promote Central Iowa through external events and visitation

- The Partnership is in mid-season of the spring college recruiting efforts with visits to more than 12 campuses. Two new locations, University of Virginia and Duke University, were added in 2019.

Work to attract international talent to the region

- In an effort to attract talent that is under-utilizing skills in other communities, Des Moines was chosen as one of eight U.S. communities to receive customized technical



assistance to advance its skilled immigrant integration efforts. Global Talent Bridge program of World Education Services (WES), a national organization dedicated to helping skilled immigrants fully utilize their talents and education in the United States. The grant will help strengthen Greater Des Moines' status as a place for foreign-born persons to find career opportunities. The Partnership will work closely with several other community organizations on this effort, including Goodwill of Central Iowa, Lutheran Services in Iowa, Iowa Works and Iowa Employment Solutions at Des Moines Area Community College.

## NATURAL CAPITAL

*Hannah Inman, Larry James and Julie Stewart*

Central Iowa will be recognized nationally as a best practice community for its environmental sustainability

### OUTDOOR RECREATION

#### **Enhance Central Iowa's network of parks and greenways**

Develop and implement a regional parks plan

- The initial draft of the plan has been developed by students at Iowa State University. Portions of the plan are being divided into implementation phases, some of which are incorporated within the Greater Des Moines Water Trails project and also within the Water Shed Management Authorities.
- The Fundraising Feasibility for the Regional Water Trails plan is coming to a close, and major gifts are now being solicited.
- The Great Outdoors Foundation has filed the LLC for the water trails incubator under the Capital Crossroads umbrella. This will provide a short-term home for the project as governance is explored. Next steps for the water trails project are to formalize the LLC board, recruit committees, confirm a budget and to begin the process for determining a governance structure for the 150 miles of waterways in the region.

### RESOURCE CONSERVATION

#### **Optimize Water Quality and Distribution**

Continue expanding watershed-management capacity and impacts

- The Council of Des Moines Area Watershed Management Authorities continues to meet. Participating watersheds include Fourmile Creek, Mud-Camp-Spring Creeks, Walnut Creek, Beaver Creek and North Raccoon. The group is taking steps to advocate to the legislature for funding and better participate in the process.

### **Partner on conservation and advocacy efforts to sustain Central Iowa's natural resources**

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

- Work continues to strengthen upstream-downstream relationships. The water trails plan was presented to the Agriculture's Clean Water Alliance board of directors, and an event is being discussed to engage rural stakeholders in metro stormwater efforts.

## **MARKETING AND EDUCATION**

### **Actively promote environmental sustainability issues and opportunities**

Develop compelling effective public outreach campaigns

- The Outdoor Recreation Calendar operating on the Great Outdoors Foundation's website. This allows for a one stop look at outdoor recreation opportunities in Central Iowa.
- The Natural Capital continues to partner with the Social Capital to convene a Feedback 4 Equity focus group. The group is comprised of individuals from underrepresented communities and has already provided valuable feedback on initiatives of the Natural Capital, with a primary focus on the water trails.

## **PHYSICAL CAPITAL**

*Todd Ashby, Eric Burmeister and Elizabeth Presutti*

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**

### **Optimize transportation infrastructure and services**

Create a non-partisan mobility alliance as a business-led partnership to advance multimodal mobility in Central Iowa

- The Transit Future Work Group continues to work to voice business support for improved transit in the Greater Des Moines community. An event is planned for April 22 with Adie Tomer, a fellow with the Brookings Institution Metropolitan Policy Program which will focus on mobility and metropolitan economies.
- An informal Mobility Coalition has been formed and has met for the last several months to ensure coordination among various transportation stakeholders. Interested parties include the Des Moines Area MPO, DART, the City of Des Moines, the United Way, the Des Moines Bike Collective and the Greater Des Moines Partnership.
- The Des Moines Bike Collective has transitioned organization names to The Street Collective to better promote and advocate for mobility in multiple forms across the region.

#### Ensure efficient use of existing transportation investments

- As DART prepares for every service change, it is continually evaluating route performance and looking for ways to improve effectiveness and efficiency. DART is beginning planning for a major service change in 2019 focused on the western and northern suburbs. That change will look at current services in Ankeny, Clive, Grimes, Urbandale, and West Des Moines to ensure current resources and services reflect growth and development patterns, meet rider needs, and use current resources as effectively and efficiently as possible. Organizations, residents and businesses are invited to review the project and share their feedback on our website: [www.ridedart.com/2019](http://www.ridedart.com/2019).
- The Des Moines Area MPO is updating its long-range transportation plan, Mobilizing Tomorrow. Part of this effort includes analyzing the region's transportation system and identifying necessary investments. These investments must be in line with forecasted funding available to the region. In September the MPO approved a funding plan for the Mobilizing Tomorrow update. The funding plan calls for the following targets: 20% of funding for bridges; 25% for major reconstruction and replacement of existing infrastructure; 15% for system optimization; 10% for transit; and, 30% for system capacity.

#### **Foster development of connected, bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly environments**

##### Implement strategies to encourage mobility alternatives

- DART and Hy-Vee recently entered into a public-private partnership to extend transit service to the new Hy-Vee Commissary facility in Ankeny. The partnership extends an existing DART route, providing access for Hy-Vee employees as well as the general public.

- DART also continues to use a variety of marketing techniques including social media, digital outreach, events, mobility training and new partnerships to attract new customers.

Advance and swiftly transition key policies into implementation mode

- DART recently completed bus stop improvements at the Windsor Heights Wal-Mart that make the stop accessible, safer and more comfortable—including bus shelters and boarding islands. The stop is made possible through the Iowa Clean Air Attainment Program and a partnership with Walmart, the City of Windsor Heights and Colby Properties.
- The Des Moines Area MPO's funding plan for the Mobilizing Tomorrow plan update targets providing a minimum of 10% of funding to transit projects.

### **Enhance regional transit capacity**

Provide ongoing support for implementation of DART Forward 2035

- Staff are working with the DART Commission on a plan that identifies and evaluates innovative business models to coordinate and deliver regional mobility services in a manner that evolves to meet changing technology and transportation trends. This planning process will happen from 2019-2020 and will likely replace the DART Forward 2035 plan when it is completed.
- In order to support transit needs in the community, the DART Commission approved priorities for the 2019 Legislative session, including funding options for DART's lobbyists to discuss with legislators. These options will allow DART to maintain current service while staff work with a consultant to develop a long-range service plan and develop options for the Commission to consider for the future funding formula. The funding options include:
  - An increase in the property tax cap from \$0.95 to \$1.45 per \$1,000 of taxable valuation. If this is the only additional funding source secured, it would allow DART to maintain its current service through approximately 2040.
  - Access to state levies that municipal transit agencies have access to. These levies offset the costs of certain budget items, including employee benefits, debt service levy, FICA and IPERS, and liability, property and self-insurance costs. Accessing these levies would allow DART to shift approximately \$6 million of its current operating budget to other levies, reducing the burden on the \$0.95 transit levy. If this is the only additional funding secured, it would allow DART to maintain its current service through 2029.
- Other legislative priorities:

- Other Funding Diversification: Authorize staff and lobbyists to discuss any other potential revenue diversification options that may arise during the legislative session. Staff and lobbyists would bring these options to the Executive Committee for approval before moving forward.
  - Medicaid: Any legislative fix to current Medicaid challenges should ensure that the cost of transportation for trips previously funded by Medicaid should not be transferred to local transit authorities, and thereby, local property taxpayers.
  - Property Tax Backfill: The elimination of the property tax backfill would mean a loss in revenue of more than \$600,000 annually for DART. Staff and lobbyists should encourage legislators to recognize DART’s unique status and maintain the backfill.
- The Des Moines Area MPO's funding plan for the Mobilizing Tomorrow plan update targets providing a minimum of 10% of funding to transit projects.

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

- DART meets regularly with member communities to review and comment on public and private development projects.

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

- DART and Hy-Vee recently entered into a public-private partnership to extend transit service to the new Hy-Vee Commissary facility in Ankeny. The partnership extends an existing DART route, providing access for Hy-Vee employees as well as the general public.
- DART recently completed a comprehensive upgrade to the customer waiting environment at one of its busiest bus stops at the Walmart in Windsor Heights.

### **Develop key freight infrastructure**

Design and promote a regional multimodal transload facility

- The MPO is actively working on developing the preferred site into a transload facility with an operator. Recently the MPO was awarded a \$11.5 million BUILD grant to support the development of the project.

## **DESTINATION AMENITIES**

### **Develop a world-class system of land and water trails**

Develop and connect Central Iowa’s network of land trails

- The MPO is using its DATA bike to determine pavement conditions on the trail network that will allow for focused use of maintenance dollars as well as working with member governments on filling in gaps on the trail network.
- The Des Moines Area MPO is currently facilitating the federal Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). TAP funds are available for a number of uses, including the expansion and maintenance of the trail system.

Build an extensive system of regional water trails

- A coalition of stakeholders has continued to move forward with developing a Water Trails Incubator under Capital Crossroads, which will help implement the vision of the Water Trails and Greenways Master Plan. This will provide a short-term home for the project as governance is explored. Next steps for the water trails project are to formalize the LLC board, recruit committees, confirm a budget and to begin the process for determining a governance structure for the 150 miles of waterways in the region.

## **21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY TECHNOLOGIES**

### **Secure competitive broadband speeds for all regional communities**

Identify viable means to secure gigabit internet for Central Iowa communities

- Work continues with the region's internet providers. All new developments are being provided with Fiber to the Premise (FTTP), which allows for gigabit speeds.

### **Pursue Smart City strategies in Central Iowa**

Launch a coordinated Smart City initiative

- The Smart City Roundtable has participation from a diverse group of stakeholders from the public, private, and non-profit sectors and is working to identify specific initiatives on which to focus its efforts.

## **NEIGHBORHOODS AND HOUSING**

### **Ensure regional diversity in neighborhood and housing costs, styles, and locations**

Build “missing middle” housing types

- Multiple central Iowa communities have been allowing smaller lots and footprints for single family detached homes.

Implement Housing Tomorrow to address regional affordable housing needs

- All funding from the Polk County Housing Trust Fund for affordable housing corresponds with the Housing Tomorrow plan. There continues to be robust discussion from a number of communities regarding a wide variety of housing needs and costs. Communities that have formerly relied only on market driven construction are now starting to find ways to provide incentives for more affordable options.

Promote infill development and the rehabilitation of vacant structures

- As it relates to the City of Des Moines, recommendations from the czb study will be implemented over time beginning with four pilot areas.

## SOCIAL CAPITAL

*Angie Dethlefs-Trettin, Daniel Hoffman-Zinnel and Izaah Knox*

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

### SUPPORT A MORE DIVERSE IOWA

#### **Establish community goals for leadership, diversity, equity, inclusion, and civility**

- The Social Capital continues to promote and share the 4 Equity tool throughout the region as well as the state. The tool is being used by JLL as Catch Des Moines' master plan is developed and also has now been shared with the Cedar Rapids Chamber of Commerce.
- The Civility Committee within the Ray Center will be updating goals as the 2020 election approaches to promote civility during the election season. Anticipated tactics will include media outreach, participation in candidate forums and outreach to community influencers.

#### **Leverage and enhance existing efforts**

Recognize, celebrate, and continue to lift up successes since Capital Crossroads' inception

- The Social Capital has partnered with the Director's Council and the Science Center of Iowa to present a session on cultural and racial trauma as part of the *Mental Health: Mind Matters* exhibit. The event will feature Dr. Keisha Ross, a nationally recognized

clinical psychologist who specializes in the how historical and cultural trauma impacts mental health. Dr. Ross will engage participants in a session outlining coping mechanisms and cultural considerations for serving communities impacted by trauma. Over 100 attendees are anticipated for the March 6 morning event.

- Work continues within the Social and Natural Capitals to convene the Feedback 4 Equity group to garner insights on parks and recreation, particularly the Central Iowa Water Trails.
- The Civility committee organized a media outreach campaign ahead of the 2018 mid-term elections to highlight civility during the election. Additionally, The Ray Center continues its mission to improve civility through character development and ethical leadership.
- The ELC and GAP continue to meet regularly. ELC will rotate venues this coming year to gain increased exposure to non-profits and increase access to volunteerism. GAP, which has had three successful morning meetings to discuss the struggles of those moving beyond the YP demographic, will continue to draw on relevant speakers, and may work toward a two-day event in late 2019, as a culmination of the work done so far. Both groups continue to add membership and address timely and relevant issues.

## WELLNESS CAPITAL

*Jami Haberl, Suzanne Mineck and Ruth Randleman*

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

#### Optimize the use of data to inform wellness planning

Participate in regular community health assessments and tracking

- The Wellness Capital has been engaged in the research and community conversation phase of our region's latest Community Health Needs Assessment. The report is currently awaiting approval from the health systems and mental health was again identified as a leading concern on how best to support corresponding work. The three health systems came together to lend support for the *Mental Health: Mind Matters* exhibit as an initial response to the CHNA results.

Partner with businesses to assess and improve their workers' social and emotional well-being



- A survey was developed and sent to the business community to gain feedback on their perspectives social and emotional well-being. NAMI Des Moines is currently analyzing the data, which will then be evaluated to drive next steps.

## PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

### Raise awareness of the need for integrated mental health services

Convene partners to inform coordinated mental health programming

- The Wellness Capital partnered with the Science Center of Iowa and nearly 30 other organizations to bring *Mental Health: Mind Matters* to Des Moines. The exhibit opened on Monday, February 4 at a launch event attended by over 200 individuals including 30 elected officials. Remarks were made by Governor Kim Reynolds, Polk County Supervisor Angela Connolly and other stakeholders.
- In correlation with the exhibit, the Wellness Capital has helped convene a series of Community Conversations aimed at furthering dialogue and inspiring action. The events include:
  - *Youth Summit* on February 25 focused on supporting themselves and peers;
  - *Mental Health in the Workplace* on March 4 featuring Minnesota Public Radio's Joe Moe, host of the *Hilarious World of Depression*;
  - *Understanding Cultural and Racial Trauma* on March 6 that addresses the impacts of race and culture on mental health;
  - *Mental Health Fair* on March 10 which includes free admission and several local mental health resources;
  - *Early Childhood Brain Science: Nurturing Strong Mental Health* on April 8 featuring Dr. Dayna Long;
  - *Minds DSM: Stories of Courage and Discovery* on April 10 which features a panel sharing stories on living with mental illness;
  - *Preventing Social Isolation* on April 22 on how to support isolation in our aging population.
- The Wellness Capital is also collaborating with community partners on an mental health anti-stigma campaign that would fall on the heels of the *Mental Health: Mind Matters* exhibit. The "Make It OK" campaign will be piloted in three Iowa counties including Polk County. The campaign was launched initially in Minnesota in 2012 includes three core components:
  - **Community:** trained ambassadors, partner businesses, presentations to civic groups and businesses, planned events and outreach, and promotion of local resources;

- Website: an online hub with resources, videos, a pledge, a stigma quiz, talking tips and more;
- Marketing: social media, ads, flyers, radio spots, media partnerships and billboards.

The goal is to use these three components to eliminate stigma by increasing awareness, knowledge and conversations. Short-term outcomes include increased community awareness and active engagement by multiple stakeholders. Long-term outcomes include a change in social narrative about mental illness, reduced stigma and informed communities.

### **Support improved regional social and emotional well-being**

Advocate for holistic Central Iowa wellness programs

- The Wellness Capital continues to promote the 5-2-1-0 program through social media and other avenues.
- The Healthiest State Annual Awards held on February 7 recognized workplaces, schools, communities and individual leaders excelling in promoting wellness initiatives.
- Iowa Walking College applications are being accepted through March 1, 2019.
- The Healthiest State Annual Conference will be held on May 14 with the theme “Putting Awareness into Action” with a focus on mental health in the workplace.