

PRIORITY ACTIVITIES PROGRESS REPORT

AUGUST 2020

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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, Rick Sanders and Geoff Wood

Central Iowa will remain a regional leader in economic growth.

HIGHLIGHTS, PROJECTS, AND WINS

ISU Research Park

ISU Research Park is working towards responding to the new reality. They, like many businesses, are planning for less consolidation of workers and moving back to more office space. The entire ISU campus has continued updating buildings and spaces to accommodate the changes required by an increased need for physical distancing. ISU has also been working towards assisting others during this time – and plan to host a Test Iowa Site (soon) in addition to other plans for resource sharing.

The Greater Des Moines Partnership

- In conjunction with local partners, the Partnership developed and implemented the Greater Des Moines Small Business Recovery Grant Program. The cities of Carlisle, Clive, Des Moines, Indianola, Johnston, Norwalk, Urbandale, West Des Moines and Windsor Heights participated in the program along with Polk County and Warren County. To date, 260 small business recovery grants have been issued.
- Developed DSM Forward Playbooks: 16 Industry playbooks & 6 business function playbooks. Held “Ask the Experts” webinars to provide insights on the playbooks.
- Assisted the City of West Des Moines on Claim Doc’s expansion project. The company will purchase an existing facility in West Des Moines and renovate it into office space that will house existing employees and allow for an increase in workforce. The project represents a \$4.5 million capital investment and will create 54 jobs.
- The Partnership also sent out a “Business and Organizational Impact on Return to Learn Survey” in late July for employers, business owners or employees in order to provide information regarding the evolving K-12 return to learn plans for the fall. The findings are still being analyzed.

Gravitate Coworking

- Gravitate Coworking’s entrepreneurial support programming has transitioned well to online platforms. Business advice, topical themes and founder perspective webinars have all been well attended.
- Gravitate’s Midtown location will be moving from West Des Moines to Windsor Heights in August with the new 4,000 SF coworking community scheduled to open on September 1.
- Geoff and Rick both serve on the Innovation Subgroup of the Economic Growth Working Group of the Governor’s Economic Recovery Advisory Board. Alongside 25 other Iowans from around the state, they’re helping craft ideas for recovery and growth in the knowledge-worker section of Iowa’s economy.

The Black Iowa Business Directory, an initiative led by the Director’s Council and the Financial Empowerment Center, went live online in mid-July. The platform is designed to list statewide Black-owned businesses and allow customers to search products and services. Businesses can apply to be listed in the directory online. [You can access it at the link here.](#)

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

Opportunities

- Continue to help consumers and employees feel safe going out and going to work.
- Continue to encourage the business community's problem solving with the back to school situation (the Partnership "Business and Organizational Impact on Return to Learn Survey" is a great example of this).
- Maintain and explore experiential learning and working – on the side of both higher education and the workplace.

Challenges

- What does back to work look like? Mask requirements? Integrating 'back to school' and the challenges there? These questions and uncertainties are continued challenges for the business community.
- The volume of COVID positive cases in Central Iowa will likely have an adverse effect on people starting new companies over the next few years. Long-term healthcare needs for COVID survivors are unknown at this point and we anticipate many people will stay in current jobs with known health coverage rather than risk pursuing a new startup without.

EQUITY & INCLUSION

Business Expansion and Strategic Trends (BEST of Iowa) is a statewide business retention and expansion program. They have a Business Retention/Expansion tool – and, in their latest survey, they incorporated questions about the business being minority owned in addition to some questions related to DEI programs and integration (all new to their usual survey). The program is an existing business collaborative effort between MidAmerican Energy, Alliant Energy, Black Hills Energy, Iowa Area Development Group and the Iowa Economic Development Authority.

In addition, the Greater Des Moines Community is working on a larger diversity statement for the community that would include the business and non-profit communities.

NEWS & EVENTS

News

- Black and Bold Coffee, owner by Pernell Cezar of Des Moines, was recognized as best-selling coffee brand on Amazon in June (they saw a 14,000% sales surge). [Check him out on a podcast here.](#)
- The Technology Association of Iowa had their Prometheus Awards in June. The award winners are [here.](#)
- [ISU Start-Up Factory](#) and [Iowa Agritech Accelerator](#) announced new cohorts.
- [Growers Edge in Johnston raised \\$40M](#) in their Series B round – the biggest dollar amount seen in the state recently.
- West Des Moines based [Makusafe raised a \\$4M round](#) in early July.
- In July, West Des Moines announced that it would be building a massive, [open access fiber network with Google Fiber.](#)

Events

- October 1: [Flyover Tech Fest](#) hosted by Structurely, Ames

COLLABORATION

- Continue to collaborate with different Capitals (Human Capital with workforce development, others)
- Collaboration with Social Capital on the community diversity statement

CAPITAL CORE

Colleen Wittmack, Everett Miles 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.

HIGHLIGHTS, PROJECTS, AND WINS

City of Des Moines

- Within the City of Des Moines, the current total (as of August 6) for Covid-related HUD funding is \$3.3 million, with another \$4 million coming in the next 6-9 months. The funding sources are the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) programs. Abbreviations CDBG-CV and ESG-CV are used to designate COVID-specific funds as opposed to our regular annual allocation of these funding sources.
- The breakdown of funds towards each of the various programs is outlined below. See budget below. Please note that any unused funds by a program will be reallocated once the additional \$4 million is available.

<u>COVID Projects</u>	<u>CDBG-CV Funding</u>	<u>HOME Funding</u>	<u>ESG-CV Funding</u>	<u>Total Program Funding</u>	<u>Goal</u>
12 CDBG-CV Housing Payments	\$ 684,970			\$ 684,970	Affordable Housing
13 CDBG-CV Small Business Recovery	\$ 750,000			\$ 750,000	Economic Development
14 CDBG-CV Emergency Food Distribution	\$ 350,000			\$ 350,000	Public Services
15 ESG-CV Program and Administration			\$ 1,108,334	\$ 1,108,334	Homelessness Strategy
16 CDBG-CV Administration	\$ 446,242			\$ 446,242	N/A
Totals	\$ 2,231,212	\$ -	\$ 1,108,334	\$ 3,339,546	

- IMPACT Community Action Agency is administering the city’s HUD funds to pay housing payments on behalf of low-income households and families who fell behind on rent and mortgage payments as a result of COVID-19. Residents can apply for up to three months of housing payments, which are paid directly to a landlord or lender. Approximately 200 households will be assisted by this program. [More details can be found on the city’s web site for COVID assistance.](#) Also please note, there will be homelessness prevention funds available in the next couple months. This is similar in that it will provide emergency payments for items such as rent and utilities to prevent a household from eviction. This program is not yet available, but once it is, it will be administered by HOME, Inc. and funded with ESG-CV funds.
- Central Iowa Shelter and Services (CISS), the Food Bank of Iowa, and Urban Dreams are partnering with the city to provide free hot meals to Des Moines families and residents in need. Locally owned restaurants and Hy-Vee are providing the food. Emergency food distribution stations have been set up at several locations across the community. The food program serves at least 100 residents of any age per day (some stations even up to 500 people at times), 6 days a week, for 13 weeks. The stations were strategically set up in parks/areas that were more likely to serve low-income residents.

- Small Business Grants in Des Moines
 - 154 businesses in Des Moines have been currently awarded funding from the Small Business Recovery Grant program.
 - Total funding is ~\$1.1M, funding was provided as follows: \$428k City, \$368k private funds through Greater Des Moines Partnership fund-raising, \$86k Polk County, \$249k CDBG (federal)
 - Approximately 35 of the grants were awarded to businesses who applied through the ISU Extension Program collaboration (connection made via Deidre DeJear)
- The city-wide sidewalk improvement program has started; with \$3.7M of improvements slated to be made across DSM.
- Invest DSM rolled out its new Block Challenge Grant program in April, which focuses on encouraging neighbors to work together to beautify their block through exterior improvements to their properties. Participants must apply as a team of at least five neighbors from the same block/street in order to receive a 1:1 funding match of up to \$1,000 or as a team of at least 10 neighbors in order to receive a match up to \$2,500. We've had incredible interest in the program, with most teams having 20+ participants. By the end of this construction season, we will have completed over 200 projects totaling over \$550,000 in investment.
- Market District
 - JSC Properties advancing proposal for redevelopment of eleven blocks on the southeast side of downtown
- State approval of re-funding Iowa Reinvestment Act; allowing for applications by:
 - Soccer Stadium
 - Merle Hay Mall

Operation Downtown

- The Operation Downtown ambassador team adjusted their deployment strategy in light of the pandemic to keep the team safe while completing daily tasks, including frequent disinfecting of common Downtown touchpoints (meters, door handles, elevator buttons, skywalk railings, etc). They have also been busy trying to stay on top of graffiti, which has increased.
- Office/garage space was secured for the Operation Downtown ambassador team. Renovations are in the works for a fall move-in at the Insurance Exchange Building and Brown Garage.
- Through a partnership with Des Moines Public Works, a porous treatment was placed in tree beds along 4th Street between Walnut and Court to allow for more walking space, even walking space and less clean up from mud/mulch.
- Operation Downtown purchased a mobile solar lighting unit for the Des Moines Police Department for temporary lighting of areas Downtown to increase safety/visibility.
- Each year, we look forward to opening The Canopy at Brenton Skating Plaza and sharing the space with businesses, organizations and individuals to host their summer and fall events. Given the COVID-19 pandemic and the local, state and national large gathering guidelines, the difficult decision was made not to install the Canopy and cancel events at Brenton Skating Plaza.

Other Downtown Updates

- The Downtown Vision Plan is included in the Greater Des Moines Partnership's 18-month Strategic Plan. We anticipate work on the Vision Plan to begin in late 2020/early 2021.
- Significant work and planning continue for major placemaking projects, including Central Iowa Water Trails, USL Pro Iowa Soccer Stadium, Historic Firehouse No. 1 and the Market District.

- Construction of the Lauridsen Skatepark continues and a team, led by Polk County, is working on the opening of the largest skatepark in the U.S.
- Discussions are beginning about an “embrace winter” campaign to encourage Central Iowans to get outdoors this winter and explore Downtown and the region.

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

Opportunities

- There are various broadband opportunities to better assist households – the city and others are exploring what this could look like. Two-fold question: is there access to technology (via fiber) and what affordability looks like (can be \$70++ a month)?
 - Potential for future grant opportunities

Challenges

- Lost revenue via sales tax, hotel/motel taxes and other sources in all our cities, organizations, businesses and at the County level
 - Domino effect of revenue loss (partner organizations, consultants and contractors)

EQUITY & INCLUSION

- There was an ordinance passed on Unbiased Policing, within the Police Department and then the Council that incorporated research and statistics. A review committee was borne out of the ordinance, focused on data, reporting and policies, dealing with unbiased services in law enforcement.
- There was also a separate resolution on June 22 to set up a Marijuana Task Force that is looking at advocacy and policy changes at the state level.
- The City of DSM continues to advance their ‘Bridging the Gap’ work – there are 12 initiatives underway – housing incentives for city employees to live in the city.
- Of the small business recovery grants awarded in Des Moines, approximately half of those businesses are owned by minorities and/or women.
- Workforce housing work continues with creation and preservation of affordable rental housing included in incentive agreements.

NEWS & EVENTS

- Reorganization of three departments (community development, housing and economic development) are becoming two departments (neighborhood services dept via Chris and Sue Ann and development services via Erin and Mike)
 - Built vs. build environments

COLLABORATION

- Physical Capital collaboration on housing
- Des Moines and West Des Moines worked through their first ‘fair play agreement’ connecting it to affordable housing and transit

CULTIVATION CORRIDOR

Billi Hunt

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

HIGHLIGHTS, PROJECTS, AND WINS

Billi of Cultivation Corridor serves on two committees for the Iowa Economic Recovery Tasks Force: the Innovation Sub-Committee for Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) and the Agriculture Task Force led by Mike Naig, Iowa Secretary of Agriculture. As a member of both committees, she has worked to connect both tasks forces with people/ideas of interest. As an example, Cultivation Corridor held an ag innovation meeting with 12 startups to better understand the needs for their businesses.

Startup businesses connected to Cultivation Corridor are finding the combination of the state's growing startup ecosystem, proximity to customers and global agricultural leadership, lower operating costs, and an expanding base of strategic and capital funding are giving startups an advantage that even the Silicon Valley can't provide. In a July [Ag Funder News](#) article, America's Cultivation Corridor shared experiences of three founders who built and commercialized their Iowa-based businesses, attracted investors and partners, and successfully completed deals and acquisitions. In addition, we also shared our strong research and development resource spotlighting Iowa State University at the link here: [Iowa State University Innovation Entrepreneurship](#).

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

Cultivation Corridor is currently seeking ways to drive excitement and engagement for the Cultivo – Global Agriculture Innovation Program since international travel has halted. There are plans to connect with the first two cohorts virtually. Currently, they are trying to define virtual engagement opportunities to continue to build relationships.

Our current goal is to host Australia in the second quarter of 2021. The cohort will be open to entrepreneur leaders of startup companies based in Australia.

Planning for the person-to-person cohort is already well underway. We are also excited to work with our partners the Australian Trade and Investment Commission and AgriFutures Australia to create virtual opportunities to engage Iowa leaders with Australian entrepreneurs and founders prior to their arrival.

EQUITY & INCLUSION

This topic was discussed in detail at the last America's Cultivation Corridor board meeting. There is recognition and awareness that we need to do more when it comes to diversity within the industry. We are discussing larger marketing campaigns reaching out to more diverse audiences and how that might work industry wide. The board knows it is not a light-switch solution – it is a long-term plan to make a change.

NEWS & EVENTS

America's Cultivation Corridor is excited to again sponsor the Start-up Stadium at the 2020 BIO IMPACT Digital event (formerly named BIO World Congress). Early stage emerging biobased companies will present 8-minute pitches to a panel of investors, analysts, and strategists in an online interactive environment. BIO IMPACT Digital will

be held Sept. 21-22, with applications for the Start-Up Stadium due on July 31. Registration information and details are available on the [BIO IMPACT web site](#).

COLLABORATION

- Natural environment and the Natural Capital – collaborating with the Central Iowa Water Trails project and how agriculture can support it; working to help make connections on both sides
- Collaborating with broadband work and the Empower Rural Iowa Council
- Engagement with Iowa Department of Agriculture and Iowa Economic Development Authority Agriculture
- ISU Administration, Faculty and Staff
- Cultivation Corridor Investors
- Iowa Agricultural Startup Business

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.

HIGHLIGHTS, PROJECTS, AND WINS

Catch Des Moines

- Catch Des Moines shared several new videos throughout the evolution of our pandemic response, including two [PSAs](#), a [sofa-seeing](#) series, and two new [trails](#) and [water](#) videos as a part of the ongoing "S's are Silent" campaign.
- Catch Des Moines launched the "[Buy Now, Visit Later](#)," hotel bonds campaign to support our hotel partners during the pandemic. This program offered a great opportunity to discuss the value our hotels contribute to the local economy and how hotel/motel tax contributes to our quality of life. Based on positive feedback from participating hotels, this is a model we may replicate for future slow periods.
- At the beginning of the pandemic, we were hyper-focused on supporting local businesses and particularly our partners in the tourism and hospitality sectors. We launched a resource hub with our external statement, resources for meeting planners, PSAs, blogs for how to support local businesses, and virtual activities.

Bravo

- Bravo honored all existing operating grant commitments and accelerated payments, putting nearly \$1.5 million in arts funding into the community ahead of schedule; Public Art Grants and Capital Campaign and Project grants were also approved adding an additional \$300,000 in arts investment.
- Metrics for the Regional Cultural Assessment have been developed to guide focus on activation of efforts to align arts and culture with achieving regional objectives.
- Two pilot projects have been initiated to show the power of arts & social impact:

- A collaboration with Mid-Iowa Health Foundation to develop a project to use arts to amplify messaging about youth homelessness in the region
- A collaboration with Invest DSM to embed an artist-in-residence there to help identify and develop projects that advance community engagement in neighborhood redevelopment

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

- The renewed attention and interest in racial equity has caused Catch Des Moines to reflect on our role in the community and where we can lead. We're thinking about how we can be a better advocate and supporter of diverse communities beyond representation in our advertising. We look forward to continuing conversations with our peers in the destination marketing world and with our tourism partners locally to ensure Greater Des Moines is a welcoming and inclusive destination both for residents and visitors.
- The pandemic has provided the unique opportunity to educate the community on the importance of our local hotels and what hotels mean to our community's culture and economy. Hotels have been hit especially hard the past few months, and we're their voice locally, championing community support and investment, as well as advocating for safe reopening strategies to allow events to resume.
- Current travel trends present an opportunity to promote our destination to leisure travelers electing to travel closer to home and to meeting and event planners looking for drivable destinations to host their events. Greater Des Moines is an attractive destination for drivability from larger Midwestern markets and for its appeal as an urban destination with lower relative population density.
- Arts and culture have been uniquely affected by COVID-19 given both earned and unearned revenue streams were dramatically interrupted and not every organization has the capability to reimagine programming in a virtual environment. Bravo is staying in close contact with our non-profit organizational partners and with other funders and supporters of arts and culture to ensure that the sector has a voice in plans for relief and recovery.
- As Bravo is almost entirely funded with hotel/motel taxes which are dramatically decreased due to COVID, we are working hard to reimagine our grantmaking programs for FY21.

EQUITY & INCLUSION

- We recognize it is our responsibility to make everyone feel welcome, locals and visitors alike, no matter their nationality, race, religion, gender, ability, or sexual orientation. Visitors not only support jobs and our quality of life, some will also become our future neighbors, co-workers, coaches, teachers, and civic leaders.
- In June, Catch Des Moines shared a public statement and committed to:
 - Continue to make a concerted effort to bring in conventions and events serving people of color (POC), religious conventions, human rights organizations, and other diverse groups. We will work with those within those communities to ensure that everyone coming to our region feels welcome, safe, and valued.
 - Support our POC and minority-owned businesses and organizations by elevating them through marketing and sharing their stories.
 - Continue to be a resource for POC-owned businesses and event organizers to help them make the right connections to ensure their success.
 - Bring POC and other leaders of diverse communities to the table and listen.

NEWS & EVENTS

- Catch Des Moines restarted our marketing and advertising plan, with a thoughtful approach focused on targeting lowans for a safe and easy getaway. We will continue to monitor the ongoing situation and adjust target markets and strategies as needed. Right now, the primary focus is on outdoor recreation, including parks, trails, and water activities, and select attractions that remain open. We plan to release new iterations of the popular S's Are Silent videos focusing on outdoor activities, as well as a video targeting event planners by showcasing our venues, hotels, and amenities.
- Bravo will be releasing a Case Statement to amplify the need for supporting arts and culture as part of our community's recovery and reemergence. The release is planned for September.

COLLABORATION

- Catch Des Moines partnered with the Greater Des Moines Partnership to promote the DSM Local Challenge, a community-wide call for residents to continue supporting local businesses throughout the pandemic. The social media campaign was very successful, with tens of millions of impressions and many local celebrities taking up the challenge and posting their purchases.
- To show solidarity with the tourism industry and inspire regional tourism, Catch Des Moines, Visit KC, Meet Minneapolis, Experience Sioux Falls, and Visit Omaha partnered to promote each other during National Travel and Tourism Week (NTTW) in May. Each city created its own Virtual Vacation and encouraged its local community through social media to enjoy inspirational photography, colorful videos, and digital offerings from the other cities.
- Catch Des Moines partnered with Raygun to design and promote a t-shirt inspired by Catch Des Moines' statement in response to civil unrest. A portion of proceeds from sales of the shirt which reads, "Des Moines. The S's are Silent. Our voices are not," will go to the ACLU of Iowa.
- Bravo continues to work closely with other community partners including the Community Foundation, the Iowa Arts Council and all of our cultural partners to ensure the needs of the cultural sector are considered in planning for the future.
- Bravo made a \$35,000 investment in the Community Foundation's Strategic Collaboration Grant program to support opportunities for alignment and collaboration in the arts sector.

GOVERNANCE CAPITAL

Mayor Bob Andeweg, Mayor Sara Kurovski and Art Wittmack

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

HIGHLIGHTS, PROJECTS, AND WINS

Urbandale is weeks away from the opening of one of the Metro's largest road building projects. The project is significant for its impact on safety, efficiency, and economic development. Work on the Urban Loop Iowa Highway 141 flyover and Meredith Drive half-diamond interchange began in 2018. Soon, over 100,000 vehicles per day will drive through or use the Urban Loop improvements. The Urban Loop flyover is designed to bring northbound traffic off Interstate 80/35 and onto Highway 141 in Grimes.

Mayor Bob is a tri-chair of the Polk County Recovery Task Force's Government committee, alongside Mayor Frank Cownie and Councilman Joseph Jones. They have been meeting bi-weekly since July.

Tri-chair Art Wittmack and the Taxpayers Association of Central Iowa have been working with the Metro Financial Managers group to clarify and improve reporting to the Iowa Department of Management (DOM) required by tax transparency legislation enacted in 2019. The goal is to have recommendations submitted to the DOM in November.

Visibility was given to issues resulting from the “silos” that fund K-12 public education in Iowa recently when money was available for an athletic stadium while cuts are being required in other essential areas. A working group has been established to review the existing funding streams to see if there may be a better funding model.

As central Iowa communities grow and expand, additional water filtration and distribution will be required. Discussions focusing on best way of accomplishing this continue, facilitated by the recently appointed Ted Corrigan, Des Moines Water Works CEO.

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

The regional and local impact of the COVID-19 crisis is varied, with significant implications for crisis management and policy responses. Beyond the health and human tragedy of coronavirus, it is now widely recognized that the pandemic has triggered the most serious economic crisis in a century. Municipalities are responsible for critical aspects of containment measures, as well as economic development policies, putting all cities at the frontline of crisis management. Because such responsibilities are shared among all levels of government, and across all Cities in the metro, a coordinated effort will be critical for the Des Moines region.

A great example of regional collaboration to come out of the coronavirus crisis was the regional Small Business Relief Grant program. Regional businesses and local governments pooled financial contributions, then worked together on a policy to assist businesses impacted by the pandemic. In Urbandale alone, this program assisted nearly 40 businesses.

The challenges in funding mental health services in central Iowa have become increasing evident in recent months, exacerbated by Broadlawns Medical Center’s cut of a previously budgeted \$2.8 million to Polk County Health Services. A working group within Taxpayer’s Association of Central Iowa is gathering to review the uses of property taxes Broadlawns receives, given that indigent care is being reimbursed by federal and state programs, rather than local resources, as was the case when the institution was originally founded.

EQUITY & INCLUSION

Urbandale opened an All-Inclusive Playground last month. The All-Inclusive Playground is located at Northview Park and is designed to opportunities for children of all ages and abilities (including those with disabilities) to enjoy using the equipment and participate in fun outdoor activities. Costing nearly \$1 million, the playground surface has a cushioned rubberized surface to help prevent injuries and has a completely flat surface to eliminate any barriers to wheelchair users or visually impaired participants. There are over 20,000 kids with disabilities in the Des Moines Metro and most playgrounds do not give these children an opportunity to experience the fun and joy of being outdoors with their peers.

Mayor Bob Andeweg and the members of the Urbandale City Council held a community listening session on Thursday, June 25, inviting residents to share their comments on topics of race and diversity in the Urbandale community. A follow-up work session for the Mayor and Council to address topics raised at the listening session will take place on Thursday, August 20.

NEWS & EVENTS

- Urbandale is weeks away from the opening the Urban Loop Iowa Highway 141 flyover and Meredith Drive half-diamond interchange.
- The Central Iowa Code Consortium presented at the August 11 meeting of the Metro Advisory Council.

COLLABORATION

- Continued successful partnership between the City of Clive and City of Urbandale on fire and EMS response.
- Coordination and collaboration between the City of Johnston and City of Urbandale on economic development project in Merle Hay Road redevelopment area.
- Continued partnership with the Natural Capital and stormwater efforts
- Continued partnership with individuals engaged in the Central Iowa Code Consortium efforts, across Capitals and jurisdictions

HUMAN CAPITAL

Elisabeth Buck, Renee Miller, Mary Bontrager and Greg Nichols

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

HIGHLIGHTS, PROJECTS, AND WINS

- Education Adaptation and Back to School / Return to Learn
 - 20 School Districts in Polk, Warren and Dallas Counties – ever-changing plans within each school district
 - United Way is tracking live updates within the school districts
 - Mental health and before / after school programs; how the virtual model will impact students and parents and the capacity issues
 - Also considering the needs around students and mental health, access to food, access to technology, access to academic services (tutors/mentors), etc.
 - Reimbursement is still a reoccurring issue for health services
 - How can parents be more supported? Is there a framework to work off of? Or an assortment of resources to share?
 - Various committees have been formed with school administrators, partners and workgroups working through solutions; DSM Partnership Survey (Return to Learn) and a potential future workgroup on ‘Innovation and Return to Learn’ / Idea Lab concept
 - Collaboration with DMPS on access to technology
 - Tutor Connect call is out to increase the number of tutors; 77 tutors total throughout the summer
 - Potential to have more students in small groups to learn from the tutors
 - Education students from Drake in pre-practicum to work with students at DMPS
- Childcare
 - Exploration of what opportunities exist for more traditional childcare centers to have school-aged children?

- Getting creative with the solutions; identifying what the scope is for the need?
- Childcare Resource and Referral (tracks availability/space within childcare centers)
- In early August, DHS confirmed two units available to be allocated to childcare assistance

- 211
 - Call volumes have started to level off; seeing peaks when new information comes out
 - Your Life Iowa Partnership – call in to 211 and be directly connected to Your Life Iowa
 - Main trends are basic needs focused: food, housing/rent support
 - Eviction moratoriums expiring

- Employment
 - Hiring is strong, especially with IT and technical skills; businesses are considering how they have operated historically and how they operate moving forward
 - Core competencies and talent needs are seeing slight shift
 - Future World of Work – anticipation of the changing environment and response to the shift
 - Reskilling and upskilling need will continue to grow
 - The office environment itself is changing: what is the future of remote work? What does employee attraction and retention look like in the ‘new normal’?

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

Challenges remain those systemic issues – the most vulnerable are the most impacted. How can we work to provide solutions to those that need it most?

EQUITY & INCLUSION

- United Way’s 21 Day Equity Challenge
- Community diversity statement work being led by Capital Crossroads and informed by 40+ partner organizations

NEWS & EVENTS

- United Way’s 21 Day Equity Challenge

COLLABORATION

- Meeting continue between the Physical Capital, Social Capital and the Transportation Gaps Analysis committee
- Ongoing collaboration within the Business Capital and workforce related work
- Work with the Physical Capital to bring James Chung back at a Tomorrow Plan speaker on September 23 at 7:30am
- Social Capital and Human Capital overlap on DEI efforts
- Continued conversations ongoing between OpportUNITY Director and Capital Crossroads Director

NATURAL CAPITAL

Hannah Inman, Larry James and Julie Stewart

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

HIGHLIGHTS, PROJECTS, AND WINS

Central Iowa Water Trails

The work of Central Iowa Water Trails (CIWT) continues with great momentum. Three regional sites have been completed: the Racoon River Boathouse (which offers kayak rentals and more), the Johnston outfitter, and the Mally's Park water access at Four Mile Creek.

The design is on schedule for the Scott Avenue, Prospect Park, Harriet Street and Birdland Marina sites and will be complete by June of 2021, with construction mobilizing in Q4 of 2021.

The Governance process is also underway, and funding and maintenance agreements should be finalized by the end of the year. CIWT is also working on the regional safety plan and site buildout strategy.

The brand identity is currently being finalized by Strategic America and should be unveiled in Q4 of 2020.

Lastly, there have been many exciting gifts received by Central Iowa Water Trails in the last few months. More information about those gifts will be announced this fall.

Urban Wood Utilization and the Iowa DNR

Capital Crossroads connected with The Iowa DNR in mid-July on grant funds that they have available to help communities investigate different options for making the most from the wood of trees that they remove each year. The purpose of the grant is to help communities become more sustainable by networking with local businesses to better utilize wood from urban trees that have been removed. The Iowa DNR is looking for communities with an in-house tree removal program and sustainability initiative to demonstrate to their community the responsible use of these urban trees, which are a public renewable natural resource. We're hoping the City of Des Moines or another jurisdiction can collaborate on the initiative.

For more information about this opportunity, please contact Aron Flickinger, DNR forester, at 515-725-8455 or email at aron.flickinger@dnr.iowa.gov

Great American Outdoors Act Passed

Some exciting national news for the greater Natural Capital came out in July when the bipartisan Great American Outdoors Act (a sweeping public lands package to fix crumbling national park infrastructure and permanently fund a decades-old conservation program) passed. The legislation will next be sent to the President for final approval. The Great American Outdoors Act combines two bills: one that sets aside \$9.5 billion to address the estimated \$12 billion maintenance backlog at national parks and another to permanently supports the Land and Water Conservation Fund. The Fund was established in 1964 and uses offshore fossil fuel revenue to protect natural areas and water resources, at the maximum \$900 million per year.

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

Opportunities

- The importance of the outdoors has elevated the benefits of water trails
- Park usage up 120% in Polk County (need updated data for Q3 report); tie in to mental and physical health as well as job creation and workforce attraction
- Fall and into winter, there will be an opportunity for a self-guided programming push with ideas to integrate giveaways with local companies for recreational items

Challenges

- COVID has put a damper on a lot of things; difficult time to fundraise
- There has been a shortage of recreational items available from local retailers
- Consideration of when winter hits – the natural environment has kept many more ‘mentally healthy.’ What reminders can we have that it is still good to get outside in the winter? How can we encourage folks to enjoy the snow?

EQUITY & INCLUSION

The CIWT Inclusion Committee is working to integrate with the design teams to consider access to the water for all user groups. They have developed a design tool for the design team to consider integrating into the water trails and access points. It also will become part of the Governance conversation when the group works through the regional standards of practice and maintenance requirements for each access site.

NEWS & EVENTS

- “A Week in Water Works Park: August 31 – September 7. Check out Water Works Event Page for more details: <http://www.dmww.com/parks-events/event-calendar/>
- GOF Golf Outing: Jester Park Golf Course on September 11, 2020 at 9 a.m.
 - Link here to attend: <https://greatoutdoorsfoundation.org/golf-tournament/>
- GOF Annual Dinner: Raccoon River Park on October 1st, 2020
 - Link here with more info: <https://greatoutdoorsfoundation.org/annual-dinner/>

COLLABORATION

- CIWT has collaborated with the Social Capital to discuss ideas related to a donor and an access site, related to equitable programming.
- CIWT and GOF are looking to collaborate with OneEconomy to discuss the best ways to look at outdoor usage, etc. within zip codes? How can we work to integrate environmental justice?
- Collaboration with Great Outdoors Foundation and Make It OK on a ‘winter wellness’ / get outside for your mental health campaign could be meaningful.

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.

HIGHLIGHTS, PROJECTS, AND WINS

Housing

- The Workforce Housing Committee has connected with the data team at Virginia Tech and the consultant czb. who put together the final Workforce Housing Report on what next steps might be with the final version of the report and the goals listed within. They both ensured us that while COVID has changed a lot of things, housing has become more important now than ever and that the integrity of the data has maintained throughout the pandemic and if anything, the gaps will only widen in to the future for the need.
- The biggest housing goal is to keep people in their homes; a recent win in the housing world is that federal dollars just were distributed to HOME Inc. and IMPACT for homeowner and renter usage.

Transportation

- DART resumed fare collection and front door boarding on July 1. Additional mitigation efforts were put in place to safely accommodate this, including the installation of a temporary barrier between DART operators and the farebox, limiting capacity on each bus to around 50% and providing hand sanitizer and face masks to riders on each bus.
- After temporarily reducing service in March and April, DART has been working to safely restore service since May. Beginning Aug. 23, most DART routes will resume their normal service pre-COVID. Express Routes will increase in frequency but won't return to full service levels as many commuters are continuing to work from home.
- DART has several contingency plans in place to ensure it is able to meet school transportation needs if/when DMPS students return to learn in-person.
- The DART Commission will resume several initiatives that were put on-hold due to COVID-19, including DART's Transit Optimization Study (TOS) and Property Tax Formula discussions.
- With the Transportation Gaps Analysis, there have been recent discussions with the consultant who put together the final report regarding next steps for the study and data. The Committee was hoping to gather some insight to how individual's transportation needs have changed during COVID-19 so some additional research and discussions with stakeholders are currently underway.
- The Transload Facility environmental work is being finalized and the BUILD grant's final review is underway with DSM Industrial.
- The Data Bike has been deployed throughout the summer (mostly in WDM and the Western Suburbs), with data analysis starting this fall.

NSF Grant with ISU

- On August 3, our team (comprised of individuals from DART, the MPO, PCHTF, Capital Crossroads and Iowa State) submitted the National Science Foundation phase one grant for the "Civic Innovation Challenge: A Research and Action Competition in the Smart and Connected Communities Domain." ISU is leading the work and submitted the proposal. Social Capital was also engaged throughout the planning and submission process. Our team's focus is: "Track A. Communities and Mobility: Offering Better Mobility Options to Solve the Spatial Mismatch Between Housing Affordability and Jobs." Phase I offers \$50k for research and community outreach work; Phase II offers \$1M for research and study around the actual mobility solutions -- getting people to their jobs. The team should know more in late fall.

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

- An upcoming opportunity for this Capital is the public release of the Workforce Housing Report – defining what strategic implementation looks like is the next step.
- DART is continuing to focus on sharing the essential role of public transportation in responding to and recovering from COVID-19.

EQUITY & INCLUSION

DART is in the process of forming an internal Diversity, Equity and Inclusion committee. The committee will work to assess what policies, processes or procedures could be updated or created to further DART's commitment to D, E and I for both its customers and employees. In addition, all employees will be completing bias and inclusion training this fall.

NEWS & EVENTS

- DART's electric buses will begin arriving in August; a public unveiling event will be held in late September (stay tuned for details!)

COLLABORATION

- Integration with Social Capital on the NSF grant
- Continued discussions with the Capital Core on Workforce Housing
- Work with the Human Capital to bring James Chung back at a Tomorrow Plan speaker on September 23 at 7:30am

SOCIAL CAPITAL

Angie Dethlefs-Trettin, Shaimaa Aly, Daniel Hoffman-Zinnel and Izaah Knox

Central Iowa will become the gold standard of the successful 21st century region.

HIGHLIGHTS, PROJECTS, AND WINS

Social Capital Chairs began the roll-out of 4 Equity presentations at nonprofit board meetings in July, beginning with Urban Dreams. In early August, presentations were given to the Drake University President's Council and the Greater Des Moines Habitat for Humanity board. We designed these presentations as an interactive "road show" that helps socialize the tool for local leaders and opens the door to organizational discussions around taking action around Equity at key decision-points. A few things to note:

- With the presentations thus far, we have identified several opportunities for growth/improvement, including but not limited to:
 - Targeting the message more thoughtfully to the audience (understanding who will be on the call prior; acknowledging the work boards have done to move the needle as it relates to DEI within their own organizations)
 - Tailoring some of the examples to the needs of the board/group
 - Acknowledging that the 4 Equity tool is not a one size fits all, but a great starting place for many

- We have also received some great positive feedback from the presentations. One example: Drake is considering using the 4 Equity tool as a means for onboarding all their 120+ student led organizations and another department there has asked for another presentation specifically for their staff.

Social Capital leaders have also been involved in mapping racial justice opportunities and events being planned by numerous partner organizations over the coming year, including serving on the steering committee for United Way's 21 Day Equity Challenge, 1619 Project work, a community Diversity Statement and Guiding Principles, and more.

Social Capital leaders have engaged in numerous conversations around elevating BIPOC leaders, BLM leaders and other young leaders at both the grassroots and grass-tops level, including a push for expanding Capital Crossroads leadership to be inclusive of diverse voices. We are developing a leadership matrix to track how our leaders do/don't represent various identity lenses, while working to educate around tokenism.

Social Capital has also started a list of BIPOC trainers and consultants which they hope to finalize in the coming months.

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

Uprisings this spring and summer around racial injustice have accelerated the awareness of inequities in our community. We are working through the tensions related to how various institutions are responding (or failing to respond) during such a crucial time. The COVID-19 crisis has exposed the systematic inequalities and it has had a disproportionate impact on people of color in central Iowa and beyond. Accordingly, we are proactively identifying opportunities for systems change to ensure both recovery planning and the next normal put the needs of our most vulnerable populations front and center.

EQUITY & INCLUSION

Equity and Inclusion is core to our work, our goals, and informs all the projects we take on. We acknowledged the need for more diversity at the table years ago and are grateful to see it rising as a priority not just within Social Capital, but within all of Capital Crossroads.

In an effort to have equitable representation on our Capital, we welcomed a Muslim woman of color to our Social Capital, in April of 2020. And given the rise of recent Social Justice movements, we are actively engaged in conversations to bring young leaders to the table.

NEWS & EVENTS

- A calendar made for internal tracking of racial inequity programming can be found here. Stay tuned for more communications around the various diversity, equity and inclusion efforts in our community in the coming months.
- Per the communication sent out to each Capital in July, Capital Crossroads welcomed Teree Caldwell-Johnson to the leadership team. This is a win in our eyes as she brings an important perspective to the table.
- In addition, the chairs of each Capital have been asked to add a BIPOC leader to their teams, that can help them drive their mission and the vision of Capital Crossroads into the future.

COLLABORATION

- The coordination and mapping of various racial justice learning opportunities in the community involved collaboration with numerous capitals including Human Capital, Capital Core and various organizations connected to the work of Capital Crossroads.
- Recent discussion and collaboration with the Natural Capital on ideas for activating the Prospect Park site of the Central Iowa Water Trails project.
- Physical Capital Collaboration via their National Science Foundation grant submission on “Communities and Mobility.”

WELLNESS CAPITAL

Jami Haberl, Suzanne Mineck and Brad Anderson

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.

HIGHLIGHTS, PROJECTS, AND WINS

Make It OK

- May was mental health awareness month and there was a large focus on Make It OK awareness. This included a number of presentations, marketing campaigns directed to Polk County residents using the Make It OK commercial, a partnership with WriteBrain capturing personal stories of those impacted by mental illness, and a partnership with Business Publication’s *Lifting the Veil* including the *Life Interrupted* series.
- Make It OK announced a six-week virtual mental health series, in tandem with the Greater Des Moines Partnership and Capital Crossroads, titled “6 Weeks of Make It OK.”
 - Each week, attendees will hear about a different topic – ranging from “Make It OK and Back to School” to “Making It OK at Work.” The diverse group of speakers includes Dr. Yogesh Shah with Broadlawns; Chaney Yeast, LMSW, JD of UnityPoint Health; Destinee Woodris with Iowa Department of Public Health; Stephanie MacFarland of Des Moines Public Schools; Ana Delgado – a college student; Annie Brandt of Bank of America, and Dr. Lauren Patrick of University Dental Group, to name a few. The sessions will be held on Thursdays starting August 20, from Noon to 1 p.m. or 1:30 p.m. You can sign up for [the first session](#) or [all the sessions here](#).

Iowa Healthiest State

- Double Up Food Bucks expanded in July to increase access to fruits and vegetables for EBT/P-EBT customers.
- 5-2-1-0 in the Workplace recertification is underway to measure impact over the past 12 months and includes a new online portal to capture data.
- Gearing up for October’s Healthiest State Month including the 10th annual walk and 5-2-1-0 Summit.

AARP

- Livable communities and long-term care around nursing homes to prevent social isolation
 - Working towards virtual visitation (at the federal and state level) and when can nursing homes open for visits?

- Working on the Complete Streets Initiative and ensuring that the city's sidewalk projects stay a priority

Other Focus Areas

- Accessing mental health care is a top interest and priority for many. Telehealth has brought great expansion to services and highlighted barriers for some providers when it comes to telehealth. In addition, there are barriers when it comes to reimbursement. The Governor has also addressed the gap in service funding, though it is not totally resolved.
- Training for school personnel continues to be a barrier
- A Community Wide LatinX Project: Individuals from this Capital are working with the LatinX community to develop something like the OneEconomy Report

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

- Continue to look for resources to support marketing efforts for Make It OK
- Broadband and the issue of access
- Long-term care – how can we address this in 2021; not only a health issue but a financial security issue (nationally and locally)
 - Is the senior living facility as we know it going to stay the same?
 - Does in-home care become more of the norm?
- How can we work with youth to break the stigma associated with mental health? Is there an opportunity for Make It OK (MIO) to target the youth in tandem with another organization?
 - To this point, how do we have more functioning working groups?
 - Goal to establish more meaningful committees that are driving specific projects.
 - See Cedar Rapids, for example: MIO and freshman in college; MIO in CR Community Schools (with staff); MIO in the workplace, partnered with local chamber to drive

EQUITY & INCLUSION

- Created Make It OK flyers available in both English and Spanish
- Working to finalize the Make It OK presentation in Spanish
- Working with One Economy Health Committee on efforts around Make It OK
- Identifying additional voices of diverse backgrounds for the Make It OK stories
- Evaluating equity and inclusion efforts for 5-2-1-0 through strategic planning
- AARP is working towards doing more multi-cultural work and has an advocate working within the LatinX community

NEWS & EVENTS

- Healthiest State 10th Annual Walk registration opens on August 3, 2020. The annual walk is scheduled for October 7, 2020.
- Healthiest State Month will be celebrated in October.

COLLABORATION

- The Wellness Capital consistently overlaps with the Social Capital and Physical Capital, as all three Capitals are engaged in bringing Nikole Hannah-Jones to Des Moines in 2021.
- AARP has had regular collaboration with the Bike Collective.