

PRIORITY ACTIVITIES PROGRESS REPORT

August 2021

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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, Geoff Wood and Brian Crowe

Central Iowa will remain a regional leader in economic growth.

HIGHLIGHTS, PROJECTS, AND WINS

The Greater Des Moines Partnership

- The Greater Des Moines Partnership has focused on several areas over the last few months, including broadband expansion, new business recruitment, existing business expansion, and hosting live events that coincide with their targeted industry sectors.

Entrepreneurial Community

- [Dwolla Raises \\$21 Million Venture Round](#)
- [Techstars Iowa Accelerator Announces 2021 Class](#)
- [Startup Champions Network Summit coming to Des Moines this fall](#)
- [Iowa State receives \\$16 million grant to study rural broadband connectivity](#)
- [Gross-Wen Technologies raises \\$6.5 million Series A round](#)
- [Dryland Genetics Raises \\$3.8 million fundraising round](#)
- [NAWBO Iowa announces second year of Business Institution, applications now open](#)
- [Investing in Iowa: Q2 2021](#)

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

Greater Des Moines Partnership

- COVID-19 is a challenge as we look for new business starts or expansions among several industry sectors. Workforce availability is also a critical challenge facing the region, state and country.

EQUITY & INCLUSION

- Business Capital is continuing to seek opportunities to utilize the 4 Equity Tool in its decision-making processes.

NEWS & EVENTS

- The Greater Des Moines Partnership is hosting 2021 DMDC from September 22nd – 24th
- The Greater Des Moines Partnership's 9th Annual Inclusion Summit is Wednesday, November 10th, 8 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

COLLABORATION

- Capital Crossroads has helped promote the Small Business Ecosystem study that Iowa State University Education & Outreach is conducting. Small businesses (under 50 employees) and nonprofit organizations within Boone, Story, Marshall, Guthrie, Dallas, Polk, Jasper, Poweshiek,

Adair, Madison, Warren and Marion counties were invited to share their perspectives on the challenges and impacts of COVID-19 as well as current needs related to their enterprise or organization. Findings from the survey will help identify strategies to support nonprofits and small businesses as we build back from COVID-19.

CAPITAL CORE

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

- The City has allocated more than \$14.6 million in federal funds to housing assistance programs in response to the pandemic, including programs that address utility payments, homelessness, eviction prevention, rental assistance, and mortgage assistance.
- The City has allocated another \$6.6 million to programs for food assistance, small business recovery, mental health, and childcare.
- Federal funding sources include Community Development Block Grant (CDBG-CV), Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG-CV), and the US Department of Treasury. In addition, the City will be looking to allocate \$3.5 million of HOME Investment Partnerships Program from the American Rescue Plan (HOME-ARP) in the upcoming year to assist with projects that help house those who are homeless or at-risk of becoming homeless.
- Housing programs funded by the City were administered by nonprofit partners, including IMPACT Community Action Agency, HOME, Inc., and homelessness agencies such as Primary Health Care, CISS, Anawim, and Children and Families of Iowa.
- To access Emergency Rental Assistance, residents of Des Moines and Polk County can visit <https://www.impactcap.org/erap>.
- As of 6/30/2021, the following have been assisted with the federal funding sources as a response to the pandemic:
 - 4,935 households have received housing assistance, or 9,174 individuals, of which 3,282 were children (this does not include additional residents served by programs through Polk County, the State of Iowa, or other local assistance programs).
 - More than 50,000 individuals accessed emergency food distribution.

- 33 small businesses were assisted with federal funds, which was one component of the City's Small Business Recovery program (funded through P3 efforts with Polk Co and GDMP) that assisted 142 businesses total.
- The City closed the Dine Out Delivery Assistance program in the spring. The program provided reimbursement of delivery and take-out supplies for December 2020 - March 2021 to over 60 Des Moines restaurants with nearly \$200,000 in local funds.

Krause+ and the City of Des Moines

- Krause+ with the City of Des Moines and the Greater Des Moines Partnership has been advancing plans for redeveloping the former DICO site into a multi-use stadium built for USL soccer, playing fields, global plaza and mixed-use district. The City made an application requesting an allocation of \$27.1M from the State earlier this year on behalf of Krause for funding through the Iowa Reinvestment Act to support a USL soccer team and Pro Iowa's efforts to build the stadium and associated global plaza. The Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) announced in June that they are providing provisional funding approval of \$23.5 million. The program provides for sales and hotel tax rebates on the State's new incremental taxes generated in the district. The City plans to make the final application for funding late this year. After extensive work with the former owner and the EPA, the City took ownership of the DICO superfund site in May. Demolition on the site will progress over the next several months. In addition to the soccer district, Krause+ is proposing significant mixed-use redevelopment in the Gateway area on real estate they assembled while implementing their office building. The total investment for both areas is approximately \$550M over 10-15 years

Downtown Vision and Action Plan

- After a thorough review process, the Downtown Vision and Action Plan Steering Committee has selected a consulting team for the plan that is made up of local, regional, and national experts who have international experience with downtowns. This team consists of Baton Global, Civitas, and RDG.
- A communications strategy has been created with the consulting team to ensure broad awareness of the plan as well as to gain input from the public through the research process.

Ongoing Infrastructure Projects

- Construction has commenced on infrastructure in the Market District. JSC Properties initiated the construction of new streets in the area. The City will also begin constructing street connections and stormwater infrastructure this summer in anticipation of the mixed-use redevelopment with a projected value of \$750M.
- In the Southeast Connector, a RAISE Grant application was submitted to USDOT in July with a request for \$23M in funding that would be used to construct the remaining section of the SE Connector and complete the Parkway from Fleur Drive through the southeast section of Des Moines to Hwy 69/5 in Pleasant Hill. Notifications of awards (or rejection) are to be published by

USDOT in November. If successful, construction is anticipated to begin in early 2024 and be completed and open to traffic in 2026.

- The rail-trucking port and associated warehousing are under construction on the east side of downtown at ML King Jr. Parkway and SE 15th Street. The developers are currently securing contracts with companies throughout the region. Construction completion is anticipated late this year.
- 15th to Grand/Locust reconstruction on the west end of downtown has been initiated. A consultant was authorized to begin design in June 2021, with the final design scheduled to be completed in Summer 2022 with bidding in Fall of 2022 and construction commencing in 2023. The project includes the design of the following:
 - 18th Street from Ingersoll Avenue to Fleur Drive/Locust Street
 - Grand Avenue from 19th Street to 15th Street
 - Locust Street from 18th Street/Fleur Drive to 15th Street
 - 17th Street from Ingersoll Avenue to Locust Street
 - 15th Street from Grand Avenue to Iowa Interstate Railroad tracks
- Levee work has begun across the region. Phase A (both sides of the DSM River from I-235 to the confluence of DSM/Raccoon Rivers) is currently under construction. \$2.6M project; completion in October 2021. Phase B Improvements (Raccoon River from Fleur to SW 5th Bridge (green bridge) from Fleur to SW 5th on the north side and from SW 7th to SW 5th on the south side of the river) to be bid in December. Phase C Improvements (both sides of the river from the confluence of DSM/Raccoon Rivers to E 14th Street) are to be bid in February 2022 (tentative). Phases D-H improvements (From E. 14th Street on to the east. Primarily on the north side of DSM River) are currently under design.
- Parking meters: In July, Council approved the removal of the existing on-street parking meters and installing 397 multi-space parking meters and 3,492 parking stall signs in the downtown meter district, as well as setting up and hosting of the operating system by Flowbird. This system will enable pay-by-cell phone. Availability of this system will occur in phases and should begin in late 2021. In conjunction w/ this effort, new branding and design will be implemented for the public parking system.
- Walnut Street bridge: Project is approximately 60% complete with design. Bid projected to be in Spring/Summer 2022. The design will match the architecture of the Grand Avenue and Locust Street bridges. 5th and Walnut parking structure is now open.

Invest DSM

- Invest DSM has over 230 homeowners from its four Special Investment Districts participating in its Homeowner Renovation Program. The program offers a grant that shares the cost of home renovation projects, ranging from addressing deferred maintenance to upgrading the home with additions or floor plan reconfigurations. The 31 completed projects represent approximately

\$771,000 of investment. For every dollar Invest DSM has contributed to those 31 projects, homeowners have invested \$1.98.

- The City of Des Moines allocated \$200,000 to expand Invest DSM's popular Block Challenge Grant program citywide on July 1st, 2021. Any household in the city is now eligible to apply for matching funds up to \$2,500 for exterior improvements to their home. The program encourages neighbors to work together and apply as a team in order to receive the funds, building social cohesion.

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

- Capital Core is currently facing issues with the state legislative agenda and regional outreach and coalition-building on affordable/workforce housing.

EQUITY & INCLUSION

- There has been a broad range of outreach to get Dine Out Des Moines Delivery Assistance program information out to diverse restaurants. ~50% of the Dine Out grants and the Small Business recovery grants were awarded to minority and/or women-owned businesses.
- Workforce Housing is an ongoing project to create equitable housing access across our region.

NEWS & EVENTS

- The World Food & Music Festival will return to its location in Downtown Des Moines's Western Gateway Park for its 17th year on Sept. 17 – 19, 2021 and will offer international cuisine, live music and performing arts, cooking demonstrations, interactive programs, wine and craft beers and much more.

COLLABORATION

- Capital Core collaborations include: Physical Capital (housing - infrastructure - stormwater), Natural Capital (ICON), Human Capital (housing, equity/diversity), Governance (code/regulation coordination).

CULTIVATION CORRIDOR

Billi Hunt

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

HIGHLIGHTS, PROJECTS, AND WINS

- This quarter, Cultivation Corridor concluded its first Cultivo Cohort.
- Hy-Vee has joined Cultivation Corridor as a new investor.
- New applications are being accepted for Cultivo Cohort 2.

- Food and agriculture industries in the state have announced nearly \$700,000,000 in capital investment.
- Cultivation Corridor saw successful outcomes from TechHub Live held in Des Moines in July.
- Perfect Flight (Brazilian startup company) announced 60 jobs and a facility at ISU Research Park.
- Agtech-type startups keep dominating in seed rounds. While not Iowa-based, they have a larger footprint in Iowa. PivotBio just received a \$2.3 billion evaluation. They opened in Ames at the ISURP just prior to the pandemic but will have a ribbon-cutting at the end of August, with an expansion for more employees taking counts from 6 just 18 months ago to a projected 60.

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

- The team is working hard to replace a staff vacancy.
- Additionally, we are currently looking at 18-month updates to our 3-year strategy.

EQUITY & INCLUSION

- As we look to hire, we are fully engaging a diverse group of candidates.
- Cultivo gives us greater opportunities to engage diverse communities.

NEWS & EVENTS

- The second Cultivo Cohort will begin in October.
- Insights to Innovations will be held in September.

COLLABORATION

- Cultivation Corridor has recently worked with Business and Human Capitals.

CULTURAL CAPITAL

Sally Dix, Greg Edwards and Myrna Johnson

Recommendations emerging from the 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 printed 100,000 2021 Catch Des Moines Visitors Guide and distributed many to visitors and area hotels. The [new guide](#) features art throughout the issue and also has custom collage artwork created by a local artist.
- Catch Des Moines has launched a new series of itineraries called [The Catch List](#). There are 18 itineraries with titles such as Foodie Feast, Family Fun, and Best of the Burbs, featuring more than 100 local businesses and attractions, including many area hotels! Each one also includes a downloadable PDF version to take on the go.

- Events have returned to Greater Des Moines and are reaching pre-pandemic numbers of attendees and the number of events being hosted.
- We hosted Dew Tour, the only U.S.-based Olympic qualifying event at the newly opened Lauridsen Skatepark in May. Dew Tour led the way to a big, earned media month. We gathered 27 million impressions, including 28 stories featuring Catch Des Moines, for our media efforts which lead to \$250,000 worth of advertising value equivalency. Catch Des Moines helped create a feature video on Des Moines with Dew Tour that aired on a national broadcast on NBC.
- After two years of planning, we hosted the IRONMAN 70.3 Des Moines. There were more than 2,600 athletes that participated, providing a huge boost to the community.
- Principal Charity Classic, World Pork Expo, National Junior High School Rodeo Championships, the Des Moines Art Festival and more were huge community successes (that did NOT take place last year).

Bravo

- There is support for reopening venues and experiences – lots of activities have happened safely and successfully!
- Bravo has hired a new Community Investment Specialist (Julia Franklin) to bring their team back to pre-pandemic levels (3 people!).
- Successful implementation of artists in residence program in collaboration with Invest DSM to demonstrate the power of artists involved more deeply in economic development conversations. Fourteen central Iowa organizations participated in a regional cultural equity cohort, funded primarily by the Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines and facilitated by national consultant artEquity.

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

Catch Des Moines

- Amid the ongoing pandemic, Catch Des Moines has continued to message to the community, visitors, and planners that Greater Des Moines is open, and we can help safely accommodate your visit.
- While we are dealing with variants of COVID-19, we continue to promote the Greater Des Moines area as a safe destination and continue to help events and meeting planners move forward. As we know, many are eager to return to normalcy. (Of course, this may change drastically if we see continued increases of the Delta variant.)

Bravo

- Revenue variability and future uncertainty continue to be a challenge for Bravo and many of the cultural entities we support. Until contributed and earned revenue streams stabilize, this sector will struggle.
- Various federal funding streams have also been a blessing and a challenge. It is nice that there are funds available, but difficult to navigate all the opportunities and all the applications/processes.

EQUITY & INCLUSION

Catch Des Moines

- Catch Des Moines recently worked with Capital City Pride to create a blog and itinerary focused on Pride month and the LGBTQ+ community.
- One of our “Des Best” (best of) blogs featured black-owned restaurants in Greater Des Moines.
- Catch Des Moines included a [statement](#) in the digital planner’s guide about inclusivity and our responsibility as both an organization and community to make everyone feel welcome no matter their nationality, race, religion, gender, ability, or sexual orientation.

Bravo

- Fourteen central Iowa organizations participated in a regional cultural equity cohort, funded primarily by the Community Foundation and facilitated by national consultant artEquity.

NEWS & EVENTS

- Des Moines artist Jordan Weber was [chosen](#) as one of 10 'accomplished practitioners' chosen worldwide for Harvard fellowships.
- Public art project [revitalizes](#) outdoor basketball courts in low-income neighborhoods in the City of Des Moines.

COLLABORATION

- Polk County and Bravo Greater Des Moines have partnered with Iowa Confluence Water Trails (ICON) to launch a project led by artist Matthew Mazzotta that will integrate public art with the water trails initiative.
- Bravo Greater Des Moines and DART are collaborating to expand the network of bus shelters while also incorporating public art into the. More than 70 existing bus stops have been identified as potential locations for art shelters. Bravo will be investing \$250,000 to support costs related to the project

GOVERNANCE CAPITAL

Mayor Bob Andeweg and Art Wittmack

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

HIGHLIGHTS, PROJECTS, AND WINS

City of Urbandale

- In June, the Iowa Economic Development Authority Board awarded provisional funding of \$26.5 million to support the Merle Hay Campus Reinvestment project through the Iowa Reinvestment Act. This project is a partnership with the Cities of Urbandale and Des Moines, Polk County, Merle Hay Mall and the Des Moines Buccaneers. Reinvestment into the Merle Hay Campus will transform the

space formerly occupied by Younkers into a multi-use arena that will be the home of the United States Hockey League's Des Moines Buccaneers. The current food court and Kohl's department store space will be part of a multi-sport training and competition center. A new Kohl's store facing Merle Hay Road will be among the first of several major investments, including new retail, residential, entertainment, and hospitality projects across the Merle Hay campus.

- The City of Urbandale is also working with a consultant to gather attitudes and opinions from a cross-section of Urbandale voters through a scientifically valid survey, with the goal of gathering insight into desired community amenities for a recreation facility.

Regional Stormwater Management Ordinances

- Several cities have adopted the model stormwater management ordinances that reflect best practices. As of July 15, Polk County, Waukee, Windsor Heights, Urbandale, Clive, Johnston, and Pleasant Hill have adopted the ordinances, and Ankeny has rejected them. Outreach will be conducted over the coming months with the remaining cities.

Central Iowa Code Consortium

- The Central Iowa Code Consortium (CICC) is currently circulating a new MOU to cities to participate in the Consortium in preparation for the 2021 code cycle.

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

- With Ankeny's rejection of the regional stormwater ordinances, there is potential that other cities in the region may follow suit. Capital Crossroads volunteers will be leading efforts with remaining cities to provide information and education on the ordinances to address any lingering concerns.

EQUITY & INCLUSION

- The Governance Capital is having discussions about adding a fourth chair to help widen the Capital's ability to be representative of diverse groups in the community.
- Urbandale has expanded employee recruitment efforts to better reach communities of color by utilizing the 4 Equity Tool.

NEWS & EVENTS

- The City of Grimes [joins](#) the Des Moines Metropolitan Wastewater Reclamation Authority.
- Mayor Andeweg's State of the City Address will be on September 30th, at Fire Station #43 in Urbandale. Please RSVP at www.Urbandale.org/rsvp.

COLLABORATION

- The Governance Capital overlaps with efforts occurring in various Capitals, including Natural Capital with the stormwater efforts and Physical Capital and various projects at the MPO.

HUMAN CAPITAL

Renee Miller, Marvin DeJear and Greg Nichols

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

HIGHLIGHTS, PROJECTS, AND WINS

United Way of Central Iowa

- Central Iowa Works is currently administering 4 main programs. Our Building New Careers work is helping to connect individuals to trade apprenticeship programs where people earn \$30-\$40 per hour after completing their apprenticeships. Our Thriving Workforce Initiative is working with employers in Central Iowa to improve frontline positions in areas such as compensation, scheduling, training, employee engagement, benefits and wealth-building. This effort is positioned to assist both the supply and demand side of the human capital pipeline.
- HealthWorks successfully closed out its 4-year Department of Labor performance period in March, serving 539 participants total, 159 more than our original goal. 72% of our participants are people of color. 88% successfully completed their training, and 74% of graduates entered employment, adding 324 Certified Nursing Assistants and 80 Registered Nurses to the Central Iowa workforce. We're continuing to focus on increasing racial diversity in nursing as we move forward with the state, private donors and United Way of Central Iowa supporting our case management model, tuition assistance and supportive services.
- Our workforce reentry initiative, CIRCA, is currently finishing up the first grant cycle and has exceeded all goals! We finished with an enrollment of 205 participants, with 96% of participants being placed in employment or training. All of this while keeping our recidivism rate well below our goal. We have also had the pleasure of hosting approximately 20 Alumni Group events and workshops with the goal of keeping our participants engaged with the program. The big news is that we were awarded another grant from the Department of Labor, and we have started the planning process in order to begin training this winter. Our hope is to serve another 201 returning citizens by December 2024.

Policy/Advocacy Highlights

- As part of Senate File 619, the tax package signed at the end of the session, two programs were expanded to support childcare needs for Iowans. The legislation increased the income threshold from \$45,000 to \$90,000 net income for the Early Childhood Development Tax Credit qualification. The legislation also permits a licensed childcare facility to be considered when determining eligibility for a project through the High Quality Jobs Program.
- Our state is currently in serious need of upgrades in our broadband network. Signed by Governor Reynolds on April 28, House File 848 expanded the Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant

Fund by creating tiers of speed levels and funding, prioritizing those needs throughout the state. House File 867 is the Administration and Regulation budget bill that appropriates \$100 million to the Fund for FY 2021. Signed by the Governor, the Legislature agreed to three years of that funding level.

- Also passed in the tax package, Senate File 619, were provisions to support housing needs in the State of Iowa. The bill provides an increase to the Workforce Housing Tax Incentives program from \$25 million to \$40 million for FY 2021-2022, to \$35 million in FY 2022-2023 and subsequently to \$30 million. The legislative package also increased the State Housing Trust Fund cap from \$3 million to \$7 million annually. Finally, the bill created a Disaster Recovery Housing Assistance Program to be administered by the Iowa Finance Authority.
- Another long-time priority has been to provide support for the Future Ready Iowa program. This year, the Legislature increased the appropriation to the Employer Innovation Fund from \$1.2 million to \$4.2 million in House File 871, with a portion of the increase being allocated to the Iowa Child Care Challenge Fund. Lastly, the Future Ready Iowa Last-Dollar Scholarship Program received \$23 million, up from \$13 million, in House File 868.

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

- The pandemic has presented a significant number of hurdles as it relates to Human Capital – including extended unemployment, the inability of companies to recruit and retain the number of employees needed to meet their business needs, and continued systemic barriers that prevent central Iowans from thriving like affordable/safe/stable housing, food insecurity, unsustainable wages, etc. Community partners continue to evaluate the current environment and define strategies that will address supply and demand barriers.

EQUITY & INCLUSION

- United Way of Central Iowa was invited to apply to participate in the National Skills Coalition's Racial Equity Learning Group – a cohort of nationwide workforce advocates who will be equipped with new strategies to advocate for education, training and supports – through an equity lens. If selected, Dave Stone, UWCI advocacy officer, will participate in a year-long learning experience. The organization will be awarded a grant to support advancing equitable solutions to Iowa's workforce shortages. We see this as a significant opportunity and value-add for our Human Capital work and the equity work in our region, specifically helping us inform Skills-Related policy and programs.
- As planning continues across programming – the Human Capital relies on the 4 Equity Tool to help in the process.

COLLABORATION

- We are excited to collaborate with DSM USA 4 Equity Collective as their work progresses. We see great opportunities to learn from this important work and find meaningful ways to incorporate what is learned and developed into the Human Capital strategies.

- We also have ongoing collaboration between the Physical Capital with the Transportation Gaps Analysis work.

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 has officially transitioned to Iowa Confluence Water Trails (ICON). Watch [this](#) video that was shared to announce the new brand.
- The new governing board of ICON is made up of 70% jurisdictional representation and 30% private community members, signifying the long-term private/public partnership for the project.
- Upstream/Downstream work to create partnerships to improve water quality is continuing. Cornerpost out of Fort Dodge was hired to help with the research phase. Through this discovery phase, one on one interviews are being held with rural and urban stakeholders. This research will be compiled and used to make recommendations for the next steps.

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

- ICON has launched an exciting grassroots fundraising opportunity through the campaign 80 Days of ICON. 80 Days of ICON represents more than 80 improvements to Central Iowa waters through the ICON Water Trails project. To date, more than 200 individuals and organizations have donated to the ICON Water Trails capital campaign.

EQUITY & INCLUSION

- ICON wrote a blog about their rebranding process, which included engagement of underrepresented groups, such as LGBTQIA+, BIPOC, lowans with disabilities and lowans with low incomes. They sought to find out how they could connect these groups' needs and wants to the water trails. Click [here](#) to learn more about what they learned and how that feedback inspired their branding.

NEWS & EVENTS

- [Des Moines Register: Call it 'ICON'](#)
- [Business Record: New Brand, New Director Named for Central Iowa Water Trails](#)
- Great Outdoors Foundation. Annual Golf Outing on September 13, 2021. Learn more and register [here](#).
- Great Outdoors Foundation Annual Dinner on October 28, 2021. More details are coming soon.

COLLABORATION

- The Upstream/Downstream work requires collaboration with several different partners, including Great Outdoors Foundation, Capital Crossroads, Greater Des Moines Partnership, Iowa Soybean Association, and Iowa Agricultural Clean Water Alliance.
- The Natural Capital has also intersected with Cultural Capital on a public art project and Governance Capital on the stormwater management ordinances.

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 Tomorrow: Here We Grow

- This month, Capital Crossroads launched Housing Tomorrow: Here We Grow, an initiative to build regional collaboration, data and knowledge sharing on workforce housing in Central Iowa.
- To kickoff this initiative, Capital Crossroads hosted an event on August 5th for city planners and economic development staff in the region. Several cities attended and had discussions about their plans for workforce housing.
- Over the next several months, the Capital Crossroads Workforce Housing Committee will be meeting with city staff individually to better understand their housing and economic development goals and to determine regional themes.
- We also launched a [new website](#) to host reports, data, and resources that cities can utilize as this initiative grows.

Smart City

- The Smart City Task Force was formed in 2018 as a joint effort between the Des Moines Area MPO and Capital Crossroads. The roundtable explores how technology could be used to enhance urban systems, service delivery, and citizen engagement in order to address community challenges identified in regional strategies such as The Tomorrow Plan, Capital Crossroads, and the United Way OpportUNITY plan.
- Earlier this month, the Task Force distributed a survey to city managers to collect information on what smart technologies are being used by cities in the region. By collecting this information, we are hoping to come together with a plan of action for our region as we look towards smart technology as a potential ROI in our communities.

Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority (DART)

- Six area nonprofit organizations received retired RideShare vans through DART's van donation program in June. The 2021 recipients are ArtForce Iowa, Bhutanese Community in Iowa, Shalom Covenant Church, Willkie House, Young Women's Resource Center and the Youth Justice Initiative.
- First art bus shelter installed - If you travel down University Avenue in Des Moines, you'll see a new, colorful artwork bus shelter that Drake University commissioned. DART collaborated with Drake University to plan two public artwork installations at the campus side of University Avenue from 25th Street to 31st Street. The first shelter was installed in June, and the second will be installed early this fall, featuring campus- and neighborhood-inspired designs. More shelters are planned across the region. Visit <http://www.ridedart.com/publicart> to learn more about what's coming next.
- DART's Half Fare Pilot Program has been extended for a year to help more central lowans get where they need to go, including jobs, classes and health care appointments. The program allows individuals who receive state food assistance, workforce assistance or job training to pay half fare. Housing assistance was added by the DART Commission in June as an additional form of eligibility since there's an important connection between affordable housing and access to transportation.

Polk County Housing Trust Fund (PCHTF)

- We are pleased that we were able to participate in the launch of the "Here We Grow" initiative on regional workforce housing on August 5th!
- Our team will also be making significant contributions to the One Economy project surrounding housing equity.
- Finally, we have continued to build support for delivering pandemic emergency relief to renters in need as well as helping coalition partners respond to the loss of a substantial amount of Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing.

Transportation and the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

- The construction of the transload facility continues on schedule. The water trails design is nearing completion, along with required approvals. Additionally, we continue working with our partners on various projects like the DOT's integrated corridor management (ICM) strategy, bike/ped issues and watershed work.

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority (DART)

- The nationwide driver shortage is impacting DART in two primary ways:
 1. The time to fill open operator positions has increased. The demand for Paratransit trips specifically has grown faster than DART can hire and train new drivers. We began offering a stay-on bonus to new drivers as well as an employee referral bonus, which has been effective in helping fill positions.
 2. Fewer Uber drivers has caused reliability issues with DART's Flex Connect service and delayed implementation of a second Flex Connect zone.

- Ongoing impacts of COVID-19 have also been a challenge. Like many organizations, DART is revisiting all of its COVID-19 mitigation efforts due to the rise in cases of the Delta variant. This includes pausing its full return-to-work for administrative staff, which was planned for September 7th.

Polk County Housing Trust Fund

- The loss of Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing is a challenge for our region. We have seen some particularly important properties enter transition in the last few weeks, resulting in a substantial wave of involuntary resident displacement as school is about to start. This is a substantial challenge for people and families.

EQUITY & INCLUSION

Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority (DART)

- DART is regularly considering equity impacts in how we plan and deliver public transit service in Greater Des Moines. Currently, we are using the 4 Equity tool to help guide our public outreach plans as we prepare to gather public feedback on near- and long-term service proposals that will serve as a roadmap for DART Commission and staff as we plan for the future.
- All DART staff recently completed a diversity, equity and inclusion training led by an external facilitator. This is part of an ongoing effort to increase employee knowledge and understanding of DEI. DART’s employee-led DEI committee completed a survey of employees and used that feedback over the last several months to identify several goals the committee will be working towards related to DEI in the workplace.

Polk County Housing Trust Fund

- We have identified advancing equity and inclusion as one of the three most important regional goals in implementing the region’s workforce housing strategy. That means as we develop goals for the initiative, we will have the opportunity to focus and engage with the community on these issues. We also look forward to closely partnering with the One Economy housing implementation team.

Transportation and the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

- MPO continues to seek opportunities to use the 4 Equity Tool in work products as well as when doing public research.

NEWS & EVENTS

Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority (DART)

- Several more art bus shelters will be installed this fall.
- DART will begin sharing and collecting feedback on near-term and long-term service proposals
- The region’s first microtransit pilot (on-demand service operated by DART) is scheduled to begin in Ankeny in November

Polk County Housing Trust Fund

- You can find information related to the workforce housing initiative, known as Housing Tomorrow: Here We Grow, at www.herewegrow.city

Transportation and the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

- Anticipate a bid letting on the water trail construction contract later this year!

COLLABORATION

Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority (DART)

- DART is closely working with Des Moines Public Schools as we prepare for the 2021-2022 school year and resuming school service.
- DART continues to work closely with BRAVO Greater Des Moines, public art stakeholders, artists and member governments on the planning and installation of art bus shelters throughout the region.
- Staff has been conducting outreach to organizations who work with individuals who qualify for our half-fare pilot program, particularly as it relates to housing assistance, food assistance or workforce and job training programs.

Polk County Housing Trust Fund

- The workforce housing initiative will give us many opportunities to work with our social and human capital peers as we look to supercharge the region's implementation of the workforce housing strategy.

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

- Nikole Hannah-Jones' event was a collaborative success! There was wonderful turnout, including for the youth event. This culminating event complimented a successful Then. Now. When program that was run by the Greater Des Moines Leadership Institute as well. Recordings are available for those who would like to view them.
- We are excited to be supporting and elevating the LatinX Project effort in Central Iowa. Look for more information in the coming months from an incredible group of leaders focusing on the LatinX community! This effort comes at an exciting time as the DSM USA 4 Equity Collective is beginning its work as well.

- We continue to work to elevate diverse leaders at tables throughout the Capital Crossroads network and look forward to continued dialog around legislative progress that can be made.
- The DSM USA 4 Equity Collective has selected Arrowhead Consulting to lead its work in developing equity metrics for the region. The consultant team is led by Kuma Roberts, who previously served as the Vice President of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at the Tulsa Regional Chamber in Oklahoma. In this role, Kuma was responsible for embedding a diversity, equity and inclusion lens into policies and practices across every aspect of the organization's management life cycle. Kuma has now joined Arrowhead Consulting, where she provides support to businesses, organizations, and communities that are looking to strengthen their commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. We are excited that she has kicked off her work in Des Moines and look forward to the strategies and recommendations that her team will put forward.

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

- Diversity in leadership continues to be an area of needed focus. How can Social Capital assist in broadening those who are engaged in this work?
- What are specific legislative priorities/concerns being addressed and identified within the other Capitals?

EQUITY & INCLUSION

- Equity and Inclusion are core to Social Capital's work, goals, and informs all the projects the Social Capital team takes on.

NEWS & EVENTS

- Please visit www.capitalcrossroadsvision.com/events/ to view the DSM USA 4 Equity Calendar! This is updated regularly with DEI events across the DSM Metro!
- Read [this news release](#) to learn more about the consultant for the DSM USA 4 Equity Collective and to learn more about the project.

COLLABORATION

- Social Capital consistently looks to collaborate with all Capitals.

WELLNESS CAPITAL

Jami Haberl, Suzanne Mineck and Brad Anderson

Lead in elevating the conversation and giving voice to the vast number of opportunities to improve the community's overall social and emotional well-being through advocacy and awareness.

HIGHLIGHTS, PROJECTS, AND WINS

- During the month of May, we recognized Mental Health Awareness Month using Make It OK. This included the creation and distribution of a toolkit that featured social media samples and other materials for organizations and communities to use.
- Wear Green for Make It OK occurred on May 20th.
- Multiple presentations and ambassador trainings have been occurring the past three months to broaden the support and capacity of Make It OK.
- There has also been success with some paid advertising and marketing efforts for Make it OK.
- Additionally, we have been working on securing funds to support the Double Up Food Bucks program at multiple locations within Central Iowa and across the state. Since January 2021, over \$130,000 of Double Up Food Bucks have been redeemed in Polk County alone.

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

- Capacity for Make It OK and Double Up Food Bucks in the region and across the state have increased, which is positive but also challenging with the current resources.

EQUITY & INCLUSION

- We were awarded a grant from United Way of Central Iowa to focus on creating a framework to engage BIPOC communities in the Make It OK efforts. This work will be starting up in the coming months after a consultant is identified to lead the work.

NEWS & EVENTS

- The Healthiest State Annual Walk registration opens August 2nd, with the walk being held on October 6th across the state. We have partnered with the Greater Des Moines Partnership for a downtown Des Moines walk. This year's walk theme is "Walk More Connect More," as we remind Iowans of the importance of walking on not only our physical but our social health. The walk kicks off the Healthiest State Month, which is throughout October. We celebrate each of the four numbers of 5-2-1-0 Healthy Choices Count throughout October and will end the month with the 5-2-1-0 Healthy Choices Count! Summit on October 28th. There are free toolkits to help support organizations in participating and sharing the message with their teams. Lastly, the annual awards applications will open for the 2022 awards on October 4th, 2021.

COLLABORATION

- Wellness Capital is interested in partnering with other Capitals to explore a regional strategy to fill sidewalk gaps in Central Iowa.