



## GREATER DES MOINES PARTNERSHIP 2018 STATE LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

### United to Drive Economic Growth: One Voice, One Mission, One Region

The Greater Des Moines Partnership is the economic and community development organization that serves Greater Des Moines (DSM), Iowa. Together with 23 Affiliate Chambers of Commerce, more than 6,100 Regional Business Members and 320 Investors, The Partnership drives economic growth with one voice, one mission and as one region. Through innovation, strategic planning and global collaboration, The Partnership grows opportunity, helps create jobs and promotes Des Moines as the best place to build a business, a career and a future.

The Partnership believes that state government plays an important role in setting the stage for business competitiveness, entrepreneurship and employment-generating investment by the private sector to promote economic growth. Economic growth is achieved by creating an environment that is conducive to business success, leading to job expansion and increased state and local revenues. The result will be an economically thriving state and growing communities that plan and build for the future. Accordingly, The Partnership supports policies that promote economic growth statewide, and align with the Capital Crossroads and The Tomorrow Plan vision plans for Greater Des Moines (DSM).

The Partnership appreciates the opportunity to work with the Governor, the General Assembly and state agencies to accomplish mutually beneficial legislative goals and objectives for the economic betterment of the State of Iowa.

### FEATURED PRIORITIES

Although all of the policy positions included in The Partnership's 2018 State Legislative Agenda are important, The Partnership will focus on the following priorities, listed in no particular order:

- **Corporate and Personal Income Taxes:** The Partnership believes Iowa's tax code should encourage business growth, limit the size and costs of government and reflect the principles of equity, neutrality, simplicity and predictability. Accordingly, The Partnership supports efforts to reform corporate and personal income tax policies to simplify and reduce Iowa's income tax rates to strengthen Iowa's economic competitiveness. This includes giving businesses and individuals the option of either retaining the ability to deduct federal income taxes or choosing to forego federal deductibility in exchange for significantly reduced state income tax.

- **Economic Development Tools:** The Partnership supports existing economic development tools such as the Research Activities Credit, Innovation Tax Credit and the Angel Investor Tax Credit. These tools are used to promote economic growth throughout the entire state as we collectively work to expand existing industry, recruit new industry to the state and support a thriving entrepreneurial startup community. Recognizing the highly competitive nature of economic development, it is imperative that lawmakers see the value that these specific economic development tools have on competitiveness, job growth and investment.
- **Future Ready Iowa:** The Partnership supports the state's Future Ready Iowa initiative to ensure that the state has a talent pipeline that is aligned to and prepared for the jobs of today and tomorrow. The Future Ready Iowa initiative will better align our education, workforce and economic development programs in efforts to close skills gaps.
- **Water Quality:** The State of Iowa has a unique opportunity to invest in Iowa's soil and water infrastructure — an infrastructure that is critically important to the state's wealth and prosperity. The Partnership views the primary pathway to success as a public-private investment in waterways across the state. The Partnership supports allocating sufficient, permanent and dedicated funding sources to meet infrastructure needs for non-point and point sources that are targeted and prioritized by watershed with annual accountability for the state's investment. Funding options include: Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund (IWILL), tax credits and water quality trading. Other options may surface.

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## Economic Development

Robust incentive programs are a critical element in Iowa's effort to create and retain high-quality, high-paying jobs. Therefore, The Partnership supports state business development programs for local economic development projects that use performance-based criteria to ensure job creation, capital investment, workforce training, wages and wealth creation in exchange for tax incentives and direct financial assistance.

- **Business Development Incentive Programs** – To create jobs and grow the economy, it is essential that the Governor and the General Assembly continue to provide adequate resources for the state's business development programs. The most effective way to do that is to increase the resources available to programs such as the High Quality Jobs Program. Therefore, The Partnership supports: (1) a maximum aggregate tax credit cap that is set high enough to spur growth in local communities; and (2) an economic development budget for direct financial assistance that keeps Iowa competitive with other states. Additionally, The Partnership supports the continued refinement of program requirements, such as laborshed wage thresholds, so that state programs remain easy to use and accessible to local communities.
- **Public-Private Partnership** – Both the private and public sectors have a role to play in improving global competitiveness. The Partnership supports continued funding for the Iowa Innovation Corporation (IIC). The relationship between the IIC and the Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) represents a unique delivery structure for economic development programs, and it has great potential to foster entrepreneurship, diversify the economy and upskill Iowa's workforce.
- **Entrepreneurship and Early-Stage Industries** – A balanced approach to economic development does not just require traditional relocation and expansion programs. It also requires the care and feeding of new business startups. Accordingly, The Partnership supports increased funding for programs that promote entrepreneurship and provide capital to targeted industries, such as those identified by the Battelle Institute. IEDA programs like the Demonstration Fund and Innovation Fund Tax Credits accelerate the growth of innovative business, enhance the development of early-stage industries and create critical pathways to follow-on funding.
- **Tax Increment Financing (TIF)** – The Partnership supports Iowa's TIF law and opposes any effort to limit its scope, duration or flexible use for commercial and industrial development.
- **Public Accountability in State Programs** – The Partnership supports transparency in the administration of state economic development programs but also seeks to ensure that such transparency strikes a prudent balance between private interests and public accountability.

## Business Climate

To encourage business expansion and foster the growth of new and existing businesses and jobs, The Partnership supports measures to strengthen Iowa's business climate and remove regulations that act as hidden taxes, inhibit innovation and investment, hinder productivity and stifle economic growth.

- **Preservation of Business Climate** – To maintain and enhance Iowa's attractiveness to current and potential businesses, it is essential that Iowa do what is possible to lower costs to employers and maintain the current balance of employee and management protections. Accordingly, The Partnership strongly supports the preservation of Iowa's "Right to Work" law, supports Iowa's current workers' compensation system, opposes mandating prevailing wage rates and project labor agreements for public construction projects and opposes changes to Iowa's current collective bargaining law that would put additional burdens on local governments and/or business owners.
- **Government Purchasing** – The Partnership supports Qualifications-Based Selection (QBS) as the preferred process for the selection of design professionals by any owner. QBS is a negotiated procurement process for selection, based on qualifications and competence relative to the work to be performed. The Iowa Legislature should require QBS on all public projects.

## Research and Development

The Partnership supports state-funded programs and initiatives to help generate and harness the latest in scientific and technological developments to keep DSM at the forefront.

- **Research Activities Credits (RAC)** – Iowa's continued economic strength depends on our ability to generate and harness the latest in scientific and technological developments and to apply these developments to real world applications. Iowa must continue encouraging companies to invest additional resources in the research, development and experimentation of various products and services that promote both job creation and economic expansion. Accordingly, The Partnership supports the preservation of Iowa's refundable RAC.
- **Renewable Chemical Production Tax Credit** – Iowa's Cultivation Corridor is a global center of investment, talent, research and technology in the agbiosciences. To aid in the expansion of the bioeconomy and create new jobs in the Corridor and across the state, The Partnership supports the recent creation and funding of the renewable chemical production tax credit and encourages continued support for this important economic development initiative.
- **Cultivation Corridor Priority Projects** – As global demand for food, feed, fiber and energy increases, the need to invest in innovation, technology and production capacity also will increase. Accordingly, The Partnership supports projects within Iowa's Cultivation Corridor, a dedicated effort to establish DSM and Central Iowa as a global center for agbioscience investment, talent and research. Additional priority projects within the Corridor include, but are not limited to, the ISU Agriculture Experiment Station, the ISU Research Park, Small Business Development Center and Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory. The Partnership supports additional renewable energy, value-added agriculture and other research and development initiatives; commercialization and technology transfer initiatives; enhanced Science, Technology, Education and Math (STEM) education programming; and other initiatives to enhance and expand the region's agbioscience ecosystem.

## Tax and Budget

The Partnership believes Iowa's tax code should encourage business growth, limit the size and costs of government and reflect the principles of equity, neutrality, simplicity and predictability. Accordingly, The Partnership urges comprehensive income tax reform and opposes efforts that would increase the tax burden on Iowa employers.

- **Local Option Sales Tax** – The Partnership supports provisions to provide DSM communities more local control of sales tax revenues.
- **Commercial and Industrial Property Taxes** – The Partnership supports the current implementation of property tax relief and will continue to support meaningful property tax relief that is coupled and linked with targeted alternative revenue streams, meaningful regulatory relief and state backfill for local governments.
- **Corporate and Personal Income Taxes** – The Partnership supports efforts to simplify and reduce Iowa's corporate and personal income tax rates to strengthen Iowa's economic competitiveness.
- **Single Factor Corporate Income Tax** – The Partnership supports the preservation of Iowa's corporate single-factor income tax formula. The single factor formula has been a pillar of economic development for the state since 1934. In recent years, other states have recognized the success Iowa has had with the single factor formula and are moving to adopt similar statutes to compete in today's global economy.
- **Federal Deductibility** – The Partnership supports giving businesses and individuals the option of either retaining the ability to deduct federal income taxes or choosing to forego federal deductibility in exchange for significantly reduced state income tax.
- **Combined Corporate Reporting** – The Partnership opposes the adoption of a combined corporate income tax reporting structure in Iowa. Moving to combined reporting would add complexity to an already complex system and may lead to costly litigation and may result in a net revenue decrease for the state.
- **Retirement Savings Options** – The financial services industry offers a wide variety of retirement savings options, including 401(k) plans, 403(b) plans, 401(a) plans, 457(b) plans, SIMPLE IRAs, SEP IRAs and traditional IRAs. The Partnership supports state initiatives – such as education and incentives – that promote retirement savings by private sector workers in such plans and products and supports state-sponsored marketplaces open to all interested plan and product providers. The Partnership opposes efforts by states to launch state-run retirement plans for private sector workers.
- **Public Pension Plans** – Escalating public pension costs are compromising the ability of state and local governments in Iowa to deliver quality services and to keep taxes level, both of which are critical elements in a climate for growth. Therefore, The Partnership supports a broad-based review of Iowa's public pension systems to better understand what is necessary to meet commitments that have already been made, to contain future growth in public pension obligations and to evaluate how well our systems serve the needs of today's employees and retirees. Any changes to Iowa's public pension plans should not reduce payments to current retirees nor reduce benefits already earned by current employees, but should seek to better fit the needs of all employees and protect current and future generations of Iowans from unsustainable costs, escalating taxes and declines in public services.

## Energy

The Partnership supports non-mandated incentives to develop, expand and promote Iowa's renewable energy sources, research and development to improve traditional energy sources, cost-effective energy efficiency programs and other green products and processes.

- **Energy Development** – The Partnership supports comprehensive policies that ensure energy remains affordable, reliable and available for the state's businesses and communities. The Partnership urges lawmakers and regulators to continue to act on energy policies that will bring long-term benefits to all Iowans, reduce the nation's dependence on foreign sources of energy and implement regulatory changes that will allow Iowa businesses to better compete. Specifically, The Partnership supports the continued development, expansion and promotion of Iowa's renewable energy sources, including biofuels, wind, solar, hydrogen and other forms of alternative energy, while avoiding mandates or cross subsidies. The Partnership also supports continuing to explore the transport of biofuels via pipeline.



# EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE

## Education and Workforce Development

The Partnership believes that a strong and aligned education system and proven workforce development programs are critical to Iowa's quality of life and is a critical attractor of business to Iowa. Learners from pre-kindergarten to adult must have access to quality education and skills development opportunities that will encourage DSM residents to become lifelong learners and economically secure citizens.

To properly educate and develop the region's students and current workforce, and attract and retain skilled workers, The Partnership supports the following:

**Early Childhood Education** – The Partnership supports continued investment in 21st Century accredited pre-kindergarten early education and supporting quality early childhood education programs to help ensure readiness for kindergarten, increase high school graduation rates and develop a strong, stable and productive workforce for tomorrow. The Partnership maintains that all children, including 4-year olds, should have access to high quality pre-school. The Partnership also supports improving literacy and school readiness skills among at-risk children by raising the per pupil funding level for children in preschool.

- **K-12 Education** – The population of DSM is becoming more diverse due to shifts in race, ethnicity, immigration and economic diversity. These shifts are changing our landscape with profound implications for education, policy makers, parents and the community. Changing demographics have and will continue to alter school practices, policies and budgetary needs.

Additionally, all Iowa students need to be better prepared to make informed career pathway decisions aligned to the workforce needs of the future through expanded Career and Technical Education (CTE), career exploration opportunities and regional planning involving both educators and employers.

The Partnership supports legislative solutions that can be enacted to better equip the region's students to compete in the global marketplace and enjoy a high quality of life. To this end, The Partnership supports the following initiatives and reforms:

- Extend or remove the sunset on SAVE (Secure an Advanced Vision for Education). School districts that have secured bonds for SAVE revenues to address immediate infrastructure and technology needs have now bonded against anticipated revenues through the 2029 sunset. Deferred maintenance, safety and security, technology and other construction projects are still a pressing need. Additionally, extending SAVE will provide an avenue for ongoing local property tax relief.
- To establish a foundation for personal and professional success in a high-technology, knowledge-based Iowa economy, each accredited high school should offer at least one high-quality computer science course, each accredited middle school should offer instruction in exploratory computer science and each accredited elementary school should offer instruction in the basics of computer science.
- An important component of Future Ready Iowa, meeting our workforce needs, is increasing the success of at-risk students. At-risk students are any student identified as needing additional support to reach the established goals of the educational program. Since low-income students are more than four times more likely to drop out of high school, The Partnership supports allocating funds to districts weighted based on poverty level, including Drop Out Prevention

funding.

- Continue the statewide implementation of Iowa's new career and technical education law to bring about regional planning involving both educators and employers. Iowa must increase the opportunities for secondary students to have work-based learning experiences and to earn college credits or industry-specific certifications/credentials. Iowa's future workforce depends on all students graduating high school being college and career ready.
  - Full implementation of the Iowa Core which establishes high academic standards in Iowa, which includes a new statewide student assessment for accountability aligned with the Iowa Core.
  - Expand and enhance the Iowa Teacher Loan Forgiveness program to effectively address critical shortages in curricular areas such as math, science, computer science, foreign languages, English Language Learner (ELL) and special education.
  - To support the growing need for STEM education, Iowa will need more young people choosing to become STEM educators. Therefore, the State must create additional incentives to encourage STEM careers in education versus more lucrative careers in private industry.
  - Maintain the increased focus on STEM learning initiatives and supporting the establishment of a stronger internship program for businesses to attract and retain STEM-educated students.
  - Support summer learning and literacy programs for all at-risk students to prevent summer learning loss. Specifically, provide funds for schools to provide research-based, intensive literacy programming for all students who are not proficient in reading. The Partnership also encourages collaboration between our schools and community-based organizations in literacy programming for at-risk students.
  - Authorize the Department of Education to create a Seal of Biliteracy to recognize a student who has attained proficiency in English and one or more other world languages by high school graduation. The recognition of attaining biliteracy becomes part of the high school transcript and diploma for these students. The Seal serves to certify attainment of biliteracy for students, employers and universities. It is a statement of accomplishment that helps to signal evidence of a student's readiness for career and college, and for engagement as a global citizen.
- **Postsecondary Education** – Technological advancement, global competition and the emerging knowledge-innovation economy are driving an increasing demand for postsecondary education and training. In the United States, 65 percent of all jobs in 2020 will require some level of postsecondary education, and the demand will reach 68 percent in Iowa. Iowa's future economic growth and competitiveness depends on increased postsecondary attainment by our workforce.

Accordingly, The Partnership supports efforts to expand college accessibility, affordability and completion through:

- Expanded promotion of financial literacy initiatives, college savings options, available tax incentives and other programs designed to help students and families prepare financially for future higher education expenses.
- Continued support for the state-funded Iowa Tuition Grant, Kibbie Grant, Iowa Scholars and other programs that invest in financially-eligible students attending Iowa's high-quality public



and private higher education institutions.

- Expand funding for the STEM Internship program to Iowa employers developing STEM talent.
  - Support for initiatives designed to reduce the costs of higher education for Iowa students and families.
  - Support for initiatives that help students efficiently complete postsecondary degree or certificate programs, including but not limited to ideas such as awarding prior learning credits to adult students, dual credit programs for high school students, internship programs and policies that make it easier for students to transfer credits.
  - Support for incentives to enroll qualified out-of-state students in Iowa's postsecondary institutions without reducing Iowa residents' access to in-state tuition.
  - Continued support of the Workforce Training and Economic Development Fund, Iowa Industrial New Jobs Training Program, and the Iowa Jobs Training Fund as implemented through the community college system throughout Iowa.
- **Workforce Development** – The Partnership believes the state should continue to encourage partnerships between Iowa's business and industry and all education institutions, as well as support training incentives to businesses. The Partnership supports:
    - The continued funding and refinement of proven programs within the Iowa Economic Development Authority, Iowa Workforce Development and the Iowa Department of Education that: (1) measure success, ensure accountability; (2) invest in regional strategies and industry-based public-private partnerships; (3) build career pathways to good jobs for all Iowans; (4) secure new investments for Iowa's integrated learning programs, which combine basic skills development and occupational skills training for low-skilled adult workers; and (5) expand access to supportive services for adult learners enrolled in education and training programs.
    - The work and recommendations of the Iowa Skills2Compete Coalition to further up-skill and train more workers for Iowa's key industries. This includes implementation of expanded high school equivalency diploma pathways, adult education programming for offenders and apprenticeships that train skilled workers in a career pathway while earning credits toward an equivalent diploma. Additionally, The Partnership supports policies that address the child care "cliff effect" in order to increase access to quality and affordable child care assistance.
  - **Immigration** – The Partnership strongly believes that enabling hard-working global talent who choose to live and put their skills to work in the United States will enhance our region's international competitiveness and net many high-paying jobs for all Americans. To strengthen talent acquisition and retention, business development and economic growth in DSM, The Partnership supports immigration-related legislation that will continue to improve the economy and opposes state-based punitive anti-immigration proposals. Therefore, The Partnership encourages support for the following key priorities:
    - Increased programming and access for ESL and ELL classes, for both K-12 students and adult members of their families.
    - Incentives for Iowa companies to hire international students as interns. The Partnership further encourages Iowa colleges and universities to continue to recruit top international students.

- The creation of a statewide refugee task force, appointed by the Governor, to address the challenges and create efficient methods of resettlement for refugees in Iowa.
  - Increased supportive services for refugees to address the adjustment challenges that refugees face in navigating their new communities across the state.
  - Recognizing the contributions of foreign-born residents to our economy and workplaces, create welcoming initiatives that seek to integrate and maximize those contributions of immigrant workers and entrepreneurs of all backgrounds, including the ability of immigrants to obtain safe, reliable transportation options.
- **Future Workforce Recruitment and Retention** – The Partnership supports the creation of loan forgiveness and/or tax credit programs designed to benefit Iowa higher education students who stay in the state following graduation and employers that assist college graduates in repaying student loans, to recruit and retain a future workforce. The Partnership also supports expanding existing programs or new initiatives that incentivize Iowa employers to provide tuition assistance to incumbent workers who seek to improve their skills through continuing educational attainment. The Partnership also supports the state's Future Ready Iowa initiative to ensure Iowa has a talent pipeline that is aligned to and prepared for the jobs of today and in the future. Future, The Partnership supports the establishment of the Future Ready Iowa Last-Dollar and Future Ready Iowa Grant programs.
  - **Military Recruitment/Retention** – The Partnership recognizes that returning or retiring military personnel have many skills and talents that Iowa businesses need and supports aggressive efforts to recruit and retain these honored individuals to Iowa. The Partnership supports the state's Home Base Iowa initiative and believes the state needs to create a "one stop shop" to assist veterans with their employment and education needs as well as integration into the community.
  - **Study Iowa Program** – The Partnership supports the Study Iowa Program to encourage more enrollments of international students at Iowa colleges and universities.

## HEALTH CARE

### Health Care

The Community Health Needs Assessment is the foundation and guide for the priorities and initiatives in health care policy for The Partnership. The Partnership supports the recommendations and initiatives established through the Community Health Needs Assessment 2016 Plan as there was considerable input and effort from the various stakeholders involved in this plan. The Partnership will advocate for policies that support implementation of this plan for our community.

- **Mental Health** – The Community Health Needs Assessment for mental health clearly outlines the needs and current state of affairs for the State of Iowa in regard to the priorities for mental health in our state. Significant work needs to be done for long-term sufficiency and system sustainability. The priorities to address mental health needs for our community include funding and support for the Adult Mental System Redesign and work toward eliminating the threats to its success including the support of a long-term funding formula in the form of a per capita county levy and design and implementation of a children's mental health system that includes statewide crisis services. The Partnership supports insurance reform and reimbursement, training and incentives to build an adequate mental health workforce and adequate funding and staffing for the 5<sup>th</sup> Judicial District to reduce recidivism in jails. Additionally, The Partnership supports innovative ways through education of future health care providers to support mental health awareness and a better understanding of the support needed for mental health throughout the State of Iowa. Finally, The Partnership supports establishment of children's mental health crisis services, which might include a 24-hour crisis hotline and mobile crisis units which can assist children and families suffering a mental health crisis.
- **Public Health** – Today's greatest public health challenges are highly complex and often linked to causes and solutions beyond traditional public health departments (e.g., housing, transportation, education, water and air quality, criminal justice and employment). Public health policy and funding should take a Health in All Policies (HiAP) approach; HiAP identifies how decisions in multiple sectors or policy areas affect health, and how better health can, in turn, support the goals of these sectors. Public health departments need adequate funding and workforce to take on the role of chief health strategist in Iowa's communities and engage diverse governmental partners and stakeholders to work together across sectors to promote health.
- **Opioid Epidemic** – The opioid epidemic has negatively affected Iowa residents and efforts to address the needs of DSM's workforce are necessary. The Partnership supports evidence-based policies to lessen the misuse of opioids to help prevent addiction and improve access to effective treatment for those who have become addicted.
- **Chronic Disease** – The Partnership understands chronic disease is the major cost driver in our health care system, costing DSM business millions in lost productivity and insurance premiums. Accordingly, The Partnership supports expanding access to health care to prevent and better control chronic conditions and expanded access to palliative care to empower providers and individuals to actively manage and improve their health by providing them with the tools and incentives to succeed. Additionally, The Partnership supports policies that provide insurers with incentives and flexibility to provide coverage options that promote and reward disease prevention to encourage early detection and aggressive treatment of chronic diseases. Further, The Partnership supports public-private partnerships to engage families, communities and schools to reverse the growth in childhood obesity and similar partnerships that fuel medical advances in prevention and treatment of chronic diseases.

- **Tobacco Control** – The Partnership recognizes the lingering burden of tobacco on Iowa’s economy and health care system. Over 5,000 Iowans die from smoking each year. Iowa spends more than \$1.2 billion in annual health care costs directly caused by smoking — approximately \$365 million of that is covered by the state Medicaid program. These costs are borne by taxpayers — \$875 per household annually — regardless of whether they use tobacco products. Smoking-caused productivity losses in Iowa total \$1.21 billion. The Partnership supports adequate funding for the state Tobacco Control Program to help ensure prevention and cessation resources are available to all Iowans. Insufficient Tobacco Prevention Funding will ultimately cost Iowans more. Iowa’s tobacco prevention and control program has successfully reduced youth smoking and helped smokers quit across the state.
- **Telehealth** – Telehealth can increase access to health care for persons who live in underserved areas, who require specialty care or who face barriers in transportation. Telemedicine also has the potential to reduce health care costs for providers and patients. The Partnership supports efforts to increase the use of telehealth to help more Iowans access health care while ensuring that quality remains high.
- **Certificate of Need** – Iowa’s health care system is among the highest quality and lowest cost in the country. This is due, in part, to Iowa’s Certificate of Need laws, which requires review by the Health Facilities Council for any new institutional facilities in the state. This includes hospitals and nursing facilities. In recent years there has been discussion of eliminating Iowa’s Certificate of Need statute, opening the possibility of the entry of more for-profit specialty providers to open facilities in our state. The Partnership supports the continuation of the Certificate of Need process to maintain oversight over aspects of health care spending and control costs.
- **Forgivable Loan and Graduate Medical Education (GME)** – With over 55 percent of our Iowa physicians at age 55 or older, it is necessary to ensure an adequate number of new physicians entering health care in Iowa. Therefore, The Partnership supports Iowa Forgivable Loan programs and GME funding from the State of Iowa to address the great need for additional residency positions for those fields of the greatest demand, such as psychiatry and family practice.
- **Dental Education Loan Repayment** – The Fulfilling Iowa’s Need for Dentists (FIND) program has successfully supported placement of 31 dentists to practice in rural Iowa since 2002. The Partnership supports continued, adequate funding to support FIND, which represents a public/private partnership that creates a powerful recruitment package for rural Iowa communities to attract and retain dentists, helping to maintain health care access within the community and drive economic development.
- **Medicaid Dental Health** – Medical research shows that poor oral health results in increased health risks and low-income adults are less likely to have seen a dentist in the last year, which drives up future costs. Accordingly, The Partnership supports maintaining a strong, comprehensive Medicaid dental program for children and adults.
- **Direct Care Worker Shortage** – Iowa has more than 491,000 residents over the age of 65, representing one of every six Iowans. This number is projected to grow to over 683,000 Iowans by 2050 and will then represent one in every five Iowans. It is critical for Iowa to maintain enough Direct Care Workers so seniors are allowed to age-in-place at home where most prefer to live. The Partnership supports expanding forgivable loans, as well as creating scholarships and incentives for high-demand health workers.
- **Individual Health Insurance Market** – The Partnership supports efforts by state leaders to stabilize the individual health insurance market in Iowa. Because small business owners and entrepreneurs make up a significant portion of the individual insurance market, policy solutions providing Iowans with

options to purchase affordable health insurance are essential for preserving Iowa's business climate. The Partnership stands ready to assist the state in its efforts to stabilize markets and provide increased flexibility for Iowans to purchase affordable health care insurance that fits their needs.

# QUALITY OF LIFE

## Quality of Life

Quality of life is widely recognized as a critical factor in location decision-making for both workers and companies. A region cannot be world-class without a comprehensive and consistent commitment to its culturally rich diversity, the arts and recreational amenities, all of which serve as key economic drivers for globally-minded, rural and urban community development.

As we move ahead, DSM's most pressing need for the future is to attract and retain a strong workforce. At the heart of this issue is how DSM is perceived by those who live here and perhaps more importantly, those the region is hoping to attract. The Partnership supports efforts of the community to develop and build upon plans that develop a long-term community vision for the arts to enhance the quality of life for residents and visitors. This includes plans such as a Community Cultural Plan, Capital Crossroads, Global DSM: International Talent Strategy, the Tomorrow Plan, Central Iowa Community OpportUNITY Plan, Age-Friendly Greater Des Moines Initiative and existing city master plans.

Accordingly, The Partnership supports the following legislative initiatives:

- **State Historical Building Renovation** – The Partnership strongly supports funding for the renovation of the State Historical Building and State Historical Museum. The building itself and its systems no longer serve the needs of housing the state's flagship museum. A renovation will allow the Museum to become a world-class attraction for visitors to our capital city and to tell the stories of Iowa. When completed, the Museum will allow greater access to and better preservation of the state's artifact collection and will become a 21st-century educational resource for Iowa history to better connect Iowans to the people, places and point of pride that define our state.
- **Enhance Iowa** – The newly created Enhance Iowa program includes the Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT), River Enhancement Community Attraction and Tourism (RECAT) and Sport Tourism funds. The Partnership supports continued CAT funding and new funding for the RECAT and Sports Tourism funds.
- **Multi-Use Trails** – Multi-use trails are utilized as an alternative mode of transportation and provide significant quality of life enhancements and recreational opportunities for Iowans. To help DSM become the "Trails Capital of the World," The Partnership supports:
  - Amending the Iowa Code to remove recreational trails as a form of private development, which furthers efforts to create a connected network of trails in Greater Des Moines.
  - Continued investment in the IDOT State Recreational Trails Program.
  - Continued investment for recreational trails by fully funding the Iowa Department of Natural Resources' Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) program.
  - A funding mechanism for regionally coordinated maintenance of the trails network that has become an important cultural amenity.
  - Funding for the strategic completion of critical gaps in the existing trails network and making connections between major trails.



- **Bike Infrastructure and Safety** – The Partnership supports the development of on-street bike facilities that connect to and integrate with the trails to have a complete network for bicycling as a form of active transportation. The Partnership also supports strengthening laws to protect bicyclists using Iowa’s roadways. Specifically, The Partnership supports a policy that calls for using data and best practices to develop steps to reach the goal of zero traffic fatalities and injuries on city streets.
- **Local Revenue for Quality of Life Investments** – The Partnership recommends that the General Assembly allow additional local option hotel/motel tax to be collected and distributed according to the requirements of the existing Iowa statute and to be used at the discretion of local governmental entities for quality of life expenditures.
- **Cultural Investments** – The Partnership supports continued investment in arts and culture through the Department of Cultural Affairs and Iowa Arts Council to create culturally vibrant communities and places that attract businesses and highly skilled workers to Iowa. Research shows arts, film and media, culture, history, historic preservation and science are catalysts for vibrant and livable communities that will position Iowa to be more competitive as an innovative, progressive state. By further enhancing our quality of life, arts and cultural organization make our communities more desirable places to live and work.
- **Endow Iowa Tax Credits** – The Partnership supports the continuation and expansion of the Endow Iowa Tax Credit program to further strengthen communities through charitable giving and building permanent endowment funds to benefit Iowa charitable causes.
- **Gaming** – The Partnership recognizes the economic and community development importance of Prairie Meadows and the gaming industry across Iowa. Accordingly, The Partnership opposes increasing the tax rate for the gaming industry.

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

### Soil Conservation, Water Quality and Related Infrastructure

The State of Iowa has a unique opportunity to invest in Iowa's soil and water infrastructure – an infrastructure that is critically important to the state's wealth and prosperity. Fixing and maintaining our state's soil systems, and subsequently, water quality, could potentially require a commitment larger than Iowa's continued investment in the road and bridge infrastructure. As a state, our communities have come together to find common ground solutions to fund transportation infrastructure, and there is a tremendous opportunity right now to do the same for our soil and water infrastructure. The Partnership sees the primary pathway to success as a public-private investment in waterways across the state. Therefore, The Partnership supports the following important water quality and infrastructure issues:

- **Drinking Water, Wastewater, Stormwater and Flood Mitigation Infrastructure** – Safe, reliable water is important to healthy living. Aging infrastructure, degradation of source waters treated for drinking water is putting Iowans at risk. Combined wastewater and stormwater sewers are problematic and the increased frequency and intensity of flood events overwhelms man-made and natural flood mitigation systems. These are expensive and complex challenges that need a unified statewide approach to lessen the burden on individuals and business and industry. Therefore, The Partnership supports a statewide focus on policies and funding for modernization of our water systems, source water protection, wastewater treatment systems and comprehensive planning, including consideration of upstream green infrastructure, to mitigate threats to life and property from flooding. Investment in continued and expanded academic research for ongoing growth and understanding of best practices, programs and policies support organizations that collect and make scientifically-verified data available.
- **Establish Financial Resources at Scale** – The Partnership support allocating funding sources to meet infrastructure needs for non-point and point sources that are targeted and prioritized by watershed with annual accountability for the state's investment. Funding must be permanent, adequate, timely, reliable and sustainable. Funding options include the Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund (IWILL), the addition of tax credits and water quality trading. All options may be necessary to satisfy the needs. Additional options might surface, but must satisfy the funding criteria. This investment should be utilized to leverage other public and private dollars through public-private partnerships.
- **Waterways and Land Protection** – The Partnership believes in the importance of creating and maintaining parks, trails, habitats and waterways. The Partnership further supports the development and funding of the state water trails program to enhance recreational opportunities in and along the many miles of waterways and adjoining greenways that are a vital natural asset in Iowa.
- **Data Driven Investment** – The Partnership supports the effective use of public funds to encourage water quality monitoring at the watershed level, by utilizing technology and data to inform state investment within watersheds. This data is important to inform and implement adaptive management. Meaningful measurement networks will require collaborative work across jurisdictional boundaries, building from monitoring work already accomplished through utilities and voluntary monitoring. Precision agriculture data can also play an important role and should be encouraged and potentially aggregated as valuable metrics to inform investment. It is important to aggregate data at scales that allow for effective decision-making, but balanced against protection for individual property owners.
- **Watershed Approach and Planning** – To provide safe and affordable drinking water, wastewater treatment and stormwater mitigation The Partnership supports regional watershed planning and ongoing funding of targeted conservation practices, identifying proactive approaches to optimize

nutrient and other chemical applications and sustainable urban development. As the watershed providing drinking water to 500,000 of the region's residents (one-sixth of the state's population), the Raccoon River Watershed must be designated as a top priority.

- **Dam Mitigation and Water Trails** – Creating vibrant communities with recreational amenities is essential to workforce attraction and economic development. As such, The Partnership strongly supports the funding of programs that mitigate low-head dams and help to establish water trails. Specifically, The Partnership supports the restoration of Iowa's Low-Head Dam Mitigation and Water Trails program – a previous line item of the Rebuild Iowa Infrastructure Fund. There is significant interest in water trails and dam mitigation in rural and urban areas, and state funding for these efforts is essential for leveraging investments from local jurisdictions and private-sector partners.
- **Regional Water Utility Efforts** – The Partnership recognizes local solutions often provide the best policy. Therefore, The Partnership supports local efforts to regionalize DSM's existing water utilities.

## Sustainable Development

Communities need to grow and develop, but they need to do so as efficiently, responsibly and sustainably as possible. Therefore, The Partnership supports incentives that encourage green development that encourages energy efficiency and conservation. The Partnership also supports transit-oriented development, historic preservation, environmental remediation, complete streets and redevelopment that is pedestrian-friendly and encourages walkability.

- **Brownfield and Grayfield Redevelopment** – The Partnership supports efforts to enhance the Brownfield and Grayfield Redevelopment program to encourage green sustainable redevelopment efforts and to revitalize economically obsolescent and energy-inefficient structures and commercially blighted areas. The Partnership supports additional funding for the program due to its current limited reach.
- **Historic Tax Credits** – Historic Rehabilitation Tax Incentives stimulate Downtown housing, business expansion, and neighborhood revitalization. Accordingly, The Partnership supports the continued improvement and further expansion of the Historic Preservation Tax Incentives program.
- **Distressed Areas and Urban Core Development** – Some areas of our state need more time, resources and attention than others if they are to return to economic prosperity. Therefore, The Partnership supports efforts to drive state resources, including housing tax credits, into distressed areas and urban core projects.
- **Housing** – The availability of housing for all people, regardless of their age, race or socioeconomic status, is foundational to the continued economic vitality and livability of DSM. Safe, stable and affordable housing improves the health of residents, improves educational outcomes for children and contributes to the recruitment and retention of the region's diverse and growing workforce. The Partnership supports policy strategies that leverage the resources and expertise of the Iowa Finance Authority. Specifically, The Partnership supports increased investment in the State Housing Trust Fund, and the Workforce Housing Tax Credit programs. Additionally, The Partnership supports the creation of new programs that help fund modifications of existing homes to help Iowans age in place and for people with disabilities.
- **Top Soil** – The Partnership supports the federal standard as set by the Environmental Protection Agency and adopted by the Iowa Environmental Protection Commission with respect to topsoil requirements in effort help prevent urban stormwater runoff and keep excess nutrients and pollution

out of our waterways. This practice is in line with the good land stewardship goals of the statewide Nutrient Reduction Strategy.

- **Comprehensive Planning and Iowa Smart Planning Principles** – In effort to advance Greater Des Moines' competitiveness nationally and internationally, The Partnership supports comprehensive planning and the Iowa Smart Planning Principles. These include collaboration; efficiency, transparency and consistency; clean, renewable and efficient energy; occupational diversity; revitalization; housing diversity; community character; natural resources and agricultural protection; sustainable design; and transportation diversity.

# TRANSPORTATION

## Transportation and Infrastructure

The Partnership strongly believes that investing in a complete, multimodal transportation system and infrastructure is a core function of state government that is critical to driving commerce, efficiently moving goods and people, creating jobs and spurring additional economic growth and supports the following public policy priorities:

- **Surface Transportation Funding** – Continuous investment in Iowa’s transportation system is essential to support economic growth and help attract new businesses to the state. The Partnership supports the funding formula for surface transportation funding established by the Transportation Investment Moves the Economy in the Twenty-First Century Fund (TIME-21).
- **Road Use Tax Fund** – The Partnership supports continued improvements to the existing Road Use Tax Fund (RUTF) to reallocate funding to more highly-traveled primary roads. Additionally, The Partnership supports the Iowa Transportation Commission’s efforts to develop rules to implement a swapping process that allows federal transportation dollars to be exchanged for state transportation dollars to give local governments more flexibility with transportation decisions.
- **U.S. 65 Designation** – The Partnership supports designating the U.S. 65/Iowa 5 Beltway/Purple Heart Highway as part of the U.S. Interstate System. Designating this part of the beltway as part of the U.S. Interstate System would open up economic development opportunities for the communities located along the route, give Greater Des Moines a true Interstate ring like many other competitor metro areas across the country and possibly decrease current Interstate congestion. Designation must be approved by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, with an application submitted by Iowa Department of Transportation. Although no new construction is necessary, new signage and a minimum speed limit would be required and future maintenance and upgrade responsibilities will need to occur.
- **Transit Funding** – As the community looks to recruit and retain employees and businesses, connect people to jobs, housing, education and economic development and ensure age-friendly communities, it is essential to provide funding for a variety of mobility options to ensure the region’s competitiveness. The Partnership supports a dedicated funding source for the Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority to supplement current financing. The Partnership also supports increased funding from the State Transit Assistance Fund and Public Transit Infrastructure Grants program (PTIG).
- **Rail Funding** – The Partnership supports continued investment in the Iowa Department of Transportation (IDOT) Rail Revolving Loan and Grant Fund to help develop rail improvements and support DSM's freight rail facilities in recognizing that the freight rail system provides critical infrastructure for transporting certain commodities and other commercial goods. The Partnership also supports continued funding for the IDOT Passenger Rail Fund Program to provide matching funding for passenger rail infrastructure development, with the goal of establishing intercity passenger rail service from Chicago to Des Moines to Omaha along the Iowa Interstate Railroad.
- **Aviation Funding** – Airports provide a tremendous economic impact to the area and regions they serve. The infrastructure of these national resources is deteriorating and in desperate need of rebuilding and expansion. Therefore, The Partnership supports continued Rebuild Iowa Infrastructure Funding for the Commercial Service Vertical Infrastructure program and the General Aviation Vertical Infrastructure program. The Partnership also supports new programs that will support the

reconstruction and development of airports in Iowa through the Rebuild Iowa Infrastructure Fund to be administered by the IDOT Office of Aviation.

- **Alternative Fuel/Power Vehicle Readiness** – The Partnership supports state policies and programs that ease the introduction and widespread adoption of electric vehicles in Iowa, including policies that simplify the establishment of more charging stations statewide.
- **Technology** – The Partnership supports state policies and programs that ease the introduction and widespread adoption of emerging technologies in Iowa. These technologies include, but are not limited to, electric vehicle charging infrastructure, transportation network companies, and vehicle-to-vehicle and vehicle-to-infrastructure Smart City technology necessary for autonomous vehicles.
- **Broadband** – The Partnership supports increased access to Broadband, including the Connect Every Acre initiative, to better connect Iowans while supporting workforce readiness.