

# 2019 FEDERAL POLICY AGENDA

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## 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 and diverse arts and recreational amenities which serve as economic drivers in today's globally minded community development. Further, creating water trails and greenways while restoring and maintaining clean and safe rivers, lakes and streams will further boost the region's ability to attract local, regional and national visitors and reinforce local pride-of-place for residents.

Greater Des Moines (DSM) has demonstrated a sustained dedication to building cultural and recreational assets for years, the result being a community with an impressive array of unmatched resources. The Partnership's goals are to make DSM the "Trails Capital of the World," to have sustainable waterways and greenways and to offer outstanding arts and cultural amenities that advance broad regional priorities. The Partnership supports federal initiatives that help achieve these objectives.

### REGIONAL TRAILS

The Partnership supports funding high-priority trail projects and continued funding for federal trails programs. Numerous studies have shown that trails, parks, recreation and green space help improve communities and grow local economies by increasing physical activity, lowering health care costs, decreasing traffic congestion, attracting businesses, improving property values, increasing tax revenues and creating jobs.

Accordingly, The Partnership supports continuing federal funding for multipurpose trails and other transportation- and recreation-related programs that improve community health and livability. The Partnership also supports continued funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) program, which provides matching grants to state and local governments for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities.

Additionally, 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 continued investment in the Federal Recreational Trails Program as well as the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Set Aside program.

### ARTS, CULTURE AND HERITAGE

Arts, culture and heritage elevate and enrich a vibrant DSM. As essential contributors to the region's quality of life and economic vitality, dozens of organizations, attractions and programs help draw regional tourism, increase resident satisfaction, help attract and retain talent and make DSM a premier place to work, live and play. According to a 2017 economic impact study of the arts completed by Americans for the Arts and supported by Bravo Greater Des Moines, arts, culture and heritage organizations in the region contributed more than \$185 million in total economic activity, supported 5,677 jobs and generated \$16.8 million in state and local tax revenue. Clearly, the arts mean business in DSM.

Public investment in arts, culture and heritage provides tremendous value and has been a catalyst for the creative sector while also generating unparalleled private support. This continued investment and meaningful



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partnership will further position Iowa as an innovative, progressive state. Therefore, The Partnership supports the following programs and policies:

- Increased funding for Iowa's National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) – State Arts Agency Partnership Grant to invest in people and projects that foster economic growth and enhance the cultural identity of local communities.
- Increased funding of the National Park Service – Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) which includes grant-in-aid to Iowa's State Historic Preservation Office for heritage preservation and protection programs that preserve the nation's heritage, create jobs and revitalize communities.
- Increased funding for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), which helps to ensure universal access to the vital public services provided by Iowa Public Television (IPTV). IPTV relies on CPB's investment to educate people of all ages, partner with public safety officials to help save lives and foster a well-informed citizenry with historical, cultural and civic resources on air, online and on the ground.
- Increased funding for the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and the National Science Foundation (NSF), whose agencies' resources and grant programs make these investments possible at the state and local level.

In addition to the support of the above programs, The Partnership supports competitive grants offered to the state and local level through federal funding for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), National Parks Service (NPS) – Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) and the National Science Foundation (NSF). Specific grants include:

- The State Historic Preservation Office of Iowa (SHPO) requests an annual grant of roughly \$850,000 from the HPF, administered by the NPS. This funding allows the SHPO to administer the National Register of Historic places application process, provide consultation and review projects participating in the State and Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credit program.
- Additionally, SHPO is applying for a \$600,000 grant from the Historic Revitalization Subgrant Program, which supports the rehabilitation of historic properties at the national, state and local level of significance in order to rehabilitate, protect and foster economic development of rural communities. If awarded, subgrants will be awarded for preservation of properties in Iowa's rural communities.
- The State Historical Society of Iowa has applied for and received annual grants to support activities undertaken by the Iowa Historical Records Advisory Board, which works to improve the care of historical records by individuals and by private and governmental organizations in Iowa. These grants encourage cooperative projects among statewide institutions, promote local records management programs and allows for review of the condition of historical records in the state. The request is in the amount of \$10,000.
- A \$620,000 annual grant for the Iowa Arts Council from the NEA, of which are granted statewide to support arts education and to provide access to arts activities in both rural and urban communities.
- The State Historical Society of Iowa is applying for the NEH Challenge Grant program for support of a \$2 million project to rehouse the Society's archival collection through the planning, purchase and installation



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of new archives compact storage.

- A \$300,000 NEH grant to create a national digital resource of historically significant newspapers which will be freely accessible via the Internet. The State Historical Society of Iowa's *Iowa Digital Newspaper Project* has received four rounds of grants with continuous support from 2012 to 2020 with plans to apply for a fifth grant as part of the 2020-2022 cycle to continue digitization of Iowa's historic newspapers expanding public access.
- A request of \$350,000 from the State Historical Society of Iowa for a NEH SCHC Implementation Grant in order to purchase and install new museum-quality lighting in the 45,000 square feet of museum gallery space in the State Historical Museum of Iowa.
- Des Moines Metro Opera applied for \$20,000 from the NEA in support of the OPERA Iowa Educational Troupe's 2020 season. The OPERA Iowa Tour annually covers over 70 Iowa communities to reach approximately 26,000 children and adults through engaging classroom workshops and onsite musical performances throughout Iowa and contiguous states.
- The Des Moines Symphony has submitted a \$15,000 request to the NEA to support the 2020 Youth Concerts where more than 5,000 DSM students in the fourth and fifth grades learn in-depth about orchestral music through an enhanced, multi-media curriculum provided to each school, then see and hear a live Des Moines Symphony Performance at the Des Moines Civic Center. Support for Youth Concerts helps accomplish a commitment to offering live performances to an increasing number of youths through discounted and free tickets.
- The 21st Century Community Learning Centers grant through the U.S. Department of Education, as a collaboration between the Des Moines Public Schools and the After School Arts Program (ASAP).