

Greater Dubuque 2022 Progress Report



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President & CEO



DAN McDONALD
VP of Existing Business



KRISTIN DIETZEL
VP of Workforce Solutions



KAREN KLUESNER
VP of Operations



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BILL BAUM
Existing Business Specialist*



ROB APEL
Existing Business Specialist*



NELSON KLAVITTER
Community Tour Guide*



CHRIS APEL
Community Tour Guide*



RENEE MEYER
Community Tour Guide*

* Contractor or Part-time Staff

HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM GREATER DUBUQUE DEVELOPMENT

As this unusual and remarkable year draws to a close, the team at Greater Dubuque Development is thankful for the partnerships that have strengthened our community. By continuing to work together, we will have a strong recovery and a return to a steady way of life. We look forward to continuing our service to the Greater Dubuque area in 2021.



NEW MANUFACTURER EYES DUBUQUE FOR NEW OPERATION—PROJECT ESTIMATES \$80 MILLION INVESTMENT AND 271 JOBS

The Dubuque Industrial Center South could soon be home to a new manufacturer. Simmons Foods is moving forward with plans to acquire and develop the former Flexsteel facility at 501 Seippel Road for a new pet food manufacturing operation. Simmons is the sixth-largest pet food manufacturer in the United States, producing both dry and wet food products.



The project, which is contingent on the approval of state and local incentives, includes plans to hire 138 workers in the first phase and a total 271 new employees over the next three years with an average starting wage of \$22.18.

In reviewing the project, consideration was given to the potential for strong odors. Greater Dubuque Development President and CEO, Rick Dickinson, anonymously visited the Simmons plant in Emporia, Kansas to clear the air. While pet food production can be associated with foul odors, it was not an issue at the Emporia facility. Based on his interactions, he said that the neighbors and employees had positive things to report. "Good neighbor, good jobs, good pay!"

In a special session on December 11th, the Dubuque City Council approved Simmons Foods' application to the Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) for state incentives. The project will be considered by IEDA at their December 18th board meeting. The City Council also unanimously agreed to set a public hearing on the agreement between the City and Simmons on December 17th. If state and local incentives are approved, Simmons would begin facility improvements in early 2021.

FUTURE LEADERSHIP TEAM REVIEWS BUSINESS GROWTH INITIATIVES

Greater Dubuque Development's Future Leadership Team met on December 2nd to hear presentations from Rick Dickinson, President and CEO, and Dan McDonald, Vice President of Existing Business, regarding efforts to grow our existing employers and attract new employers to our market. Kristin Dietzel, Vice President of Workforce Solutions, also presented the latest employment data and how it has been effected by the COVID-19 pandemic. This month the group also welcomed a new member, Nicole Salazar, representing the City of Dubuque.

This 30-person advisory group comprised of current and emerging leaders meets quarterly to delve into Greater Dubuque Development's annual and long-range strategies and objectives. They will meet again in March 2021.

TO SEE A LIST OF FUTURE LEADERSHIP TEAM MEMBERS: [Visit our website](#)

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE FUTURE LEADERSHIP TEAM:

Contact Kristin Dietzel, Vice President of Workforce Solutions at kristind@greaterdubuque.org.

CITY OF DUBUQUE RECEIVES SCORE OF 100 ON MUNICIPAL EQUALITY INDEX

The Human Rights Campaign (HRC) issued its 2020 Municipal Equality Index, a ranking of municipalities across the country based on the inclusiveness of their laws, policies, and services for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) residents. Dubuque's score for 2020 is 100.

The HRC is a national education and advocacy organization working to achieve equality for LGBTQ people. Since 2012, the HRC has issued the annual Municipal Equality Index, ranking cities on a scale from zero to 100 based on 44 criteria covering non-discrimination laws, the municipality as an employer, municipal services, law enforcement, and the City leadership's public position on equality.

2020 marks Dubuque's third consecutive year with a score of 100. Dubuque was awarded all available standard points for its municipal services, law enforcement, and leadership on LGBTQ equality. [Learn more about this and other recognition the City of Dubuque has received on their website.](#)

business development



BEHNKE ENTERPRISES ADDING MORE THAN 100,000 SQUARE FEET AND NEW CAPABILITIES

Behnke Enterprises is doing what they do best—growing. A family business that started 33 years ago as a 3,600-square-foot welding shop with two employees now has one of the largest manufacturing facilities in the area. Today, the company has 120 employees and more than a quarter of a million square feet of space in Farley, Iowa. The company is moving forward with a major expansion that will add more than 100,000 square feet of space. Additionally, the company is investing a significant amount of capital for enhanced capabilities, including a new state-of-the-art painting system and large robotic welding cells.

Behnke's products and services are recognized as the best in the industry. Behnke designs and manufactures heavy duty trailers for the agricultural, construction, heavy haul, commercial, and OEM markets. The company has evolved into one of North America's top trailer manufacturers and serves dealers across the United States and Canada.

Greater Dubuque Development has long had the privilege of working with Behnke Enterprises on growth plans and expansions. The Greater Dubuque community and overall economy continue to benefit from the determination, and vision of this world-class company.

workforce solutions

EMPLOYER INNOVATION FUND ASSISTING COMPANIES HIRE AND UPSKILL NEW EMPLOYEES

On September 23rd, Greater Dubuque Development Corporation was awarded a \$100,000 Coronavirus Relief Fund Employer Innovation Fund grant from Iowa Workforce Development. Greater Dubuque Development's project, *Opportunity Dubuque Manufacturing Essentials*, was developed in partnership with Northeast Iowa Community College, the Dubuque Works collaborative, and three lead manufacturing partners to develop in-demand training for approximately 70 new and existing employees in need of manufacturing skills.

Since the grant began on October 1, business partnerships have expanded to include workforce training through the grant for HODGE, Quanex Building Products, Dubuque Screw Products, Rite-Hite, and Farmtek. The grant period runs only until December 30, meaning Innovation Grant partners and employers had to quickly ramp up training, outreach and promotion of the Innovation Grant opportunities. To date, training has occurred or is scheduled for 122 employees of the partner companies. Trainings offered range from newly developed certificates in Assembly and Warehousing, to existing certificates in Computer Numerical Control Operation and Customer Service, to essential skills training in IT, project management, conflict resolution, and leadership. To date, 100% of the grant has been expended or earmarked for scheduled training sessions.

Many of the training programs follow an Earn-and-Learn model, a new enhancement to the traditional Opportunity Dubuque pre-employment training, where employees are recruited and hired through a local company and then receive training through Northeast Iowa Community College as part of their onboarding process. In some cases, wage stipends are provided through the grant for the employees' training hours. Earn-and-Learn models benefit both the employer and the employee and are shown to lead to greater employee retention long-term.

Jordan Fullan, Vice President of Human Resources at HODGE, has been leading her company's participation in the Innovation Grant. According to Jordan, "When we were contacted earlier this year with the opportunity to offer training to staff, it was an easy decision for us to take part. The Innovation Grant has assisted us in expanding the training we offer to new hires as well as current staff."

Fullan recognizes that despite the layoffs experienced in our community during the COVID-19 pandemic, area manufacturers and

Continued on Page 3

Continued from Page 2

warehousing and logistics companies continue to face a tight labor market: "Especially in today's tough times, these opportunities to attract talent and show appreciation to staff by investing in their development are crucial. We thank Greater Dubuque Development for involving us and Northeast Iowa Community College for all of their hard work on establishing and launching these training efforts." The Opportunity Dubuque Manufacturing Essentials grant builds upon the successes created through the Opportunity Dubuque program, a workforce effort administered by Northeast Iowa Community College to provide high-demand, short-term certificates of training for jobs needed by area employers. Opportunity Dubuque is financially supported by Greater Dubuque Development's Dubuque Works initiative through the City of Dubuque, the Dubuque County Board of Supervisors, and the Dubuque Racing Association/Q Casino. Developed in 2012, the effort has trained 729 graduates in advanced manufacturing, health care, transportation, construction and other careers, with an employment rate of 88 percent.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON OPPORTUNITY DUBUQUE PROGRAMS:
Visit the [Northeast Iowa Community College website](#)

ACCESSDUBUQUEJOBS.COM UPDATE

New Investors

- Berry Global
- DMI, LLC

Renewed Investors

- Dubuque Bank & Trust
- Dubuque Community YMCA/YWCA
- DuTrac Community Credit Union
- Hills & Dales
- Hirschbach Transportation Services, Inc.
- Kendall Hunt/Westmark/ Great River Learning

Renewed Investors, cont.

- MedOne Healthcare Systems
- O'Connor, Brooks, & Co. P.C.
- Pepsi-Cola Bottling Company of Dubuque
- Sinsinawa Dominicans
- Smart Retract, Inc.
- Spahn & Rose Lumber Company
- The McGraw-Hill Companies
- University of Dubuque

Declined Investors

- Platinum Supplemental Insurance
- Shady Rest Care Center

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GREATER DUBUQUE DEVELOPMENT RELEASES UPDATED RENTAL RESOURCES

When potential newcomers start learning about the area, one of their first steps is rental housing. Helping them find a place for their family and pets to live is one way we can make newcomers feel welcome in our community. Greater Dubuque Development regularly releases the Rental Resources guide—which includes the most frequently utilized online resources that list local properties, as well as management companies and contact information. We will continue to make updates as more properties are developed.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON HOUSING AND OUR OTHER NEWCOMER SERVICES:

Contact Anna Roling, Workforce Solutions Coordinator, at annar@greaterdubuque.org.



[Click to view the latest Rental Resources Guide on our website.](#)

community development

BROADBAND EFFORTS IN DUBUQUE EXPANDED IN ORDER TO CLOSE THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

More and more often in this connected world you need internet access to fully participate in our economy and society. You apply for jobs online. You learn online. You bank, shop, visit the doctor, and socialize online. But what if you are unable to be online? Labeled the *Digital Divide*, the negative implications to individuals and local economies due to an inability to access the internet has become clear. On December 7th, Greater Dubuque Development presented the first step in a larger digital equity strategy. David Lyons, Greater Dubuque Development's Sustainable Innovations consultant, presented to the Dubuque City Council on a public/private collaboration to increase internet access in areas of the City most threatened by the impact of a digital divide. Yet this year, efforts will be undertaken to combine existing City infrastructure already built into the new Bee Branch linear park with a community investment and support program available through ImOn Communications to create a free public WiFi-access system covering the park and adjacent areas. Phase One will cover the area from Rhomberg Avenue to 24th Street, with Phase Two expanding to the Comiskey Park and surrounding areas next summer. Lyons noted that using the City's existing but underutilized infrastructure and ImOn's available community investment program created the ability to deliver this new service without charge to these neighborhoods and without charge to the City. "However, WiFi is just an interim step", Lyons noted to the Council. "The gold-standard is fiber to every home and business and through these public/private partnerships we have a plan to deliver that over the next five years."

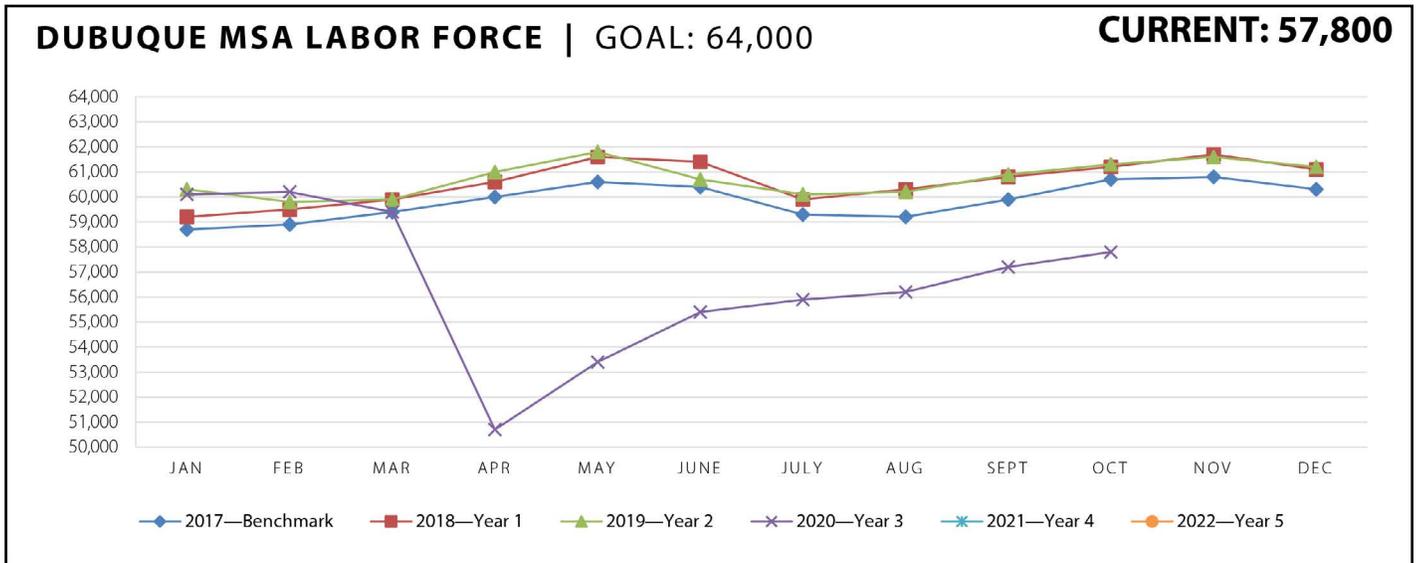
TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE BROADBAND EXPANSION INITIATIVE:

Contact Dave Lyons, Sustainable Innovations Consultant, at Davel@greaterdubuque.org.

goals & progress

JOB CREATION UPDATE

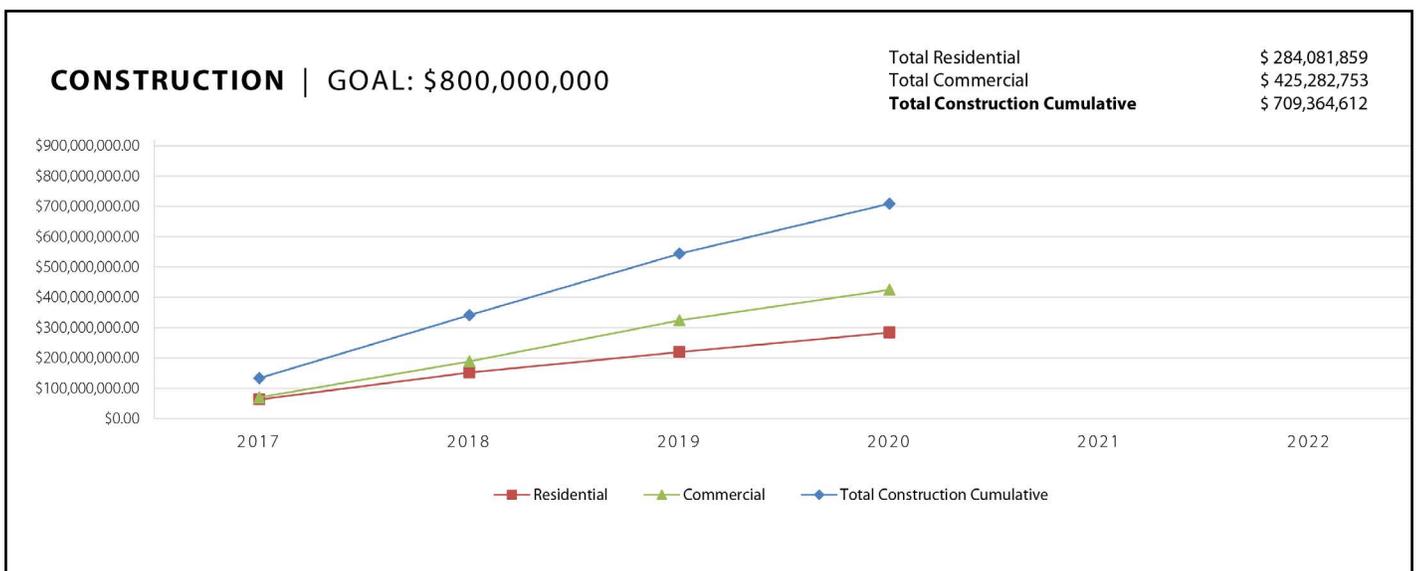
The resident unemployment rate for October 2020 was reported as 3.3% and non-farm employment was 57,800.



SOURCE: Iowa Workforce Development

NEW CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

Since the beginning of the Greater Dubuque 2022 Campaign (7/1/17 through 11/30/20), Residential construction totals \$284,081,859. Commercial construction totals \$425,282,753. Total construction totals \$709,364,612.

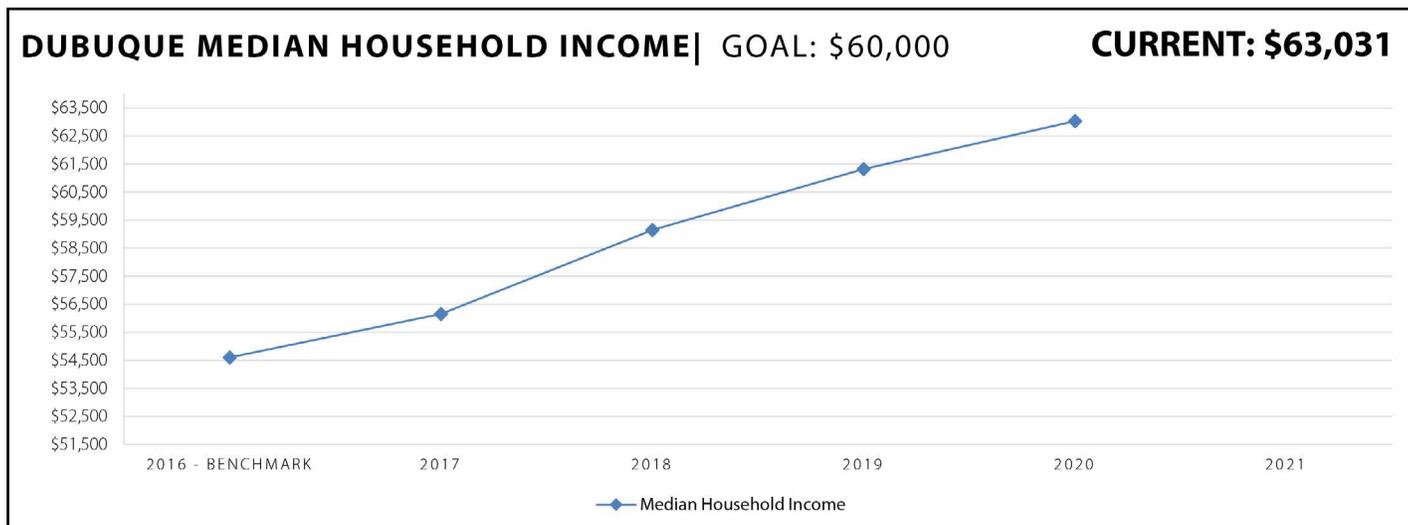


SOURCE: City of Dubuque and Dubuque County, incorporated and unincorporated.

goals & progress

NEW DATA ADDED FOR 2020 MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME UPDATE

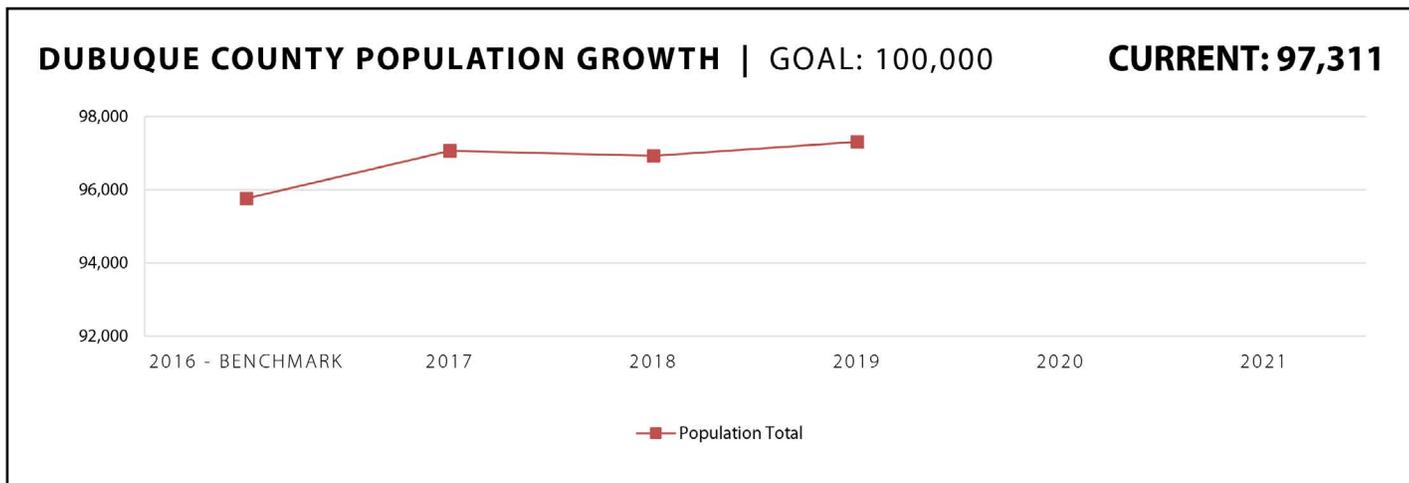
As of December 2020, the median household income for Dubuque County was reported as \$63,031.



SOURCE: American Community Survey 5-year Estimates (2014-2018), updated annually

POPULATION GROWTH UPDATE

As of April 2019, the population was 97,311



SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, updated annually

upcoming religious celebrations & cultural events

EVENING OF DEC 10TH - EVENING OF DEC 18TH Hanukkah (Jewish)

DEC 25TH Christmas (Christian)

DEC 26TH - JAN 1ST Kwanzaa (African American)

JAN 1ST New Year's Day (U.S. Secular)

JAN 18TH Martin Luther King Jr. Day (U.S. Secular)

JAN 20TH Bodhi Day (Buddhist)