

Rising to the challenge

It's easy to look at the past year and only see the last few months. Our community, nation, and world had to shift focus and effort in response to global pandemic. The long-term effects are as of yet unknown but the Greater Dubuque area has an advantage—we have weathered storms before and we are prepared to weather this one as well.

Through natural disasters and economic declines, our community has a proven track record of being resilient. We're pulling together to reinforce our regional economy, supporting local employers as they adapt to the breakneck changes in day-to-day work. Our long-standing relationships with CEOs and HR teams streamlined the sharing of information and resources, allowing employers to be nimble in their decision-making. The recent expansion in our community's broadband network facilitated the widespread leap to remote work and education.

This year was also about building the resiliency of Greater Dubuque Development for the future. Through strategic planning with our staff, our Board of Directors, and our Future Leadership Team, we've considered where we've come from and are laying the groundwork for where we are headed next.

Our history of rising to the challenge and the foresight of our leaders have prepared us for this moment. When the going gets tough, the Greater Dubuque area puts their plans in action, ready for a strong recovery.



From Our Chair



Dr. Liang Chee Wee

Board Chair,
Greater Dubuque Development Corporation
President, Northeast Iowa Community College

Greetings and gratitude to our investors, partners, and friends. The 2019–2020 fiscal year was trending strongly on many fronts, including:

- The Board of Directors reviewed our six pillars of action and initiatives facilitated by the Institute for Decision Making at the University of Northern Iowa, setting the stage for future priorities and strategies.
- Our Workforce Solutions team and AccessDubuqueJobs were creating events throughout the year to connect employers and college graduates.
- Cottingham & Butler and Heartland Financial USA purchased the Roshek Building with plans to invest an additional \$2.85 million make improvements for their operations and collectively committed to creating 32 full-time jobs.
- Progressive Processing, a subsidiary of Hormel Foods, announced a \$13 million plan to expand their facility and add 58 new jobs.
- Walter Development (HODGE) leased their existing space at Chavenelle Road to Duluth Trading Company and Crown Holdings, two new employers to Dubuque who have pledged to add a collective 116 jobs.

COVID-19 changed our landscape dramatically by mid-March. Our leader, Rick Dickinson, and his team pivoted and responded—connecting businesses to emergency funding, safety guidance, unemployment resources, and assistance.

In this challenging environment, other priorities did not get sidetracked. Dubuque's True North turned over the rehabilitation of workforce housing to the City of Dubuque and began focusing on the redevelopment of commercial properties to attract new industry with partners including Dubuque Initiatives and Dubuque Main Street. Another example is the continued growth of broadband technology and expansion of renewable energy usage. In nurturing young leaders, Greater Dubuque remains engaged with our Future Leadership Team to explore issues and best practices in business and industry, community, non-profits, and education.

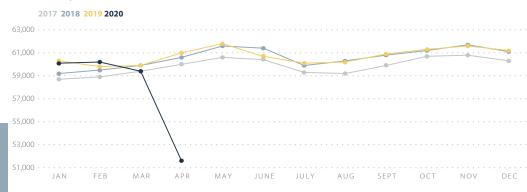
COVID-19 is challenging but it did not paralyze us. It is gratifying to see how we assess, learn, adapt, adjust, innovate, persist, and pivot together. As Rick is fond of saying, "That's our secret sauce." We are resilient. Together, we make Greater Dubuque great!

Goals & Progress

As a visual illustration, the impact of the pandemic is striking. Data through April 2020 is represented—the peak of the shutdown will be reflected in May 2020 data and then rebounding as our economy reopens and recovers.

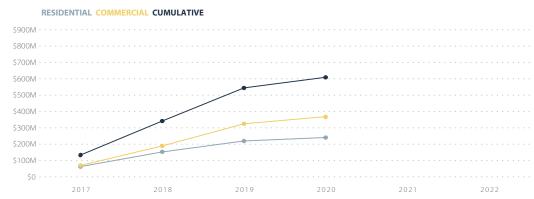
LABOR FORCE | GOAL: 64,000

The Dubuque Metropolitan Statistical Area labor force was relatively flat going into the COVID-19 pandemic.



CONSTRUCTION SPENDING | GOAL: \$800,000,000

In 2019, Dubuque County and the City of Dubuque continued to have strong construction growth. As of May 2020, we are at \$617,905,579, putting our goal within reach by 2022.



MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME | GOAL: \$60,000

In December 2019, we reached a Median Household Income of \$61,321—surpassing our five-year goal of \$60,000.



POPULATION GROWTH | GOAL: 100,000

U.S. Census Bureau data indicates the 2019 Dubuque MSA population is 97,311—up only 0.4% over 2018. Nationally, communities our size have seen similar stalls in growth.



Covid response

"Thank you | Greater Dubuque Development| for always being a cheerleader for our Dubuque friends and neighbors. Thank you for being a cheerleader for Graham's. It means the world to me. Keep fighting for Dubuque businesses and our downtown neighbors and friends."

—Ben Graham, Fourth Generation Owner of Graham's Style Store for Men & Women, Utilized the COVID-19 Business Helpline Reviewing this year in economic development requires recognition of how our work adapted and intensified in response to COVID-19. Like many of our employers, Greater Dubuque Development shifted to mostly remote work in mid-March. Even while distanced, our day-to-day operations never paused and we quickly ramped up efforts to assist our community through this unprecedented event.

The Greater Dubuque Development team took on new responsibilities to support employers, led by Kristin Dietzel, our Vice President of Workforce Solutions and COVID-19 project lead. We worked with partners in the public and private sectors to provide in-the-moment assistance to employers navigating challenges of the pandemic.

We partnered with Northeast Iowa Community College (NICC), America's Small Business Development Centers, and East Central Intergovernmental Association to launch the COVID-19 Business Helpline at 563-588-3350. Employers and business owners can connect with coaches for help with emergency funding applications, health and safety guidance, unemployment and tax questions, and access to experts. Greater Dubuque Development staff members joined the NICC team in fielding the calls, connecting our area businesses with the help they needed. The Greater Dubuque staff responded to 94 of 603 total calls through the helpline and made an additional 971 calls to check in with our local employers and offer assistance.

We also developed resources to simplify the guidance from local, state, and federal sources. The COVID-19 webpage features daily updates to keep partners informed of emplloyer-relevant news and information. As we continue speaking with businesses, we also update a Frequently Asked Questions webpage and document to help clarify the complicated guidance and legislation. We also worked with partners at Northeast Iowa Community College and the Iowa State University Center for Industrial Research and Service (CIRAS) to develop *Safe at Work in Greater Dubuque*. This booklet and webpage compiles guidance from the Centers for Disease Control, Iowa Department of Public Health, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, and CIRAS to help employers protect their workers and customers.

A common story during these unprecedented times, our team pivoted to take on new challenges in order to help your team do the same.

Business Retention & Expansion National Marketing

The pillars of Greater Dubuque Development's work overlap and intertwine in the fundamental effort of growing our regional economy. In 2019, what appeared to be pieces falling into place by chance was the culmination of Business Retention and Expansion and National Marketing efforts that had been in the works for years.

HODGE | DULUTH TRADING COMPANY | CROWN HOLDINGS

Business Retention and Expansion is based on building relationships with existing employer, developers, and public sector partners in order to be ready when the time is right. Greater Dubuque Development has a long-standing relationship with HODGE and they have been a great partner on countless National Marketing projects. Summer of 2019 was no different as Duluth Trading Company, an apparel company based in Mt. Horeb, Wisconsin, came to Dubuque with their proposal for an aggressive project—locate space for and open a 300-person distribution center before their winter holiday season. HODGE was able to accommodate their schedule and space by adjusting their existing operations at 7500 Chavenelle Road. Not soon after, Crown Holdings, Inc., an international food packaging manufacturer, announced opening a facility in late 2020, sharing the space at 7500 Chavenelle. To accommodate both new businesses, HODGE started construction on a new 216,000-square-foot facility at 5955 Chavenelle to house their own existing operations.

It wasn't long before the strategy shifted again. Based on their success in the Dubuque market, Duluth Trading Company worked with HODGE to expand beyond their initial vision. Plans are now underway for Duluth Trading Company's relocation and expansion into that new building once complete in Summer 2020.





Duluth Trading Company is operating at 7500 Chavenelle Road (top), relocating once construction is completed at 5955 Chavenelle Road (bottom).

Our Existing Business partner, HODGE, is able to expand their operations while two new employers, Duluth Trading Company and Crown Holdings, join the Greater Dubuque economy. To the public, it may seem like a streak of luck but to the partners involved, it is years-long dedication, planning, and strategy to bring multi-faceted projects like this together.

Workforce Solutions

Historically, the needs for talent ebb and flow with the economy. Dramatic shifts rarely happen but as this year unfolded, the Workforce Solutions team proved that they were able to adapt to meet the needs of our employers. The high demand for talent required innovative efforts like the AccessDubuqueJobs.com College Career and Professional Development fair and Talent Dubuque: Intern Engagement Program or the Opportunity Dubuque Child Care Pilot program removes barriers for parents desiring training and employment. As the demand for talent shifted as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the team assisted employers and impacted workers in navigating complicated guidance and legislation. And as the recovery continues, the team is once again connecting qualified talent to open positions.



BIG LIFE, SMALL CITY

In April 2019, we launched *Big Life, Small City: You're Home in Dubuque* to attract and welcome people from outside our area. It combines a targeted digital marketing effort, outreach materials, and the Emsi Profile Analytics tool to help employers locate and recruit talent to our area. Since it's launch, the *BigLifeSmallCity.com* website has seen 12,790 visitors who are able to connect with information on the community, partner websites, and downloadable resources to help inform their decision to move to the Greater Dubuque area. The marketing campaign and the *Big Life, Small City* materials increase awareness about the community while helping our employers showcase our quality of life alongside their career opportunities.



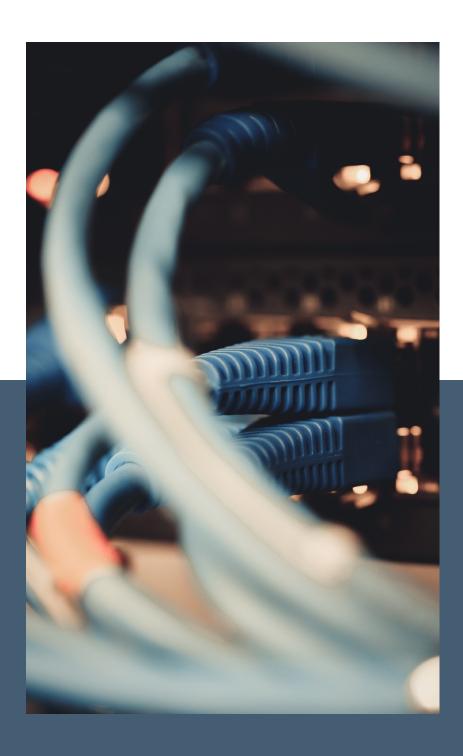
ACCESSDUBUQUEJOBS

AccessDubuqueJobs began as a job posting website but is now the backbone to a suite of resources to help you connect with talent. Employer-investors have unlimited posting for job opportunities, internships, and career fairs. They also have free participation in college outreach events like *Talent Dubuque: An Intern Engagement Program* and the AccessDubuqueJobs College Career and Professional Development Fair. Newcomer resources like the *Big Life, Small City* campaign, the Distinctively Dubuque program, and community tours are available at no additional fee to complement the employer's recruitment and onboarding efforts. Posting a job is just the first step—AccessDubuqueJobs helps you the entire way through attraction, recruitment, onboarding, and retention of talent.



Dubuaue

AccessDubuqueJobs is made possible through a partnership between Greater Dubuque Development and the Telegraph Herald.



Sustainable Innovations

Renewable energy and broadband connectivity are vital to our region's economy. Most notably, as schools and businesses moved some of daily operations to remote work this year, the broadband improvements recently made through public and private partnerships meant that our network was ready. While the City of Dubuque has been adding fiber conduit for 15 years, from 2016 to 2020 we were able to quadruple the amount. The work is far from over, however. The next 12 months will double it again. Broadband is crucial for modern commerce, education, and infrastructure. We will continue to work with private and public partners to facilitate expanding the network, adding providers, and reducing costs to support our businesses and residents while keeping the Greater Dubuque area competitive.

Renewable energy continues to be a growing part of our economy. The conversion of excess methane emissions into BioCNG at the Water Resource Recovery Center (WRRC) and the Dubuque Metropolitan Area Solid Waste Agency (DMASWA) is part of an overall strategy to generate revenue, reduce city energy costs, improve air quality, and minimize environmental impact. The conversion process has been in operation at the WRRC and agreements are in place to start at the DMASWA landfill. That system is projected to be online by December 2021.

Dubuque's True North

Greater Dubuque Development's work is built on established partnerships—with public and private entities, nonprofits, educational institutions, and community leaders. Out of those partnerships and the needs of the community, the scope of our work is defined. Over the course of the year, working with our Board of Directors, Future Leadership, and staff through strategic planning sessions, it was determined that two areas of our work were ready to be redefined.

Dubuque's True North was added to the pillars of our work in 2017–2018 in order to start a widespread effort to revitalize the North End neighborhoods. The initiative focused on three areas: collection of data to better understand those living in the North End and the community perception of the North End; the redevelopment of commercial properties to attract new industry; and the reduction of slum and blight through the purchase and rehabilitation of rental properties for conversion to single-family homes. Dubuque's True North brought partners to the table from various City of Dubuque departments, private partners, and nonprofits. As the project has grown and evolved, it is time to divide the effort for the most effective impact. Greater Dubuque Development will continue to work with area partners and developers on the redevelopment of commercial properties, expanding the options to attract new employers to our community and economy. The rehabilitation of single-family homes will be managed by the City of Dubuque, now possible with their expanded Housing and Inspections team. Working in tandem, we'll continue to bring new energy to this historic and vital part of our community.

Startup Dubuque

StartUp Dubuque has a foundation of collaboration—between Greater Dubuque Development, Northeast Iowa Community College, and America's Small Business Development Center. Throughout the years, coaches provided support and resources for new small business owners in our community. In order for the work to expand, StartUp Dubuque will no longer be an individual pillar of Greater Dubuque Development. Our work will continue to support small business development and entrepreneurialism through our Business Retention and Expansion team and through our collaboration with and support of area partners.

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Joe Hearn, Dupaco Community Credit Union

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Mike Portzen, Portzen Construction

Kay Takes, MercyOne Dubuque Medical Center

Tom Townsend, IBEW Local 704

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Laura Roussell, City of Dubuque

Brian Schatz, Medical Associates Clinic, P.C

Brett Shaw, City of Dubuque

Barry Shear, Eagle Point Solar

Dennis Shields, University of Wisconsin-Platteville

Jeff Staudenmaier, Black Hills Energy

Dan White, UAW Local 94

Chad Wolbers, UnityPoint Health-Finley Hospital



Future Leadership Team

The Future Leadership Team was established in 2017 as an advisory group to provide feedback to our Board of Directors and management team on long-term goals and strategies. The 31-member group is comprised of current and emerging leaders from the Greater Dubuque area,

True innovation is not possible without representation. The Future Leadership Team is comprised of members who are diverse, inclusive, and equity-focused.

Gisella Aitken-Shadle, Northeast Iowa Community College

Holly Bratten, U.S. Bank

Michelle Breitbach, MidWestOne Bank

Cori Burbach, City of Dubuque

Jen Cavanagh, MercyOne Dubuque Medical Center

Pauline Chilton, 4 the People/RE/MAX

Poppy Conlon, Conlon Construction

Erin Dragotto, National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium

Stephanie Fueger, O'Connor & Thomas, P.C.

Jordan Fullan, HODGE

Jon Gill, Cottingham & Butler

Amy Gilligan, Telegraph Herald

Danielle Gratton, Dupaco Community Credit Union

Wes Hartig, MedOne Healthcare Systems

Caprice Jones, Fountain of Youth

Tyson Leyendecker, Dubuque Bank & Trust

Holly McPherson, East Central Intergovernmental Association

Jill Mitchell, Medical Associates Clinic, P.C.

Andy Mozena, Premier Bank

Jason Norton, DuTrac Community Credit Union

Julie Oeth, Cottingham & Butler

Kari Pollak, Progressive Processing, LLC

Tom Rauen, Envision Sports Design/Dimensional Brewing Company

Kristina Sabatos, John Deere Dubuque Works

Anderson Sainci, Dubuque Community School Board/City of Dubuque

Natalie Weber, University of Dubuque

Mike Welbes, Honkamp Krueger & Co., P.C.

Jason Weston, Prudential Retirement

Josh Yeltman, Diamond Jo Casino

Kathy Young, Q Casino/Dubuque Racing Association

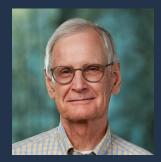
Ramona Zuniga, Sadlier Publishing

Staff



























Jayne Ervolino
Administrative Assistant
Anna Roling
Workforce Solutions Coordinator
Dave Lyons

Pictured left to right, top to bottom

Sustainable Innovations Consultant*
Bill Baum

Existing Business Specialist*
Rick Dickinson

President & CEO
Karen Kluesner

Vice President of Operations

Dan McDonald Vice President of Existing Business

Chris Apel

Community Tour Guide*

Rob Apel
Existing Business Specialist*
Kristin Dietzel
Vice President of Workforce Solutions
Nelson Klavitter
Community Tour Guide*
Emily Graves
Director of Communications
Renee Meyer
Community Tour Guide*
* Contracted or Part-time Staff

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Investors

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ACCESSDUBUQUEJOBS

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Theisen Supply, Inc.

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