



# THE TOMORROW PLAN

A Summary to Launch a Greener Greater Des Moines

The Tomorrow Plan looks forward to 2050 for Greater Des Moines. We are many distinct communities working as one to compete globally and leave a dynamic, enduring legacy for future generations. We focus on the economy, the environment, community vitality, and regional cooperation. The plan will save us money, draw resources and talent to the region, and prepare us for future growth.

## *Everyone has a role.*

The Tomorrow Plan works as a voluntary, best practices guide for communities to use as they see appropriate. Though this document is non-binding, the communities that do participate will reap the benefits of leaving a lasting legacy through:

- Cost savings through efficiency
- Strengthened public health, personal happiness, and sense of community
- Improved development opportunities
- Enhanced community character
- More choices to live, learn, work, and play
- Power of a regional brand to supplement community identity
- More choices to share culture and experiences
- Increased funding for infrastructure, services, technology and the arts
- Enhanced recreation and ecology benefits
- Lowered flood risk with improved water quality
- Empowered neighborhoods and dynamic nodes of opportunity



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# TOMORROW IS TODAY -

## *Let's Get Started!*

This document not only summarizes The Tomorrow Plan's highlights, it also outlines the top action steps we'll take over the next 1 to 2 years so all of the regional initiatives launch and the goals get well underway. This piece also highlights partners to lead or serve as catalysts for progress.

## *Mobilizing Tomorrow*

The Tomorrow Plan belongs to all of us, but someone needs to make sure it moves forward. The Tomorrow Plan Steering Committee provides oversight for the ongoing work of The Tomorrow Plan, while the MPO staff offers day-to-day prompting and supports the work with its many partners.

To keep The Tomorrow Plan going, the Steering Committee meets at least three times annually. It reviews the work, makes recommendations to the MPO Policy Committee regarding regional priorities, and reports on the plan's progress. The MPO Policy Committee sets final priority projects, helps identify funding opportunities, and adjusts the MPO's traditional priorities to better support The Tomorrow Plan. Growing funding opportunities for all is an ongoing effort of The Tomorrow Plan, the Steering Committee, the MPO, and the many partners.

### ACRONYM GLOSSARY

CC	Capital Crossroads	DMWW	Des Moines Water Works	NGO	Non-Governmental Organizations
CF	Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines	DOT	Do One Thing	PCCB	Polk County Conservation Board
CISS	Central Iowa Shelter & Services	HP2020	Healthy Polk 2020	PCHTF	Polk County Housing Trust Fund
COSC	Center on Sustainable Communities	GDMP	Greater Des Moines Partnership	RICC	Regional Infrastructure Coordinating Committee
CVB	Convention & Visitors Bureau	IDNR	Iowa Department of Natural Resources	TMA	Transportation Management Association
DART	Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority	INHF	Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation	UA	Urban Ambassadors
DMACC	Des Moines Area Community College	ISU	Iowa State University	WMA	Watershed Management Authority
DMARC	Des Moines Area Religious Council	MAA	Metro Arts Alliance	WRA	Wastewater Reclamation Authority
DMSC	Des Moines Social Club	MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization	YP	Young Professionals
		MWA	Metro Waste Authority		

# GOAL 1

GDMP + MPO

## Create a resilient regional economy

A healthy economy is the foundation upon which to build a more sustainable future. The Tomorrow Plan builds on our strengths to compete in a changing global marketplace. Economic analysis indicates opportunities to diversify our economy by leveraging the work of other planning efforts, expanding the capacity for entrepreneurship, and growing educational options in necessary skills.

### Strategies

- A. Develop a vibrant, walkable system of employment and residential activity centers with access to public transportation (nodes and corridors)
- B. Provide many means of access and transportation throughout the region
- C. Create an innovation core for advanced manufacturing, biotechnology, and information technology
- D. Enhance Greater Des Moines' digital infrastructure
- E. Grow and retain existing companies
- F. Expand and enhance preparation for the world of work, including retraining



### LET'S GET STARTED!

- Leverage libraries and the access they offer to technology and the arts (Libraries, communities)
- Educate banks, developers, real estate professionals, and appraisers about nodes and corridors (MPO, GDMP, communities)
- Support DART Forward 2035 by increasing transit service and reducing parking requirements accordingly (MPO, TMA, DART)
- Implement Capital Crossroads, the region's economic development strategy (GDMP, MPO)

Launch Nodes & Corridors Initiative!





## INITIATIVE 1

# NODES & CORRIDORS

The Nodes & Corridors initiative emphasizes a strategic, regional approach to guiding growth towards identified locations – nodes – throughout Greater Des Moines. These nodes connect with one another and the region as a whole through corridors. This creates compact, walkable mixed-use centers while strengthening our existing investments, protecting the environment, and providing a variety of employment, housing, and transportation choices.



## KEY STEPS TO LAUNCH

1. Identify areas for development/redevelopment as walkable nodes and corridors. (MPO, communities)
2. Develop sample codes to help communities achieve vibrant, mixed-use, walkable environments. (MPO, communities)
3. Promote through inclusion in community comprehensive plans (Communities)



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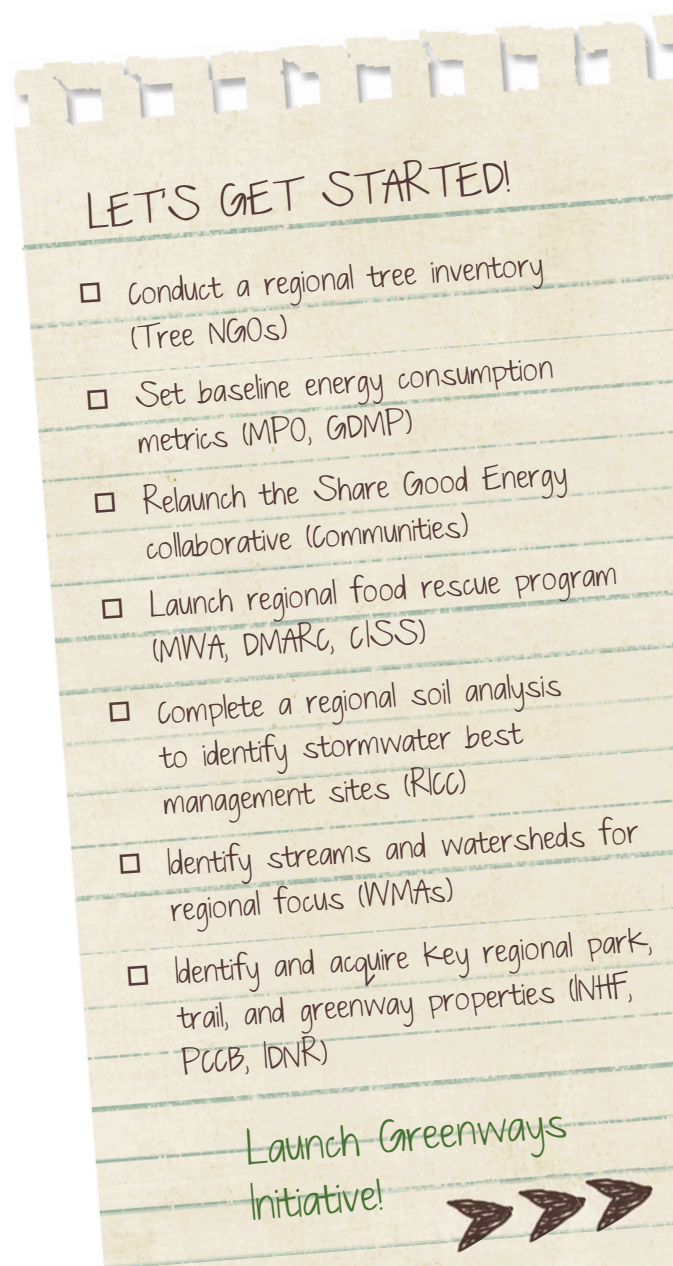
# GOAL 2 MWA + MPO

## *Improve the region's environmental health and access to the outdoors*

How the region manages energy, waste, and natural resources provides the backdrop for vibrant economies, welcoming communities, and public and personal health. The stormwater management, clean air, reduced waste, energy conservation and public recreation strategies greatly benefit the region in ways we can measure.

### *Strategies*

- A. Promote use of renewable energy and reduced energy consumption
- B. Minimize the waste stream, emphasizing waste reduction
- C. Build a region-wide greenways system
- D. Develop a regional stormwater approach that includes natural systems
- E. Expand tree canopy and regional park capacity – acres, facilities, programs, and connections





## INITIATIVE 2

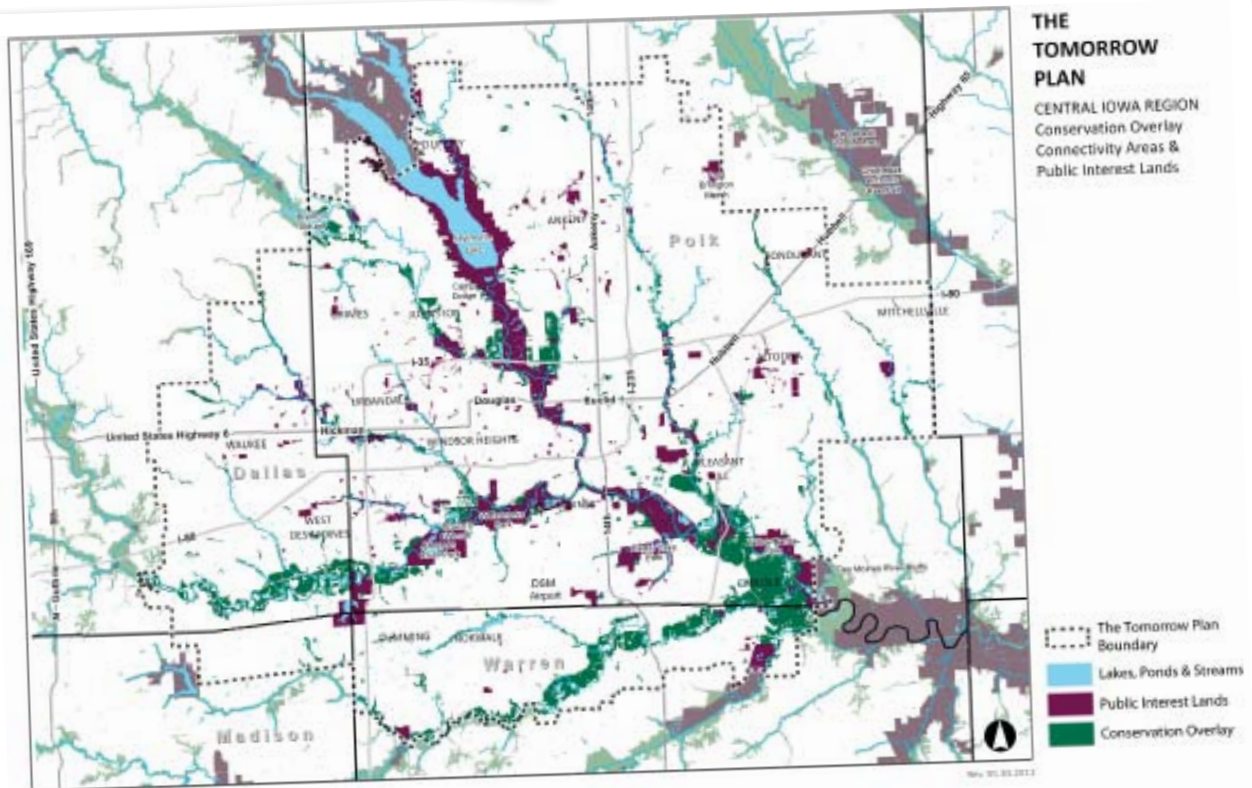
# GREENWAYS

Selectively expand the network of parks, conservation areas, open space, and trails to build a fully-connected system of natural resource areas.



## KEY STEPS TO LAUNCH

1. Assign staff to coordinate and communicate greenway work (MWA, MPO)
2. Conduct a natural areas inventory (RICC)
3. Celebrate connecting land purchases (INHF)
4. Launch with Bio-Blitz of most connected areas (INHF)
5. Coordinate WMA efforts for watershed planning (MPO)



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# GOAL 3

PCHTF + HP2020

## *Further the health and well-being of all residents in the region*

Quality of life sets Greater Des Moines apart from its competitors. The region earns high marks for its affordability, access to the outdoors, and family-friendly atmosphere. Yet challenges to the region include access to ample housing choices, jobs, and local food; a lack of transportation options; decreasing physical activity; and more. For Greater Des Moines to flourish, all aspects of health and well-being need promotion throughout the region.

### *Strategies*

- A. Ensure diverse housing choices – in terms of cost, style, and location – throughout the region
- B. Make walking, biking, and using public transportation as viable as driving
- C. Make healthy choices intuitive
- D. Provide access to healthy food
- E. Encourage and celebrate community building
- F. Promote community/regional heritage, character, and historic preservation
- G. Create Zest, a committee to reflect and celebrate our diversity, and spark regional “wow” factors



### LET'S GET STARTED!

- Kick-off open streets and play streets events around the region
  - picture a big block party (Des Moines Bicycle Collective, MPO)
- Create and foster Zest (DMSC, Eat Greater Des Moines, MAA)
- Develop a local arts incubator (GF, DesMoinesArts)
- Create a marketing campaign to link transportation options, the built environment, and public health and well-being (TMA, DART, MPO)
- Create a regional food system clearinghouse (Eat Greater Des Moines)

Launch Resilient  
Neighborhoods Initiative!





## INITIATIVE 3

# RESILIENT NEIGHBORHOODS

As economic, social, or environmental conditions change over time, neighborhoods must adapt, or show resilience. Having a patchwork quilt of multiple resilient neighborhoods—each with different character, assets, and strengths—makes a region flexible and able to adapt to any challenges it may face. In other words, a region composed of resilient neighborhoods stands the test of time.

### KEY STEPS TO LAUNCH

1. Establish neighborhood associations throughout the region (Communities)
2. Initiate the regional affordable housing plan (PCHTF)
3. Create a model inclusionary zoning ordinance (PCHTF, MPO)



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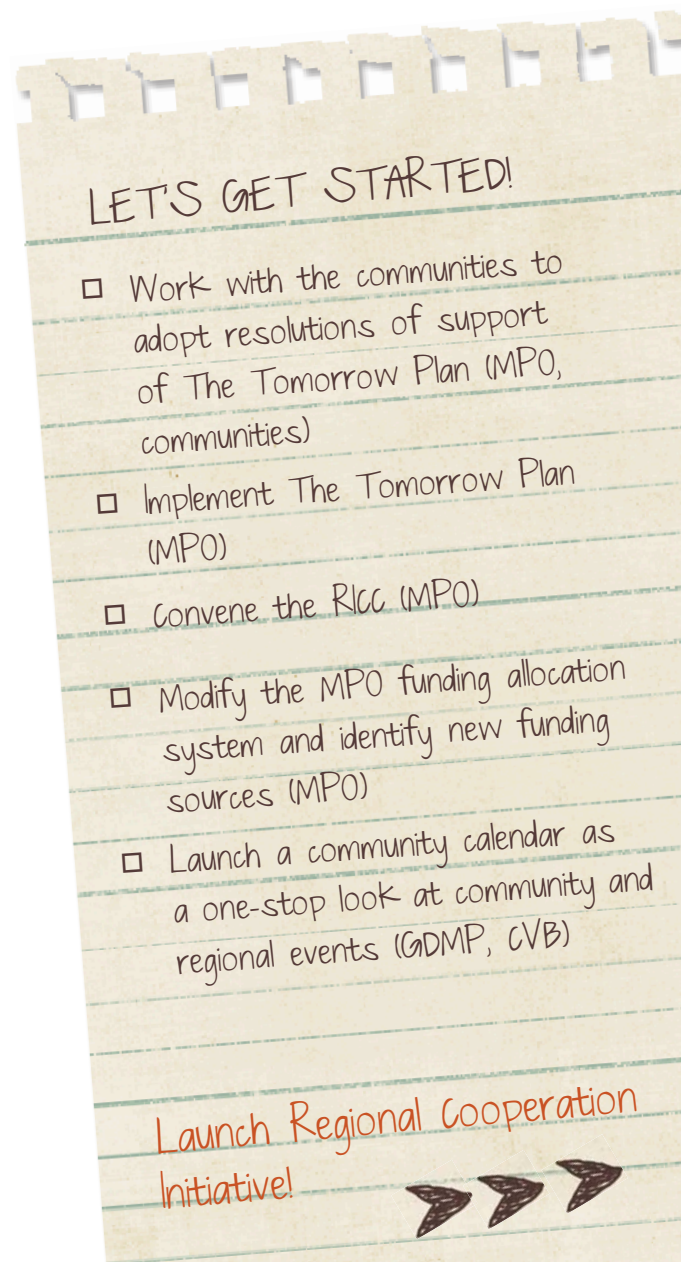
# GOAL 4 RICC + MPO

## *Increase regional cooperation and efficiency at all levels*

For any of the goals of The Tomorrow Plan to succeed, increased regional collaboration is essential. These collaborations lead to efficiencies in cost, time, and materials without sacrificing the character and particular advantages of each of the local communities or counties connected in the region.

### *Strategies*

- A. Leverage the ongoing work of the MPO to serve as the entity to address monitoring and implementation of The Tomorrow Plan
- B. Develop a Regional Infrastructure Coordinating Committee (RICC)
- C. Maintain ongoing educational efforts for the development and maintenance of healthy communities
- D. Leverage The Tomorrow Plan to secure and award funding for regional benefit
- E. Explore the merits of regional alternative revenue sources



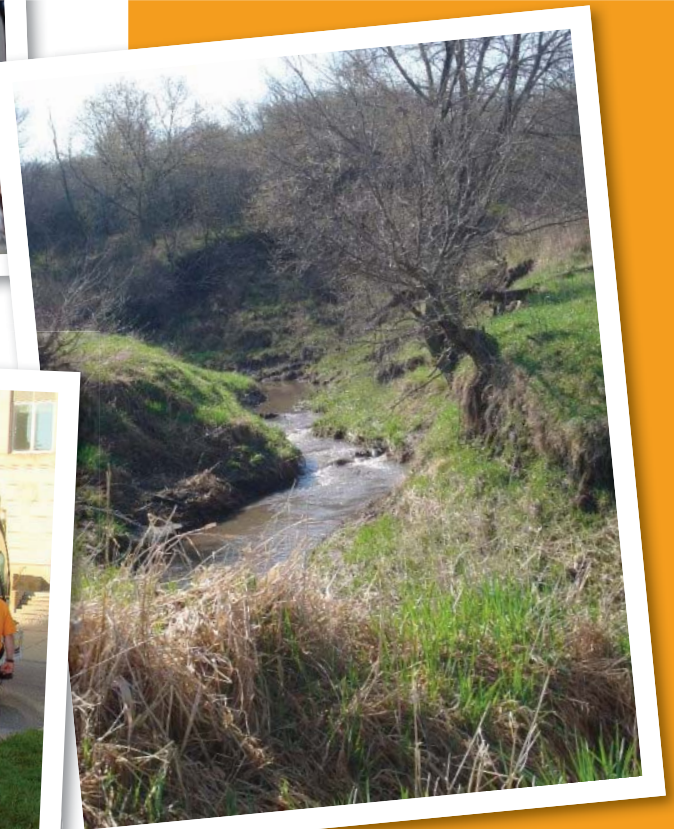
## INITIATIVE 4

# REGIONAL COOPERATION

Reach across jurisdictional boundaries to manage systems, including utilities and infrastructure.

### KEY STEPS TO LAUNCH

1. Analyze suitability around the region for natural stormwater utilities (RICC)
2. Analyze community stormwater practices and ordinances (RICC)
3. Develop sample ordinances for the region (RICC)



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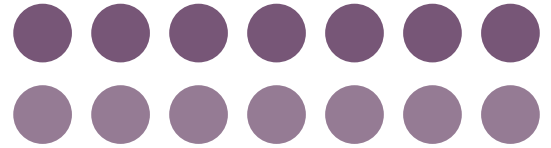


## INITIATIVE 5

# EVERYDAY STEWARDS: DO ONE THING

As we said at the outset, everyone has a role in The Tomorrow Plan. Whether as a resident steward, an activist, a champion, a teacher, mediator, community leader, or neighborhood group, The Tomorrow Plan – and our region's future – depends on you.

Many small actions add up. To further the idea of taking small steps, The Tomorrow Plan is launching the Do One Thing (DOT) campaign. With every seemingly small DOT activity, we build the foundation for big shifts and help make our region a better place.

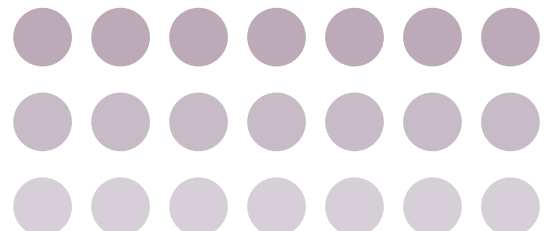


### KEY STEPS TO LAUNCH

1. Launch the Do One Thing – DOT – campaign and secure 15,000 DOT pledges (MPO)
2. Take the Do One Thing pledge (You)
3. Connect the DOTs by engaging with one of the many existing community groups – see the Acronym Glossary for some ideas (You)

### *Taking the DOT pledge? Here are some ideas!*

- Buy local goods and food whenever possible
- Garden, compost, and use native plants
- Reduce, reuse, recycle
- Turn off and unplug
- Drink tap water
- Carpool, ride the bus, walk, or bike
- Donate your time and money
- Check out local and regional events
- Vote in all elections
- Get to know your neighbors



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# Measuring Tomorrow

The timeline for launching the regional initiatives serves as one key measure of success. Are we getting these big picture efforts underway according to plan?

The Tomorrow Plan also looks at specific measures to track the region's progress, including:

- *Half of high-quality natural areas protected by 2025 (all by 2050)*
- *Improved stream stability measured at 13 existing monitoring stations (volatility reduced by one-fourth by 2025 and half by 2040)*
- *Steady reduction in the poverty rate*
- *Steady increase in transit service frequency at nodes*
- *Steady reduction in combined housing and transportation costs*
- *Steady growth in jobs per household*
- *Steady growth in the arts and audience participation*

## Our Mission

Ever mindful of future generations, our mission is to cooperate across political boundaries to achieve social, economic, and environmental resilience for Greater Des Moines.

## LET'S GET STARTED! TIMELINE

