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**PLANNING  
CONTEXT &  
PROCESS**



# PLANNING CONTEXT & PROCESS

In 2010, the Greater Des Moines region — a 542-square mile area that includes seventeen communities and parts of four counties in central Iowa — was at a crossroads. As laid out in The Tomorrow Plan grant application to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD):

“Not only does the region lie at the crossroads of two major interstates, it lies at the crossroads of rural and urban America, at the crossroads of autonomy and collaboration, at the crossroads of status quo and creating a more sustainable future in the heartland of America.”

At the same time, Greater Des Moines has been included in a number of ‘best of’ lists over the past several years, including the Best Place for Young Professionals, the Best Place to Raise a Family, and among the Best Mid-Sized Cities for Jobs — all indicators that the region is thriving. Recent regional highlights include:

- Thirty-five percent of adults with bachelor’s or advanced college degrees.
- Annual employment growth of 1.5 percent over the past 20 years, well above the state’s average annual rate of 0.9 percent and the national rate of 0.8 percent.<sup>1</sup>
- A recreational trail system with over 115 miles of trails and further expansion planned.<sup>2</sup>

While Greater Des Moines is enjoying these successes, the population is projected to increase from approximately 500,000 in 2010 to 750,000 by the year 2050.<sup>3</sup> The region could face a number of challenges as a result. These include rising housing costs, periodic water shortages, and the loss of agricultural land to development. Centuries of land clearing and development, along with agricultural practices across the state, have drastically reduced the region’s core natural habitat and its capacity to buffer extreme conditions. While the regional economy has shown consistent growth, economic activity is concentrated in professional services and financial activities; these industries have accounted for approximately half of all new jobs created over the past 20 years.

In 2010, when local leaders asked how to best respond to these current and anticipated challenges, the idea for The Tomorrow Plan formed. Now, a few years later, the result of the process is the development of this comprehensive, coordinated regional plan

for how Greater Des Moines can leverage its many assets while strategically addressing threats to the region's long-term sustainability.

At its core, The Tomorrow Plan is a regional planning effort focused on the sustainable development of Greater Des Moines. Coordinated by a broad group nicknamed "The Tomorrow Team," the multi-year planning effort asked residents and local leaders to identify visions and aspirations for the region, to explore potential scenarios for its future, and to set a preferred direction for sustainable future development.

The Tomorrow Plan received a \$2 million Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant from HUD in 2011. This grant program is an initiative of the Partnership for Sustainable Communities, a joint effort among HUD, the US Department of Transportation (DOT), and the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The Partnership seeks to help American communities take an integrated approach to improving livability. In addition to the federal grant, the development of The Tomorrow Plan leveraged approximately \$1.1 million in local funds, including time and expertise from many local municipalities and groups. The Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) administered the funds and continues to oversee the project.

## The Planning Process

The Tomorrow Plan initiative launched in July 2011 to guide the region's growth through 2050. This integration of major planning components into a comprehensive, forward-thinking regional plan marks a first in Iowa history. The planning process had five phases.

Completed in September 2011, the first phase involved creating a public participation process for the community to voice concerns and provide input. In the second phase, the regional planning consortium — led by the MPO and in partnership with local jurisdictions, the Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority (DART), the Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines, the Greater Des Moines Partnership, and Iowa State University — analyzed existing economic, transportation, and environmental plans, as well as demographic and development data, to project plausible future trends through 2050.

The third phase involved generating and testing regional growth scenarios to identify the strengths and weaknesses of each and to compare these scenarios with a baseline, or "business as usual," approach. This demonstrated the potential effects of different paths.

## LOOK WHO'S TALKING ABOUT GREATER DES MOINES

### #6 "Cities Where Startups Are Thriving"

*CNN Money, 2012*

### #6 "Best Cities to Grow Old In"

*MSN Money, 2012*

### #1 "Best Cities for Families"

*Kiplinger, 2012*

### #1 "Best Places for Business and Careers"

*Forbes, 2013*

### #2 "Best Cities for Jobs this Summer"

*Forbes, 2012*

### #2 "Strongest Local Economy"

*Tech Journal, 2012*

### #10 "Most Educated Young Workforce"

*The Business Journals, 2012*

### #2 "Best Cities for Jobs"

*Forbes, 2012*

### "One of America's Best"

Downtown Des Moines

Farmers' Market

*Country Living, 2012*

### #1 "Best Cities for Young Professionals"

*Forbes, 2011*

### #1 "Richest Metro in the Nation"

*US News & World*

*Report, 2011*

### #1 "Cities in the US for Home Renters"

*Time, 2011*

### #9 "Best State for Business"

*CNBC, 2011*

### #3 "Best Cities for Business"

*MarketWatch, 2011*

### #7 "Best Cities for the Next Decade"

*Kiplinger, 2010*

## SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

### Regional Planning Grants & Interagency Partnership for Sustainability

The Partnership for Sustainable Communities — a collaboration among the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, the US Department of Transportation, and the US Environmental Protection Agency — funded a majority of The Tomorrow Plan. The Partnership coordinates federal housing, transportation, water, and other infrastructure investments that make neighborhoods more prosperous, allow people to live closer to their jobs, save households time and money, and reduce pollution. Six livability principles<sup>4</sup> serve as the foundation for interagency coordination and guide the Partnership. They are:

**1. Provide more transportation choices.**

Develop safe, reliable, and economical transportation choices to decrease household transportation costs, reduce our nation's dependence on foreign oil, improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and promote public health.

**2. Promote equitable, affordable housing.**

Expand location- and energy-efficient housing choices for people of all ages, incomes, races, and ethnicities to increase mobility and lower the combined cost of housing and transportation.

**3. Enhance economic competitiveness.**

Improve economic competitiveness through reliable and timely access to employment centers, educational opportunities, services, and other basic needs by workers as well as expanded business access to markets.

**4. Support existing communities.**

Target federal funding toward existing communities — through such strategies as transit-oriented, mixed-use development, and land recycling — to increase community revitalization, improve the efficiency of public works investments, and safeguard rural landscapes.

**5. Coordinate policies and leverage investment.**

Align federal policies and funding to remove barriers to collaboration, leverage funding, and increase the accountability and effectiveness of all levels of government to plan for future growth, including making smart energy choices such as locally generated renewable energy.

**6. Value communities and neighborhoods.**

Enhance the unique characteristics of all communities by investing in healthy, safe, and walkable neighborhoods—rural, urban, or suburban.

The Tomorrow Plan used a scenario planning approach to envision a more sustainable future for Greater Des Moines. Scenario planning is the exploration of multiple plausible future conditions that reveal trade-offs, limitations, challenges, and opportunities. It asks, “What if...?” The process is about learning, not predicting the future. In fact, uncertainty about the future is the reason why scenarios are so valuable. Researchers can test a handful of different possible outcomes and compare them. Maybe there is a policy that has a positive outcome regardless of other factors; scenario planning can provide a way to find that policy. Almost any scenario planning process also includes a trend scenario, which tells us what the future would look like if everything continues as it has in the past. Just seeing the trend played out over time often teaches us a significant amount. Of course, the future might differ from the past either because of our own actions or an external force, and this is why we create alternative scenarios.

In The Tomorrow Plan, we used scenarios to explore outcomes for the region in terms of land use, density, water, infrastructure, ecology, and other areas. In order to understand the complex interplay between these factors and the impacts that potential policies might have on them, the team incorporated a wide variety of data covering jobs, housing, transportation, zoning, conservation, and land use plans. Comparing the scenarios revealed challenges and opportunities for creating a sustainable future.

In the fourth phase, the results of the previous “compare and contrast” exercise helped to further develop and refine the plan’s direction and to identify action items and strategies for the various plan components.

The fifth and final phase consisted of assimilating all the plan components into a comprehensive regional plan for sustainable development, complete with the steps required for implementation. These components make up this document.

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

# 1

PROJECT  
INITIATION

**September 2011:** Project Launch  
Open House

# 2

REGIONAL  
ASSESSMENT

**October 2011:** What Is Your  
Vision for Greater Des Moines?

**January/February 2012:**  
Business-as-Usual Scenario

# 3

REGIONAL  
VISION FOR  
SUSTAINABILITY

**April 2012:** Potential Future  
Scenarios

## Related Planning Efforts

The Tomorrow Plan closely connects to several other recent planning initiatives in Greater Des Moines, including Capital Crossroads, the DART Forward 2035 Transit Services Plan, and Healthy Polk 2020. These initiatives share many goals and resources. While the specific planning horizons and strategies differ, there will be ongoing coordination to implement these plans as well as individual community plans.

### Capital Crossroads

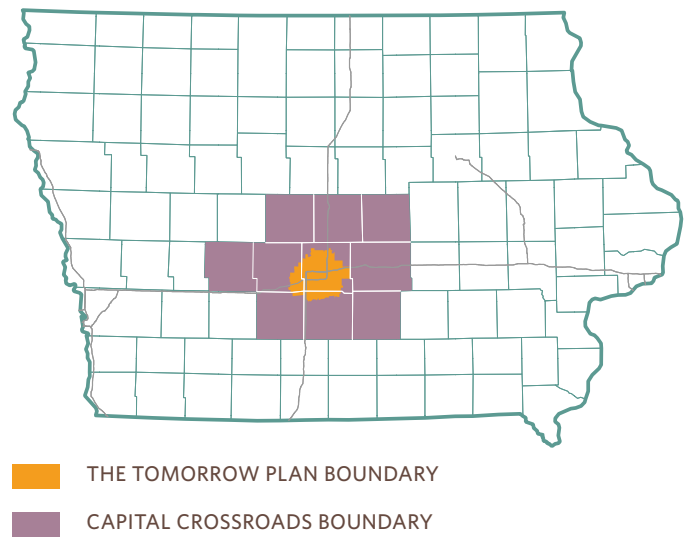
The Greater Des Moines Partnership and the Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines spearheaded the Capital Crossroads initiative, a nine-month visioning process focused on central Iowa. The Capital Crossroads visioning process culminated in a consensus-based, achievable roadmap to guide the area’s path to short and long-term economic growth. This initiative formed the foundation for the visioning phase of The Tomorrow Plan.

However, the two initiatives focus on different time frames: Capital Crossroads is a broad look at the goals for the region’s next five years, while The Tomorrow Plan takes a deeper look at a number of issues out to the year 2050. Moreover, Capital Crossroads focuses on a larger geographic region that includes all areas located within a 50-mile radius of the Iowa State Capitol, while The Tomorrow Plan focuses on the MPO’s planning area, as shown in the map at right. These two initiatives have been coordinated since the summer of 2010, when both were merely ideas. Since then, the Partnership, the Community Foundation, and the MPO have worked closely to align the two endeavors.

### DART Forward 2035 Plan

As it has with Capital Crossroads, The Tomorrow Plan has been closely coordinated with the DART Forward 2035 Plan from the beginning of these initiatives. The DART Forward 2035 Plan will guide the growth of the transit system in Greater Des Moines over the next twenty-five years and includes an alternatives analysis that explores different options for rapid transit. The DART Forward 2035 Plan contributes transit analysis and planning to The Tomorrow Plan, and the two plans will have a dynamic relationship as the region implements elements of each.

COMPLEMENTARY INITIATIVE AREAS



# 4

## REGIONAL SUSTAINABILITY FRAMEWORK

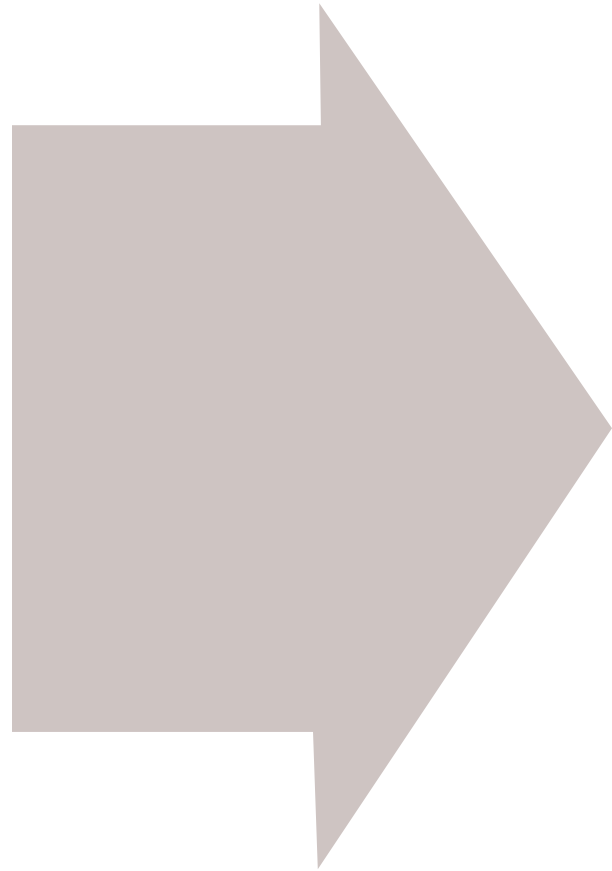
August 2012: Choose Tomorrow Future Fair

January/February 2013: Here Comes Tomorrow

# 5

## SUSTAINABILITY REPORT & IMPLEMENTATION

November 2013: Report Release



## Community Engagement

Plan formulation is the forum for an engaged discussion about the future. As a process, a plan is only as successful as the commitment of the participants who help form the concepts, believe in the vision, and further the recommendations towards implementation. To this end, The Tomorrow Team led an ever-evolving public participation and outreach process that used a variety of in-person and virtual modes of communication. The plan's community engagement strategy also reflected the Partnership for Sustainable Communities' heavy emphasis on engaging traditionally under-involved populations.

All told, the team made over 26,000 contacts throughout the planning process with three goals:

- **Educating residents and civic leaders:** This encouraged informed decision-making and helped elevate the discussion around sustainability.
- **Engaging residents and civic leaders:** This developed on-the-ground support for ideas and cultivated leaders to implement the recommendations that are emerging from the planning process. The team employed both high- and low-tech engagement strategies to engage a range of individuals.
- **Eliciting feedback from residents and civic leaders:** This enriched all aspects of the plan and helped ensure that it adequately addresses local context. Beyond gathering information to inform the plan, eliciting feedback has also served as a springboard for ongoing conversation amongst those who live, work, learn, and play in the region.

To achieve these goals, The Tomorrow Team embarked on an extensive community engagement process, undertaking an array of activities, taking the time to build relationships, and making personal connections, which are a lynchpin for success. These efforts have propelled The Tomorrow Plan and have helped build allies for the implementation phase.

## Public Outreach Events

Public meetings and outreach events were key opportunities to gather input and feedback as well as to go into depth on important issues. At various points, the team synthesized and incorporated public feedback into ongoing content development as well as the design of the planning process.

At the project launch in September 2011, nearly 300 people filled the State Historical Building to learn about the plan. At this interactive open house, attendees — young professionals, elected officials, area youth, long-time residents, and others — demonstrated how they already use the region's many resources, identified their priority issues, and shared their many ideas for the Greater Des Moines area in the coming decades.



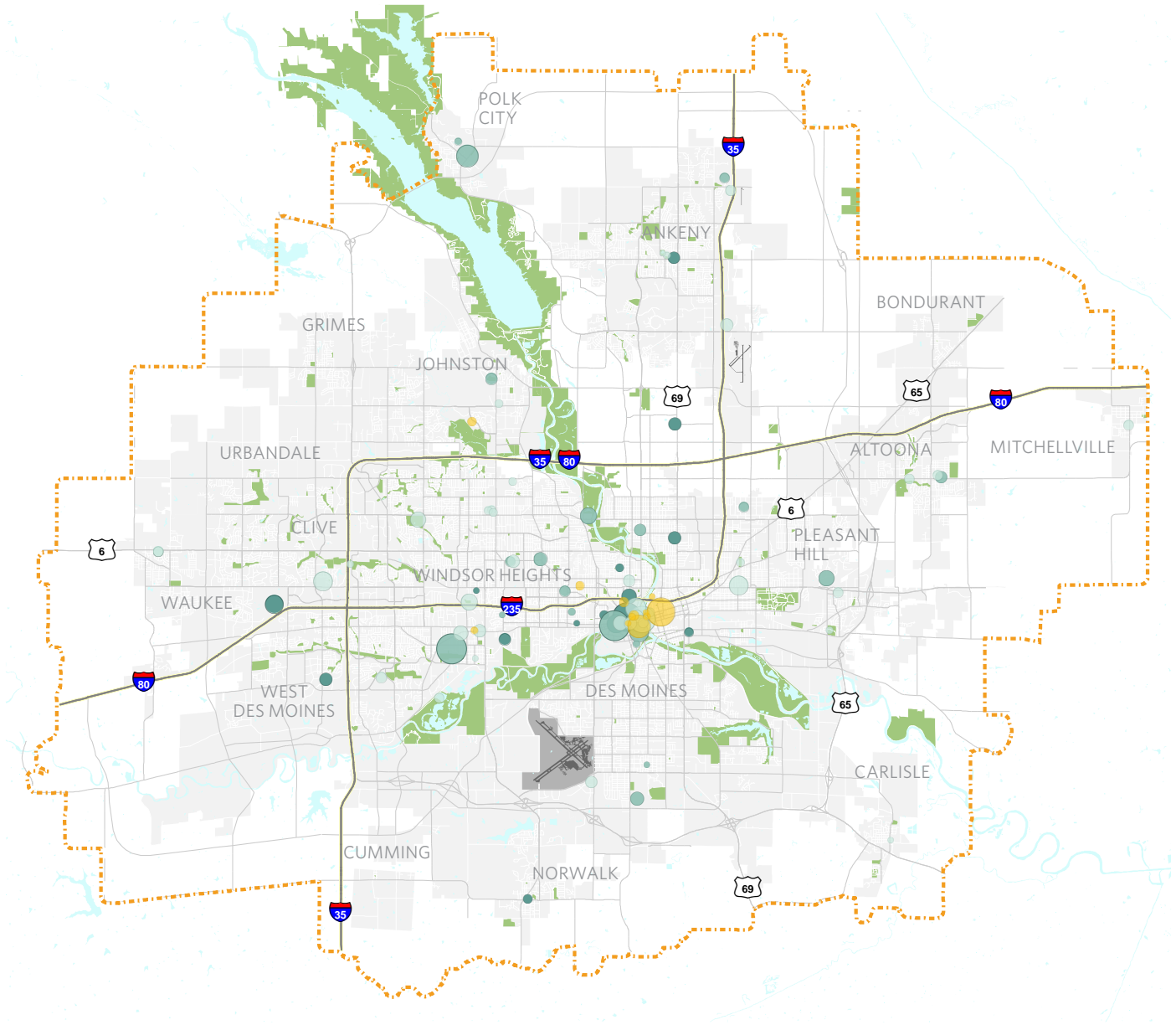
PROJECT LAUNCH (SEPTEMBER 2011)



POTENTIAL FUTURE SCENARIOS WORKSHOPS (APRIL 2012)



LOCATIONS OF COMMUNITY OUTREACH EVENTS



- PHASE 1: PROJECT LAUNCH (JULY — SEPTEMBER 2011)
- PHASE 2: REGIONAL ASSESSMENT (OCTOBER 2011 — MARCH 2012)
- PHASE 3: REGIONAL VISION FOR SUSTAINABILITY (APRIL — JULY 2012)
- PHASE 4: REGIONAL SUSTAINABILITY FRAMEWORK (AUGUST 2012 — MARCH 2013)

- LAKES + RIVERS
- AIRPORT
- MAJOR ROADS
- PARK SPACE
- CITY BOUNDARIES
- STUDY AREA BOUNDARY



SHELLEY POTICHA, FORMER DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF SUSTAINABLE HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES AT CHOOSE TOMORROW, THE TOMORROW PLAN'S FIRST FUTURE FAIR (AUGUST 2012)



ISISERETTES DRILL & DRUM CORP AT CHOOSE TOMORROW (AUGUST 2012)



INTERACTIVE PHOTO BOOTH AT CHOOSE TOMORROW (AUGUST 2012)

In October 2011, residents participated in Shape Tomorrow events around the region. These events included brief presentations about the plan along with discussions among the attendees about the assets and challenges for our communities.

The planning team introduced the business-as-usual model to the public in early 2012. This forecast provided the basis for discussion, allowing residents to consider and respond to key outcomes. Residents also offered input on potential alternative future scenarios.

During the spring of 2012, the team developed and presented these potential future scenarios to the public. Each event included a presentation of these possible futures followed by a discussion about the public's vision for a preferred regional future. Participants helped design a regional scenario that illustrated the future state of housing, parks, transportation, and land use in the year 2050. The planning team also introduced Design My DSM at these April events.

In August 2012, Choose Tomorrow — The Tomorrow Plan's future fair — came to the World Food Prize Hall of Laureates. This highly interactive opportunity to create a collective vision for the future featured a presentation by HUD's Shelley Poticha, former Director of the Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities (2009 to 2013).

Dubbed a "homerun" by Ms. Poticha, the fair presented the Design My DSM results, compared future scenarios for regional growth, and engaged the public in hands-on ways to head toward a vibrant and lasting future for the region. From bike generators and water tables to online job searching and principles for sustainability, the open house allowed nearly 400 participants to see sustainability at work in Greater Des Moines today. It also featured the Isiserettes Drill & Drum Corp, an organization composed of youth ages seven to eighteen aimed at building character and social skills.

The Choose Tomorrow event also featured an interactive photo booth that allowed event participants to show which areas were most important to them.

Building on the momentum of the Choose Tomorrow event, the team hosted the Here Comes Tomorrow events around the region in early 2013. At these events, residents reviewed the draft plan and weighed in on the various strategies.

## Community Presentations + Discussions

The team also presented and discussed The Tomorrow Plan with residents around the region outside of these big events. The team conferred with neighborhood associations, chambers of commerce, professional groups, and elected bodies. It engaged young professionals through the Greater Des Moines Leadership Institute, the Ankeny Young Professionals, the launch of Design My DSM, and Drake University courses. The team also engaged with state organizations, the building and construction industry, faith-based organizations, students, and educators.

## Focus Groups

A key strength of The Tomorrow Plan has been our ability to draw upon existing resources. Some of these resources are subject matter experts who have helped inform the plan. We have periodically convened focus groups related to local foods, waste systems, conservation and parks, air quality, development, and arts and culture. These focus groups served as the basis for key relationships that will propel The Tomorrow Plan to greater success in the future.

## Community Partnerships

Community partnerships — those partnerships that are imperative to the success of The Tomorrow Plan — strengthened our community engagement efforts as well.

- A partnership with **DART** resulted in the placement of advertisements on a portion of their fleet. Several of these posters pose thought-provoking questions, such as "Where will 250,000 more metro residents live?" "Can our roads handle another 110,000 commuters?" and "Should Iowa continue to import 80 percent of its food?"
- Working with the **Young Professionals Connection (YPC)**, The Tomorrow Team engaged with countless Greater Des Moines young professionals. The team presented as part of a Civic Café event, sharing how The Tomorrow Plan fits in with other regional planning efforts. A morning meet-up event hosted at the MPO focused on Design My DSM and enabled young professionals to step back from their own perspectives to better understand the tradeoffs that regional leaders face.
- The planning team participated in multiple Earth Day events in 2012, including the **Earth Day Trash Bash** and the **Science Center of Iowa's Earth Day Fair**. These events coincided with the launch of Design My DSM and enabled the team to reach people not typically engaged in planning processes.



PROJECT MANAGER BETHANY WILCOXON, STEERING COMMITTEE CO-CHAIR ANGELA CONNOLLY, DART GENERAL MANAGER ELIZABETH PRESUTTI, AND MPO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TODD ASHBY POSE WITH AN ADVERTISEMENT ON A DART BUS (APRIL 2012)

- The Young Professionals Advisory Committee (YPAC) represented the team at the **80/35 music festival** in July 2012. Participating as part of the Green Zone, the team highlighted three activities at the event: a living regionally activity, a visual preference survey, and a survey of residents' favorite aspects of the region.
- The team worked with the **African American Leadership Forum (AALF)** to collaborate on **Talk Tomorrow**, an affordable, multi-media approach to teaching and learning about the future of Greater Des Moines. WRLD.tv, the AALF, and others sought to engage African American residents in planning activities that address future needs as viewed by these residents. Outreach included live broadcasts that streamed live online, on cable television, and on the radio; panel discussions; social networking; and, online training modules. These events reached approximately 7,000 people. In November 2012, the team facilitated a van tour through part of the east side of the City of Des Moines with the AALF. The tour route was approximately twenty miles and focused on neighborhoods and commercial corridors in the eastern portion of the planning area. The tour participants noted aspects they liked and disliked, and they suggested potential possibilities for underused land. Recurring themes included the need for youth development facilities, access to food, and the potential for a business incubator.
- The team collaborated with the **Iowa Bureau of Refugee Services** and **Lutheran Services of Iowa** to meet with twenty-five refugees from Southeast Asia. These residents played Design My DSM and voiced the need for better connections among public transit, housing, and jobs, as well as the lack of opportunities for them to get involved in local, small-scale agriculture, a vocation many were involved in prior to their arrival in the US.
- In February 2013, the team worked with RDG Planning & Design to facilitate a discussion with the **Latino Forum**, one of the Capital Crossroads initiatives. The forum is comprised of members and supporters of the Latino community, business owners and professionals, government representatives, advocacy groups, and service organizations. Census figures show that, between 2000 and 2010, the Polk County Latino population nearly doubled, reflecting the changing demographics of the region and the growing need to give Latinos a place to express social and cultural identity.



## Special Events + Activities

In April 2012, we collaborated with local PechaKucha organizers to host a special event focused on The Tomorrow Plan. PechaKucha is a simple presentation format in which presenters show 20 images, each for 20 seconds. The event allowed the team to increase the awareness of The Tomorrow Plan, to increase participation in an upcoming outreach series, and to educate people about the variety of elements required for a strong, vibrant region.

## Speaker Series Events

In-person outreach also included an ongoing Speaker Series designed to educate the public and decision makers about topics related to the project. The Speaker Series provided an opportunity to increase the visibility of the project and to encourage the engagement of individuals with a wide range of interests.

Smart Growth America's Bill Fulton kicked off the Speaker Series in January 2012 with a look at what tomorrow could look like in central Iowa. Mr. Fulton is one of the country's leading experts on smart growth policies and the relationship between smart growth and economic development. His presentation delved into the idea that current development patterns are a fiscal strain on municipalities and individuals and that, as our population ages, these taxpayer fiscal burdens are likely to increase.



YOUNG PROFESSIONALS AND EARTH DAY EVENT ATTENDEES  
PLAY THE IN-PERSON VERSION OF DESIGN MY DSM (APRIL 2012)

In March 2012, Peter Katz — the founding executive director of the Congress for New Urbanism — shared his insights on combining traditional planning with modern technology to create compelling places that exude environmental balance, social equity, and a true sense of community.

As The Tomorrow Team embarked on its own scenario planning process, Bob Dean of the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, Jared Lombard of the Atlanta Regional Commission, and Tom Gerend of the Mid-America Regional Council shared how scenario planning had shaped their respective regional plans and the desired futures of those regions.

The fourth Speaker Series event, State of Our Plates in Central Iowa, featured Ken Meter, author of *Finding Food in Farm Country* and one of the most experienced food system analysts in the country. Mr. Meter focused on the unique opportunities to affect our health and local economy by taking advantage of our locally grown food.

In collaboration with Capital Crossroads, The Tomorrow Plan presented The Great Rivers Greenway: How St. Louis is Growing Clean, Green, and Connected in July 2012. Experts from the

St. Louis region shared what they have done to maximize their natural assets and to develop a world-class network of trails that connect neighborhoods, improve economic vitality, and encourage wellness, activity, and preservation.

Lee Fisher of CEOs for Cities shared his work in the sixth and seventh Speaker Series events. In July 2012, he focused on City Vitals and Dividends. City Vitals is a detailed set of statistical measures for leaders to understand their city's performance in four key areas: talent, innovation, connections, and distinctiveness. City Dividends calculates the monetary gains that major metropolitan areas could realize if they increased their college attainment by one percentage point, reduced their vehicle miles traveled (VMTs) by one mile per person per day, and reduced the number of people in poverty by one percentage point. In February 2013, Mr. Fisher discussed the importance of cross-sector leaders and of regions connecting with one another to share smart ideas.

In August 2013, author and planner Jeff Speck discussed the role that walkability plays in the vibrancy of a community. Mr. Speck revealed the invisible workings of the city, how simple decisions can have cascading effects, and how streets may actually matter more than the buildings along them.



PECHAKUCHA PRESENTERS (APRIL 2012)



BILL FULTON SPEAKER EVENT (JANUARY 2012)



THE TOMORROW PLAN ACTIVITIES AT THE 80/35 MUSIC FESTIVAL (JULY 2012)

## Online Presence

The Tomorrow Plan also sought multiple avenues to reach various audiences online. The project website, [www.thetomorrowplan.com](http://www.thetomorrowplan.com), features information about upcoming events, overall goals, proposed projects, and ways to participate. The project blog, The Tomorrow Plan Exchange (TPX), provides a weekly forum in which a guest author introduces a line of thought related to sustainability or Greater Des Moines. The blog also provides opportunities to engage in online dialogue.

The website links to social media sites Facebook and Twitter, which have enabled the team to reach a wider swath of the public, including young professionals. Over 500 people have “liked” the Facebook page, and approximately 8,500 individuals have clicked the content on the page 35,000 times. In total, the content on The Tomorrow Plan Facebook page has over 500,000 views, furthering the plan’s reach. Though similar statistics are not available for our Twitter account, frequent interactions on this social media site have helped build relationships and further the goals of the plan.

The team also used MindMixer technology. This new public engagement platform allows for a more diverse group of participants to engage in the process than typically attend

conventional public meetings. Anyone interested in providing ideas and solutions that would enhance our region’s future could jump online from work, home, school, or anywhere with internet access to join in the discussion. The MindMixer site provided a creative and convenient way to share ideas, provide feedback, and make recommendations on how the region could become a more sustainable place to live, work, learn, and play.

## Design My DSM + Quantitative Survey

In April 2012, The Tomorrow Plan launched a dynamic, game-like tool that pushes the boundaries of technology and engagement in planning. Called Design My DSM and housed online, the tool takes an innovative, participatory approach, allowing residents to directly influence the design of an upcoming scenario. The purpose of the tool was to illuminate overlapping interests among stakeholders and to encourage people to think regionally before strategizing locally.

One of the ongoing challenges for planning is how to build trust among diverse stakeholders and how to create an incentive to participate in the planning process. Design My DSM used a playful approach to lower the stakes, making it easy for people to explore how their personal preferences relate to regional benefits and allowing them to see overlapping interests.

## GREATER DES MOINES VITALS + DIVIDENDS

The City Dividends framework laid out by CEOs for Cities calculates the monetary gains that major metropolitan areas could realize if they:

- **Increased their college attainment** by one percentage point (the talent dividend);
- **Reduced their vehicle miles traveled** (VMTs) by one mile per person per day (the green dividend); and,
- **Reduced the number of people in poverty** by one percentage point (the opportunity dividend).

In Greater Des Moines, the talent dividend would result in \$500 million of annual savings, the green dividend in \$110 million of annual savings, and the opportunity dividend in \$120 million of annual savings.

TALENT DIVIDEND

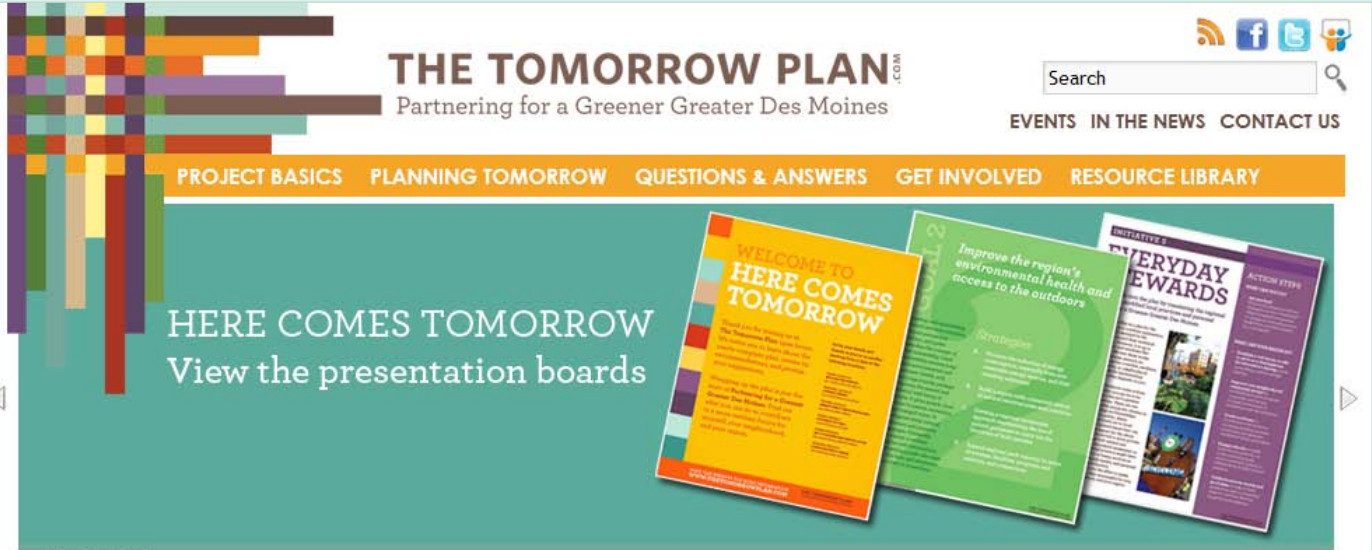


GREEN DIVIDEND



OPPORTUNITY DIVIDEND





1 2 3 4

## HERE COMES TOMORROW

The open houses for **The Tomorrow Plan** were a success! Residents learned about the nearly-complete plan, reviewed its recommendations, and provided suggestions. Wrapping up the plan is just the start of **Partnering for a Greener Greater Des Moines**. Find out what you can do to contribute to a more resilient future for yourself, your neighborhood, and your region.

Download the Draft Report  
Review Open House Feedback  
Photos from the Open House

## TPX

The Tomorrow Plan Exchange (TPX) is a community forum for discussing topics related to the plan. Every Wednesday, guest authors will introduce a train of thought related to sustainability, regionalism, or Greater Des Moines. It's up to you to take it from there!

### Greening Goods Movement

Posted Wednesday, March 14, 2013

What comes to mind when you think about rail? You probably think of those annoying things that block the road when you have somewhere important to get to. What if I told you rail is one of the greenest methods of moving goods from one location to another? Tell me more, you say. Well, let's examine some of the reasons why. Continue reading →

## What's New

- [TPX: Greening Goods Movement](#)
- [TPX: A Road Map to Resilience](#)
- [TPX: The Tomorrow Plan and Moving Toward a More Accessible Future](#)
- [TPX: Planting the Seeds of Sustainability](#)
- [TPX: Healthy Choices Made Easy](#)
- [Review Open House Feedback](#)
- [TPX: Central Iowa's Catalyst: Local Talent and Small Businesses](#)
- [Des Moines Register: Get involved with plan for tomorrow](#)
- [Here Comes Tomorrow Presentation Boards](#)





DESIGN MY DSM DESIGN PROFILE

The team saw participation from all seventeen of The Tomorrow Plan communities in Design My DSM, with nearly 1,000 unique responses. Participants tended to be younger than the overall population in the zip codes from which responses came. This was expected based on the web-based nature of Design My DSM. Overall, the game respondents from around the region told us their top four priorities were:

- I can walk, bike, or take transit to important destinations
- I live in a great school district
- I can get out in nature
- There is a park near my house

These results align with what The Tomorrow Team heard throughout the process: transit, schools, nature, and parks are all very important assets for quality of life in the region.

In October 2012, the team conducted a 400-person random sample survey that was supplemented with a 50-person

oversample of underserved populations in the urban core. The results of this quantitative survey overlapped with several of the results of Design My DSM. The top priorities in this survey were buying local food, having low taxes, being safe from flooding, and living in a great school district. Only the survey response of owning an acre or more of land failed to receive statements of support from a majority of respondents. The top funding priorities that emerged from the survey were lower taxes, increased school funding, local placemaking, and an enhanced stormwater system. A majority of respondents did not see building a major regional attraction downtown, adding parking, and building more roads as good or excellent ideas.

## Plan Development

All of the goals, strategies, and initiatives described in The Tomorrow Plan were informed by the many dialogues among the planning team, subject matter experts, and stakeholders from around the region.