SEPTEMBER 2026 NEWSLETTER

Bringing Home More Than Awards

A Message from Our President & CEO

Recently, I traveled to Grand Rapids for the Mid-America Economic Development Council's annual conference, where Greater Dubuque Development was honored with multiple awards. The most valuable thing I brought home wasn't the accolades, however; it was two days of conversations with the site selectors who help companies choose where to invest and the economic developers working to bring those investments to their regions.

Their message was consistent: Communities need sites, workforce, and infrastructure ready well before a company calls. When companies face uncertainty, they look for a community they can trust—one that has done its homework and can deliver.

Resonance, whose inaugural America's Best Small Cities ranking recently placed Dubuque among the top 100 of 282 small metros nationwide, presented research that reinforced something we've long believed: the experiences that make a place appealing to visitors also help people imagine living there. Assets like the Field of Dreams and the amenities families seek out are not just tourism, they are also population attraction.

I came home confident in this region's direction because we are already investing in site readiness, building the talent pipeline, and strengthening relationships through decades of Info*Action* visits. Those relationships help us understand

what businesses need and demonstrate that we follow through on our promise that **YOU can be great here**.

One idea from the conference has stayed with me, and it's worth remembering. Economic development is the service that helps pay for all the others by growing the tax base that supports our schools, streets, and public safety. Your investment makes that work possible, and we intend to keep earning your trust.

With gratitude,

Jason E. White

Jason White

President & CEO

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Business Support & Attraction

YOUR BUSINESS can be great here.

Aerial views show the MZH Development site at different stages, with the center and right photos showing the most recent progress. The images also capture Dubuque's green, tree-covered landscape and the Mississippi River in the distance. Photos courtesy of Matt Henick.

MZH Development Breaks Ground on New Dubuque Housing

In 2015, Matt Henick came to Dubuque from suburban Chicago to attend Loras College. He chose to stay, build a career, and invest in the community he now calls home. On August 17, 2026, he broke ground on his latest project: three

duplexes at West 32nd Street and Carter Road that will add six housing units to an infill site in Dubuque.

The project will create more options for individuals and families looking to settle in Dubuque, adding available housing stock to the market to support population growth. Through the process, Greater Dubuque Development supported Henick by participating in the City's Design Review Team meetings and working with Planning Services to address barriers and keep the project moving forward.

Learn more about the MZH Development Project

IOWA | Economic Development & Finance Authority

New Round of Manufacturing 4.0 Grants Opens for Iowa Manufacturers

A new round of Iowa's Manufacturing 4.0 Technology Investment Program could help local manufacturers put planned equipment, automation, and smart technology upgrades within reach. IEDA's list of past recipients includes 23 Greater Dubuque area manufacturers, from Dubuque Screw Products and Klauer Manufacturing to smaller firms across the region.

Eligible businesses can seek up to $75,000 with a 1:1 cash match. Applications open January 4, 2027, but the first deadline comes sooner: Manufacturers must request a required CIRAS assessment by November 20, 2026. Greater Dubuque Development's Business Services team can help companies explore whether the program fits their plans.

Explore program details and review past recipients from the Greater Dubuque region

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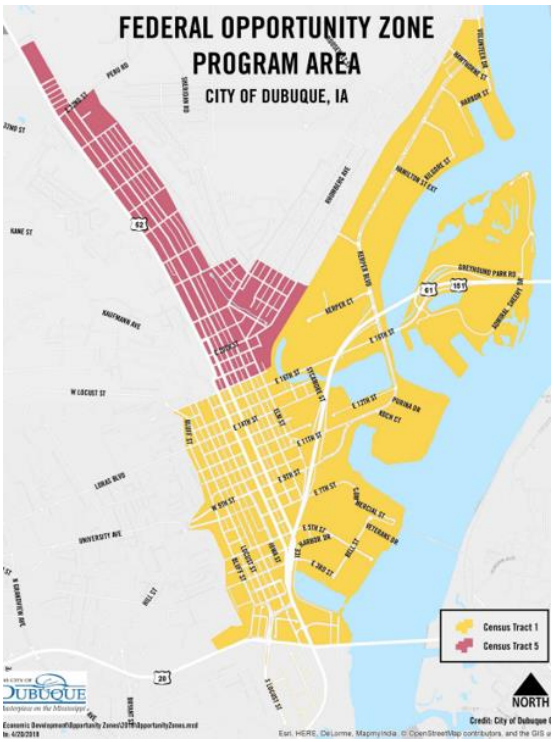

Dubuque Pursues New Opportunity Zone Designations

Greater Dubuque Development is leading a coordinated effort with the City of Dubuque to secure Opportunity Zone designations for two census tracts to incentivize federal tax benefits for qualifying investments in lower-income areas. Ahead of the program's next phase in 2027, Greater Dubuque Development has also convened a working group to explore projects, financing, and a shared investment fund to help turn designation into local development.

Read more about Dubuque's Opportunity Zone efforts

Small Business Owners: Make Your Experience Count

A financing challenge, a strong year of sales, plans to hire—what Greater Dubuque businesses are experiencing belongs in the national picture. Greater Dubuque Development is partnering with the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago to gather local responses to the 2026 Small Business Credit Survey.

The survey takes about 10–12 minutes and closes November 13, 2026. If 50 businesses respond through Greater Dubuque Development's outreach, we will receive a local report that can help guide our business support work and conversations with lenders.

Learn more and take the 12-minute survey

Population Growth

YOUR FUTURE can be great here.

From left: Hilda Alonyo shares her experience studying and living in Greater Dubuque; Northeast Iowa Community College students listen during the welcome remarks; and student life representatives from participating institutions greet students at check-in.

Community of Colleges Kickoff Celebrates Worldwide Connections

Students from seven area colleges and universities came together at the National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium for the 2026-2027 **YOU can be great here** Community of Colleges kickoff that put international students at the heart of the welcome. In partnership with the Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque, the September 17, 2026 event drew 314 students, community members, and college partners for food, music, and conversation.

Guests heard from Hilda Alonyo of Uganda and Shree Prakash Shah of Nepal about the paths they are building in Dubuque. Shah's internship with Dubuque County led to a full-time position—a reminder of how local employers can help students, including international students, see a future in the region.

Read more about the YOU can be great here Community of Colleges Kickoff

IOWA™ | Iowa Workforce Development

New Iowa Grant Aims to Expand Training for High-Demand Careers with CTPE Grant Program

Training programs need room and equipment to prepare more workers for careers Iowa employers need to fill. Iowa Workforce Development's new Career Training Physical Expansion (CTPE) Grant Program offers $3.5 million statewide to help eligible community colleges, trade unions, and private sector apprenticeship programs build or improve training facilities and purchase essential equipment.

Up to $1 million is available per award, with $1.5 million reserved for healthcare training. Applications are due Monday, October 19, 2026, at 2:00 p.m. Contact Mandi Dolson, Director of Workforce Solutions at mandid@greaterdubuque.org or 563-557-9049 to explore if this funding program is a fit for your program.

Review eligibility and application details on Iowa Workforce Development's website

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In a video produced by the City of Dubuque's Media Services team as part of our annual Welcome Students Campaign, Dubuque Mayor Brad Cavanagh offered a personal welcome to students who will be attending a higher education institution in the Greater Dubuque region during the 2026-2027 academic year.

Welcoming Students to Life Beyond Campus

A student's connection to the Greater Dubuque region can begin with a welcome—and grow through a job opportunity, a local event, or an easier way to explore the city. In conjunction with the start of the new academic year, Greater Dubuque Development, the City of Dubuque, and area colleges and universities shared messages from Mayor Brad Cavanagh alongside resources for transportation, employment, and our 2026-2027 **YOU can be great here** Community of Colleges event series.

The campaign reached students through more than 1,900 welcome letters and an email delivered to 3,344 students on September 9, helping introduce them to the possibilities of living and working here.

Read more about our 2026 Welcome Student Campaign

Greater Dubuque's Newcomer Tools Earn Regional Recognition

The Mid-America Economic Development Council (MAEDC) recognized two Greater Dubuque Development initiatives that support those steps: the **YOU can be great here** Relocation Guide earned a Marketing Program Award, and Distinctively Dubuque earned a Workforce & Talent Award.

Read about our 2026 MAEDC awards

Organizational Excellence

YOUR SUPPORT can be great here.

New Future Leadership Team members at the September meeting. From left: Irving Duran of HODGE; Zachary Rigdon of Clarke University and Robin Reed of McGraw Hill | Higher Education; and Amy Henson of Northeast Iowa Community College.

Future Leadership Team Looks Ahead

Greater Dubuque Development welcomed 15 new members to its Future Leadership Team in September. The meeting began with an introduction to economic development and the organization's 2025–2030 strategic goals before asking members: What would you change about the Greater Dubuque region if you had the next 10 years to shape its future?

Their discussion explored housing, families and schools, quality of life, talent retention, and economic growth. Members also considered how regional partners could work together—and what measures would show whether their ideas are making a difference.

Learn more about Future Leadership Team and the newly appointed members

From left: Jordan Fullan of HODGE, Board Chair; Poppy Conlon of Conlon Construction, Vice-Chair; Wayne Breckon of Nicolet National Bank, Treasurer; and Zach Keeling of Medical Associates Clinic, Past Chair.

Meet Our 2026–2027 Board Officers

Greater Dubuque Development's members elected their 2026-2027 officers of the Board of Directors at the July 14, 2026 Annual Meeting to help guide the organization through the year ahead. Jordan Fullan of HODGE serves as Chair, Poppy Conlon of Conlon Construction as Vice-Chair, Wayne Breckon of Nicolet National Bank as Treasurer, and Zach Keeling of Medical Associates Clinic as Past Chair.

Their experience spans logistics, construction, banking, and healthcare—industries that help shape the Greater Dubuque region's future. Get to know the people behind this year's, including a family connection to Greater Dubuque Development's history of board leadership.

Learn more about our 2026-2027 Board Officers

Community Information

YOUR LIFE can be great here.

Dubuque Selected to Join "Love Your Block"

The City of Dubuque has been selected to join "Love Your Block," an initiative led by the Bloomberg Center for Public Innovation at Johns Hopkins University, to launch resident-led projects that improve their cities. Dubuque is one of 25 new cities from 20 U.S. states selected to join the "Love Your Block" program which was founded in 2009.

Learn more >

Youth Climate Action Microgrants Available

Through October 9, 2026, Dubuque youth ages 15-24 can apply for $5,000 microgrants to lead local climate action projects. Made possible through funding from Bloomberg Philanthropies, the grants support projects lead by at least two youth that align with Dubuque's 50% by 2030 Climate Action and Resiliency Plan.

Learn more and apply online >

Public Input Invited on City of Dubuque Housing Assistance Changes

The City of Dubuque Public Housing Agency is accepting comments through November 2, 2026 on a proposed change to its Housing Choice Voucher plan that would establish a limited preference for people experiencing homelessness. A public hearing is scheduled for that evening at 6:30 p.m. in City Council Chambers.

Learn more & submit comments >

Upcoming Events

YOUR NETWORK can be great here.

Thursday, October 22, 2026

AccessDubuqueJobs.com Career Fair

1:00 - 4:00 p.m. | Grand River Center | 500 Bell St, Dubuque, IA

Our next AccessDubuqueJobs.com Career Fair will be on Thursday, October 22, 2026 from 1:00 - 4:00 p.m. at the Grand River Center in the Port of Dubuque. This career fair is open to the public with targeted outreach to regional higher ed institutions as part of our 2026-2027 **YOU can be great here** Community of Colleges event series. Registration for the AccessDubuqueJobs.com Career Fair is now open for our Workforce Solutions Investors. Contact Mandi Dolson, Director of Workforce Solutions at 563-557-9049 or mandid@greaterdubuque.org.

Access employer registration >

Wednesdays, January 17 - February 24, 2027

Wednesdays, March 10 - April 7, 2027

Distinctively Dubuque Newcomer Program

5:30 - 8:30 p.m. | Various Locations | Dubuque, IA

Distinctively Dubuque is a five-night course taught by high-energy presenters with in-depth knowledge of the Greater Dubuque region. This course is designed for individuals who are new to the area within the last five years. Thanks to our generous sponsors of the DRA, City of Dubuque and Dubuque County Board of Supervisors, Distinctively Dubuque is offered free of charge. Online registration is now available for dates in the first half of 2027. For more information, contact Mandi Dolson, Director of Workforce Solutions at 563-557-9049 or mandid@greaterdubuque.org.

Learn more about Distinctively Dubuque >

YOU can be great here Campaign

Our sights are set on 5 goals through 2027.

Grow our regional workforce to over 64,000 jobs.

Support median household income to reach $76,000.

Encourage and facilitate $1 billion of new construction.

Reduce regional poverty by 5%.

Reach a population of 105,000 in the Greater Dubuque region.

View Progress

View past issues of the newsletter here.

Greater Dubuque DEVELOPMENT CORP.

YOU can be great here.

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